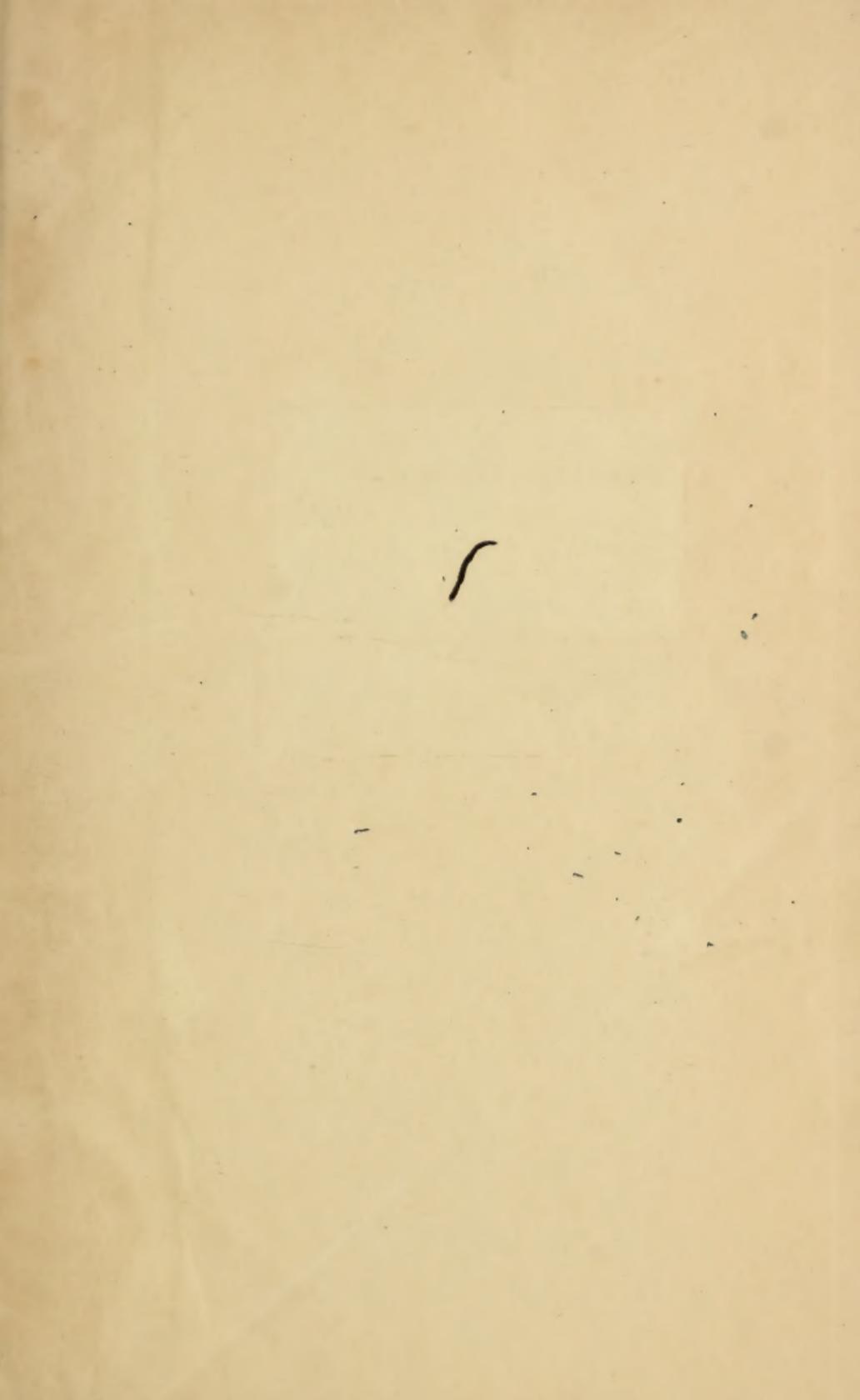
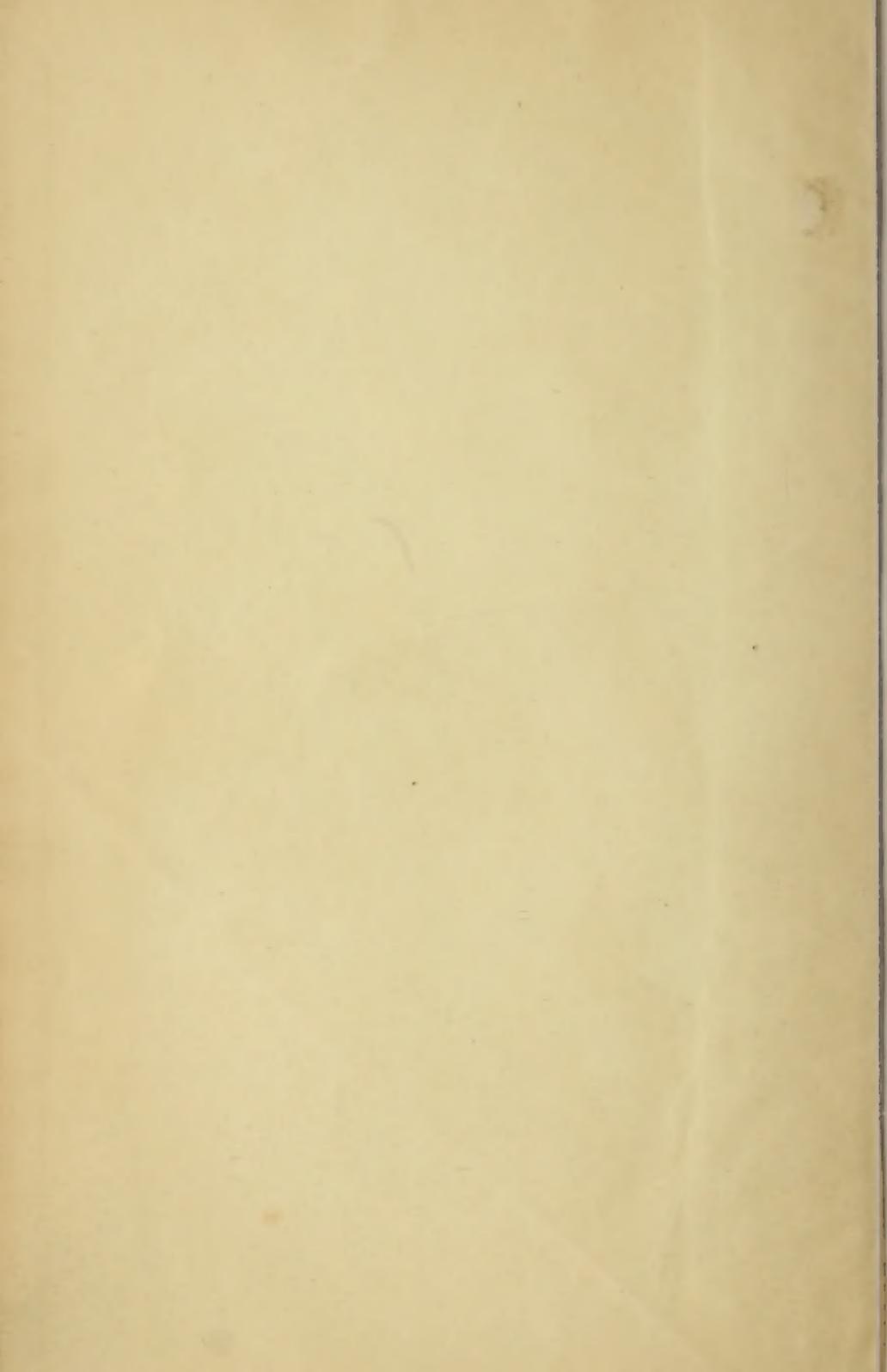


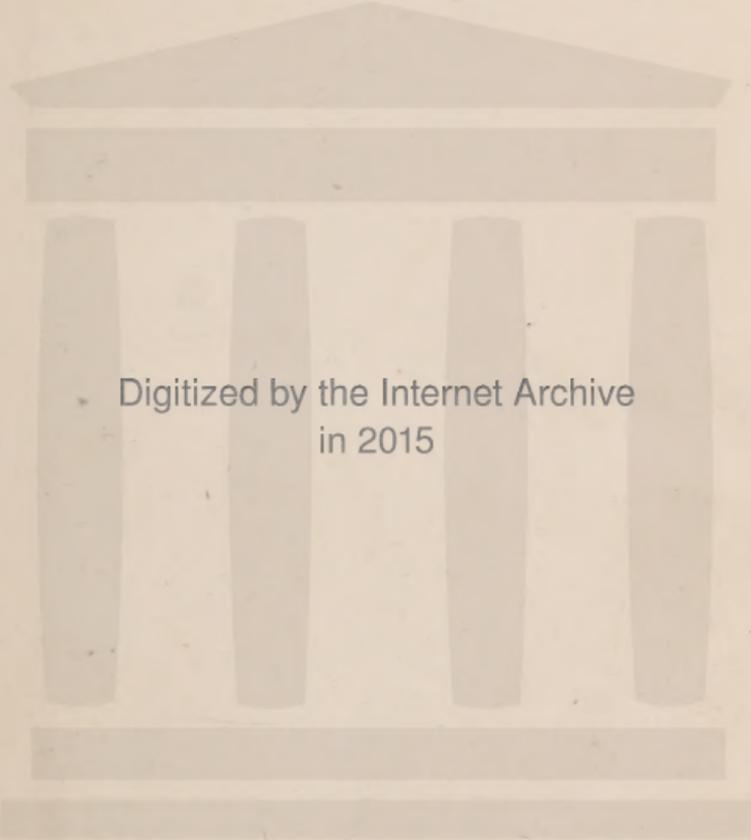
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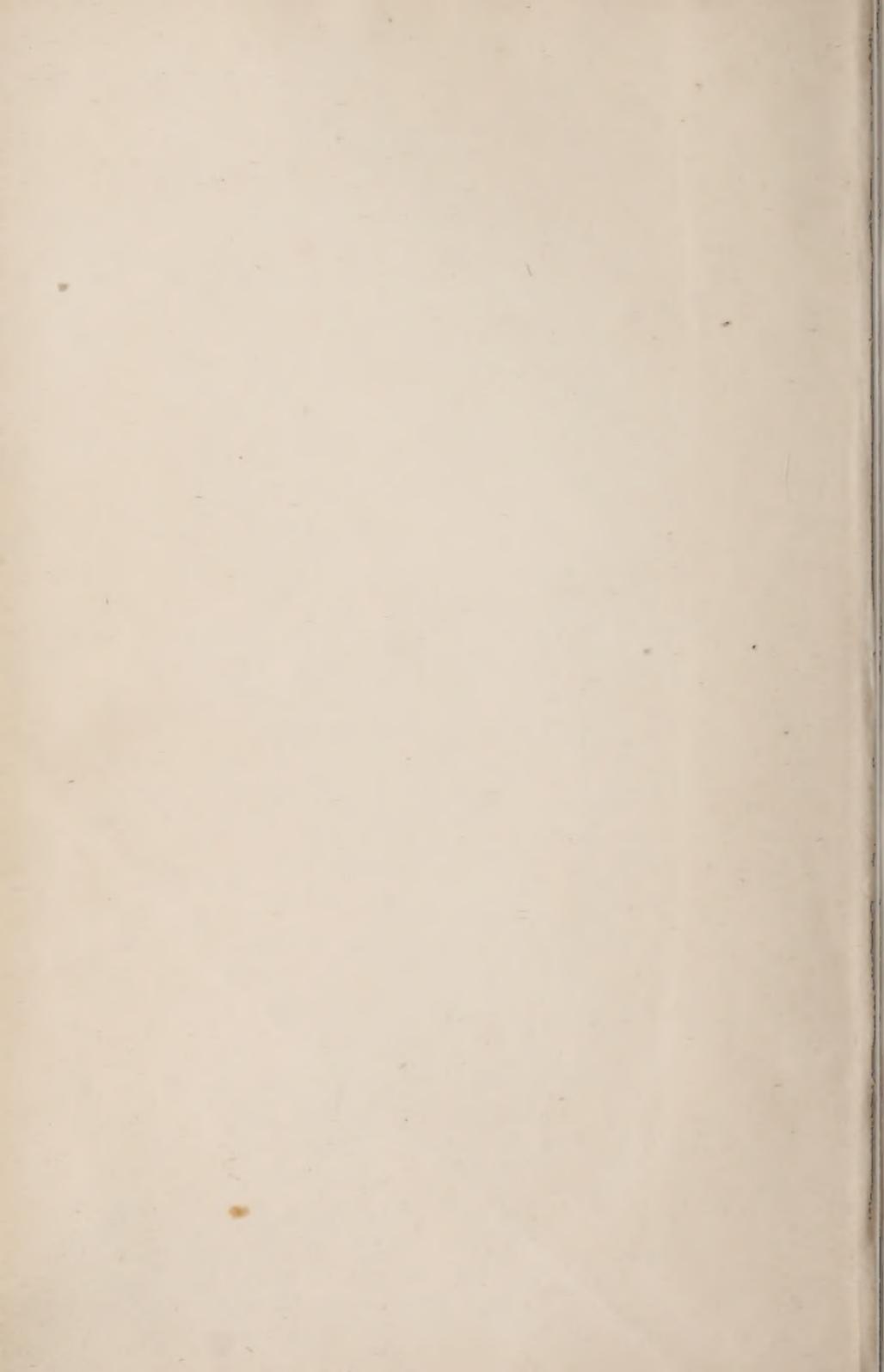
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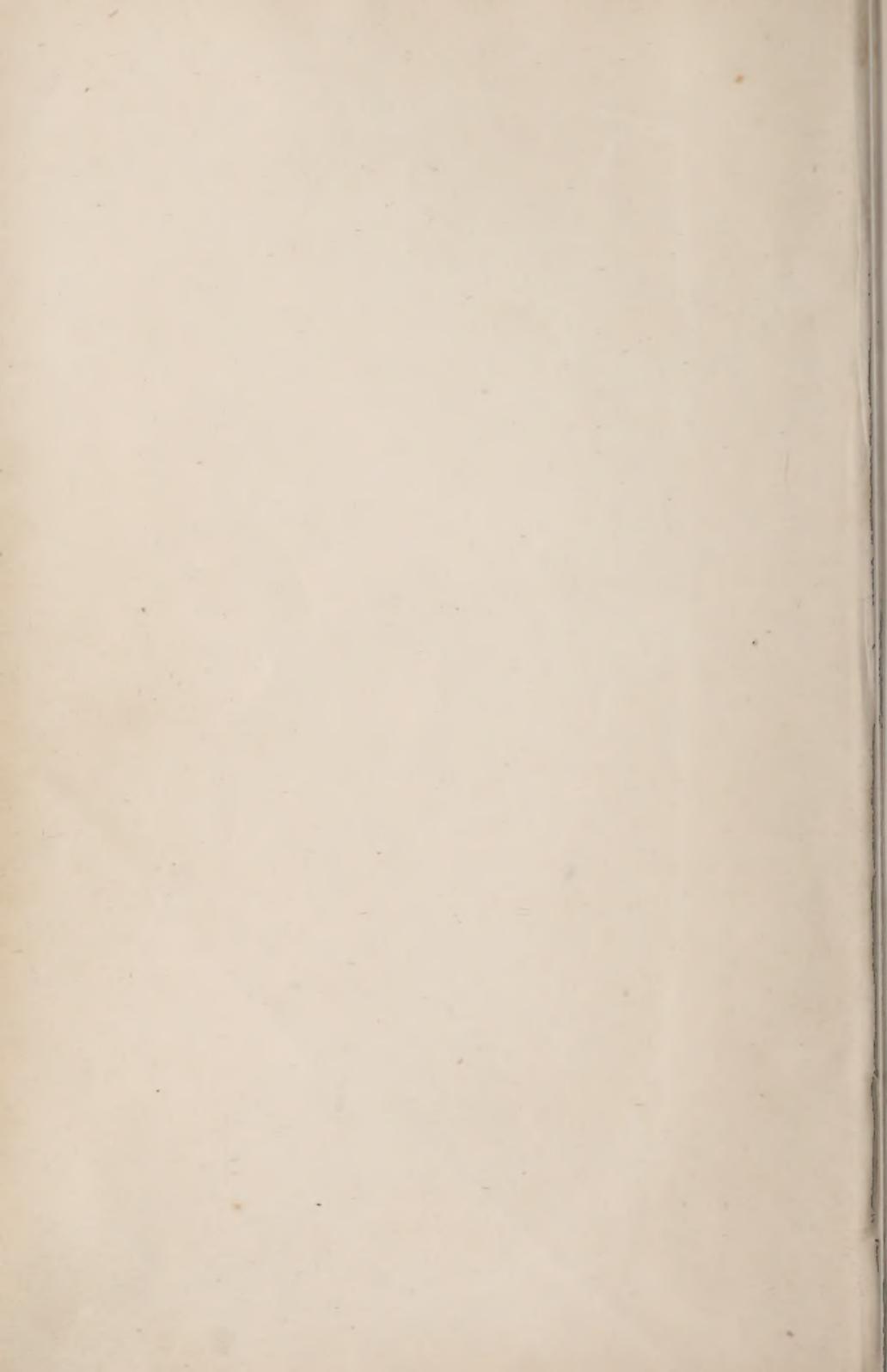


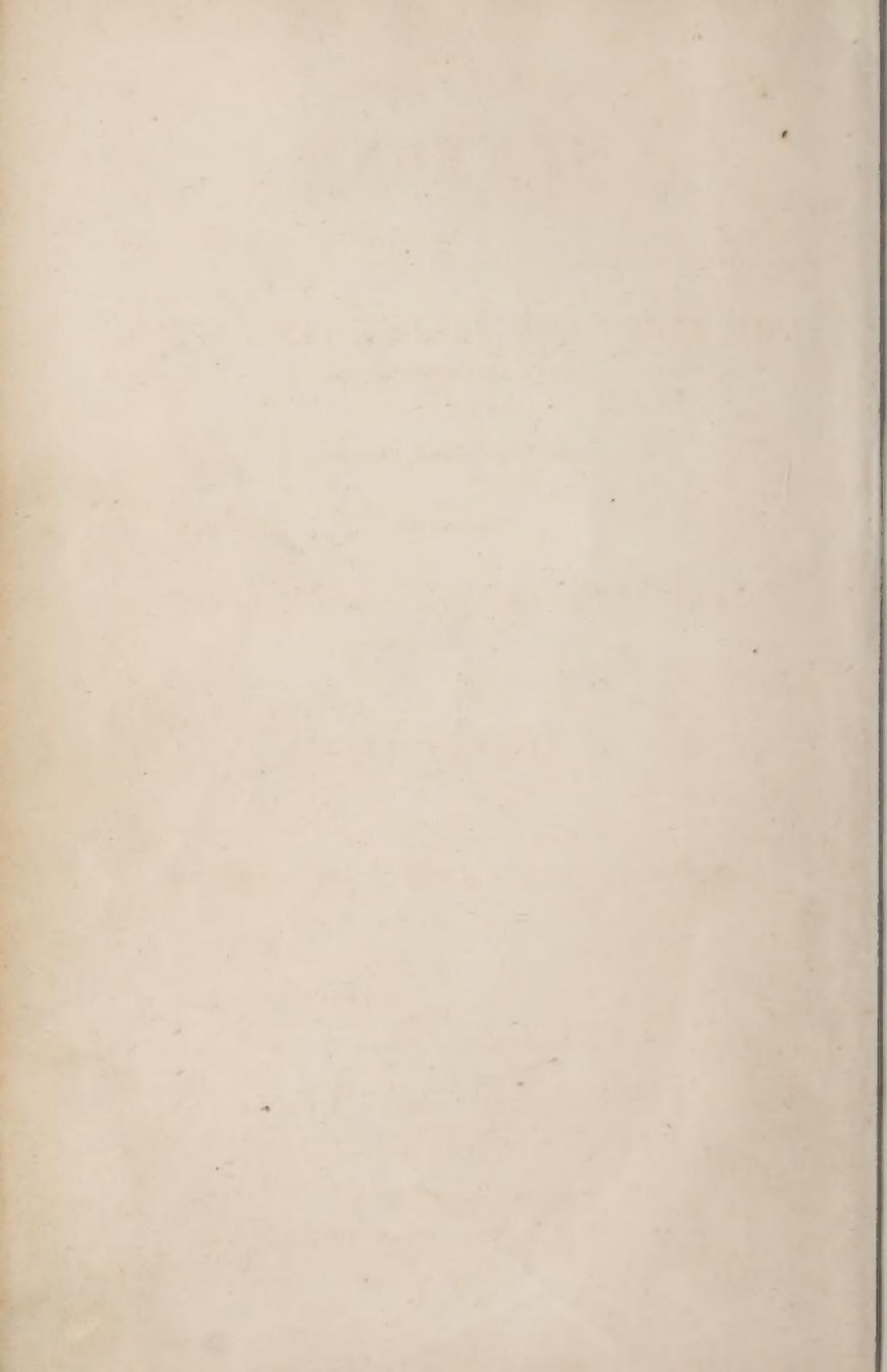




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THE
SERMONS

OF

THE RIGHT REV. JEREMY TAYLOR, D.D.,

LORD BISHOP OF DOWN, CONNOR, AND DROMORE.

COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME.

COMPRISING

A COURSE FOR THE WHOLE YEAR,

AND

A SUPPLEMENT

OF

SERMONS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS AND OCCASIONS.

PHILADELPHIA:
H. HOOKER, No. 178 CHESTNUT STREET.

.....
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COURSE OF SERMONS

FOR THE WHOLE YEAR.

PRAYERS.

A PRAYER BEFORE SERMON.

O LORD GOD, fountain of life, giver of all good things, who givest to men the blessed hope of eternal life by our Lord Jesus Christ, and hast promised thy Holy Spirit to them that ask him; be present with us in the dispensation of thy holy word [and sacraments*]; grant that we, being preserved from all evil by thy power, and, among the diversities of opinions and judgments in this world, from all errors and false doctrines, and led into all truth by the conduct of thy Holy Spirit, may for ever obey thy heavenly calling: that we may not be only hearers of the word of life, but doers also of good works, keeping faith and a good conscience, living an unblamable life, usefully and charitably, religiously and prudently, in all godliness and honesty, before thee our God, and before all the world, that, at the end of our mortal life, we may enter into the light and life of God, to sing praises and eternal hymns to the glory of thy name in eternal ages, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

In whose Name let us pray, in the words which Himself commanded, saying,

OUR Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

A PRAYER AFTER SERMON.

LORD, pity and pardon, direct and bless, sanctify and save us all. Give repentance to all that live in sin, and perseverance to all thy sons and servants for his sake, who is thy beloved, and the foundation of all our hopes, our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus; to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory, praise and adoration, love and obedience, now and for evermore. Amen.

SERMON I. ADVENT SUNDAY.

DOOMSDAY BOOK; OR, CHRIST'S ADVENT TO JUDGMENT.

For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.—2 Cor. v. 10.

VIRTUE and vice are so essentially distinguished, and the distinction is so necessary to be observed in order to the well-being of men in private, and in societies, that to divide them in themselves, and to separate them by sufficient notices, and to distinguish them by rewards, hath been designed by all laws, by the sayings of wise men, by the order of things, by their proportions to good or evil; and the expectations of men have

been framed accordingly: that virtue may have a proper seat in the will and in the affections, and may become amiable by its own excellencies and its appendant blessing; and that vice may be as natural an enemy to a man as a wolf to a lamb, and as darkness to light: destructive of its being, and a contradiction of its nature. But it is not enough that all the world hath armed itself against vice, and, by all that is wise and sober amongst men, hath taken the part of virtue, adorning it with glorious appellatives, encouraging it by rewards, entertaining it with sweetness, and commanding it by edicts, fortifying it with defensatives, and twining it in all artificial compliances: all this is short of man's necessity: for this will,

* This clause is to be omitted, if there be no sacrament that day.

in all modest men, secure their actions in theatres and highways, in markets and churches, before the eye of judges, and in the society of witnesses; but the actions of closets and chambers, the designs and thoughts of men, their discourses in dark places, and the actions of retirements and of the night, are left indifferent to virtue or to vice; and of these, as man can take no cognizance, so he can make no coercitive; and therefore above one half of human actions is, by the laws of man, left unregarded and unprovided for. And, besides this, there are some men who are bigger than laws, and some are bigger than judges, and some judges have lessened themselves by fear and cowardice, by bribery and flattery, by iniquity and compliance; and where they have not, yet they have notices but of few causes; and there are some sins so popular and universal, that to punish them is either impossible or intolerable; and to question such, would betray the weakness of the public rods and axes, and represent the sinner to be stronger than the power that is appointed to be his bridle. And, after all this, we find sinners so prosperous that they escape, so potent that they fear not; and sin is made safe when it grows great;

—Facere omnia sævè
Non impune licet, nisi dum facis—

and innocence is oppressed, and the poor cries, and he hath no helper; and he is oppressed, and he wants a patron. And for these and many other concurrent causes, if you reckon all the causes that come before all the judicatories of the world, though the litigious are too many, and the matters of instance are intricate and numerous, yet the personal and criminal are so few, that of two thousand sins that cry aloud to God for vengeance, scarce two are noted by the public eye, and chastised by the hand of justice. It must follow from hence, that it is but reasonable, for the interest of virtue and the necessities of the world, that the private should be judged, and virtue should be tied upon the spirit, and the poor should be relieved, and the oppressed should appeal, and the noise of widows should be heard, and the saints should stand upright, and the cause that was ill-judged should be judged over again, and tyrants should be called to account, and our thoughts should be examined, and our secret actions viewed on all sides, and the infinite number of sins which escape here, should not escape finally. And therefore God hath so ordained it, that there shall be a day of doom, wherein all that are

let alone by men, shall be questioned by God, and every word and every action shall receive its just recompense of reward. "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Tà *ἴδια τοῦ σώματος*, so it is in the best copies, not τὰ *διὰ*, "the things done in the body," so we commonly read it "the things proper or due to the body," so the expression is more apt and proper; for not only what is done *διὰ σώματος*, "by the body," but even the acts of abstracted understanding and volition, the acts of reflection and choice, acts of self-love and admiration, and whatever else can be supposed the proper and peculiar act of the soul or of the spirit, is to be accounted for at the day of judgement: and even these may be called *ἴδια τοῦ σώματος*, because these are the acts of the man in the state of conjunction with the body. The words have in them no other difficulty or variety, but contain a great truth of the biggest interest, and one of the most material constitutive articles of the whole religion, and the greatest endearment of our duty in the whole world. Things are so ordered by the great Lord of all the creatures, that whatsoever we do or suffer shall be called to account, and this account shall be exact, and the sentence shall be just, and the reward shall be great; all the evils of the world shall be amended, and the injustices shall be repaid, and the Divine Providence shall be vindicated, and virtue and vice shall forever be remarked by their separate dwellings and rewards.

This is that which the apostle, in the next verse, calls "the terror of the Lord." It is *his* terror, because himself shall appear in his dress of majesty and robes of justice; and it is *his* terror, because it is, of all things in the world, the most formidable in itself, and it is most fearful to us, where shall be acted the interest and final sentence of eternity: and because it is so intended, I shall all the way represent it as "the Lord's terror," that we may be afraid of sin, for the destruction of which this terror is intended. 1. Therefore, we will consider the persons that are to be judged, with the circumstances of our advantages or our sorrows; "We must all appear." 2. The judge and his judgement-seat; "before the judgement-seat of Christ." 3. The sentence that they are to receive; "the things due to the body, good or bad;" according as we now please, but then cannot alter. Every of these is

dressed with circumstances of affliction and affrightment to those, to whom such terrors shall appertain as a portion of their inheritance.

1. The persons who are to be judged; even you, and I, and all the world; kings and priests, nobles and learned, the crafty and the easy, the wise and the foolish, the rich and the poor, the prevailing tyrant and the oppressed party, shall all appear to receive their symbol; and this is so far from abating any thing of its terror and our dear concernment, that it much increases it: for, although concerning precepts and discourses, we are apt to neglect in particular, what is recommended in general, and in incidences of mortality and sad events, the singularity of the chance heightens the apprehension of the evil; yet it is so by accident, and only in regard of our imperfection; it being an effect of self-love, or some little creeping envy, which adheres too often to the unfortunate and miserable; or else, because the sorrow is apt to increase by being apprehended to be a rare case, and a singular unworthiness in him who is afflicted, otherwise than is common to the sons of men, companions of his sin, and brethren of his nature, and partners of his usual accidents; yet in final and extreme events, the multitude of sufferers does not lessen but increase the sufferings; and when the first day of judgment happened, that (I mean) of the universal deluge of waters upon the old world, the calamity swelled like the flood, and every man saw his friend perish, and the neighbours of his dwelling, and the relatives of his house, and the sharers of his joys, and yesterday's bride, and the new-born heir, the priest of the family, and the honour of the kindred, all dying or dead, drenched in water, and the Divine vengeance; and then they had no place to flee unto, no man cared for their souls; they had none to go unto for counsel, no sanctuary high enough to keep them from the vengeance that rained down from heaven: and so it shall be at the day of judgment, when that world and this, and all that shall be born hereafter, shall pass through the same Red sea, and be all baptized with the same fire, and be involved in the same cloud, in which shall be thunderings and terrors infinite; every man's fear shall be increased by his neighbour's shrieks, and the amazement that all the world shall be in, shall unite as the sparks of a raging furnace, into a globe of fire, and roll upon its own principle, and increase by direct appearances and

intolerable reflections. He that stands in a church-yard in the time of a great plague, and hears the passing-bell perpetually telling the sad stories of death, and sees crowds of infected bodies pressing to their graves, and others sick and tremulous, and death, dressed up in all the images of sorrow, round about him, is not supported in his spirit by the variety of his sorrow: and at doomsday, when the terrors are universal, besides that it is itself so much greater, because it can affright the whole world, it is also made greater by communication and a sorrowful influence; grief being then strongly infectious, when there is no variety of state, but an entire kingdom of fear; and amazement is the king of all our passions, and all the world its subjects: and that shriek must needs be terrible, when millions of men and women, at the same instant, shall fearfully cry out, and the noise shall mingle with the trumpet of the archangel, with the thunders of the dying and groaning heavens, and the crack of the dissolving world, when the whole fabric of nature shall shake into dissolution and eternal ashes. But this general consideration may be heightened with four or five circumstances.

1. Consider what an infinite multitude of angels, and men and women shall then appear; it is a huge assembly, when the men of one kingdom, the men of one age in a single province, are gathered together into heaps and confusion of disorder; but then, all kingdoms of all ages, all the armies that ever mustered, all the world that Augustus Cæsar taxed, all those hundreds of millions that were slain in all the Roman wars, from Numa's time till Italy was broken into principalities and small exarchates; all these, and all that can come into numbers, and that did descend from the loins of Adam, shall at once be represented; to which account if we add the armies of heaven, the nine orders of blessed spirits, and the infinite numbers in every order, we may suppose the numbers fit to express the majesty of that God, and the terror of that Judge, who is the Lord and Father of all that unimaginable multitude. "Erit terror ingens tot simul tantorumque populorum."⁷

2. In this great multitude we shall meet all those, who, by their example and their holy precepts, have, like tapers, enkindled with a beam of the Sun of righteousness, enlightened us, and taught us to walk in the paths of justice. There we shall see all

those good men, whom God sent to preach to us, and recall us from human follies and inhuman practices: and when we espy the good man, that chid us for our last drunkenness or adulteries, it shall then also be remembered how we mocked at counsel, and were civilly modest at the reproof, but laughed when the man was gone, and accepted it for a religious compliment, and took our leaves, and went and did the same again. But then things shall put on another face; and that we smiled at here and slighted fondly, shall then be the greatest terror in the world; men shall feel that they once laughed at their own destruction, and rejected health when it was offered by a man of God upon no other condition, but that they would be wise, and not be in love with death. Then they shall perceive, that if they had obeyed an easy and a sober counsel, they had been partners of the same felicity, which they see so illustrious upon the heads of those preachers, "whose work is with the Lord," and who, by their life and doctrine, endeavoured to snatch the soul of their friend or relatives from an intolerable misery. But he that sees a crown put upon their heads, that give good counsel, and preach holy and severe sermons with designs of charity and piety, will also then perceive that God did not send preachers for nothing, on trifling errands and without regard: but that work, which he crowns in them, he purposed should be effective to us, persuasive to the understanding, and active upon our consciences. Good preachers, by their doctrine, and all good men, by their lives, are the accusers of the disobedient; and they shall rise up from their seats, and judge and condemn the follies of those who thought their piety to be want of courage, and their discourses pedantical, and their reproofs the priest's trade, but of no signification, because they preferred moments before eternity.

3. There in that great assembly shall be seen all those converts, who, upon easier terms, and fewer miracles, and a less experience, and a younger grace, and a seldomer preaching, and more unlikely circumstances, have suffered the work of God to prosper upon their spirits, and have been obedient to the heavenly calling. There shall stand the men of Nineveh, and they "shall stand upright in judgment," for they, at the preaching of one man, in a less space than forty days, returned unto the Lord their God; but we have heard him call all our lives, and, like the deaf adder, stopped our ears against

the voice of God's servants, "charm they never so wisely." There shall appear the men of Capernaum, and the queen of the South, and the men of Berea, and the first-fruits of the Christian church, and the holy martyrs, and shall proclaim to all the world, that it is not impossible to do the work of grace in the midst of all our weaknesses, and accidental disadvantages: and that "the obedience of faith, and the "labour of love," and the contentions of chastity, and the severities of temperance and self-denial, are not such insuperable mountains, but that an honest and sober person may perform them in acceptable degrees, if he have but a ready ear, and a willing mind, and an honest heart: and this scene of honest persons shall make the Divine judgment upon sinners more reasonable, and apparently just, in passing upon them the horrible sentence; for why cannot we as well serve God in peace, as others served him in war? why cannot we love him as well when he treats us sweetly, and gives us health and plenty, honours or fair fortunes, reputation or contentedness, quietness and peace, as others did upon gibbets and under axes, in the hands of tormentors and in hard wildernesses, in nakedness and poverty, in the midst of all evil things, and all sad discomforts? Concerning this no answer can be made.

4. But there is a worse sight than this yet, which, in that great assembly, shall distract our sight, and amaze our spirits. There men shall meet the partners of their sins, and them that drank the round, when they crowned their heads with folly and forgetfulness, and their cups with wine and noises. There shall ye see that poor, perishing soul, whom thou didst tempt to adultery and wantonness, to drunkenness or perjury, to rebellion or an evil interest, by power or craft, by witty discourses or deep dissembling, by scandal or a snare, by evil example or pernicious counsel, by malice or unweariness; and when all this is summed up, and from the variety of its particulars is drawn into an uneasy load and a formidable sum, possibly we may find sights enough to scare all our confidences, and arguments enough to press our evil souls into the sorrows of a most intolerable death. For, however we make now but light accounts and evil proportions concerning it, yet it will be a fearful circumstance of appearing, to see one, or two, or ten, or twenty accursed souls, despairing, miserable, infinitely miserable, roaring and blaspheming, and fearfully cursing thee

as the cause of its eternal sorrows. Thy lust betrayed and rifled her weak and unguarded innocence; thy example made thy servant confident to lie, or to be perjured; thy society brought a third into intemperance and the disguises of a beast: and when thou seest that soul, with whom thou didst sin, dragged into hell, well mayest thou fear to drink the dregs of thy intolerable potion. And most certainly, it is the greatest of evils to destroy a soul, for whom the Lord Jesus died, and to undo that grace which our Lord purchased with so much sweat and blood, pains and a mighty charity. And because very many sins of society and confederation; such are fornication, drunkenness, bribery, simony, rebellion, schism, and many others; it is a hard and a weighty consideration, what shall become of any one of us, who have tempted our brother or sister to sin and death: for though God hath spared our life, and they are dead, and their debt-books are sealed up till the day of account; yet the mischief of our sin is gone before us, and it is like a murder, but more execrable: the soul is dead in trespasses and sins, and sealed up to an eternal sorrow; and thou shalt see, at doomsday, what damnable uncharitableness thou hast done. That soul that cries to those rocks to cover her, if it had not been for thy perpetual temptations, might have followed the Lamb in a white robe; and that poor man, that is clothed with shame and flames of fire, would have shined in glory, but that thou didst force him to be a partner in thy baseness. And who shall pay for this loss? a soul is lost by thy means; thou hast defeated the holy purposes of the Lord's bitter passion by thy impurities; and what shall happen to thee, by whom thy brother dies eternally? Of all the considerations that concern this part of the horrors of doomsday, nothing can be more formidable than this, to such whom it does concern: and truly it concerns so many, and amongst so many, perhaps some persons are so tender, that it might affright their hopes, and discompose their industries and spiteful labours of repentance; but that our most merciful Lord hath, in the midst of all the fearful circumstances of his second coming, interwoven this one comfort relating to this, which, to my sense, seems the most fearful and killing circumstance: "Two shall be grinding at one mill; the one shall be taken and the other left. Two shall be in a bed; the one shall be taken and the other left;" that is, those who are confederate in the same fortunes, and interests,

and actions, may yet have a different sentence: for an early and an active repentance will wash off this account, and put it upon the tables of the cross; and though it ought to make us diligent and careful, eharitable and penitent, hugely penitent, even so long as we live, yet when we shall appear together, there is a mercy that shall there separate us, who sometimes had blended each other in a common crime. Blessed be the mercies of God, who hath so carefully provided a fruitful shower of grace, to refresh the miseries and dangers of the greatest part of mankind. Thomas Aquinas was used to beg of God, that he might never be tempted, from his low fortune, to prelacies and dignities ecclesiastical; and that his mind might never be discomposed or polluted with the love of any creature; and that he might, by some instrument or other, understand the state of his deceased brother; and the story says, that he was heard in all. In him it was a great curiosity, or the passion and impertinences of a useless charity, to search after him, unless he had some other personal concernment than his relation of kindred. But truly, it would concern very many to be solicitous concerning the event of those souls, with whom we have mingled death and sin; for many of those sentences, which have passed and decreed concerning our departed relatives, will concern us dearly, and we are bound in the same bundles, and shall be thrown into the same fires, unless we repent for our own sins, and double our sorrows for their damnation.

5. We may consider that this infinite multitude of men, women, angels, and devils, is not inaffective as a number in Pythagoras's tables, but must needs have influence upon every spirit that shall there appear.—For the transactions of that court are not like orations spoken by a Grecian orator in the circles of his people, heard by them that crowd nearest him, or that sound limited by the circles of air, or the enclosure of a wall; but every thing is represented to every person, and then, let it be considered, when thy shame and secret turpitude, thy midnight revels and secret hypocrisies, thy lustful thoughts and treacherous designs, thy falsehood to God and startings from thy holy promises, thy follies and impieties, shall be laid open before all the world, and that then shall be spoken by the trumpet of an archangel upon the housetop, the highest battlements of heaven, all those filthy words and lewd circumstances, which thou didst act

secretly ; thou wilt find, that thou wilt have reason strangely to be ashamed. All the wise men in the world shall know how vile thou hast been : and then consider, with what confusion of face wouldst thou stand in the presence of a good man and a severe, if peradventure he should suddenly draw thy curtain, and find thee in the sins of shame and lust ; it must be infinitely more, when God and all the angels of heaven and earth, all his holy myriads, and all his redeemed saints, shall stare and wonder at thy impurities and follies. I have read a story, that a young gentleman, being passionately by his mother dissuaded from entering into the severe courses of a religious and single life, broke from her importunity by saying, "Volo servare animam meam ;" "I am resolved by all means to save my soul."— But when he had undertaken a rule with passion, he performed it carelessly and remissly, and was but lukewarm in his religion, and quickly proceeded to a melancholy and wearied spirit, and from thence to a sickness and the neighbourhood of death : but falling into an agony and a fantastic vision, dreamed that he saw himself summoned before God's angry throne, and from thence hurried into a place of torments, where espying his mother, full of scorn she upbraided him with his former answer, and asked him why he did not save his soul by all means, according as he undertook. But when the sick man awaked and recovered, he made his words good indeed, and prayed frequently, and fasted severely, and laboured humbly, and conversed charitably, and mortified himself severely, and refused such secular solaces which other good men received to refresh and sustain their infirmities, and gave no other account to them that asked him but this : If I could not in my ecstasy or dream endure my mother's upbraiding my follies and weak religion, how shall I be able to suffer, that God should redargue me at doomsday, and the angels reproach my lukewarmness, and the devils aggravate my sins, and all the saints of God deride my follies and hypocrisies ? The effect of that man's consideration may serve to actuate a meditation in every one of us ; for we shall all be at that pass, that unless our shame and sorrows be cleansed by a timely repentance, and covered by the robe of Christ, we shall suffer the anger of God, the scorn of saints and angels, and our own shame in the general assembly of all mankind. This argument is most considerable to them,

who are tender of their precious name and sensible of honour ; if they rather would choose death than a disgrace, poverty rather than shame, let them remember that a sinful life will bring them to an intolerable shame at that day, when all that is excellent in heaven and earth shall be summoned as witnesses and parties in a fearful scrutiny.— The sum is this, all that are born of Adam shall appear before God and his Christ, and all the innumerable companies of angels and devils shall be there : and the wicked shall be affrighted with every thing they see ; and there they shall see those good men that taught them the ways of life ; and all those evil persons, whom themselves have tempted into the ways of death ; and those who were converted upon easier terms ; and some of these shall shame the wicked, and some shall curse them, and some shall upbraid them, and all shall amaze them ; and yet this is but the ἀρχὴ τῶν κρίσεων, the beginning of those evils which shall never end, till eternity hath a period ; but concerning this they must first be judged ; and that is the second general consideration, "we must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ," and that is a new state of terrors and affrightments. Christ, who is our Saviour and is our advocate, shall then be our judge ; and that will strangely change our confidences and all the face of things.

2. That is then the state and place of our appearance, "before the judgment-seat of Christ : " for Christ shall rise from the right hand of his Father ; he shall descend towards us, and ride upon a cloud, and shall make himself illustrious by a glorious majesty, and an innumerable retinue, and circumstances of terror and amighty power : and that is that which Origen affirms to be the sign of the Son of man. Remacus de Vaux, in Harpocrate Divino, affirms, that all the Greek and Latin fathers "consentientibus animis asseverant, hoc signo crucem Christi significari," do unanimously affirm, that the representation of the cross is the sign of the Son of man spoken of, Matt. xxiv. 50. And indeed they affirm it very generally, but Origen after this manner is singular, "hoc signum crucis erit, cum Dominus adjudicandum venerit," so the church used to sing, and so it is in the Sibyl's verses :

O lignum felix, in quo Deus ipse pependit ;
Nec te terra capit, sed cæli tecta videbis,
Cum renovata Dei facies ignita micabit.

The sign of that cross is the sign of the Son of man, when the Lord shall come to judg-

ment: and from those words of scripture, "they shall look on him whom they have pierced," it hath been freely entertained, that at the day of judgment Christ shall signify his person by something that related to his passion, his cross, or his wounds, or both. I list not to spin this curious cobweb; but Origen's opinion seems to me more reasonable; and it is more agreeable to the majesty and power of Christ to signify himself with proportions of his glory, rather than of his humility; with effects of his being exalted into heaven, rather than of his poverty and sorrows upon earth: and this is countenanced better by some Greek copies; *τοῦτε φανήσεται σημεῖον τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ*, so it is commonly read, "the sign of the Son of man in heaven;" that is, (say they,) the sign of the Son of man imprinted upon a cloud; but it is in others *τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς*, "the sign of the Son of man who is in the heavens;" not that the sign shall be imprinted on a cloud, or in any part of the heavens, but that he who is now in the heavens, shall, when he comes down, have a sign and signification of his own, that is proper to him who is there glorified, and shall return in glory.— And he disparages the beauty of the sun, who inquires for a rule to know when the sun shines, or the light breaks forth from its chambers of the east; and the Son of man shall need no other signification, but his infinite retinue, and all the angels of God worshipping him, and sitting upon a cloud, and leading the heavenly host, and bringing his elect with him, and being clothed with the robes of majesty, and trampling upon devils, and confounding the wicked, and destroying death: but all these great things shall be invested with such strange circumstances, and annexes of mightiness and divinity, that all the world shall confess the glories of the Lord; and this is sufficiently signified by St. Paul, "We shall all be set before the throne or place of Christ's judicature; for it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God:"* that is, at the day of judgment, when we are placed ready to receive our sentence, all knees shall bow to the holy Jesus, and confess him to be God the Lord; meaning that our Lord's presence shall be such, as to force obeisance from angels and men and devils; and his

address to judgment shall sufficiently declare his person and his office, and his proper glories. This is the greatest scene of majesty that shall be in that day, till the sentence be pronounced; but there goes much before this, which prepares all the world to the expectation and consequent reception of this mighty judge of men and angels.

The majesty of the Judge, and the terrors of the judgment, shall be spoken aloud by the immediate forerunning accidents, which shall be so great violences to the old constitutions of nature, that it shall break her very bones, and disorder her till she be destroyed. Saint Jerome relates out of the Jews' books, that their doctors used to account fifteen days of prodigy immediately before Christ's coming, and to every day assign a wonder, any one of which if we should chance to see in the days of our flesh, it would affright us into the like thoughts which the old world had, when they saw the countries round about them covered with water and the Divine vengeance; or as those poor people near Adria, and the Mediterranean sea, when their houses and cities are entering into graves, and the bowels of the earth rent with convulsions and horrid tremblings. The sea (they say) shall rise fifteen feet above the highest mountains, and thence descend into hollowness and a prodigious drought; and when they are reduced again to their usual proportions, then all the beasts and creeping things, the monsters and the usual inhabitants of the sea, shall be gathered together, and make fearful noises to distract mankind; the birds shall mourn, and change their songs into threnes and sad accents; rivers of fire shall rise from the east to west, and the stars shall be rent into threads of light, and scatter like the beards of comets; then shall be fearful earthquakes, and the rocks shall rend in pieces, the trees shall distil blood, and the mountains and fairest structures shall return unto their primitive dust; the wild beasts shall leave their dens, and come into the companies of men, so that you shall hardly tell how to call them, herds of men, or congregations of beasts; then shall the graves open and give up their dead, and those which are alive in nature and dead in fear, shall be forced from the rocks whither they went to hide them, and from caverns of the earth, where they would fain have been concealed; because their retirements are dismantled, and their rocks are broken into wider ruptures, and admit a strange

* Romans xiv. 10, 11.

light into their secret bowels; and the men being forced abroad into the theatre of mighty horrors, shall run up and down distracted and at their wits' end; and then some men shall die, and some shall be changed, and by this time the elect shall be gathered together from the four quarters of the world, and Christ shall come along with them to judgment.

These signs, although the Jewish doctors reckon them by order and a method, concerning which they had no other revelation (that appears) nor sufficiently credible tradition, yet for the main parts of the things themselves, the Holy Scripture records Christ's own words, and concerning the most terrible of them; the sum of which, as Christ related them, and his apostles recorded and explicated, is this, "the earth shall tremble, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken; the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood;" that is, there shall be strange eclipses of the sun, and fearful aspects in the moon, who when she is troubled, looks red like blood; "the rocks shall rend, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. The heavens shall be rolled up like a parchment, the earth shall be burned with fire, the hills shall be like wax, for there shall go a fire before him, and a mighty tempest shall be stirred round about him:"

*Dies iræ, Dies illa
Solvat sæc'lum in favilla;
Teste David, cum Sibyllâ.*

The trumpet of God shall sound, and the voice of the archangel, that is, of him who is the prince of all that great army of spirits, which shall then attend their Lord, and wait upon and illustrate his glory; and this also is part of that which is called the sign of the Son of man; for the fulfilling of all these predictions, and the preaching of the gospel to all nations, and the conversion of the Jews, and these prodigies, and the address of majesty, make up that sign. The notice of which things some way or other came to the very heathen themselves, who were alarmed into caution and sobriety by these dead remembrancers:

—Sic cùm, compage soluta,
Sæcula tot mundi suprema cœgerit hora,
Antiquum repetens iterum chaos, omnia mistis
Sidera sideribus concurrent: ignea pontum
Astra petent, tellus extendere littora nolit,
Excutietque fretum; fratri contraria Phœbe
Ibit, ————— Totaque discors
Machina divulsæ turbabit fœdera mundi.

Which things when they come to pass, it will be no wonder if men's hearts shall fail them for fear, and their wits be lost with guilt, and their fond hopes destroyed by prodigy and amazement; but it will be an extreme wonder, if the consideration and certain expectation of these things shall not awake our sleeping spirits, and raise us from the death of sin, and the baseness of vice and dishonourable actions, to live soberly and temperately, chastely and justly, humbly and obediently, that is, like persons that believe all this; and such who are not madmen or fools will order their actions according to these notices. For if they do not believe these things, where is their faith? If they do believe them, and sin on, and do as if there were no such thing to come to pass, where is their prudence, and what is their hopes, and where their charity? how do they differ from beasts, save that they are more foolish? for beasts go on and consider not, because they cannot; but we can consider, and will not: we know that strange terrors shall affright us all, and strange deaths and torments shall sieze upon the wicked, and that we cannot escape, and the rocks themselves will not be able to hide us from the fears of those prodigies, which shall come before the day of judgment; and that the mountains, though, when they are broken in pieces, we call upon them to fall upon us, shall not be able to secure us one minute from the present vengeance; and yet we proceed with confidence or carelessness, and consider not, that there is no greater folly in the world than for a man to neglect his greatest interest, and to die for trifles and little regards, and to become miserable for such interests, which are not excusable in a child. He that is youngest, hath not long to live; he that is thirty, forty, or fifty years old, hath spent most of his life, and his dream is almost done, and in a very few months he must be cast into his eternal portion; that is, he must be in an unalterable condition; his final sentence shall pass, according as he shall then be found; and that will be an intolerable condition, when he shall have reason to cry out in the bitterness of his soul, "Eternal woe is to me, who refused to consider, when I might have been saved and secured from this intolerable calamity." But I must descend to consider the particulars and circumstances of the great consideration, "Christ shall be our judge at doomsday."

SERMON II.

PART II.

1. IF we consider the person of the Judge, we first perceive, that he is interested in the injury of the crimes he is to sentence.—“Videbunt quem crucifixerunt,” “they shall look on him whom they have pierced.” It was for thy sins that the Judge did suffer unspeakable pains, as were enough to reconcile all the world to God: the sum and spirit of which pains could not be better understood than by the consequence of his own words, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” meaning that he felt such horrible pure unmingled sorrows, that although his human nature was personally united to the Godhead, yet at that instant he felt no comfortable emanations by sensible perception from the Divinity, but he was so drenched in sorrow, that the Godhead seemed to have forsaken him. Beyond this nothing can be added: but then, that thou hast for thy own particular made all this in vain and ineffective, that Christ thy Lord and Judge should be tormented for nothing, that thou wouldst not accept felicity and pardon, when he purchased them at so dear a price, must needs be an infinite condemnation to such persons. How shalt thou look upon him that fainted and died for love of thee, and thou didst scorn his miraculous mercies? How shall we dare to behold that holy face that brought salvation to us, and we turned away and fell in love with death, and kissed deformity and sins? and yet in the beholding that face consists much of the glories of eternity. All the pains and passions, the sorrows and the groans, the humility and poverty, the labours and the watchings, the prayers and the sermons, the miracles and the prophecies, the whip and the nails, the death and the burial, the shame and the smart, the cross and the grave, of Jesus, shall be laid upon thy score, if thou hast refused the mercies and design of all their holy ends and purposes. And if we remember what a calamity that was, which broke the Jewish nation in pieces, when Christ came to judge them for their murdering him, who was their King and the Prince of life; and consider, that this was but a dark image of the terrors of the day of judgment; we may then apprehend, that there is some strange unspeakable evil that attends them that are guilty of this death and of so much evil to their Lord. Now it is certain,

if thou wilt not be saved by his death, thou art guilty of his death; if thou wilt not suffer him to save thee, thou art guilty of destroying him: and then let it be considered, what is to be expected from that Judge, before whom you stand as his murderer and betrayer. But this is but half of that consideration.

2. Christ may be “crucified again,” and upon a new account “put to an open shame.” For after that Christ had done all this by the direct actions of his priestly office of sacrificing himself for us, he hath also done very many things for us, which are also the fruits of his first love and prosecution of our redemption. I will not instance in the strange arts of mercy that our Lord uses to bring us to live holy lives; but I consider that things are so ordered, and so great a value set upon our souls, since they are the images of God, and redeemed by the blood of the holy Lamb, that the salvation of our souls is reckoned as a part of Christ’s reward, a part of the glorification of his humanity. Every sinner that repents causes joy to Christ, and the joy is so great that it runs over and wets the fair brows and beauteous locks of cherubim and seraphim, and all the angels have a part of that banquet; then it is that our blessed Lord feels the fruits of his holy death, the acceptance of his holy sacrifice, the graciousness of his person, the return of his prayers. For all that Christ did or suffered, and all that he now does as a priest in heaven, is to glorify his Father by bringing souls to God: for this it was that he was born and died, and that he descended from heaven to earth, from life to death, from the cross to the grave; this was the purpose of his resurrection and ascension, of the end and design of all the miracles and graces of God manifested to all the world by him. And now what man is so vile, such a malicious fool, that will refuse to bring joy to his Lord by doing himself the greatest good in the world? They who refuse to do this, are said to “crucify the Lord of life again, and put him to an open shame;” that is, they, as much as in them lies, bring Christ from his glorious joys to the labours of his life, and the shame of his death; they advance his enemies, and refuse to advance the kingdom of their Lord; they put themselves in that state, in which they were when Christ came to die for them; and now that he is in a state that he may rejoice over them, (for he hath done all his share towards it,) every wicked man takes his head from the blessing, and rather chooses that the devil should rejoice in his destruc-

tion, than that his Lord should triumph in his felicity. And now upon the supposition of these premises we may imagine, that it will be an infinite amazement to meet the Lord to be our judge, whose person we have murdered, whose honour we have disparaged, whose purposes we have destroyed, whose joys we have lessened, whose passion we have made ineffectual, and whose love we have trampled under our profane and impious feet.

3. But there is yet a third part of this consideration. As it will be inquired at the day of judgment concerning the dishonours to the person of Christ, so also concerning the profession and institution of Christ, and concerning his poor members; for by these also we make sad reflections upon our Lord. Every man that lives wickedly, disgraces the religion and institution of Jesus, he discourages strangers from entering into it, he weakens the hands of them that are in already, and makes that the adversaries speak reproachfully of the name of Christ; but although it is certain our Lord and Judge will deeply resent all these things, yet there is one thing which he takes more tenderly, and that is, the uncharitableness of men towards his poor; it shall then be upbraided to them by the Judge, that himself was hungry, and they refused to give meat to him that gave them his body and heart-blood to feed them and quench their thirst; that they denied a robe to cover his nakedness, and yet he would have clothed their souls with the robe of his righteousness, lest their souls should be found naked in the day of the Lord's visitation; and all this unkindness is nothing but that evil men were uncharitable to their brethren, they would not feed the hungry, nor give drink to the thirsty, nor clothe the naked, nor relieve their brother's needs, nor forgive his follies, nor cover their shame, nor turn their eyes from delighting in their affronts and evil accidents; this is it which our Lord will take so tenderly, that his brethren, for whom he died, who sucked the paps of his mother, that fed on his body and are nourished with his blood, whom he hath lodged in his heart and entertains in his bosom, the partners of his spirit and co-heirs of his inheritance, that these should be denied relief and suffered to go away ashamed and unpitied; this our blessed Lord will take so ill, that all those who are guilty of this unkindness have no reason to expect the favour of the court.

4. To this if we add the almightiness of the Judge, his infinite wisdom and knowledge of all causes and all persons and all circumstances, that he is infinitely just, inflexibly angry, and impartial in his sentence, there can be nothing added either to the greatness or the requisites of a terrible and an almighty Judge. For who can resist him who is almighty? Who can evade his scrutiny that knows all things? Who can hope for pity of him that is inflexible? Who can think to be exempted when the Judge is righteous and impartial? But in all these annexes of the great Judge, that which I shall now remark, is that indeed which hath terror in it, and that is the severity of our Lord. For then is the day of vengeance and recompenses, and no mercy at all shall be showed but to them that are the sons of mercy; for the other, their portion is such as can be expected from these premises.

1. If we remember the instances of God's severity in this life, in the days of mercy and repentance, in those days when judgment waits upon mercy and receives laws by the rules and measures of pardon, and that for all the rare streams of loving-kindness issuing out of paradise, and refreshing all our fields with a moisture more fruitful than the floods of Nilus, still there are mingled some storms and violences, some fearful instances of the Divine justice; we may more readily expect it will be worse, infinitely worse, at that day when judgment shall ride in triumph, and mercy shall be the accuser of the wicked. But so we read and are commanded to remember, because they are written for our example, that God destroyed at once five cities of the plain and all the country; and Sodom and her sisters are set forth for an example suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Fearful it was when God destroyed at once twenty-three thousand for fornication, and an exterminating angel in one night killed one-hundred and eighty-five thousand of the Assyrians, and the first-born of all the families of Egypt, and for the sin of David in numbering the people, threescore and ten thousand of the people died, and God sent ten tribes into captivity and eternal oblivion and indistinction from a common people for their idolatry. Did not God strike Corah and his company with fire from heaven? and the earth opened and swallowed up the congregation of Abiram? And is not evil come upon all the world for one sin of Adam? Did not

the anger of God break the nation of the Jews all in pieces with judgments so great, that no nation ever suffered the like, because none ever sinned so? And at once it was done that God in anger destroyed all the world, and eight persons only escaped the angry baptism of water, and yet this world is the time of mercy; God hath opened here his magazines, and sent his only Son as the great fountain of it too: here he delights in mercy, and in judgment loves to remember it, and it triumphs over all his works, and God contrives incidents and accidents, chances and designs, occasions and opportunities, for mercy: if therefore now the anger of God make such terrible eruptions upon the wicked people that delight in sin, how great may we suppose that anger to be, how severe that judgment, how terrible that vengeance, how intolerable those inflictions, which God reserves for the full effusion of indignation on the great day of vengeance!

2. We may also guess at it by this; if God, upon all single instances, and in the midst of our sins, before they are come to the full, and sometimes in the beginning of an evil habit, be so fierce in his anger; what can we imagine it to be in that day, when the wicked are to drink the dregs of that horrid potion, and count over all the particulars of their whole treasure of wrath? This is the day of wrath, and God shall reveal or bring forth his righteous judgments.* The expression is taken from Deut. xxxii. 34. "Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures? *ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐκδικήσεως ἀναποδώσω*, I will restore it in the day of vengeance, for the Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants." For so did the Libyan lion that was brought up under discipline, and taught to endure blows, and eat the meat of order and regular provision, and to suffer gentle usages and the familiarities of societies; but once he brake out into his own wildness, "Dedidit pacem subito feritate reversa," and killed two Roman boys: but those that forage on the Libyan mountains, tread down and devour all that they meet or master; and when they have fasted two days, lay up an anger great as is their appetite, and bring certain death to all that can be overcome. God is pleased to compare himself to a lion; and though in this life he hath confined himself with promises and gracious emanations of an infinite goodness, and limits him-

self by conditions and covenants, and suffers himself to be overcome by prayers, and himself hath invented ways of atonement and expiation; yet when he is provoked by our unhandsome and unworthy actions he makes sudden breaches, and tears some of us in pieces; and of others he breaks their bones or affrights their hopes and secular gaieties, and fills their house with mourning and cypress and groans and death: but when this Lion of the tribe of Judah shall appear upon his own mountain, the mountain of the Lord, in his natural dress of majesty, and that justice shall have her chain and golden fetters taken off, then justice shall strike, and mercy shall not hold her hands; she shall strike sore strokes, and pity shall not break the blow; and God shall account with us by minutes, and for words, and for thoughts: and then he shall be severe to mark what is done amiss; and that justice may reign entirely, God shall open the wicked man's treasure, and tell the sums and weigh grains and scruples: *εἰσὶ γὰρ ὡς περ ἀγαθῶν, οὕτω κακῶν παρὰ τῷ θεῷ θησαυροί. ἐν ἡμέρᾳ γὰρ (φησὶν) ἐκδικήσεως ἐσφραγίσθαι τοὺς τῶν κακῶν θησαυροὺς*, said Philo upon the place of Deuteronomy before quoted: as there are treasures of good things, and God hath crowns and sceptres in store for his saints and servants, and coronets for martyrs, and rosaries for virgins, and phials full of prayers, and bottles full of tears, and a register of sighs and penitential groans: so God hath a treasure of wrath and fury, and scourges and scorpions, and then shall be produced the shame of lust, and the malice of envy, and the groans of the oppressed, and the persecutions of the saints, and the cares of covetousness, and the troubles of ambition, and the insolences of traitors, and the violences of rebels, and the rage of anger, and the uneasiness of impatience, and the restlessness of unlawful desires; and by this time the monsters and diseases will be numerous and intolerable, when God's heavy hand shall press the *sanies* and the intolerableness, and the obliquity, and the unreasonableness, the amazement and the disorder, the smart and the sorrow, the guilt and the punishment, out from all our sins, and pour them into one chalice, and mingle them with an infinite wrath, and make the wicked drink off all the vengeance, and force it down their unwilling throats with the violence of devils and accursed spirits.

3. We may guess at the severity of the

* Rom. ii. 5.

Judge, by the lesser strokes of that judgment, which he is pleased to send upon sinners in this world to make them afraid of the horrible pains of doomsday: I mean the torments of an unquiet conscience, the amazement and confusions of some sins and some persons. For I have sometimes seen persons surprised in a base action, and taken in the circumstances of crafty theft and secret injustices, before their excuse was ready; they have changed their colour, their speech hath faltered, their tongue stammered, their eyes did wander and fix no where, till shame made them sink into their hollow eye-pits, to retreat from the images and circumstances of discovery; their wits are lost, their reason useless, the whole order of the soul is discomposed, and they neither see, nor feel, nor think, as they used to do, but they are broken into disorder by a stroke of damnation, and a lesser stripe of hell; but then if you come to observe a guilty and a base murderer, a condemned traitor, and see him harassed, first by an evil conscience, and then pulled in pieces by the hangman's hooks, or broken upon sorrows and the wheel, we may then guess as well as we can in this life) what the pains of that day shall be to accursed souls: but those we shall consider afterwards in their proper scene; now only we are to estimate the severity of our Judge by the intolerableness of an evil conscience: if guilt will make a man despair, and despair will make a man mad, confounded and dissolved in all the regions of his senses and more noble faculties, that he shall neither feel, nor, hear, nor see, anything but spectres and illusions, devils and frightful dreams, and hear noises, and shriek fearfully, and look pale and distracted, like a hopeless man, from the horrors and confusions of a lost battle upon which all his hopes did stand; then the wicked must at the day of judgment expect strange things and fearful, and such which now no language can express, and then no patience can endure.

Πολλοὺς δ' ὀδυρμοῖς καὶ γοοῖς ἀναφειλῆς
Φθίγη. Διὸς γὰρ δυσπαραίτητοι φρένες.

Then only it can truly be said, that he is inflexible and inexorable. No prayers then can move him, no groans can cause him to pity thee; therefore pity thyself in time, that when the Judge comes thou mayest be one of the sons of everlasting mercy, to whom pity belongs as part of thine inheritance; for all these shall without any re-

morse (except his own) be condemned by the horrible sentence.

4. That all may think themselves concerned in this consideration, let us remember that even the righteous and most innocent shall pass through a severe trial. Many of the ancients explicated this severity by the fire of conflagration, which (say they) shall purify those souls at the day of judgment, which in this life have built upon the foundation of hay and stubble, works of folly and false opinions, and states of imperfection. So Saint Austin's doctrine was,* "Hoc agit caminus, alios in sinistra separabit, alios in dextra quodam modo eliquabit: The great fire at doomsday shall throw some into the portion of the left hand, and others shall be purified and represented on the right;" and the same is affirmed by Origen and Lactantius;† and St. Hilary thus expostulates, "Since we are to give an account for every idle word, shall we long for the day of judgment," "in quo est nobis indefessus ille ignis obundans in quo subeunda sunt gravia illa expiandæ peccatis animæ supplicia: wherein we must every one of us pass that unwearied fire, in which those grievous punishments for expiating the soul from sins must be endured; for to such as have been baptized with the Holy Ghost, it remaineth that they be consummated with the fire of judgment." And St. Ambrose adds, that if any be as Peter or as John, they are baptized with this fire, and he that is purged here, hath need to be purged there again: "Illic quoque nos purificet, quando dicat dominus, intrate in requiem meam; Let him also purify us, that every one of us being burned with that flaming sword, not burned up or consumed, we may enter into paradise, and give thanks unto the Lord, who hath brought us into a place of refreshment."‡ This opinion of theirs is in the main of it very uncertain, relying upon the sense of some obscure places of scripture, is only apt to represent the great severity of the Judge at that day; and it hath in it this only certainty, that even the most innocent person hath great need of mercy, and he that hath the greatest cause of confidence, although he runs to no rocks to hide him, yet he runs to the protection of the cross, and hides himself under the shadow of Di-

* In Psalm ciii.

† In Jerem. hom. 13. et in Luc. hom. 14. et Lactantius. lib. vii. Instit. c. xxi. Hilarius in Psal. cxviii, octen. 2. et in Matt. can. 2.

‡ In Psalm cxviii. serm. 3.

vine mercies; and he that shall receive the absolution of the blessed sentence, shall also suffer the terrors of the day, and the fearful circumstances of Christ's coming. The effect of this consideration is this, that "if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the wicked and the sinner appear?" "Quid faciet virgula deserti, ubi concutietur cedrus paradisi? Quid faciet agnus, cum tremittaries? Si cælum fugiat, ubi manebit terra?" said St. Gregory. And if St. Paul, whose conscience accused him not, yet durst not be too confident because he was not hereby justified, but might be found faulty by the severer judgment of his Lord; how shall we appear with all our crimes and evil habits round about us? If there be need of much mercy to the friends of the Judge, then his enemies shall not be able to stand upright in judgment.

5. But the matter is still of more concernment. The Pharisees believed that they were innocent, if they abstained from criminal actions, such as were punishable by the judge; and many Christians think all is well with them, if they abstain from such sins as have a name in the tables of their laws; but because some sins are secret and not discernible to man, others are public but not punished, because they are frequent and perpetual, and without external mischiefs in some instances, and only provocations against God; men think that in their concernments they have no place; and such are jeering, and many instances of wantonness and reveling, doing petty spites, and rudeness, and churlishness, lying and pride: and beyond this, some are very like virtues; as too much gentleness and slackness in government, or too great severity and rigour of animadversion, bitterness in reproof of sinners, uncivil circumstances, imprudent handlings of some criminals, and zeal; nay, there are some vile things, which, through the evil discouragements and worse manners of men, are passed into an artificial and false reputation, and men are accounted wits for talking atheistically, and valiant for being murderers, and wise for deceiving and circumventing our brothers; and many irregularities more, for all which we are safe enough here. But when the day of judgment comes, these shall be called to a severe account, for the Judge is omniscient and knows all things, and his tribunal takes cognizance of all causes, and hath a coercive for all, "all things are naked and open to his eyes," saith

St. Paul;* therefore nothing shall escape for being secret:

"Ἀπανθ' ὁ μακρὸς καὶ ἀναρίθμητος Χρόνος
Φύετ' ἄδηλα—

And all prejudices being laid aside, it shall be considered concerning our evil rules, and false principles; "cum cepero tempus, ego justitias judicabo; when I shall receive the people, I shall judge according unto right;"† so we read: "when we shall receive time, I will judge justices and judgments;" so the vulgar Latin reads it: that is, in the day of the Lord, when time is put into his hand and time shall be no more, he shall judge concerning those judgments which men here make of things below; and the fighting men shall perceive the noise of drunkards and fools that cried him up for daring to kill his brother, to have been evil principles; and then it will be declared by strange effects, that wealth is not the greatest fortune; and ambition was but an ill counsellor; and to lie for a good cause was no piety; and to do evil for the glory of God was but an ill worshipping him; and that good-nature was not well employed, when it spent itself in vicious company and evil compliances; and that piety was not softness and want of courage; and that poverty ought not to have been contemptible; and the cause that is unsuccessful, is not therefore evil: and what is folly here shall be wisdom there; then shall men curse their evil guides, and their accursed superinduced necessities and the evil guises of the world; and then when silence shall be found innocence, and eloquence in many instances condemned as criminal; when the poor shall reign, and generals and tyrants shall lie low in horrible regions; when he that lost all shall find a treasure, and he that spoiled him shall be found naked and spoiled by the destroyer; then we shall find it true, that we ought here to have done what our Judge, our blessed Lord, shall do there, that is, take our measures of good and evil by the severities of the word of God, by the sermons of Christ and the four gospels, and by the epistles of St. Paul, by justice and charity, by the laws of God and the laws of wise princes and republics, by the rules of nature and the just proportions of reason, by the examples of good men and the proverbs of wise men, by severity and the rules of discipline: for then it shall be that truth shall

* Heb. iv. 13. † Psalm lxxiv.

ride in triumph, and the holiness of Christ's sermons shall be manifest to all the world; that the word of God shall be advanced over all the discourses of men, and "wisdom shall be justified by all her children." Then shall be heard those words of an evil and tardy repentance, and the just rewards of folly, "We fools thought their life madness;" but behold, they are justified before the throne of God, and we are miserable forever. Here men think it strange if others will not run into the same excess of riot; but there they will wonder how themselves should be so mad and infinitely unsafe, by being strangely and inexcusably unreasonable. The sum is this, the Judge shall appear clothed with wisdom, and power, and justice, and knowledge, and an impartial spirit, making no separations by the proportions of this world, but by the measures of God; not giving sentence by the principles of our folly and evil customs, but by the severity of his own laws and measures of the Spirit. "Non est judicium Dei; hominum; God does not judge as man judges."

6. Now that the Judge is come thus arrayed, thus prepared, so instructed, let us next consider the circumstances of our appearing and his sentence; and first consider, that men at the day of judgment, that belong not to the portion of life, shall have three sorts of accusers. 1. Christ himself, who is their judge. 2. Their own consciences, whom they have injured and blotted with characters of death and foul dishonour. 3. The devil, their enemy, whom they served.

1. Christ shall be their accuser, not only upon the stock of those direct injuries (which I before reckoned) of crucifying the Lord of life, once and again, &c., but upon the titles of contempt and unworthiness, of unkindness and ingratitude; and the accusation will be nothing else but a plain representation of those artifices and assistances, those bonds and invitations, those constrainings and importunities, which our dear Lord used to us, to make it almost impossible to lie in sin, and necessary to be saved. For it will, it must needs be a fearful exprobration of our unworthiness, when the Judge himself shall bear witness against us, that the wisdom of God himself was strangely employed in bringing us safely to felicity. I shall draw a short scheme, which, although it must needs be infinitely short of what God hath done for us, yet it will be enough to shame us. 1. God did not only

give his Son for an example, and the Son gave himself for a price for us, but both gave the Holy Spirit to assist us in mighty graces, for the verifications of faith, and the entertainments of hope, and the increase and perseverance of charity. 2. God gave to us a new nature, he put another principle into us, a third part, a perfective constitution: we have the Spirit put into us to be a part of us, as properly to produce actions of holy life, as the soul of man in the body does produce the natural. 3. God hath exalted human nature, and made it in the person of Jesus Christ to sit above the highest seat of angels, and the angels are made ministering spirits, ever since their Lord became our brother. 4. Christ hath by a miraculous sacrament given us his body to eat, and his blood to drink; he made ways that we may become all one with him. 5. He hath given us an easy religion, and hath established our future felicity upon natural and pleasant conditions, and we are to be happy hereafter if we suffer God to make us happy here; and things are so ordered, that a man must take more pains to perish than to be happy. 6. God hath found out rare ways to make our prayers acceptable, our weak petitions, the desires of our imperfect souls, to prevail mightily with God; and to lay a holy violence, and an undeniable necessity upon himself: and God will deny us nothing but when we ask of him to do us ill offices, to give us poisons and dangers, and evil nourishment, and temptations; and he that hath given such mighty power to the prayers of his servants, yet will not be moved by those potent and mighty prayers to do any good man an evil turn, or to grant him one mischief; in that only God can deny us. 7. But in all things else, God hath made all the excellent things in heaven and earth to join towards holy and fortunate effects; for he hath appointed an angel to present the prayers of saints,* and Christ makes intercession for us, and the Holy Spirit makes intercession for us with groans unutterable;† and all the holy men in the world pray for all and for every one; and God hath instructed us with scriptures and precedents, and collateral and direct assistances to pray; and he encourages us with divers excellent promises, and parables, and examples, and teaches us what to pray and how, and gives one promise to public prayer, and another

* Rev. viii. 3. † Rom. vii. 26.

to private prayer, and to both the blessing of being heard.

8. Add to this account, that God did heap blessings upon us without order, infinitely, perpetually, and in all instances, when we needed and when we needed not. 9. He heard us when we prayed, giving us all and giving us more than we desired. 10. He desired that we should ask, and yet he hath also prevented our desire. 11. He watched for us, and, at his own charge, sent a whole order of men, whose employment is to minister to our souls: and, if all this had not been enough, he had given us more also. 12. He promised heaven to our obedience, a province for a dish of water, a kingdom for a prayer, satisfaction for desiring it, grace for receiving, and more grace for accepting and using the first. 13. He invited us with gracious words and perfect entertainments. 14. He threatened horrible things to us, if we would not be happy. 15. He hath made strange necessities for us, making our very repentance to be a conjugation of holy actions, and holy times, and a long succession. 16. He hath taken away all excuses from us, he hath called us off from temptation, he bears our charges, he is always beforehand with us in every act of favour, and perpetually slow in striking; and his arrows are unfeathered, and he is so long, first in drawing his sword, and another long while in whetting it, and yet longer in lifting his hand to strike, that, before the blow comes, the man hath repented long, unless he is a fool and impudent; and then God is so glad of an excuse to lay his anger aside, that certainly if, after all this, we refuse life and glory, there is no more to be said; the plain story will condemn us; but the story is very much longer. And as our conscience will represent all our sins to us, so the Judge will represent all his Father's kindnesses, as Nathan did to David, when he was to make the justice of the Divine sentence appear against him. 17. Then it shall be remembered, that the joys of every day's piety would have been a greater pleasure every night, than the remembrance of every night's sin could have been in the morning: 18. That every night, the trouble and labour of the day's virtue would have as much passed, and turned to as very a nothing, as the pleasure of the day's sin; but that they would be infinitely distinguished by the remanent effects. **Ἄν τι πράξεις καλὸν μετὰ πόνου, ὃ μὲν τοῖς αἰχταί, τὸ δὲ καλὸν μένει; ἂν τι ποιήσης αἰσχρὸν μετὰ ἡδονῆς, τὸ μὲν ἡδὺ αἰχταί, τὸ δὲ αἰσχρὸν μένει;* so Musonius

expressed the sense of this inducement; and that this argument would have grown so great by that time we come to die that the certain pleasures, and rare confidences, and holy hopes, of a death-bed, would be a strange felicity to the man, when he remembers he did obey, if they were compared to the fearful expectations of a dying sinner, who feels, by a formidable and affrighting remembrance, that of all his sins, nothing remains but the gains of a miserable eternity. The offering ourselves to God every morning, and the thanksgiving to God every night, hope and fear, shame and desire, the honour of leaving a fair name behind us, and the shame of dying like a fool, every thing indeed in the world, is made to be an argument and inducement to us to invite us to come to God and be saved; and therefore when this and infinitely more shall, by the Judge, be exhibited in sad remembrances, there needs no other sentence; we shall condemn ourselves with a hasty shame, and a fearful confusion, to see how good God hath been to us, and how base we have been to ourselves. Thus Moses is said to accuse the Jews; and thus also he that does accuse, is said to condemn; as Verres was by Cicero, and Claudia by Domitius, her accuser; and the world of impenitent persons by the men of Nineveh, and all by Christ, their judge. I represent the horror of this circumstance to consist in this: besides the reasonableness of the judgment and the certainty of the condemnation, it cannot but be an argument of an intolerable despair to perishing souls, when he that was our advocate all our life, shall, in the day of that appearing, be our accuser and our judge, a party against us, an injured person, in the day of his power and of his wrath, doing execution upon all his own foolish and malicious enemies.

2. Our conscience shall be our accuser: but this signifies but these two things; 1. That we shall be condemned for the evils that we have done, and shall then remember; God, by his power, wiping away the dust from the tables of our memory, and taking off the consideration and the voluntary neglect and rude shufflings of our cases of conscience. For then we shall see things as they are, the evil circumstances and the crooked intentions, the adherent unhand-someness, and the direct crimes; for all things are laid up safely: and though we draw a curtain of a cobweb over them, and sew fig-leaves before our shame, yet God

shall draw away the curtain, and forgetfulness shall be no more; because with a taper in the hand of God, all the corners of our nastiness shall be discovered. And, 2. It signifies this also; that not only the justice of God shall be confessed by us in our own shame and condemnation, but the evil of the sentence shall be received into us, to melt our bowels and to break our hearts in pieces within us, because we are the authors of our own death, and our inhuman hands have torn our souls in pieces. Thus far the horrors are great, and when evil men consider it, it is certain they must be afraid to die. Even they that have lived well, have some sad considerations, and the trembling of humility, and suspicion of themselves. I remember St. Cyprian tells of a good man who, in his agony of death, saw a phantasm of a noble angelical shape, who, frowning and angry, said to him, "Pati timetis, exire non vultis: quid faciam vobis? Ye cannot endure sickness, ye are troubled at the evils of the world, and yet you are loth to die and be quit of them: what shall I do to you?" although this is apt to represent every man's condition more or less, yet concerning persons of wicked lives, it hath in it too many sad degrees of truth; they are impatient of sorrow, and justly fearful of death, because they know not how to comfort themselves in the evil accidents of their lives; and their conscience is too polluted to take death for sanctuary, to hope to have amends made to their condition by the sentence of the day of judgment. Evil and sad is their condition, who cannot be contented here, nor blessed hereafter; whose life is their misery, and their conscience is their enemy, whose grave is their prison, and death their undoing, and the sentence of doomsday the beginning of an intolerable condition.

3. The third sort of accusers are the devils; and they will do it with malicious and evil purposes; the prince of the devils hath *Διάβολος* for one of his chiefest appellatives; "the accuser of the brethren" he is, by his professed malice and employment: and therefore God, who delights that his mercy should triumph, and his goodness prevail over all the malice of men and devils, hath appointed one whose office is *ἐλέγχει τὸν ἀντιλέγοντα* to reprove the accuser, and to resist the enemy, to be a defender of their cause who belong to God. The Holy Spirit is *Παράκλητος*, a defender; the evil spirit is *Διάβολος*, the accuser; and they that in this life belong to one or the other, shall, in the

same proportion, be treated at the day of judgment. The devil shall accuse the brethren, that is, the saints and servants of God, and shall tell concerning their follies and infirmities, the sins of their youth, and the weakness of their age, the imperfect grace and the long schedule of omissions of duty, their scruples and their fears, their diffidences and pusillanimity, and all those things which themselves, by strict examination, find themselves guilty of and have confessed, all their shame and the matter of their sorrows, their evil intentions and their little plots, their carnal confidences and too fond adherencies to the things of this world, their indulgence and easiness of government, their wild joys and freer meals, their loss of time, and their too forward and apt compliances, their trifling arrests and little peevishnesses, the mixtures of the world with the things of the Spirit, and all the incidences of humanity, he will bring forth and aggravate them by the circumstance of ingratitude, and the breach of promise, and the evacuating of their holy purposes, and breaking their resolutions, and rifling their vows; and all these things being drawn into an entire representation, and the bills clogged by numbers, will make the best men in the world seem foul and unhandsome, and stained with the characters of death and evil dishonour. But for these there is appointed a defender; the Holy Spirit that maketh intercession for us, shall then also interpose, and against all these things shall oppose the passion of our blessed Lord, and upon all their defects shall cast the robe of his righteousness; and the sins of their youth shall not prevail so much as the repentance of their age; and their omissions be excused by probable intervening causes, and their little escapes shall appear single and in disunion, because they were always kept asunder by penitential prayers and sighings, and their seldom returns of sin by their daily watchfulness, and their often infirmities by the sincerity of their souls, and their scruples by their zeal, and their passions by their love, and all by the mercies of God and the sacrifice which their Judge offered, and the Holy Spirit made effective by daily graces and assistances.— These, therefore, infallibly go to the portion of the right hand, because the Lord our God shall answer for them. "But as for the wicked, it is not so with them;" for although the plain story of their life be to them a sad condemnation, yet what will be answered when it shall be told concerning

them, that they despised God's mercies, and feared not his angry judgments; that they regarded not his word, and loved not his excellencies; that they were not persuaded by his promises, nor affrighted by his threatenings; that they neither would accept his government nor his blessings; that all the sad stories that ever happened in both the worlds (in all which himself did escape till the day of his death, and was not concerned in them, save only that he was called upon by every one of them, which he ever heard, or saw, or was told of, to repentance, that all these) were sent to him in vain? But cannot the accuser truly say to the Judge concerning such persons, "They were thine by creation, but mine by their own choice; thou didst redeem them indeed, but they sold themselves to me for a trifle, or for an unsatisfying interest: thou diedst for them, but they obeyed my commandments: I gave them nothing, I promised them nothing but the filthy pleasure of a night, or the joys of madness, or the delights of a disease: I never hanged upon the cross three long hours for them, nor endured the labours of a poor life thirty-three years together for their interest: only when they were thine by the merit of thy death, they quickly became mine by the demerit of their ingratitude: and when thou hadst clothed their soul with thy robe, and adorned them by thy graces, we stripped them naked as their shame, and only put on a robe of darkness, and they thought themselves secure, and went dancing to their grave, like a drunkard to a fight, or a fly unto a candle; and, therefore, they that did partake with us in our faults, must divide with us in our portion and fearful interest?" This is a sad story, because it ends in death, and there is nothing to abate or lessen the calamity. It concerns us, therefore, to consider in time, that he that tempts us will accuse us, and what he calls pleasant now, he shall then say was nothing, and all the gains that now invite earthly souls and mean persons to vanity, were nothing but the seeds of folly, and the harvest is pain, and sorrow, and shame eternal. But then, since this horror proceeds upon the account of so many accusers, God hath put it into our power, by a timely accusation of ourselves in the tribunal of the court Christian, to prevent all the arts of aggravation, which, at doomsday, shall load foolish and undiscerning souls. He that accuses himself of his crimes here, means to forsake them, and looks upon them on all sides, and

spies out his deformity, and is taught to hate them; he is instructed and prayed for, he prevents the anger of God, and defeats the devil's malice; and by making shame the instrument of repentance, he takes away the sting, and makes that to be his medicine, which otherwise would be his death. And concerning this exercise, I shall only add what the patriarch of Alexandria told an old religious person in his hermitage. Having asked him what he found in that desert, he was answered only this, "*Indesinenter culpare et judicare meipsum*;"—To judge and condemn myself perpetually, that is the employment of my solitude."—The patriarch answered, "*Non est alia via*; There is no other way."—by accusing ourselves we shall make the devil's malice useless, and our own consciences clear, and be reconciled to the Judge by the severities of an early repentance, and then we need to fear no accusers.

SERMON III.

PART III.

3. It remains that we consider the sentence itself, "We must receive according to what we have done in the body, whether it be good or bad." "*Judicaturus Domino lugubre mundus immugiet, et tribus ad tribum pectora ferient. Potentissimi quondam reges nudo latere palpitantur*:" so St. Jerome meditates concerning the terror of this consideration; "The whole world shall groan when the judge comes to give his sentence, tribe and tribe shall knock their sides together; and through the naked breasts of the most mighty kings, you shall see their hearts beat with fearful tremblings." "*Tunc Aristotelis argumenta parum proderunt, cum venerit filius pauperulæ quæstuarie judicare orbem terræ*." Nothing shall then be worth owning, or the means of obtaining mercy, but a holy conscience; "all the human craft and trifling subtilties shall be useless when the son of a poor maid shall sit Judge over all the world." When the prophet Joel was describing the formidable accidents in the day of the Lord's judgment, and the fearful sentence of an angry Judge, he was not able to express it, but stammered like a child, or an amazed, imperfect person,

“A. A. diei, quia prope est dies Domini.”* It is not sense at first; he was so amazed he knew not what to say; and the Spirit of God was pleased to let that sign remain, like Agamemnon’s sorrow for the death of Iphigenia, nothing could describe it but a veil; it must be hidden and supposed; and the stammering tongue, that is full of fear, can best speak that terror, which will make all the world to cry, and shriek, and speak fearful accents, and significations of an infinite sorrow and amazement.

But so it is, there are two great days, in which the fate of all the world is transacted. This life is man’s day, in which man does what he pleases, and God holds his peace. Man destroys his brother, and destroys himself, and confounds governments, and raises armies, and attempts to sin, and delights in it, and drinks drunk, and forgets his sorrow, and heaps up great estates, and raises a family, and a name in the annals, and makes others fear him, and introduces new religions, and confounds the old, and changeth articles as his interest requires, and all this while God is silent, save that he is loud and clamorous with his holy precepts, and over-rules the event; but leaves the desires of men to their own choice, and their course of life such as they generally choose. But then God shall have his day too; the day of the Lord shall come, in which he shall speak, and no man shall answer; he shall speak in the voice of thunder and fearful noises, and man shall do no more as he please, but must suffer as he hath deserved. When Zedekiah reigned in Jerusalem, and persecuted the prophets, and destroyed the interests of religion, and put Jeremy into the dungeon, God held his peace, save only that he warned him of the danger, and told him of the disorder; but it was Zedekiah’s day, and he was permitted to his pleasure; but when he was led in chains to Babylon, and his eyes were put out with burning basins and horrible circles of reflected fires, then was God’s day, and his voice was the accent of a fearful anger, that broke him all in pieces. It will be all our cases, unless we hear God speak now, and do his work, and serve his interest, and bear ourselves in our just proportions, that is, as such, the very end of whose being and all our faculties is, to serve God, and do justice and charities to our brother. For if we do the work of God in our own day, we shall receive an infinite mercy in the day of

the Lord. But what that is, is now to be inquired.

“What we have done in the body.” But certainly this is the greatest terror of all. The thunders and the fires, the earthquakes and the trumpets, the brightness of holy angels, and the horror of accursed spirits, the voice of the archangel (who is the prince of the heavenly host) and the majesty of the Judge, in whose service all that army stands girt with holiness and obedience, all those strange circumstances which have been already reckoned, and all those others which we cannot understand, are but little preparatories and umbrages of this fearful circumstance. All this amazing majesty and formidable preparatories, are for the passing of an eternal sentence upon us, according to what we have done in the body. Woe and alas? and God help us. All mankind is an enemy to God, his nature is accursed, and his manners are depraved. It is with the nature of man, and with all his manners, as Philemon said of the nature of foxes:

— Ἀλώπηξ, ἣ μὲν εἰρων τῆ φύσει,
Ἡ δ’ ἀβήκαστος. ἀλλ’ ἐὰν τρισημῖρας
Ἀλώπηκας τις συναγάγοι, μιαν φύσιν
Ἀπᾶς ἀπίστας ὀφεται—

“Every fox is crafty and mischievous, and if you gather a whole herd of them, there is not a good natured beast amongst them all.”—So it is with man; by nature he is the child of wrath, and by his manners he is the child of the devil; we call Christian, and we dishonour our Lord; and we are brethren, but we oppress and murder one another; it is a great degree of sanctity now-a-days, not to be so wicked as the worst of men; and we live at the rate, as if the best of men did design to themselves an easier condemnation; and as if the generality of men considered not concerning the degrees of death, but did believe that in hell no man shall perceive any ease or refreshment in being tormented with a slower fire. For consider what we do in the body; twelve or fourteen years pass, before we choose good or bad; and of that which remains, above half is spent in sleep and the needs of nature; for the other half, it is divided as the stag was when the beasts went a hunting, the lion hath five parts of six. The business of the world takes so much of our remaining portion, that religion and the service of God have not much time left that can be spared; and of that which can, if we consider how much is allowed to crafty arts of cozenage, to oppression and ambition, to greedy desires and

*Joel i.

avaricious prosecutions, to the vanities of our youth and the proper sins of every age, to the mere idleness of man and doing nothing, to his fantastic imaginations of greatness and pleasures, of great and little devices, of impertinent lawsuits, and uncharitable treatings of our brother; it will be intolerable when we consider that we are to stand or fall eternally according to what we have done in the body. Gather it all together, and set it before thy eyes; alms and prayers are the sum of all thy good. Were thy prayers made in fear and holiness, with passion and desire? Were they not made unwillingly, weakly, and wanderingly, and abated with sins in the greatest part of thy life? Didst thou pray with the same affection and labour as thou didst purchase thy estate? Have thine alms been more than thy oppressions, and according to thy power? and by what means didst thou judge concerning it? How much of our time was spent in that? and how much of our estate was spent in this? But let us go one step farther:—How many of us love our enemies? or pray for and do good to them that persecute and affront us? or overcome evil with good, or turn the face again to them that strike us, rather than be revenged? or suffer ourselves to be spoiled or robbed without contention or uncharitable courses? or lose our interest rather than lose our charity? And yet by these precepts we shall be judged. I instance but once more. Our blessed Saviour spake a hard saying: “Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof at the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”* And upon this account may every one, weeping and trembling, say with Job, “Quid faciam, cum resurrexerit ad judicandum Deus? What shall I do, when the Lord shall come to judgment?”†—Of every idle word—O blessed God! what shall become of them who love to prate continually, to tell tales, to detract, to slander, to backbite, to praise themselves, to undervalue others, to compare, to raise divisions, to boast? Τίς δὲ φρουρήσει τὸ ζάναθρονον τὸ ἀδύνατον, οὐ κάμπτων γόνυ; “Who shall be able to stand upright, not bowing the knee with the intolerable load of the sins of his tongue?” If of every idle word we must give account, what shall we do for those malicious words, that dishonour God or do despite to our brother? Remember how

often we have tempted our brother or a silly woman to sin and death! How often have we pleaded for unjust interests, or by our wit have cozened an easy and a believing person, or given ill sentences, or disputed others into false persuasions! Did we never call good evil, or evil good? Did we never say to others, Thy cause is right, when nothing made it right but favour and money, a false advocate or a covetous judge? Πᾶν ῥῆμα ἄργον, so said Christ, “every idle word,” that is, πᾶν ῥῆμα κενόν, so St. Paul uses it, “every false word,”* every lie shall be called to judgment; or, as some copies read it, πᾶν ῥῆμα πονηρὸν, “every wicked word,” shall be called to judgment. For by ἄργον, “idle words,” are not meant words that are unprofitable or unwise, for fools and silly persons speak most of those, and have the least accounts to make; but by *vain* the Jews usually understood *false*; and to give their mind to vanity, or to speak vanity, is all one as to mind or speak falsehoods with malicious and evil purposes. But if every idle word, that is, every vain and lying word, shall be called to judgment, what shall become of men that blaspheme God, or their rulers, or princes of the people, or their parents? that dishonour the religion, and disgrace the ministers? that corrupt justice and pervert judgment? that preach evil doctrines, or declare perverse sentences? that take God’s holy name in vain, or dishonour the name of God by trifling and frequent swearings; that holy name, by which we hope to be saved, and which all the angels of God fall down to and worship? These things are to be considered, for by our own words we stand or fall, that is, as in human judgments the confession of the party, and the contradiction of himself, or the failing in the circumstances of his story, are the confidences or presumptions of law, by which judges give sentence; so shall our words be, not only the means of declaring a secret sentence, but a certain instrument of being absolved or condemned. But upon these premises we see what reason we have to fear the sentence of that day, who have sinned with our tongues so often, so continually, that if there were no other actions to be accounted for, we have enough in this account to make us die; and yet have committed so many evil actions, that, if our words were wholly forgotten, we have infinite reason to fear concerning the event of

*Matt. xii. 36. † Job xxxi. 14.

*Eph. v. 6.

that horrible sentence. The effect of which consideration is this, that we set a guard before our lips, and watch over our actions with a care, equal to that fear which shall be at doomsday, when we are to pass our sad accounts. But I have some considerations to interpose.

1. But (that the sadness of this may a little be relieved, and our endeavours be encouraged to a timely care and repentance) consider that this great sentence, although it shall pass concerning little things, yet it shall not pass by little portions, but by general measures; not by the little errors of one day, but by the great proportions of our life; for God takes not notice of the infirmities of honest persons that always endeavour to avoid every sin, but in little intervening instances are surprised; but he judges us by single actions, if they are great, and of evil effects; and by little small instances, if they be habitual. No man can take care concerning every minute; and therefore concerning it Christ will not pass sentence but by the discernible portions of our time, by human actions, by things of choice and deliberation, and by general precepts of care and watchfulness, this sentence shall be exacted. 2. The sentence of that day shall be passed, not by the proportions of an angel, but by the measures of a man; the first follies are not unpardonable, but may be recovered; and the second are dangerous, and the third are more fatal; but nothing is unpardonable but perseverance in evil courses. 3. The last judgment shall be transacted by the same principles by which we are guided here; not by strange and secret propositions, or by the fancies of men, or by the subtilities of useless distinctions, or evil persuasions; not by the scruples of the credulous, or the interest of sects, nor the proverbs of prejudice, nor the uncertain definitions of them that give laws to subjects by expounding the decrees of princes; but by the plain rules of justice, by the ten commandments, by the first apprehensions of conscience, by the plain rules of Scripture, and the rules of an honest mind, and a certain justice. So that by this restraint and limit of the final sentence, we are secured we shall not fall by scruple or by ignorance, by interest or by faction, by false persuasions of others, or invincible prejudice of our own, but we shall stand or fall by plain and easy propositions, by chastity or uncleanness, by justice or injustice, by robbery or restitution: and of this we have a great testimony by

our Judge and Lord himself; "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye loose shall be loosed there;" that is, you shall stand or fall according to the sermons of the gospel; as the ministers of the word are commanded to preach, so ye must live here, and so ye must be judged hereafter; ye must not look for that sentence by secret decrees or obscure doctrines, but by plain precepts and certain rules. But there are yet some more degrees of mercy. 4. That sentence shall pass upon us not after the measures of nature, and possibilities, and utmost extents, but by the mercies of the covenant; we shall be judged as Christians rather than as men, that is, as persons to whom much is pardoned, and much is pitied, and many things are (not accidentally, but consequently) indulged, and great helps are ministered, and many remedies supplied, and some mercies extra-regularly conveyed, and their hopes enlarged upon the stock of an infinite mercy, that hath no bounds but our needs, our capacities, and our proportions to glory. 5. The sentence is to be given by him that once died for us, and does now pray for us, and perpetually intercedes; and upon souls that he loves, and in the salvation of which himself hath a great interest and increase of joy. And now upon these premises we may dare to consider what the sentence itself shall be, that shall never be reversed, but shall last for ever and ever.

"Whether it be good or bad." I cannot discourse now the greatness of the good or bad, so far (I mean) as is revealed to us; the considerations are too long to be crowded into the end of a sermon; only in general: 1. If it be good, it is greater than all the good of this world, and every man's share then, in every instant of his blessed eternity, is greater than all the pleasures of mankind in one heap.

*"Α τοῖς θεοῖς ἀθροῦς εὐχεται τυχῆν,
Τῆς ἀθανάσιος κρείττον οὐδὲν εὐχεται."*

"A man can never wish for any thing greater than this immortality," said Posidippus. 2. To which I add this one consideration, that the portion of the good at the day of sentence shall be so great, that after all the labours of our life, and suffering persecutions, and enduring affronts, and the labour of love, and the continual fears and cares of the whole duration and abode, it rewards it all, and gives infinitely more; "Non sunt condignæ passiones hujus sæculi," all the torments and evils of this world are not to

be estimated with the joys of the blessed; it is the gift of God; a donative beyond the *δωρίων*, the military stipend, it is beyond our work and beyond our wages, and beyond the promise and beyond our thoughts, and above our understandings, and above the highest heavens, it is a participation of the joys of God, and of the inheritance of the Judge himself.

ὄχι ἔστιν πλάσασθ', οὐδ' ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἐφικτὸν
Ἡμετέροισι, ἢ χειρὶ λαβεῖν ἤπερτε μεγίστη
Πειθούς ἀνθρώποισιν ἀμαξίτος εἰς φρένα πίπτει.*

It is a day of recompenses, in which all our sorrows shall be turned into joys, our persecutions into a crown, the cross into a throne, poverty into the riches of God; loss, and affronts, and inconveniences, and death, into sceptres, and hymns, and rejoicings, and hallelujahs, and such great things which are fit for us to hope, but too great for us to discourse of, while we see as in a glass darkly and imperfectly. And he that chooses to do an evil rather than suffer one, shall find it but an ill exchange that he deferred his little to change for a great one. I remember that a servant in the old comedy did choose to venture the lash rather than to feel a present inconvenience, "*Quia illud aderat malum, istud aberat longius: illud erat præsens, huic erat diecula:*" but this will be but an ill account, when the rods shall for the delay be turned into scorpions, and from easy shall become intolerable. Better it is to suffer here, and to stay till the day of restitution for the good and the holy portion; for it will recompense both for the suffering and the stay.

But how if the portion be bad? It shall be bad to the greatest part of mankind; that is a fearful consideration; the greatest part of men and women shall dwell in the portion of devils to eternal ages. So that these portions are like the prophet's figs in the vision: the good are the best that ever were; and the worst are so bad that worse cannot be imagined. For though in hell the accursed souls shall have no worse than they have deserved, and there are not there over-running measures, as there are in heaven, and therefore that the joys of heaven are infinitely greater joys than the pains of hell are great pains, yet even these are a full measure to a full iniquity, pain above patience, sorrows without ease, amazement without consideration, despair without the intervals of a little hope, indignation without the pos-

session of any good; there dwells envy and confusion, disorder and sad remembrances, perpetual woes and continual shriekings, uneasiness and all the evils of the soul. But if we will represent it in some orderly circumstances, we may consider,

1. That here, all the trouble of our spirits are little participations of a disorderly passion; a man desires earnestly but he hath not, or he envies because another hath something besides him, and he is troubled at the want of one when at the same time he hath a hundred good things; and yet ambition and envy, impatience and confusion, covetousness and lust, are all of them very great torments; but these shall be in essence and abstracted beings; the spirit of envy, and the spirit of sorrow; devils, that shall inflict all the whole nature of the evil and pour it into the minds of accursed men, where it shall sit without abatement; for he that envies there, envies not for the eminence of another that sits a little above him, and excels him in some one good, but he shall envy for all; because the saints have all and they have none; therefore all their passions are integral, abstracted, perfect passions: and all the sorrow in the world at this time, is but a portion of sorrow; every man hath his share, and yet besides that which all sad men have, there is a great deal of sorrow which they have not, and all the devils' portion besides that; but in hell, they shall have the whole passion of sorrow in every one, just as the whole body of the sun is seen by every one in the same horizon: and he that is in darkness enjoys it not by parts, but the whole darkness is the portion of one as well as of another. If this consideration be not too metaphysical, I am sure it is very sad, and it relies upon this; that as in heaven there are some holy spirits whose crown is all love; and some in which the brightest jewel is understanding; some are purity and some are holiness to the Lord: so in the regions of sorrow, evil and sorrow have an essence and proper being, and are set there to be suffered entirely by every undone man, that dies there for ever.

2. The evils of this world are material and bodily; the pressing of a shoulder, or the straining of a joint; the dislocation of a bone, or the extending of an artery; a bruise in the flesh, or the pinching of the skin; a hot liver, or a sickly stomach; and then the mind is troubled because its instrument is ill at ease: but all the proper troubles of this life are nothing but the effects of an un-

*Xenoph.

easy body, or an abused fancy; and therefore can be no bigger than a blow or a cozenage, than a wound or a dream; only the trouble increases as the soul works it; and if it makes reflex acts, and begins the evil upon its own account, then it multiplies and doubles, because the proper scene of grief is opened, and sorrow peeps through the corners of the soul. But in those regions and days of sorrow, when the soul shall be no more depending upon the body, but the perfect principle of all its actions, the actions are quick and the perceptions brisk; the passions are extreme and the motions are spiritual; the pains are like the horrors of a devil and the groans of an evil spirit; not slow like the motions of a heavy foot, or a loaded arm, but quick as an angel's wing, active as lightning; and a grief *then*, is nothing like a grief *now*; and the words of a man's tongue which are fitted to the uses of this world, are as unfit to signify the evils of the next, as person, and nature, and hand, and motion, and passion, are to represent the effects of the Divine attributes, actions, and subsistence.

3. The evil portion of the next world is so great, that God did not create or design it in the first intention of things, and production of essences; he made the kingdom of heaven ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου, from the foundation of the world; for so it is observable that Christ shall say to the sheep at his right hand, "Receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world;"* but to the goats and accursed spirits, he speaks of no such primitive and original design; it was accidental and a consequent to horrid crimes, that God was forced to invent and to after-create that place of torments.

4. And when God did create and prepare that place, he did not at all intend it for man; it was prepared for the devil and his angels, so saith the Judge himself, "Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, † ἡ ἠτοίμασεν ὁ πατήρ μου τῷ διαβόλῳ, which my father prepared for the devil," so some copies read it: God intended it not for man, but man would imitate the devil's pride, and listen to the whispers of an evil spirit, and follow his temptations, and rebel against his Maker; and then God also, against his first design, resolved to throw such persons into that place that was prepared for the devil: for so great was the love of God to mankind, that

he prepared joys infinite and never-ceasing for man, before he had created him; but he did not predetermine him to any evil; but when he was forced to it by man's malice, he doing what God forbade him, God cast him thither where he never intended him; but it was not man's portion: he designed it not at first, and at last also he invited him to repentance; and when nothing could do it, he threw man into another's portion, because he would not accept of what was designed to be his own.

5. The evil portion shall be continual without intermission of evil; no days of rest, no nights of sleep, no ease from labour, no periods of the stroke nor taking off the hand, no intervals between blow and blow; but a continued stroke, which neither shortens the life, nor introduces a brawny patience, or the toleration of an ox, but it is the same in every instant, and great as the first stroke of lightning; the smart is as great for ever as at the first change, from the rest of the grave to the flames of that horrible burning. The church of Rome amongst some other strange opinions hath inserted this one into her public offices; that the perishing souls in hell may have sometimes remission and refreshment, like the fits of an intermitting fever: for so it is in the Roman missal printed at Paris, 1626, in the mass for the dead; "Ut quia de ejus vitæ qualitate diffidimus, etsi plenam veniam anima ipsius obtinere non potest, saltem vel inter ipsa tormenta quæ forsân patitur, refrigerium de abundantia miserationum tuarum sentiat:" and something like this is that of Prudentius,*

Sunt et spiritibus sæpe nocentibus
Pœnarum celebres sub Styge feræ, &c.

The evil spirits have ease of their pain, and he names their holiday, that when the resurrection of our Lord from the grave is celebrated:

Marcent supplicis Tartara mitibus,
Exultatque sui carceris otio
Umbrarum populus liber ab ignibus:
Nec fervent solito flumina sulphure.

They then thought, that when the paschal taper burned, the flames of hell could not burn till the holy wax was spent: but because this is a fancy without ground or revelation, and is against the analogy of all those expressions of our Lord, "where the worm dieth not, and the fire is never quenched," and divers others, it is sufficient to have noted it without further consideration; the pains of hell have no rest, no drop of

* Matt. xxv. 34. † Ver. 41.

* Hymn v. lib. Cathemer.

water is allowed to cool the tongue, there is no advocate to plead for them, no mercy belongs to their portion, but fearful wrath and continual burnings.

6. And yet this is not the worst of it; for as it is continual during its abode, so its abode is for ever; it is continual and eternal. Tertullian speaks of something otherwise, "Pro magnitudine cruciatus non diurni, verum sempiterni;" not continual, or the pains of every day, but such which shall last for ever. But Lactantius is more plain in this affair: "the same Divine fire by the same power and force shall burn the wicked, and shall repair instantly whatsoever of the body it does consume: "Ac sibi ipsi æternum pabulum subministrabit,—and shall make for itself an eternal fuel."

Vernibus et flammis et discruciatibus ævum
Immortale dedit, senio ne pœna periret
Non pereunte animâ.—

So Prudentius, eternal worms, and unextinguished flames, and immortal punishment, are prepared for the ever never dying souls of wicked men. Origen is charged by the ancient churches for saying, that after a long time the devils and the accursed souls shall be restored to the kingdom of God, and that after a long time again they shall be restored to their state, and so it was from their fall, and shall be for ever; and, it may be, that might be the meaning of Tertullian's expression of "cruciatus non diurni sed sempiterni." Epiphanius charges not the opinion upon Origen, and yet he was free enough in his animadversion and reproof of him; but St. Austin did, and confuted the opinion in his books De Civitate Dei. However, Origen was not the first that said, the pains of the damned should cease; Justin Martyr in his dialogue with Triphon expresses it thus: "Neither do I say that all the souls do die, for that indeed would be to the wicked again unlooked for: what then? The souls of the godly in a better place, of the wicked in a worse, do tarry the time of judgment; then they that are worthy shall never die again, but those that are designed to punishment, shall abide so long as God please to have them to live and to be punished." But I observe that the primitive doctors were very willing to believe, that the mercy of God would find out a period to the torment of accursed souls; but such a period, which should be nothing but eternal destruction, called by the Scripture, "the second death:" only Origen (as I observed) is charged by St. Austin to have said, they

shall return into joys, and back again to hell by an eternal revolution. But concerning the death of a wicked soul, and its being broken into pieces with fearful torments, and consumed by the wrath of God, they had entertained some different fancies very early in the church, as their sentences are collected by St. Jerome at the end of his commentaries upon Isaiah. And Ireneus* disputes it largely, "that they that are unthankful to God in this short life, and obey him not, shall never have an eternal duration of life in the ages to come," "sed ipse se privat in sæculum sæculi perseverantia,—he deprives his soul of living to eternal ages;" for he supposes an immortal duration not to be natural to the soul, but a gift of God, which he can take away, and did take away from Adam, and restored it again in Christ to them that believe in him and obey him: for the other; they shall be raised again to suffer shame, and fearful torments; and according to the degree of their sins, so shall be continued in their sorrows; and some shall die, and some shall not die: the devil, and the beast, and they that were marked with his character, these St. John saith "shall be tormented for ever and ever;" he does not say so of all, but of some certain great criminals; ὅπως ἂν Θεὸς θέλη, all so long as God please,—some for ever and ever, and some not so severely; and whereas the general sentence is given to all wicked persons, to all on the left hand, to go into everlasting fire; it is answered, that the fire indeed is everlasting, but not all that enters into it is everlasting, but only the devils for whom it was prepared, and others, more mighty criminals (according as St. John intimates): though also *everlasting* signifies only to the end of its proper period.

Concerning this doctrine of theirs, so severe, and yet so moderated, there is less to be objected than against the supposed fancy of Origen; for it is a strange consideration to suppose an eternal torment to those to whom it was never threatened, to those who never heard of Christ, to those that lived probably well, to heathens of good lives, to ignorants and untaught people, to people surprised in a single crime, to men that die young in their natural follies and foolish lusts, to them that fall in a sudden gaiety and excessive joy, to all alike; to all infinite and eternal, even to unwarned people; and that this should be inflicted by God who infinitely

* Lib. ii. cap. 65.

loves his creatures, who died for them, who pardons easily, and pities readily, and excuses much, and delights in our being saved, and would not have us to die, and takes little things in exchange for great: it is certain that God's mercies are infinite, and it is also certain that the matter of eternal torments cannot truly be understood; and when the schoolmen go about to reconcile the Divine justice to that severity, and consider why God punishes eternally a temporal sin, or a state of evil, they speak variously, and uncertainly, and unsatisfyingly. But, that in this question we may separate the certain from the uncertain:

1. It is certain that the torments of hell shall certainly last as long as the soul lasts; for eternal and everlasting can signify no less but to the end of that duration, to the perfect end of the period which it signifies. So Sodom and Gomorrah, when God rained down hell from heaven upon the earth, (as Salvain's expression is,) they are said "to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire:" that is, of a fire that consumed them finally, and they never were restored: and so the accursed souls shall suffer torments till they be consumed; who because they are immortal either naturally or by gift, shall be tormented for ever, or till God shall take from them the life that he restored to them on purpose to give them a capacity of being miserable, and the best that they can expect is to despair of all good, to suffer the wrath of God, never to come to any minute of felicity, or of a tolerable state, and to be held in pain till God be weary of striking. This is the gentlest sentence of some of the old doctors.

But, 2. The generality of Christians have been taught to believe worse things yet concerning them; and the words of our blessed Lord are *κόλασις αἰώνιος*, eternal affliction or smiting;

*Nec mortis pœnas mora altera finiet hujus,
Horaque erit tantis ultima nulla malis.*

And St. John,* who well knew the mind of his Lord, saith, "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night:" that is, their torment is continual, and it is eternal. Their second death shall be but a dying to all felicity; for so death is taken in Scripture: Adam died when he ate the forbidden fruit; that is, he was liable to sickness and sorrows, and pain and dissolution of soul and

body: and to be miserable is the worse death of the two; they shall see the eternal felicity of the saints, but they shall never taste of the holy chalice. Those joys shall indeed be for ever and ever; for immortality is part of their reward, and on them the second death shall have no power: but the wicked shall be tormented horribly and insufferably, till "death and hell be thrown into the lake of fire, and shall be no more: which is the second death."* But that they may not imagine that this second death shall be the end of their pains, St. John speaks expressly what that is, Rev. xxi. 8. "The fearful and unbelieving, the abominable and the murderers, the whoremongers and sorcerers, the idolators and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death:" no dying there, but a being tormented, burning in a lake of fire, that is the second death. For if life be reckoned a blessing, then to be destitute of all blessing is to have no life; and therefore to be intolerably miserable is this second death, that is, death eternal.

3. And yet if God should deal with man hereafter more mercifully and proportionably to his weak nature than he does to angels, and as he admits him to repentance here, so in hell also to a period of his smart, even when he keeps the angels in pain for ever; yet he will never admit him to favour, he shall be tormented beyond all the measure of human ages, and be destroyed for ever and ever.

It concerns us all, who hear and believe these things, to do as our blessed Lord will do before the day of his coming; he will call and convert the Jews and strangers: conversion to God is the best preparatory to doomsday: and it concerns all them who are in the neighbourhood and fringes of the flames of hell, that is, in the state of sin, quickly to arise from the danger, and shake the burning coals of our flesh, lest it consume the marrow and the bones: "Exuenda est velociter de incendio sarcina, priusquam flammis supervenientibus concremetur. Nemo diu tutus est, periculo proximus," saith St. Cyprian; "No man is safe long, that is so near to danger;" for suddenly the change will come in which the judge shall be called to judgment, and no man to plead for him, unless a good conscience be his advocate; and the rich shall be naked as a condemned criminal to execution; and there

* Rev. xiv. 11.

* Rev. xx. 14.

shall be no regard of princes or of nobles, and the differences of men's account shall be forgotten, and no distinction remaining but of good or bad, sheep and goats, blessed and accursed souls. Among the wonders of the day of judgment, our blessed Saviour reckons it, that men shall be marrying and giving in marriage, γαμοῖντες καὶ ἐγγαμίζοντες, marrying and cross-marrying, that is, raising families and lasting greatness and huge estates; when the world is to end so quickly, and the gains of a rich purchase so very a trifle, but no trifling danger; a thing that can give no security to our souls, but much hazards and a great charge. More reasonable it is, that we despise the world and lay up for heaven, that we heap up treasures by giving alms, and make friends of unrighteous Mammon; but at no hand to enter into a state of life, that is all the way a hazard to the main interest, and at the best, an increase of the particular charge. Every degree of riches, every degree of greatness, every ambitious employment, every great fortune, every eminency above our brother, is a charge to the accounts of the last day. He that lives temperately and charitably, whose employment is religion, whose affections are fear and love, whose desires are after heaven, and do not dwell below; that man can long and pray for the hastening of the coming of the day of the Lord. He that does not really desire and long for that day, either is in a very ill condition, or does not understand that he is in a good. I will not be so severe in this meditation as to forbid any man to laugh, that believes himself shall be called to so severe a judgment; yet St. Jerome said it, "Coram cælo et terrâ rationem reddemus totius nostræ vitæ; et tu rides? Heaven and earth shall see all the follies and baseness of thy life: and dost thou laugh?" That we may, but we have not reason to laugh loudly and frequently if we consider things wisely, and as we are concerned: but if we do, yet "præsentis temporis ita est agenda lætitia, ut sequentis iudicii amaritudo nunquam recedat a memoriâ:—so laugh here that you may not forget your danger, lest you weep for ever." He that thinks most seriously and most frequently of this fearful appearance, will find that it is better staying for his joys till this sentence be past; for then he shall perceive, whether he hath reason or no. In the mean time wonder not, that God, who loves mankind so well, should punish him so severely: for

therefore the evil fall into an accursed portion, because they despised that which God most loves, his Son and his mercies, his graces and his holy Spirit; and they that do all this, have cause to complain of nothing but their own follies; and they shall feel the accursed consequents then, when they shall see the Judge sit above them, angry and severe, inexorable and terrible; under them, an intolerable hell; within them, their consciences clamorous and diseased: without them, all the world on fire; on the right hand, those men glorified whom they persecuted or despised; on the left hand, the devils accusing; for this is the day of the Lord's terror, and who is able to abide it?

Seu vigilo intentus studiis, seu dormio, semper Judicis extremi nostras tuba personet aures.

SERMON IV.

THE RETURN OF PRAYERS; OR, THE CONDITIONS OF A PREVAILING PRAYER.

Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth.—John ix. 31.

I KNOW not which is the greater wonder, either that prayer, which is a duty so easy and facile, so ready and apted to the powers, and skill, and opportunities, of every man, should have so great effects, and be productive of such mighty blessings; or, that we should be so unwilling to use so easy an instrument of procuring so much good. The first declares God's goodness, but this publishes man's folly and weakness, who finds in himself so much difficulty to perform a condition so easy and full of advantage. But the order of this felicity is knotted like the foldings of a serpent; all those parts of easiness, which invite us to the duty, are become like the joints of a bulrush, not bendings, but consolidations and stiffenings: the very facility becomes its objection, and in every of its stages, we make or find a huge uneasiness. At first, we do not know what to ask; and when we do, then we find difficulty to bring our will to desire it; and when that is instructed and kept in awe, it mingles interest, and confounds the purposes; and when it is forced to ask honestly and severely, then it wills so coldly, that God hates the prayer; and, if it desires

ferently, it sometimes turns that into passion, and that passion breaks into murmurs or unquietness; or, if that be avoided, the indifference cools into death, or the fire burns violently and is quickly spent; our desires are dull as a rock, or fugitive as lightning; either we ask ill things earnestly, or good things remissly; we either court our own danger, or are not zealous for our real safety; or, if we be right in our matter, or earnest in our affections, and lasting in our abode, yet we miss in the manner; and either we ask for evil ends, or without religious and awful apprehensions; or we rest on the words and signification of the prayer, and never take care to pass on to action; or else we sacrifice in the company of Korah, being partners of a schism, or a rebellion in religion; or we bring unhallowed censers, our hearts send up to God an unholy smoke, a cloud from the fires of lust; and either the flames of lust or rage, of wine or revenge, kindle the beast that is laid upon the altar; or we bring swine's flesh, or a dog's neck; whereas God never accepts or delights in a prayer, unless it be for a holy thing, to a lawful end, presented unto him upon the wings of zeal and love, of religious sorrow, or religious joy; by sanctified lips, and pure hands, and a sincere heart. It must be the prayer of a gracious man; and he is only gracious before God, and acceptable and effective in his prayer, whose life is holy, and whose prayer is holy; for both these are necessary ingredients to the constitution of a prevailing prayer; there is a holiness peculiar to the man, and a holiness peculiar to the prayer, that must adorn the prayer, before it can be united to the intercession of the holy Jesus, in which union alone our prayers can be prevailing.

"God heareth not sinners."—So the blind man in the text, and confidently, "this we know:" he had reason, indeed, for his confidence; it was a proverbial saying, and every where recorded in their Scriptures, which were read in the synagogues every sabbath-day. "For what is the hope of the hypocrite? (saith Job.) Will God hear his cry, when trouble cometh upon him?"* No, he will not. "For if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me,"† said David; and so said the Spirit of the Lord by the Son of David: "When distress and anguish come upon you, then shall they

call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me,"* And Isaiah, "When you spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when you make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood."† And again, "When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they will offer burnt-offerings and oblations, I will not accept them. For they have loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet, therefore the Lord will not accept them; he will now remember their iniquity, and visit their sins."‡ Upon these and many other authorities,§ it grew into a proverb; "Deus non exaudit peccatores." It was a known case, and an established rule in religion; "Wicked persons are neither fit to pray for themselves, nor for others."

Which proposition let us first consider in the sense of that purpose which the blind man spoke it in, and then in the utmost extent of it, as its analogy and equal reason go forth upon us and our necessities. The man was cured of his blindness, and being examined concerning him that did it, named and gloried in his physician; but the spiteful Pharisees bid him give glory to God, and defy the minister; for God indeed was good, but he wrought that cure by a wicked hand. No, says he, this is impossible. If this man were a sinner and a false prophet, (for in that instance the accusation was intended,) God would not hear his prayer, and work miracles by him in verification of a lie.—A false prophet could not work true miracles: this hath received its diminution, when the case was changed; for at that time, when Christ preached, miracles were the only or the great verification of any new revelation; and, therefore, it proceeding from an almighty God, must needs be the testimony of a Divine truth; and if it could have been brought for a lie, there could not then have been sufficient instruction given to mankind, to prevent their belief of false prophets and lying doctrines. But when Christ proved his doctrine by miracles, that no enemy of his did ever do so great before or after him; then he also told, that, after him, his friends should do greater, and his enemies should do some, but they were fewer, and very inconsiderable; and, therefore, could have in them no unavoidable cause of deception,

* Prov. i. 28. † Isa. i. 15. ‡ Jer. xiv. 12, 10. § Vide etiam, Psalm xxxiv. 6. Micah iii. 4. 1 Pet. iii. 12.

* Job xxvii. 9. † Psalm lxxvi. 18.

because they were discovered by a prophecy, and caution was given against them by him that did greater miracles, and yet ought to have been believed, if he had done but one; because against him there had been no caution, but many prophecies creating such expectations concerning him, which he verified by his great works. So that, in this sense of working miracles, though it was infinitely true that the blind man said, then when he said it, yet after that the case was altered; and sinners, magicians, astrologers, witches, heretics, simoniacs, and wicked persons of other instances, have done miracles, and God hath heard sinners, and wrought his own works by their hands, or suffered the devil to do his works under their pretences; and many at the day of judgment shall plead that they have done miracles in Christ's name, and yet they shall be rejected; Christ knows them not, and their portion shall be with dogs, and goats, and unbelievers.

There is, in this case, only this difference; that they who do miracles in opposition to Christ, do them by the power of the devil, to whom it is permitted to do such things, which we think miracles; and that is all one as though they were; but the danger of them is none at all, but to them that will not believe him that did greater miracles, and prophesied of these less, and gave warning of their attending danger, and was confirmed to be a true teacher by voices from heaven, and by the resurrection of his body after a three days' burial: so that to these the proposition still remains true, "God hears not sinners;" God does not work those miracles; but concerning sinning Christians, God, in this sense, and towards the purposes of miracles, does hear them, and hath wrought miracles by them, for they do them "in the name of Christ," and therefore Christ said, "cannot easily speak ill of him;" and although they either prevaricate in their lives, or in superinduced doctrines, yet, because the miracles are a verification of the religion, not of the opinion, of the power of truth of Christ, not of the veracity of the man, God hath heard such persons many times, whom men have long since, and to this day, called heretics; such were the Novatians and Arians; for to the heathens they could only prove their religion, by which they stood distinguished from them; but we find not that they wrought miracles among the Christians, or to verify their superstructures and private opinions.

But, besides this, yet we may also by such means arrest the forwardness of our judgments and condemnations of persons disagreeing in their opinions from us; for those persons, whose faith God confirmed by miracles, was an entire faith; and although they might have false opinions, or mistaken explications of true opinions, either inartificial, or misunderstood, yet we have reason to believe their faith to be entire; for that which God would have the heathen to believe, and to that purpose proved it by a miracle, himself intended to accept, first to a holy life, and then to glory. The false opinion should burn, and themselves escape. One thing more is here very considerable, that in this very instance of working miracles, God was so very careful not to hear sinners or permit sinners, till he had prevented all dangers to good and innocent persons, that the case of Christ and his apostles working miracles, was so clearly separated and remarked by the finger of God, and distinguished from the impostures and pretences of all the many antichrists that appeared in Palestine, Cyprus, Crete, Syria, and the vicinage, that there were but very few Christians that, with hearty persuasions, fell away from Christ, *Θάρττον τις τοις ἀπὸ Χριστοῦ μεταδιδάξει*, said Galen, "It is not easy to teach anew him that hath been taught by Christ:" and St. Austin tells a story of an unbelieving man, that, being troubled that his wife was a Christian, went to the oracle to ask by what means he should alter her persuasion; but he was answered, "it could never be done, he might as well imprint characters upon the face of a torrent, or a rapid river, or himself fly in the air, as alter the persuasion of a hearty and an honest Christian;" I would to God it were so now in all instances, and that it were so hard to draw men from the severities of a holy life, as of old they could be cozened, disputed, or forced out of their faith. Some men are vexed with hypocrisy, and then their hypocrisy was punished with infidelity and wretchless spirit. Demas, and Simon Magus, and Ecebolius, and the lapsed confessors, are instances of human craft or human weakness; but they are scarce a number that are remarked, in ancient story, to have fallen from Christianity by direct persuasions, or the efficacy of abusing arguments and discourses. The reason of it is the truth of the text: God did so avoid hearing sinners in this affair, that he never permitted them to do any miracles, so as to

do any mischief to the souls of good men; and therefore it is said, the enemies of Christ came, "in the power of signs and wonders, able to deceive (if it were possible) even the very elect;" but that was not possible; without their faults it could not be; the elect were sufficiently strengthened, and the evidence of Christ's being heard of God, and that none of his enemies were heard of God to any dangerous effect, was so great, that if any Christian had apostatized or fallen away by direct persuasion, it was like the sin of a falling angel, of so direct a malice, that he never could repent, and God never would pardon him, as St. Paul twice remarks in his epistle to the Hebrews. The result of this discourse is the first sense and explication of the words, "God heareth not sinners," viz. in that in which they are sinners: a sinner in his manners may be heard in his prayer, in order to the confirmation of his faith; but if he be a sinner in his faith, God hears him not at all in that wherein he sins; for God is truth, and cannot confirm a lie, and whenever he permitted the devil to do it, he secured the interest of his elect, that is, of all that believe in him and love him, "lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting."

2. That which yet concerns us more nearly is, that "God heareth not sinners;" that is, if we be not good men, our prayers will do us no good: we shall be in the condition of them that never pray at all. The prayers of a wicked man are like the breath of corrupted lungs; God turns away from such unwholesome breathings. But that I may reduce this necessary doctrine to a method, I shall consider that there are some persons whose prayers are sins, and some others whose prayers are ineffectual: some are such who do not pray lawfully; they sin when they pray, while they remain in that state and evil condition; others are such who do not obtain what they pray for, and yet their prayer is not a direct sin: the prayer of the first is a direct abomination, the prayer of the second is hindered; the first is corrupted by a direct state of sin, the latter by some intervening imperfection and unhandsome circumstance of action; and in proportion to these, it is required, 1. that he be in a state and possibility of acceptance; and, 2. that the prayer itself be in a proper disposition. 1. Therefore we shall consider, what are those conditions, which are required in every person that prays, the want of which makes the prayer to be a

sin? 2. What are the conditions of a good man's prayer, the absence of which makes that even his prayer return empty? 3. What degrees and circumstances of piety are required to make a man fit to be an intercessor for others, both with holiness in himself and effect to them he prays for? And, 4. as an appendix to these considerations, I shall add the proper indices and signification, by which we may make a judgment whether God hath heard our prayers or no.

1. Whosoever prays to God while he is in a state or in the affection to sin, his prayer is an abomination to God. This was a truth so believed by all nations of the world, that in all religions they ever appointed baptisms and ceremonial expiations, to cleanse the persons, before they presented themselves in their holy offices. "Deorum templa cum adire disponitis, ab omni vos labe puros, lautos, castissimosque præstatitis," said Arnobius to the gentiles: "When you address yourselves to the temples of your God, you keep yourselves chaste, and clean, and spotless." They washed their hands and wore white garments, they refused to touch a dead body, they avoided a spot upon their clothes as they avoided a wound upon their head, *μη καθαρόν γὰρ καθαροῦ ἐφάπτεσθαι μή οὐ θεμιτὸν ἦ*. That was the religious ground they went upon; "an impure thing ought not to touch that which is holy," much less to approach the Prince of purities; and this was the sense of the old world in their lustrations, and of the Jews in their preparatory baptisms; they washed their hands to signify, that they should cleanse them from all iniquity, and keep them pure from blood and rapine; they washed their garments; but that intended, they should not be spotted with the flesh; and their follies consisted in this, that they did not look to the bottom of their lavatories; they did not see through the veil of their ceremonies. "Flagitiis omnibus inquinati veniunt ad precandum, et se pie sacrificasse opinantur, si cutem laverint, tanquam libidines intra pectus inclusas ulla amnis abluit, aut ulla maria purificent," said Lactantius; "They come to their prayers dressed round about with wickedness, *ut quercus hederâ*; and think God will accept their offering, if their skin be washed; as if a river could purify their lustful souls, or a sea take off their guilt." But David reconciles the ceremony with the mystery, "I will wash my hands, I will wash them in innocency, and so I

will go to thine altar." Hæ sunt veræ munditiæ, (saith Tertullian,) non quas plerique superstitione curant ad omnem orationem, etiam cum lavacro totius corporis aquam sumentes. "This is the true purification, not that which most men do, superstitiously cleansing their hands and washing when they go to prayers, but cleansing the soul from all impiety, and leaving every affection to sin; then they come pure to God:" and this is it which the apostle also signifies, having translated the gentile and Jewish ceremony into the spirituality of the gospel, "I will therefore, that men pray every where, levantes puras manus, lifting up clean hands," so it is in the vulgar Latin; *δαίσιος χεῖρας*, so it is in the Greek, *holy hands*; that is the purity that God looks for upon them that lift up their hands to him in prayer: and this very thing is founded upon the natural constitution of things, and their essential proportion to each other.

1. It is an act of profanation for any unholy person to handle holy things and holy offices. For if God was ever careful to put all holy things into cancels, and immerse them with acts and laws and cautions of separation; and the very sanctification of them was nothing else but the solemn separating them from common usages, that himself might be distinguished from men by actions of propriety; it is naturally certain, he that would be differenced from common things, would be infinitely divided from things that are wicked. If things that are lawful may yet be unholy in this sense, much more are unlawful things most unholy in all senses. If God will not admit of that which is beside religion, he will less endure that which is against religion. And therefore if a common man must not serve at the altar, how shall he abide a wicked man to stand there? No: he will not endure him, but he will cast him and his prayer into the separation of an infinite and eternal distance. "Sic profanatis sacris peritura Troja perdidit primum Deos;—So Troy entered into ruin when their prayers became unholy, and they profaned the rites of their religion."

2. A wicked person, while he remains in that condition, is not the natural object of pity: "Ἐλεός ἐστι λύπη ὡς ἐπὶ ἀναξίως κακοπαθοῦντι," said Zeno; "Mercy is a sorrow or a trouble at that misery, which falls upon a person which deserved it not." And so Aristotle defines it, it is *λύπη*

τις ἐπὶ τῷ πονηρῷ τοῦ ἀναξίως τυγχάνειν, "when we see the person deserves a better fortune," or is disposed to a fairer entreaty, then we naturally pity him: and Sinon pleaded for pity to the Trojans, saying,

—Miserere animi non digna ferentis.

For who pitieth the fears of a base man, who hath treacherously murdered his friend? or who will lend a friendly sigh, when he sees a traitor to his country pass forth through the execrable gates of cities? and when any circumstance of baseness, that is, any thing that takes off the excuse of infirmity, does accompany a sin, (such as are ingratitude, perjury, perseverance, delight, malice, treachery,) then every man scorns the criminal, and God delights and rejoices in, and laughs at the calamity of such a person. When Vitellius with his hands bound behind him, his imperial robe rent, and with a dejected countenance and an ill name, was led to execution, every man cursed him, but no man wept. "Deformitas exitus misericordiam abstulerat," saith Tacitus, "The filthiness of his life and death took away pity." So it is with us in our prayers; while we love our sin, we must nurse all its children; and when we roar in our lustful beds, and groan with the whips of an exterminating angel, chastising those *ὑπογαστήριος ἐπιδυμίας*, (as Aretas calls them,) "the lusts of the lower belly," wantonness, and its mother intemperance, we feel the price of our sin, that which God foretold to be their issues, that which he threatened us withal, and that which is the natural consequence, and its certain expectation, that which we delighted in, and chose, even then when we refused God, and threw away felicity, and hated virtue. For punishment is but the latter part of sin; it is not a new thing and distinct from it: or if we will kiss the *hyæna*, or clip the lamia about the neck, we have as certainly chosen the tail, and its venomous embraces, as the face and lip. Every man that sins against God and loves it, or, which is all one, continues in it, for by interpretation that is love, hath all the circumstances of unworthiness towards God; he is unthankful, and a breaker of his vows, and a despiser of his mercies, and impudent against his judgments; he is false to his profession, false to his faith; he is an unfriendly person, and useth him barbarously, who hath treated him with an affection not less than infinite; and if any man does half so much evil, and so unhandsomely to a man, we stone him with stones and curses,

with reproach, and an unrelenting scorn. And how then shall such a person hope that God should pity him? For God better understands, and deeper resents, and more essentially hates, and more severely exacts, the circumstances and degrees of baseness, than we can do; and therefore proportionably scorns the person and derides the calamity. Is not unthankfulness to God a greater baseness, and unworthiness than unthankfulness to our patron? And is not he as sensible of it, and more than we? These things are more than words; and therefore if no man pities a base person, let us remember, that no man is so base in any thing as in his unhandsome demeanour towards God. Do we not profess ourselves his servants, and yet serve the devil? Do we not live upon God's provision, and yet stand or work at the command of lust or avarice, human regards and little interests of the world? We call him Father when we desire our portion, and yet spend it in the society of all his enemies. In short, let our actions to God and their circumstances be supposed to be done towards men, and we should scorn ourselves; and how then can we expect God should not scorn us, and reject our prayer, when we have done all the dishonour to him, and with all the unhandsomeness in the world? Take heed lest we fall into a condition of evil, in which it shall be said, you may thank yourselves; and be infinitely afraid lest at the same time we be in a condition of person, in which God will upbraid our unworthiness, and scorn our persons, and rejoice in our calamity. The first is intolerable, the second is irremediable; the first proclaims our folly, and the second declares God's final justice; in the first there is no comfort, in the latter there is no remedy; that therefore makes us miserable, and this renders us desperate.

3. This great truth is further manifested by the necessary and convenient appendages of prayer required, or advised, or recommended, in Holy Scripture. For why is fasting prescribed together with prayer? For "neither if we eat, are we the better; neither if we eat not, are we the worse;" and God does not delight in that service, the first, second, and third part of which is nothing but pain and self-affliction. But therefore fasting is useful with prayer, because it is a penal duty, and an action of repentance; for then only God hears sinners, when they enter first into the gates of repentance, and proceed in all the regions

of sorrow and carefulness; therefore we are commanded to fast, that we may pray with more spirituality, and with repentance; that is, without the loads of meat, and without the loads of sin. Of the same consideration it is that alms are prescribed together with prayer, because it is a part of that charity, without which our souls are enemies to all that, which ought to be equally valued with our own lives. But besides this, we may easily observe what special indecencies there are, which besides the general malignity and demerit, are special deleteries and hinderances to our prayers, by irreconciling the person of him that prays.

1. The first is unmercifulness. *Ὅυτε ἐξ ἱεροῦ βωπιόν, οὔτε ἐξ ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως ἀραυρητίον τὸν θεόν*, said one in Stobæus; and they were well joined together: "He that takes mercy from a man, is like him that takes an altar from the temple;" the temple is of no use without an altar, and the man cannot pray without mercy; and there are infinite of prayers sent forth by men which God never attends to, but as to so many sins, because the men live in a course of rapine, or tyranny, or oppression, or uncharitableness, or something that is most contrary to God, because it is unmerciful. Remember, that God sometimes puts thee into some images of his own relation. We beg of God for mercy, and our brother begs of us for pity: and therefore let us deal equally with God and all the world. I see myself fall by a too frequent infirmity, and still I beg for pardon, and hope for pity: thy brother that offends thee, he hopes so too, and would fain have the same measure, and would be as glad thou wouldst pardon him, as thou wouldst rejoice in thy own forgiveness. I am troubled when God rejects my prayer, or, instead of hearing my petition, sends a judgment: is not thy tenant, or thy servant, or thy client, so to thee? Does not he tremble at thy frown, and is of an uncertain soul till thou speakest kindly unto him, and observe thy looks as he watches the colour of the bean coming from the box of sentence, life or death depending on it? When he begs of thee for mercy, his passion is greater, his necessities more pungent, his apprehension more brisk and sensitive, his case dressed with the circumstance of pity, and thou thyself canst better feel his condition than thou dost usually perceive the earnestness of thy own prayers to God; and if thou regardest not thy brother whom thou seest, whose case thou feelest, whose cir-

cumstances can afflict thee, whose passion is dressed to thy fancy, and proportioned to thy capacity,—how shall God regard thy distant prayer, or be melted with thy cold desire, or softened with thy dry story, or moved by thy unrepenting soul? If I be sad, I seek for comfort, and go to God and to the ministry of his creatures for it; and is it not just in God to stop his own fountains, and seal the cisterns and little emanations of the creatures from thee, who shuttest thy hand, and shuttest thy eye, and twistest thy bowels against thy brother, who would as fain be comforted as thou? It is a strange illicial passion that so hardens a man's bowels, that nothing proceeds from him but the name of his own disease; a "miserere mei Deus," a prayer to God for pity upon him, that will not show pity to others. We are troubled when God through severity breaks our bones, and hardens his face against us; but we think our poor brother is made of iron, and not of flesh and blood, as we are. God hath bound mercy upon us by the iron bands of necessity, and though God's mercy is the measure of his justice, yet justice is the measure of our mercy; and as we do to others, it shall be done to us, even in the matter of pardon and of bounty, of gentleness and remission, of bearing each other's burdens, and fair interpretation; "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us," so we pray. The final sentence in this affair is recorded by St. James, "He that shows no mercy, shall have justice without mercy:"* as thy poor brother hath groaned under thy cruelty and ungentle nature without remedy, so shalt thou before the throne of God; thou shalt pray, and plead, and call, and cry, and beg again, and in the midst of thy despairing noises be carried into the regions of sorrow, which never did and never shall feel a mercy. "God never can hear the prayers of an unmerciful man."

2. Lust and uncleanness are a direct enemy to the praying man, an obstruction to his prayers; for this is not only a profanation, but a direct sacrilege; it defiles a temple to the ground; it takes from a man all affection to spiritual things, and mingles his very soul with the things of the world; it makes his understanding low, and his reasonings cheap and foolish, and it destroys his confidence, and all his manly hopes; it

makes his spirit light, effeminate, and fantastic, and dissolves his attention; and makes his mind so to disaffect all the objects of his desires, that when he prays he is as uneasy as an impaled person, or a condemned criminal upon the hook or wheel; and it hath in it this evil quality, that a lustful person cannot pray heartily against his sin; he cannot desire his cure, for his will is contradictory to his collect, and he would not that God should hear the words of his prayer, which he poor man never intended. For no crime so seizes upon the will as that; some sins steal an affection, or obey a temptation, or secure an interest, or work by the way of understanding, but lust seizes directly upon the will, for the devil knows well that the lusts of the body are soon cured; the uneasiness that dwells there, is a disease very tolerable, and every degree of patience can pass under it. But therefore the devil seizes upon the will, and that is it that makes adulteries and all the species of uncleanness; and lust grows so hard a cure, because the formality of it is, that it will not be cured; the will loves it, and so long as it does, God cannot love the man; for God is the prince of purities, and the Son of God is the king of virgins, and the Holy Spirit is all love, and that is all purity and all spirituality; and therefore the prayer of an adulterer, or an unclean person, is like the sacrifices to Moloch, or the rights of Flora, "ubi Cato spectator esse non potuit." A good man will not endure them; much less will God entertain such reekings of the Dead sea and clouds of Sodom. For so an impure vapour,—begotten of the slime of the earth by the fevers and adulterous heats of an intemperate summer-sun, striving by the ladder of a mountain to climb up to heaven, and rolling into various figures by an uneasy, unfixed revolution, and stopped at the middle region of the air, being thrown from his pride and attempt of passing towards the seat of the stars,—turns into an unwholesome flame, and like the breath of hell is confined into a prison of darkness, and a cloud, till it breaks into diseases, plagues, and mildews, stink and blastings; so is the prayer of an unchaste person; it strives to climb the battlements of heaven, but because it is a flame of sulphur, salt, and bitumen, and was kindled in the dishonourable regions below, derived from hell, and contrary to God, it cannot pass forth to the element of love, but ends in barrenness and murmur, fantastic

* James ii. 13.

expectations, and trifling imaginative confidences; and they at last end in sorrows and despair. Every state of sin is against the possibility of a man's being accepted; but these have a proper venom against the graciousness of the person, and the power of the prayer. God can never accept an unholy prayer, and a wicked man can never send forth any other; the waters pass through impure aqueducts and channels of brimstone, and therefore may end in brimstone and fire, but never in forgiveness, and the blessings of an eternal charity.

Henceforth, therefore, never any more wonder that men pray so seldom; there are few that feel the relish, and are enticed with the deliciousness, and refreshed with the comforts, and instructed with the sanctity, and acquainted with the secrets of a holy prayer; but cease also to wonder, that of those few that say many prayers, so few find any return of any at all. To make up a good and a lawful prayer, there must be charity, with all its daughters, "alms, forgiveness," not judging uncharitably; there must be purity of spirit, that is, purity of intention; and there must be purity of the body and soul, that is, the cleanness of chastity; and there must be no vice remaining, no affection to sin; for he that brings his body to God, and hath left his will in the power of any sin, offers to God the calves of his lips, but not a whole burnt-offering; a lame oblation, but not a "reasonable sacrifice; and therefore their portion shall be amongst them whose prayers were never recorded in the book of life, whose tears God never put into his bottle, whose desires shall remain ineffectual to eternal ages. Take heed you do not lose your prayers; "for by them ye hope to have eternal life;" and let any of you, whose conscience is most religious and tender, consider what condition that man is in, that hath not said his prayers in thirty or forty years together; and that is the true state of him, who hath lived so long in the course of an unsanctified life; in all that while he never said one prayer that did him any good, but they ought to be reckoned to him upon the account of his sins. He that is in the affection, or in the habit, or in the state, of any one sin whatsoever, is at such distance from and contrariety to God, that he provokes God to anger in every prayer he makes: and then add but this consideration; that prayer is the great sum of our religion, it is the effect, and the exercise, and the

beginning, and the promoter, of all graces, and the consummation and perfection of many; and all those persons who pretend towards heaven, and yet are not experienced in the secrets of religion, they reckon their piety, and account their hopes, only upon the stock of a few prayers. It may be they pray twice every day, it may be thrice, and blessed be God for it; so far is very well; but if it shall be remembered and considered, that this course of piety is so far from warranting any one course of sin, that any one habitual and cherished sin destroys the effect of all that piety, we shall see there is reason to account this to be one of those great arguments, with which God hath so bound the duty of holy living upon us, that without a holy life we cannot in any sense be happy, or have the effect of one prayer. But if we be returning and repenting sinners, God delights to hear, because he delights to save us:

—Si precibus (dixerunt) numina justis
Victa remollescunt—

When a man is holy, then God is gracious, and a holy life is the best, and it is a continual prayer; and repentance is the best argument to move God to mercy, because it is the instrument to unite our prayers to the intercession of the holy Jesus.

SERMON V.

PART II.

AFTER these evidences of Scripture, and reason derived from its analogy, there will be less necessity to take any particular notices of those little objections, which are usually made from the experience of the success and prosperities of evil persons. For true it is, there is in the world a generation of men that pray long and loud, and ask for vile things, such which they ought to fear, and pray against, and yet they are heard; "the fat upon earth eat and worship:"* but if these men ask things hurtful and sinful, it is certain God hears them not in mercy: they pray to God as despairing Saul did to his armour-bearer, "Sta super me et interfice me;" "Stand upon me and kill me; and he that obeyed his voice did him dishonour, and sinned against the head

* Psal. xxii. 29.

of his king, and his own life. And the vicious persons of old prayed to Laverna,

— Pulchra Laverna,

Da mihi fallere, da justum sanctumque videri,
Noctem peccatis et fraudibus objice nubem.

“Give me a prosperous robbery, a rich prey, and secret escape, let me become rich, with thieving, and still be accounted holy:” for every sort of men hath some religion or other, by the measures of which they proportion their lives and their prayers; now, as the Holy Spirit of God, teaching us to pray, makes us like himself, in order to a holy and an effective prayer; and no man prays well, but he that prays by the Spirit of God, “the Spirit of holiness,” and he that prays with the spirit must be made like to the Spirit; he is first sanctified and made holy, and then made fervent, and then his prayer ascends beyond the clouds: first, he is renewed in the spirit of his mind, and then he is inflamed with holy fires, and guided by a bright star; first purified and then lightened, then burning and shining: so is every man in every of his prayers; he is always like the Spirit by which he prays: if he be a lustful person, he prays with a lustful spirit; if he does not pray for it, he cannot heartily pray against it: if he be a tyrant or a usurper, a robber or a murderer, he hath his Laverna too, by which all his desires are guided, and his prayers directed, and his petitions furnished: he cannot pray against that spirit that possesses him, and hath seized upon his will and affections: if he be filled with a lying spirit, and be conformed to it in the image of his mind, he will be also in the expressions of his prayer, and the sense of his soul. Since, therefore, no prayer can be good but that which is taught by the Spirit of grace, none holy but the man whom God’s Spirit hath sanctified, and therefore none heard to any purposes of blessing, which the Holy Ghost does not make for us (for he makes intercession for the saints; the Spirit of Christ is the precentor or *rector chori*, the master of the choir); it follows that all other prayers, being made with an evil spirit, must have an evil portion; and though the devils by their oracles have given some answers, and by their significations have foretold some future contingencies, and in their government and subordinate rule have assisted some armies, and discovered some treasures, and prevented some snares of chance and accidents of men; yet no man, that reckons by the measures of reason or

religion, reckons witches and conjurors amongst blessed and prosperous persons: these and all other evil persons have an evil spirit, by the measures of which their desires begin and proceed on to issue; but this success of theirs neither comes from God, nor brings felicity: but if it comes from God, it is anger; if it descends upon good men, it is a curse; if upon evil men, it is a sin; and then it is a present curse, and leads on to an eternal infelicity. Plutarch reports, that the Tyrians tied their gods with chains, because certain persons did dream, that Apollo said he would leave their city, and go to the party of Alexander, who then besieged the town: and Apollodorus tells of some, that tied the image of Saturn with bands of wool upon his feet. So some Christians; they think God is tied to their sect, and bound to be of their side, and the interest of their opinion; and they think, he can never go to the enemy’s party, so long as they charm him with certain form of words or disguises of their own; and then all the success they have, and all the evils that are prosperous, all the mischiefs they do, and all the ambitious designs that do succeed, they reckon upon the account of their prayers; and well they may: for their prayers are sins, and their desires are evil; they wish mischief, and they act iniquity, and they enjoy their sin: and if this be a blessing or a cursing, themselves shall then judge, and all the world shall perceive, when the accounts of all the world are truly stated; then, when prosperity shall be called to accounts, and adversity shall receive its comforts, when virtue shall have a crown, and the satisfaction of all sinful desires shall be recompensed with an intolerable sorrow, and the despair of a perishing soul. Nero’s mother prayed passionately, that her son might be emperor; and many persons, of whom St. James speaks, “pray to spend upon their lusts,” and they are heard too: some were not, and very many are: and some, that fight against a just possessor of a country, pray, that their wars may be prosperous; and sometimes they have been heard too: and Julian the Apostate prayed, and sacrificed, and inquired of demons, and burned man’s flesh, and operated with secret rites, and all that he might craftily and powerfully oppose the religion of Christ; and he was heard to, and did mischief beyond the malice and the effect of his predecessors, that did swim in Christian blood: but when we sum up the

accounts at the foot of their lives, or as soon as the thing was understood, and find that the effect of Agrippian's prayer was, that her son murdered her; and of those lustful petitioners, in St. James, that they were given over to the tyranny and possession of their passions, and baser appetites; and the effect of Julian the Apostate's prayer was, that he lived and died a professed enemy of Christ; and the effect of the prayers of usurpers is, that they do mischief, and reap curses, and undo mankind, and provoke God, and live hated, and die miserable, and shall possess the fruit of their sin to eternal ages; these will be no objections to the truth of the former discourse; but the greater instances, that, if by hearing our prayers, we mean or intend a blessing, we must also, by making prayers, mean, that the man first be holy, and his desires just and charitable, before he can be admitted to the throne of grace, or converse with God by the intercourses of a prosperous prayer.

That is the first general. 2. Many times good men pray, and their prayer is not a sin, but yet it returns empty; because, although the man may be, yet the prayer is not, in proper disposition; and here I am to account to you concerning the collateral and accidental hinderances of the prayer of a good man.

The first thing that hinders the prayer of a good man from obtaining its effects, is a violent anger and a violent storm in the spirit of him that prays. For anger sets the house on fire, and all the spirits are busy upon trouble, and intend propulsion, defence, displeasure, or revenge; it is a short madness, and an eternal enemy to discourse, and sober counsels, and fair conversation; it intends its own object with all the earnestness of perception, or activity of design, and a quicker motion of a too warm and distempered blood; it is a fever in the heart, and a calenture in the head, and a fire in the face, and a sword in the hand, and a fury all over; and therefore can never suffer a man to be in a disposition to pray. For prayer is an action, and a state of intercourse and desire, exactly contrary to this character of anger. Prayer is an action of likeness to the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of gentleness and dove-like simplicity; an imitation of the holy Jesus, whose spirit is meek, up to the greatness of the biggest example, and a conformity to God; whose anger is always just, and marches slowly, and is without transportation, and often hindered, and never

hasty, and is full of mercy: prayer is the peace of our spirit, the stillness of our thoughts, the evenness of recollection, the seat of meditation, the rest of our cares, and the calm of our tempest; prayer is the issue of a quiet mind, of untroubled thoughts, it is the daughter of charity, and the sister of meekness; and he that prays to God with an angry, that is, with a troubled and discomposed spirit, is like him that retires into a battle to meditate, and sets up his closet in the out-quarters of an army, and chooses a frontier-garrison to be wise in. Anger is a perfect alienation of the mind from prayer, and therefore is contrary to that attention, which presents our prayers in a right line to God. For so have I seen a lark rising from his bed of grass, and soaring upwards, singing as he rises, and hopes to get to heaven, and climb above the clouds; but the poor bird was beaten back with the loud sighings of an eastern wind, and his motion made irregular and inconstant, descending more at every breath of the tempest, than it could recover by the libration and frequent weighing of his wings; till the little creature was forced to sit down and pant, and stay till the storm was over; and then it made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing, as if it had learned music and motion from an angel, as he passed sometimes through the air, about his ministries here below: so is the prayer of a good man; when his affairs have required business, and his business was matter of discipline, and his discipline was to pass upon a sinning person, or had a design of charity, his duty met with infirmities of a man, and anger was its instrument, and the instrument became stronger than the prime agent, and raised a tempest, and overruled the man; and then his prayer was broken, and his thoughts were troubled, and his words went up towards a cloud, and his thoughts pulled them back again, and made them without intention; and the good man sighs for his infirmity, but must be content to loose the prayer, and he must recover it when his anger is removed, and his spirit is becalmed, made even as the brow of Jesus, and smooth like the heart of God; and then it ascends to heaven upon the wings of the holy dove, and dwells with God, till it returns, like the useful bee, loaded with a blessing and the dew of heaven.

But besides this; anger is a combination of many other things, every one of which is an enemy to prayer; it is *λύπη*, and *ἀμετρίαις*,

and *τιμωρία*, and it is *ζέσις*, and it is *ἄσρος*, and it is *κόλασις*, and *ἐπιτίμησις*; so it is in the several definitions of it, and in its natural constitution. It hath in it the trouble of sorrow, and the heats of lust, and the disease of revenge, and the boilings of a fever, and the rashness of precipitancy, and the disturbance of persecution; and therefore is a certain effective enemy against prayer; which ought to be a spiritual joy, and an act of mortification; and to have in it no heats, but of charity and zeal; and they are to be guided by prudence and consideration, and allayed with the deliciousness of mercy, and the serenity of a meek and a quiet spirit; and therefore St. Paul gave caution, that "the sun should not go down upon our anger," meaning, that it should not stay upon us till evening prayer; for it would hinder our evening sacrifice; but the stopping of the first egressions of anger, is a certain artifice of the Spirit of God, to prevent unmercifulness, which turns not only our desires into vanity, but our prayers into sin; and, remember, that Elisha's anger, though it was also zeal, had so discomposed his spirit, when the two kings came to inquire of the Lord, that, though he was a good man and a prophet, yet he could not pray, he could not inquire of the Lord, till by rest and music he had gathered himself into the evenness of a dispassionate and recollected mind; therefore, let your prayers be without wrath. Βούλεται αὐτοὺς ἀναδιᾶσαι διὰ συμβόλων ὅποτε, προσέρχοντο εἰς βωμοὺς εὐχόμενοι ἢ εὐχαριστήσαντες, μὴδεν ἀβήλωσται ἢ πάθος ἐπιφέρεσθαι τῇ ψυχῇ; "for God, by many significations, hath taught us, that when men go to the altars to pray or give thanks, they must bring no sin or violent passion along with them to the sacrifice," said Philo.

2. Indifferency and easiness of desire is a great enemy to the success of a good man's prayer. When Plato gave Diogenes a great vessel of wine, who asked but a little, and a few caraways, the Cynic thanked him with his rude expression: "Cum interrogaris, quot sint duo et duo, respondes viginti; ita non secundum ea, quæ rogaris, das; nec ad ea, quæ interrogaris, respondes;" "Thou neither answerest to the question thou art asked, nor givest according as thou art desired: being inquired of, how many are two and two, thou answerest, twenty." So it is with God and us in the intercourse of our prayers: we pray for health, and he gives us, it may be, a sickness that carries us into eternal life; we pray for necessary support

for our persons and families, and he gives us more than we need; we beg for a removal of a present sadness, and he gives us that which makes us able to bear twenty sadnesses, a cheerful spirit, a peaceful conscience and a joy in God, as an antepast of eternal rejoicings in the kingdom of God. But, then, although God doth very frequently give us beyond the matter of our desires, yet he does not so often give us great things beyond the spirit of our desires, beyond the quickness, vivacity, and fervour of our minds: for there is but one thing in the world that God hates besides sin, that is, indifferency and lukewarmness,* which, although it hath not in it the direct nature of sin, yet it hath this testimony from God, that it is loathsome and abominable; and excepting this thing alone, God never said so of any thing in the New Testament, but what was a direct breach of a commandment. The reason of it is, because lukewarmness, or an indifferent spirit, is an undervaluing of God and of religion; it is a separation of reason from affections, and a perfect conviction of the understanding to the goodness of a duty, but a refusing to follow what we understand. For he that is lukewarm alway, understands the better way, and seldom pursues it; he hath so much reason as is sufficient, but he will not obey it; his will does not follow the dictate of his understanding, and therefore it is unnatural. It is like the fantastic fires of the night, where there is light, and no heat; and therefore may pass on to the real fires of hell, where there is heat, and no light; and therefore, although an act of lukewarmness is only an indecency, and no sin, yet a state of lukewarmness is criminal, and a sinful state of imperfection and indecency; an act of indifferency hinders a single prayer from being accepted; but a state of it makes the person ungracious and despised in the court of heaven: and therefore St. James, in his accounts concerning an effective prayer, not only requires that he be a just man who prays, but his prayer must be fervent; *δέησις δικαίου ενεργουμένη*, "an effectual prayer," so our English reads it; it must be an intent, zealous, busy, operative prayer; for consider what a huge indecency it is, that a man should speak to God for a thing that he values not; or that he should not value a thing, without which he cannot be happy; or that he should spend his

* See Sermon II. of Lukewarmness and Zeal.

religion upon a trifle; and if it be not a trifle, that he should not spend his affections upon it. If our prayers be for temporal things, I shall not need to stir up your affections to be passionate for their purchase; we desire them greedily, we run after them intemperately, we are kept from them with huge impatience, we are delayed with infinite regrets; we prefer them before our duty, we ask them unseasonably; we receive them with our own prejudice, and we care not; we choose them to our hurt and hinderance, and yet delight in the purchase; and when we do pray for them, we can hardly bring ourselves to it, to submit to God's will, but will have them (if we can) whether he be pleased or no; like the parasite in the comedy, "Qui comedit quod fuit et quod non fuit:" "he ate all and more than all; what was set before him, and what was kept from him." But then, for spiritual things, for the interests of our souls, and the affairs of the kingdom, we pray to God with just such a zeal, as a man begs of a chirurgion to cut him of the stone; or a condemned man desires his executioner quickly to put him out of his pain, by taking away his life; when things are come to that pass, it must be done, but God knows with what little complacency and desire the man makes his request: and yet the things of religion and the Spirit are the only things that ought to be desired vehemently, and pursued passionately, because God hath set such a value upon them, that they are the effects of his greatest loving-kindness; they are the purchases of Christ's blood, and the effect of his continual intercession, the fruits of his bloody sacrifice, and the gifts of his healing and saving mercy; the graces of God's Spirit, and the only instruments of felicity: and if we can have fondnesses for things indifferent or dangerous, our prayers upbraid our spirits, when we beg coldly and tamely for those things for which we ought to die, which are more precious than the globes of kings, and weightier than imperial sceptres, richer than the spoils of the sea, or the treasures of the Indian hills.

He that is cold and tame in his prayers, hath not tasted of the deliciousness of religion and the goodness of God; he is a stranger to the secrets of the kingdom, and therefore he does not know what it is, either to have hunger or satiety; and therefore neither are they hungry for God, nor satisfied with the world; but remain stupid

and inapprehensive, without resolution and determination, never choosing clearly, nor pursuing earnestly, and therefore never enter into possession; but always stand at the gate of weariness, unnecessary caution, and perpetual irresolution. But so it is too often in our prayers; we come to God because it is civil so to do, and a general custom, but neither drawn thither by love, nor pinched by spiritual necessities and pungent apprehensions; we say so many prayers, because we are resolved so to do, and we pass through them, sometimes with a little attention, sometimes with none at all; and can we think that the grace of chastity can be obtained at such a purchase, that grace, that hath cost more labours than all the persecutions of faith, and all the disputes of hope, and all the expense of charity besides, amounts to? Can we expect that our sins should be washed by a lazy prayer? Can an indifferent prayer quench the flames of hell, or rescue us from an eternal sorrow? Is lust so soon overcome, that the very naming it can master it? Is the devil so slight and easy an enemy, that he will fly away from us at the first word, spoken without power and without vehemence? Read and attend to the accents of the prayers of saints. "I cried day and night before thee, O Lord; my soul refused comfort; my throat is dry with calling upon my God, my knees are weak through fasting;" and, "Let me alone," says God to Moses, and, "I will not let thee go till thou hast blessed me," said Jacob to the angel. And I shall tell you a short character of a fervent prayer out of the practice of St. Jerome, in his epistle "ad Eustachium de Custodia Virginitatis." "Being destitute of all help, I threw myself down at the feet of Jesus; I watered his feet with tears, and wiped them with my hair, and mortified the lust of my flesh with the abstinence and hungry diet of many weeks; I remember that in my crying to God, I did frequently join the night and the day, and never did entertain to call, nor cease from beating my breast, till the mercy of the Lord brought to me peace and freedom from temptation. After many tears, and my eyes fixed in heaven, I thought myself sometimes encircled with troops of angels, and then at last I sang to God, 'We will run after thee into the smell and deliciousness of thy precious ointments;'"—such a prayer as this will never return without its errand. But though your person be as gracious as David or

Job, and your desire as holy as the love of angels, and your necessities great as a new penitent, yet it pierces not the clouds, unless it be also as loud as thunder, passionate as the cries of women, and clamorous as necessity. And we may guess at the degrees of importunity by the insinuation of the apostle: "Let the married abstain for a time," *ut vacent orationi et jejuniis*, "that they may attend to prayer;" it is a great attendance, and a long diligence, that is promoted by such a separation; and supposes a devotion that spends more than many hours: for ordinary prayers, and many hours of every day, might well enough consist with an ordinary cohabitation; but that which requires such a separation, calls for a longer time and a greater attendance than we usually consider. For every prayer we make is considered by God, and recorded in heaven; but cold prayers are not put into the account, in order to effect and acceptance; but are laid aside like the buds of roses, which a cold wind hath nipped into death, and the discoloured, tawny face of an Indian slave: and when in order to your hopes of obtaining a great blessing, you reckon up your prayers, with which you have solicited your suit in the court of heaven, you must reckon, not by the number of the collects, but by your sighs and passions, by the vehemence of your desires, and the fervour of your spirit, the apprehension of your need, and the consequent prosecution of your supply. Christ prayed *κραγαυαίς ισχυραίς* "with loud cryings," and St. Paul made mention of his scholars in his prayers "night and day." Fall upon your knees and grow there, and let not your desires cool nor your zeal remit, but renew it again and again, and let not your offices and the custom of praying put thee in mind of thy need, but let thy need draw thee to thy holy offices; and remember, how great a God, how glorious a majesty you speak to; therefore, let not your devotions and addresses be little. Remember, how great a need thou hast; let not your desires be less. Remember, how great the thing is you pray for; do not undervalue it with thy indifferency. Remember, that prayer is an act of religion; let it, therefore, be made thy business: and, lastly, Remember that God hates a cold prayer; and, therefore, will never bless it, but it shall be always ineffectual.

3. Under this title of lukewarmness and tepidity may be comprised also these cau-

tions: that a good man's prayers are sometimes hindered by inadvertency, sometimes by want of perseverance. For inadvertency, or want of attendance to the sense and intention of our prayers, is certainly an effect of lukewarmness, and a certain companion and appendage to human infirmity; and is only so remedied, as our prayers are made zealous, and our infirmities pass into the strengths of the Spirit. But if we were quick in our perceptions, either concerning our danger, or our need, or the excellency of the object, or the glories of God, or the niceties and perfections of religion, we should not dare to throw away our prayers so like fools, or come to God and say a prayer with our mind standing at distance, trifling like untaught boys at their books, with a truant spirit. I shall say no more to this, but that, in reason, we can never hope, that God in heaven will hear our prayers, which we ourselves speak, and yet hear not at the same time, when we ourselves speak them with instruments joined to our ears; even with those organs, which are parts of our hearing faculties. If they be not worth our own attending to, they are not worth God's hearing; if they are worth God's attending to, we must make them so by our own zeal, and passion, and industry, and observation, and a present and a holy spirit.

But concerning perseverance, the consideration is something distinct. For when our prayer is for a great matter, and a great necessity, strictly attended to, yet we pursue it only by chance or humour, by the strengths of fancy, and natural disposition; or else our choice is cool as soon as hot, like the emissions of lightning, or like a sunbeam often interrupted with a cloud, or cooled with intervening showers: and our prayer is without fruit, because the desire lasts not, and the prayer lives like the repentance of Simon Magus, or the trembling of Felix, or the Jews' devotion for seven days of unleavened bread, during the passover, or the feast of tabernacles: but if we would secure the blessing of our prayers, and the effect of our prayers, we must never leave till we have obtained what we need.

There are many that pray against a temptation for a month together, and so long as the prayer is fervent, so long the man hath a nollition, and a direct enmity against the lust; he consents not all that while; but when the month is gone, and

of that caution is, that every good man be careful, that he do not mingle his devotion in the communions of heretical persons, and in schismatical conventicles; for although he be like them that follow Absalom in the simplicity of their heart, yet his intermedial fortune, and the event of his present affairs, may be the same with Absalom's; and it is not a light thing, that we curiously choose the parties of our communion. I do not say it is necessary to avoid all the society of evil persons: "for then we must go out of the world;" and when we have thrown out a drunkard, possibly we have entertained a hypocrite; or when a swearer is gone, an oppressor may stay still; or if that be remedied, yet pride is soon discernible, but not easily judicable: but that which is of caution in this question, is, that we never mingle with those, whose very combination is a sin; such as were Corah and his company that rebelled against Moses their prince; and Dathan and Abiram, that made a schism in religion against Aaron the priest: for so said the Spirit of the Lord, "Come out from the congregation of these men, lest ye perish in their company;" and all those that were abused in their communion, did perish in the gainsaying of Corah. It is a sad thing to see a good man cozened by fair pretences, and allured into an evil snare; for besides that he dwells in danger, and cohabits with a dragon, and his virtue may change by evil persuasion into an evil disposition, from sweetness to bitterness, from thence to evil speaking, from thence to believe a lie, and from believing to practise it;—besides this, it is a very great sadness, that such a man should lose all his prayers to very many purposes. God will not respect the offering of those men, who assemble by a peevish spirit; and therefore, although God in pity regards the desires of a good man, if innocently abused, yet as it unites in that assembly, God will not hear it to any purposes of blessing and holiness: unless "we keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," we cannot have the blessing of the Spirit in the returns of a holy prayer; and all those assemblies, which meet together against God or God's ordinance, may pray and call, and cry loudly and frequently, and still they provoke God to anger; and many times he will not have so much mercy for them, as to deny them; but lets them prosper in their sin, till it swells to intolerable and unpardonable. But when good men pray with one heart, and

in a holy assembly, that is, holy in their desires, lawful in their authority, though the persons be of different complexions, then the prayer flies up to God like the hymns of a choir of angels; for God—that made body and soul to be one man, and God and man to be one Christ; and three persons are one God, and his praises are sung to him by choirs, and the persons are joined in orders, and the orders into hierarchies, and all, that God might be served by unions and communities—loves that his church should imitate the concords of heaven, and the unions of God, and that every good man should promote the interests of his prayers by joining in the communion of saints in the unions of obedience and charity, with the powers that God and the laws have ordained.

The sum is this: If the man that makes the prayer be an unholy person, his prayer is not the instrument of a blessing, but a curse; but when the sinner begins to repent truly, then his desires begin to be holy. But if they be holy, and just, and good, yet they are without profit and effect, if the prayer be made in schism, or an evil communion, or if it be made without attention, or if the man soon gives over, or if the prayer be not zealous, or if the man be angry. There are very many ways for a good man to become unblest and unthriving in his prayers, and he cannot be secure unless he be in the state of grace, and his spirit be quiet, and his mind be attentive, and his society be lawful, and his desires earnest and passionate, and his devotions persevering, lasting till his needs be served or exchanged for another blessing: so that what Lælius (*apud Cicer. de senectute*) said concerning old age, "neque in summâ inopiâ levis esse senectus potest, ne sapienti quidem, nec insipienti etiam in summâ copiâ non gravis;" "that a wise man could not bear old age, if it were extremely poor; and yet if it were very rich, it were intolerable to a fool;" we may say concerning our prayers; they are sins and unholy, if a wicked man makes them; and yet if they be made by a good man, they are ineffective, unless they be improved by their proper dispositions. A good man cannot prevail in his prayers, if his desires be cold, and his affections trifling, and his industry soon weary, and his society criminal; and if all these appendages of prayer be observed, yet they will do no good to an evil man: for his prayer that begins in sin, shall end in sorrow.

SERMON VI.

PART III.

3. NEXT I am to inquire and consider, What degrees and circumstances of piety are required to make us fit to be intercessors for others, and to pray for them with probable effect? I say "with probable effect;" for when the event principally depends upon that which is not within our own election, such as are the lives and actions of others, all that we can consider in this affair is, whether we be persons fit to pray in the behalf of others, that hinder not, but are persons within the limit and possibilities of the present mercy. When the emperor Maximinus was smitten with the wrath of God, and a sore disease, for his cruel persecuting the Christian cause, and putting so many thousand innocent and holy persons to death, and he understood the voice of God and the accents of thunder, and discerned that cruelty was the cause,—he revoked their decrees made against the Christians, recalled them from their caves and deserts, their sanctuaries and retirements, and enjoined them to pray for the life and health of their prince. They did so; and they who could command mountains to remove and were obeyed, they who could do miracles, they who with the key of prayer could open God's four closets, of the *womb* and the *grave*, of *providence* and *rain*, could not obtain for their bloody emperor one drop of mercy, but he must die miserable for ever. God would not be entreated for him; and though he loved the prayer because he loved the advocates, yet Maximinus was not worthy to receive the blessing. And it was threatened to the rebellious people of Israel, and by them to all people that should sin grievously against the Lord, God "would break their staff of bread," and even the righteous should not be prevailing intercessors; "Though Noah, Job, or Daniel, were there, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God:"* and when Abraham prevailed very far with God in the behalf of Sodom, and the five cities of the plain, it had its period: if there had been ten righteous in Sodom, it should have been spared for their sakes; but four only were found, and they only delivered their own souls too; but neither their righteous-

ness, nor Abraham's prayer, prevailed any farther. And we have this case also mentioned in the New Testament: "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death."* At his prayer the sinner shall receive pardon; God shall "give him life for them," to him that prays in their behalf that sin, provided it be "not a sin unto death;" for "there is a sin unto death, but I do not say that he shall pray for it:" there his commission expires, and his power is confined. For there are some sins of that state and greatness that God will not pardon. St. Austin in his books "de Sermone Domini in Monte" affirms it, concerning some one single sin of a perfect malice. It was also the opinion of Origen and Athanasius, and is followed by Venerable Bede; and whether the apostle means a peculiar state of sin, or some one single great crime which also supposes a precedent and a present state of criminal condition; it is such a thing as will hinder our prayers from prevailing in their behalf: we are therefore not encouraged to pray, because they cannot receive the benefit of Christ's intercession, and therefore much less of our advocacy, which only can prevail by virtue and participation of his mediation. For whomsoever Christ prays, for them we pray; that is, for all them that are within the covenant of repentance, for all whose actions have not destroyed the very being of religion, who have not renounced their faith, nor voluntarily quit their hopes, nor openly opposed the Spirit of grace, nor grown by a long progress to a resolute and final impiety, nor done injustices greater than sorrow, or restitution, or recompence, or acknowledgment. However, though it may be uncertain and disputed concerning the number of "sins unto death," and therefore to pray, or not to pray, is not matter of duty;—yet it is all one as to the effect, whether we know them or no; for though we intend charity, when we pray for the worst of men—yet concerning the event God will take care, and will certainly return thy prayer upon thy own head, though thou didst desire it should water and refresh thy neighbour's dryness; and St. John so expresses it, as if he had left the matter of duty undetermined; because the instances are uncertain; yet the event is certainly none at all, therefore be-

* Ezek. xiv. 14.

* 1 John v. 16.

cause we are not encouraged to pray, and because it is a "sin unto death;" that is, such a sin that hath no portion in the promises of life, and the state of repentance. But now, suppose the man, for whom we pray, to be capable of mercy, within the covenant of repentance, and not far from the kingdom of heaven; yet,

1. No prayers of others can further prevail, than to remove this person to the next stage in order to felicity. When St. Monica prayed for her son, she did not pray to God to save him, but to convert him; and when God intended to reward the prayers and alms of Cornelius, he did not do it by giving him a crown, but by sending an apostle to him to make him a Christian; the meaning of which observation is, that we may understand, that as, in the person prayed for, there ought to be the great disposition of being in a savable condition; so there ought also to be all the intermedial aptnesses; for just as he is disposed, so can we prevail; and the prayers of a good man first prevail in behalf of a sinner, that he shall be invited, that he shall be reprov'd,—and then that he shall attend to it, then that he shall have his heart opened, and then that he shall repent: and still a good man's prayers follow him through the several stages of pardon, of sanctification, of restraining graces, of a mighty Providence, of great assistance, of perseverance, and a holy death. No prayers can prevail upon an indisposed person. For the sun himself cannot enlighten a blind eye, nor the soul move a body whose silver cord is loosed, and whose joints are untied by the rudeness and dissolutions of a pertinacious sickness. But then, suppose an eye quick and healthful, or apt to be refreshed with light and a friendly prospect; yet a glow-worm or a diamond, the shells of pearl, or a dead man's candle, are not enough to make him discern the beauties of the world, and to admire the glories of creation. Therefore,

2. As the persons must be capable for whom we pray, so they that pray for others must be persons extraordinary in something.

1. If persons be of an extraordinary piety, they are apt to be intercessors for others. This appears in the case of Job; when the wrath of God was kindled against Eliphaz and his two friends, God commanded them to offer a sacrifice, but "my servant Job shall pray for you, for him will I accept;"*

and it was so in the case of the prevaricating Israelites; God was full of indignation against them, and smote them; "then stood up Phinehas and prayed, and the plague ceased." For this man was a good man, and the spirit of an extraordinary zeal filled him, and he did glory to God in the execution upon Zimri and his fair Midianite. And it was a huge blessing, that was entailed upon the posterity of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; because they had a great religion, a great power with God, and their extraordinary did consist especially in the matter of prayers and devotion; for that was eminent in them, besides their obedience: for so Maimonides tells concerning them, that Abraham first instituted morning-prayer. The affairs of religion had not the same constitution then as now. They worshipped God never but at their memorials, and in places, and seldom times of separation. They bowed their heads when they came to a hallowed stone, and upon the top of their staff, and worshipped when they came to a consecrated pillar, but this was seldom; and they knew not the secrets and the privileges of a frequent prayer, of intercourses with God by ejaculations, and the advantages of importunity: and the doctors of the Jews,—that record the prayer of Noah, who in all reason knew the secret best, because he was to teach it to all the world,—yet have transmitted to us but a short prayer of some seven lines long; and this he only said within the ark, in that great danger, on a day, provoked by his fear, and stirred up by a religion then made actual, in those days of sorrow and penance. But in the descending ages, when God began to reckon a church in Abraham's family; there began to be a new institution of offices, and Abraham appointed that God should be prayed to every morning. Isaac being taught by Abraham, made a law, or at least commended the practice, and adopted it into the religion, that God should be worshipped by decimation or tithing of our goods; and he added an order of prayer to be said in the afternoon; and Jacob, to make up the office complete, added evening-prayer; and God was their God, and they became fit persons to bless, that is, of procuring blessings to their relatives; as appears in the instances of their own families, of the king of Egypt, and the cities of the plain. For a man of ordinary piety is like Gideon's fleece, wet in its own locks; but it could not water a poor man's garden; but so does a thirsty land drink all the dew of heaven that wets its

* Chap. xliii. 7, 8.

face, and a greater shower makes no torrent, nor digs so much as a little furrow, that the drills of the water might pass into rivers, or refresh their neighbour's weariness; but when the earth is full, and hath no strange consumptive needs, then at the next time, when God blesses it with a gracious shower, it divides into portions, and sends it abroad in free and equal communications, that all that stand round about may feel the shower. So is a good man's prayer; his own cup is full, it is crowned with health, and overflows with blessings, and all that drink of his cup and eat at his table, are refreshed with his joys, and divide with him in his holy portions. And indeed he hath need of a great stock of piety, who is first to provide for his own necessities, and then to give portions to a numerous relation. It is a great matter, that every man needs for himself,—the daily expenses of his own infirmities, the unthriving state of his omission of duty, and recessions from perfection,—and sometimes the great losses and shipwrecks, the plunderings and burning of his house by a fall into a deadly sin; and most good men are in this condition, that they have enough to do to live, and keep themselves above water; but how few men are able to pay their own debts, and lend great portions to others? The number of those who can effectually intercede for others to great purposes of grace and pardon, are as soon told as the number of wise men, as the gates of a city, or the entries of the river Nilus.

But then do but consider, what a great engagement this is to a very strict and holy life. If we chance to live in times of an extraordinary trouble, or if our relatives can be capable of great dangers or great sorrows, or if we ourselves would do the noblest friendship in the world, and oblige others by acts of greatest benefit; if we would assist their souls and work towards their salvation; if we would be public ministers of the greatest usefulness to our country; if we would support kings, and relieve the great necessities of kingdoms; if we would be effective in the stopping of a plague, or in the success of armies;—a great and an exemplar piety, and a zealous and holy prayer, can do all this. “*Semper tu hoc facito, ut cogites id optimum esse, tute ut sis optimus; si id nequeas, saltem ut optimis sis proximus:*” “He that is the best man towards God, is certainly the best minister to his prince or country, and there-

fore do thou endeavour to be so, and if thou canst not be so, be at least next to the best.” For in that degree in which our religion is great, and our piety exemplar, in the same we can contribute towards the fortune of a kingdom: and when Elijah was taken into heaven, Elisha mourned for him, because it was a loss to Israel: “My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and horsemen thereof.” But consider how useless thou art, when thou canst not by thy prayers obtain so much mercy, as to prevail for the life of a single trooper, or in a plague beg of God for the life of a poor maid-servant; but the ordinary emanations of Providence shall proceed to issue without any arrest, and the sword of the angel shall not be turned aside in one single infliction. Remember, although he is a great and excellent person, that can prevail with God for the interest of others; yet thou, that hast no stock of grace and favour, no interest in the court of heaven, art but a mean person, extraordinary in nothing; thou art unregarded by God, cheap in the sight of angels, useless to thy prince or country; thou mayest hold thy peace in a time of public danger. For kings never pardon murderers at the intercession of thieves; and if a mean mechanic should beg a reprieve for a condemned traitor, he is ridiculous and impudent: so is a vicious advocate or an ordinary person with God. It is well if God will hear him begging for his own pardon, he is not yet disposed to plead for others.

And yet every man that is in the state of grace, every man that can pray without a sinful prayer, may also intercede for others; and it is a duty for all men to do it; all men, I say, who can pray at all acceptably: “I will, therefore, that prayers, and supplications, and intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;” and this is a duty that is prescribed to all them that are concerned in the duty and in the blessings of prayer; but this is it which I say—if their piety be but ordinary, their prayer can be effectual but in easy purposes, and to smaller degrees; but he,—that would work effectually towards a great deliverance, or in great degrees towards the benefit or ease of any of his relatives—can be confident of his success but in the same degree in which his person is gracious. “There are strange things in heaven:” judgments there are made of things and persons by the measures of religion, and a plain promise produces effects of wonder and miracle; and the

changes that are there made, are not effected by passions, and interests, and corporal changes; and the love that is there, is not the same thing that is here; it is more beneficial, more reasonable, more holy, of other designs, and strange productions; and upon that stock it is, that a holy poor man,—that possesses no more, (it may be) than a ewe-lamb, that eats of his bread, and drinks of his cup, and is a daughter to him, and is all his temporal portion,—this poor man is ministered to by angels, and attended to by God, and the Holy Spirit makes intercession for him, and Christ joins the man's prayer to his own advocacy, and the man by prayer shall save the city, and destroy the fortune of a tyrant-army, even then when God sees it good it should be so: for he will no longer deny him any thing, but when it is no blessing; and when it is otherwise, his prayer is most heard when it is most denied.

2. That we should prevail in intercessions for others, we are to regard and to take care, that as our piety, so also must our offices be extraordinary. He that prays to recover a family from an hereditary curse, or to reverse a sentence of God, to cancel a decree of Heaven gone out against his friend; he that would heal the sick with his prayer, or with his devotion prevail against an army, must not expect such great effects upon a morning or evening collect, or an honest wish put into the recollections of a prayer, or a period put in on purpose. Mamercus, bishop of Vienna, seeing his city and all the diocess in great danger of perishing by an earthquake, instituted great litanies, and solemn supplications, besides the ordinary devotions of his usual hours of prayer; and the church from his example took up the practice, and translated it into an anniversary solemnity, and upon St. Mark's day did solemnly intercede with God to divert or prevent his judgments falling upon the people, "majoribus litanis," so they are called; with the more solemn supplications they did pray unto God in behalf of their people. And this hath in it the same consideration, that is in every great necessity; for it is a great thing for a man to be so gracious with God as to be able to prevail for himself and his friend, for himself and his relatives; and therefore in these cases, as in all great needs, it is the way of prudence and security, that we use all those greater offices, which God hath appointed as instruments of importunity, and arguments of hope, and acts of prevailing, and

means of great effect and advocacy: such as are, separating days for solemn prayer, all the degrees of violence and earnest address, fasting and prayer, alms and prayer, acts of repentance and prayer, praying together in public with united hearts, and, above all, praying in the susception and communication of the holy sacrament; the effects and admirable issues of which we know not, and perceive not; we lose because we desire not, and choose to lose many great blessings rather than purchase them with the frequent commemoration of that sacrifice, which was offered up for all the needs of mankind, and for obtaining all favours and graces to the Catholic church. *Εὐχῆς δεκαίας οὐκ ἀνήκοος Θεός*, "God never refuses to hear a holy prayer;" and our prayers can never be so holy, as when they are offered up in the union of Christ's sacrifice: for Christ, by that sacrifice, reconciled God and the world; and because our needs continue, therefore we are commanded to continue the memory, and to represent to God that which was done to satisfy all our needs: then we receive Christ; we are, after a secret and mysterious, but most real and admirable manner, made all one with Christ; and if God giving us his Son could not but "with him give us all things else," how shall he refuse our persons, when we are united to his person, when our souls are joined to his soul, our body nourished by his body, and our souls sanctified by his blood, and clothed with his robes, and marked with his character, and sealed with his Spirit, and renewed with holy vows, and consigned to all his glories, and adopted to his inheritance? when we represent his death, and pray in virtue of his passion, and imitate his intercession, and do that which God commands, and offer him in our manner that which he essentially loves; can it be that either any thing should be more prevalent, or that God can possibly deny such addresses and such importunities? Try it often, and let all things else be answerable, and you cannot have greater reason for your confidence. Do not all the Christians in the world, that understand religion, desire to have the holy sacrament when they die; when they are to make their great appearance before God, and to receive their great consignment to their eternal sentence, good or bad? And if then be their greatest needs, that is their greatest advantage, and instrument of acceptance. Therefore if you have a great need to be served, or a great charity to serve, and

a great pity to minister, and a dear friend in a sorrow, take Christ along in thy prayers: in all the ways thou canst, take him; take him in affection, and take him in a solemnity; take him by obedience, and receive him in the sacrament; and if thou then offerest up thy prayers, and makest thy needs known; if thou nor thy friend be not relieved; if thy party be not prevalent, and the war be not appeased, or the plague be not cured, or the enemy taken off, there is something else in it: but thy prayer is good and pleasing to God, and dressed with circumstances of advantage, and thy person is apt to be an intercessor, and thou hast done all that thou canst; the event must be left to God; and the secret reasons of the denial, either thou shalt find in time, or thou mayest trust with God, who certainly does it with the greatest wisdom and the greatest charity. I have in this thing only one caution to insert; viz.

That is our importunity and extraordinary offices for others, we must not make our accounts by multitude of words, and long prayers, but by the measures of the spirit, by the holiness of the soul, and the justness of the desire, and the usefulness of the request, and its order to God's glory, and its place in the order of providence, and the sincerity of our heart, and the charity of our wishes, and the perseverance of our advocacy. There are some, (as Tertullian observes,) "*Qui loquacitatem, facundiam existimant, et impudentiam constantiam deputant;*" "they are praters and they are impudent, and they call that constancy and importunity:" concerning which, the advice is easy: many words or few are extrinsic to the nature, and not at all considered in the effects of prayer; but much desire, and much holiness, are essential to its constitution; but we must be very curious, that our importunity do not degenerate into impudence and rude boldness. Capitolinus said of Antoninus the emperor and philosopher, "*Sane quamvis esset constans, erat etiam verecundus;*" "he was modest even when he was most pertinacious in his desires." So must we; though we must not be ashamed to ask for whatsoever we need, "*Rebus semper pudor absit in arctis;*" and in this sense it is true, that Stasimus in the comedy said concerning meat, "*Verecundari neminem apud mensam decet, Nam ibi de divinis et humanis cernitur;*" "men must not be bashful so as to lose their meat; for that is a necessary that cannot be dis-

pensed withal:" so it is in our prayers; whatsoever our necessity calls to us for, we must call to God for; and he is not pleased with that rusticity or fond modesty of being ashamed to ask of God any thing, that is honest and necessary; yet our importunity hath also bounds of modesty, but such as are to be expressed with other significations; and he is rightly modest towards God, who, without confidence in himself, but not without confidence in God's mercy, or without great humility of person, and reverence of address, presents his prayers to God as earnestly as he can; provided always, that in the greatest of our desires, and holy violence, we submit to God's will, and desire him to choose for us. Our modesty to God in prayers hath no other measures but these: 1. Distrust of ourselves: 2. Confidence in God: 3. Humility of person: 4. Reverence of address: and, 5. Submission to God's will. These are all, unless you also will add that of Solomon, "*Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter a thing before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.*" These things being observed, let your importunity be as great as it can; it is still the more likely to prevail, by how much it is the more earnest, and signified and represented by the most offices extraordinary.

3. The last great advantage towards a prevailing intercession for others is, that the person that prays for his relatives, be a person of an extraordinary dignity, employment, or designation. For God hath appointed some persons and callings of men to pray for others, such are fathers for their children, bishops for their diocesses, kings for their subjects, and the whole order ecclesiastical for all the men and women in the Christian church. And it is well it is so; for, as things are now, and have been too long, how few are there that understand it to be their duty, or part of their necessary employment, that some of their time, and much of their prayers, and an equal portion of their desires, be spent upon the necessities of others. All men do not think it necessary, and fewer practise it frequently, and they but coldly, without interest and deep resentment: it is like the compassion we have in other men's miseries; we are not concerned in it, and it is not our case, and our hearts ache not when another man's children are made fatherless, or his wife a sad widow: and just so are our prayers for

their relief: if we thought their evils to be ours,—if we and they, as members of the same body, had sensible and real communications of good and evil,—if we understood what is really meant by being “members one of another,” or if we did not think it a spiritual word of art, instrumental only to a science, but no part of duty, or real relation,—surely we should pray more earnestly one for another than we usually do. How few of us are troubled, when he sees his brother wicked, or dishonourably vicious! Who is sad and melancholy, when his neighbour is almost in hell? when he sees him grow old in iniquity? How many days have we set apart for the public relief and interests of the kingdom? How earnestly have we fasted, if our prince be sick or afflicted? What alms have we given for our brother’s conversion? Or if this be great, how importunate and passionate have we been with God by prayer in his behalf, by prayer and secret petition? But, however, though it were well, very well, that all of us would think of his duty a little more; because, besides the excellency of the duty itself, it would have this blessed consequent, that for whose necessities we pray, if we do desire earnestly they should be relieved, we would, whenever we can, and in all we can, set our hands to it; and if we pity the orphan-children, and pray for them heartily, we would also, when we could, relieve them charitably: but though it were therefore very well, that things were thus with all men, yet God, who takes care of us all, makes provision for us in special manner; and the whole order of the clergy are appointed by God to pray for others to be ministers of Christ’s priesthood, to be followers of his avocation, to stand between God and the people, and to present to God all their needs, and all their desires. That this God hath ordained and appointed, and that this rather he will bless and accept, appears by the testimony of God himself, for he only can be witness in this particular, for it depends wholly upon his gracious favour and acceptance. It was the case of Abraham and Abimelech: “Now, therefore, restore the man his wife, for he is a prophet, and he will pray for thee, and thou shalt live:”* and this caused confidence in Micah: “Now know I that the Lord will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest:”† meaning that in his ministry,

in the ministry of priests, God hath established the alternate returns of blessing and prayers, the intercourses between God and his people; and through the descending ages of the synagogue it came to be transmitted also to the Christian church, that the ministers of religion are advocates for us under Christ, by “the ministry of reconciliation,” by their dispensing the holy sacraments, by “the keys of the kingdom of heaven,” by baptism and the Lord’s supper, by “binding and loosing,” by “the word of God and prayers;” and, therefore, saith St. James, “If any man be sick among you, let him send for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him:”‡ meaning that God hath appointed them especially, and will accept them in ordinary and extraordinary; and this is that which is meant by blessing. A father blesses his child, and Solomon blessed his people, and Melchisedec the priest blessed Abraham, and Moses blessed the sons of Israel, and God appointed the Levitical priest to “bless the congregation;” and this is more than can be done by the people; for though they can say the same prayer, and the people pray for their kings, and children for their parents, and the flock for the pastor, yet they cannot bless him as he blesseth them; “for the less is blessed of the greater, and not the greater of the less;” and this is “without all contradiction,” said St. Paul:† the meaning of the mystery is this, That God hath appointed the priest to pray for the people, and because he hath made it to be his ordinary office and employment, he also intends to be seen in that way, which he hath appointed, and chalked out for us; his prayer, if it be “found in the way of righteousness,” is the surer way to prevail in his intercessions for the people.

But upon this stock comes in the greatest difficulty of the text: for if “God heareth not sinners,” there is an infinite necessity, that the ministers of religion should be very holy: for all their ministries consist in preaching and praying; to these two are reducible all the ministries ecclesiastical, which are of Divine institution: so the apostles summed up their employment: “But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word:”‡ to exhort, to reprove, to comfort, to cast down, to determine cases of conscience, and to rule in the church by “the word of their

* Gen. xx. 7.

† Judg. xvii. 13.

* James v. 14. † Heb. vii. 7. ‡ Acts vi. 4.

proper ministry;" and the very making laws ecclesiastical, is the ministry of the word; for so their dictates pass into laws by being duties enjoined by God, or the acts, or exercises, or instruments of some enjoined graces. To prayer is reduced "administration of the sacraments;" but "binding and losing," and "visitation of the sick," are mixed offices, partly relating to one, partly to the other. Now although the word of God preached will have a great effect, even though it be preached by an evil minister, a vicious person; yet it is not so well there as from a pious man, because by prayer also his preaching is made effectual, and by his good example his homilies and sermons are made active; and therefore it is very necessary in respect of this half of the minister's office, "the preaching of the word," he be a good man; unless he be, much perishes to the people, most of the advantages are lost. But then for the other half, all those ministries which are by way of prayer, are rendered extremely invalid, and ineffectual, if they be ministered by an evil person. For upon this very stock it was that St. Cyprian affirmed, that none were to be chosen to the ministry but "immaculati et integri antistites, 'holy and upright men,' who, offering their sacrifices worthily to God and holily, may be heard in their prayers, which they make for the safety of the Lord's people."* But he presses this caution to a further issue: that it is not only necessary to choose holy persons to these holy ministries for fear of losing the advantages of a sanctified ministry, but also that the people may not be guilty of an evil communion, and a criminal state of society. "Nec enim sibi plebs blandiatur, quasi immunis a contagione delicti esse possit, cum sacerdote peccatore communicans; 'The people cannot be innocent if they communicate with a vicious priest:' for so said the Lord by the prophet Hosea, *Sacrificia eorum panis luctus*; for 'their sacrifices are like bread of sorrow,' whosoever eats thereof shall be defiled." The same also he says often and more vehemently, *ibid. et lib. 4. ep. 2.* But there is yet a further degree of this evil. It is not only a loss, and also criminal to the people, to communicate with a minister of a notorious evil life and scandalous, but it is affirmed by the doctors of the church to be wholly without effect; and their prayers are sins,

* Lib. i. Ep. 4.

their sacraments are null and ineffective, their communions are without consecration, their hand is *χειρ άκυρος*, "a dead hand," the blessing vain, their sacrifices rejected, their ordinations imperfect, their order is vanished, their character is extinguished, and the Holy Ghost will not descend upon the mysteries, when he is invocated by unholy hands and unsanctified lips. This is a sad story, but it is expressly affirmed by Dionysius, by St. Jerome upon the second chapter of Zephaniah,* affirming that they do wickedly who affirm, "Eucharistiam imprecantis facere verba, non vitam; et necessariam esse tantum solennem orationem et non sacerdotum merita;" "that the eucharist is consecrated by the word and solemn prayer, and not by the life and holiness of the priest;" and by St. Gelasius,† by the author of the imperfect work attributed to St. Chrysostom,‡ who quotes the eighth book of the Apostolical Constitutions for the same doctrine; the words of which in the first chapter are so plain, that Bovius§ and Sixtus Senensis¶ accuse both the author of the Apostolical Constitutions, and St. Jerome, and the author of these homilies, to be guilty of the doctrine of John Huss, who for the crude delivery of this truth was sentenced by the council of Constance. To the same sense and signification of doctrine is that, which is generally agreed upon by almost all persons; that he that enters into his ministry by simony, receives nothing but a curse, which is expressly affirmed by Petrus Damiani,¶ and Tarasius** the patriarch of Constantinople, by St. Gregory,†† and St. Ambrose.‡‡

For if the Holy Ghost leaves polluted temples and unchaste bodies, if he takes away his grace from them that abuse it, if the Holy Ghost would not have descended upon Simon Magus at the prayer of St. Peter, if St. Peter had taken money from him: it is but reasonable to believe the Holy Ghost will not descend upon the simoniacal, unchaste concubinaries, schismatics, and scandalous priests, and excommunicate. And besides the reasonableness of the doctrine, it is also further affirmed by the council of Neocæsarea, by St. Chrysostom,§§ Innocentius,¶¶ Nicholaus the

* Ad Demo. † I. q. I. c. sacro sancta. ‡ Homil. 53. § In Scholiis ad hunc locum. ¶ Lib. vi. A. D. 108. Biblioth. † Ep. 16. Biblioth. pp. tom. 3. n. 19. ** Decret. I. q. I. ad c. eos qui. †† Lib. vi. regist. 5. in decretis et I. vii. c. 120. ‡‡ De dignit. sacerd. c. 5. §§ Can. 9. orat. 4. de sacerd. ¶¶ I. in ep. 20. hom I. part. 2. ep. 27.

first,* and by the Master of the Sentences upon the saying of God by the prophet Malachi, i. "Maledicam benedictionibus vestris," "I will curse your blessings:" upon the stock of these scriptures, reasons, and authorities, we may see how we are to understand this advantage of intercession. The prayer and offices of the holy ministers are of great advantages for the interest of the people; but if they be ministered to by evil men, by vicious and scandalous ministers, this extraordinary advantage is lost, they are left to stand alone or to fall by their own crimes; so much as is the action of God, and so much as is the piety of the man that attends and prays in the holy place with the priest, so far he shall prevail, but no farther; and therefore, the church hath taught her ministers to pray thus in their preparatory prayer to consecration; "Quoniam me peccatorem inter te et eundem populum medium esse voluisti, licet in me boni operis testimonium non agnoscas, officium dispensationis creditæ non recuses, nec per me, indignum famulum tuum, eorum salutis pereat pretium, pro quibus victima factus salutaris, dignatus est fieri redemptio." For we must know, that God hath not put the salvation of any man into the power of another. And although the church of Rome, by calling the priest's actual intention simply necessary, and the sacraments also indispensibly necessary, hath left it in the power of every curate to damn very many of his parish; yet it is otherwise with the accounts of truth and the Divine mercy; and, therefore, he will never exact the sacraments of us by the measures and proportions of an evil priest, but by the piety of the communicant, by the prayers of Christ, and the mercies of God. But although the greatest interest of salvation depends not upon this ministry; yet, as by this we receive many advantages, if the minister be holy; so, if he be vicious, we lose all that which could be conveyed to us by his part of the holy ministration; every man and woman in the assembly prays and joins in the effect, and for the obtaining the blessing; but the more vain persons are assembled, the less benefits are received, even by good men there present; and therefore, much is the loss, if a wicked priest ministers, though the sum of affairs is not entirely turned upon his office or default, yet many advantages are. For we must not think, that

the effect of the sacraments is indivisibly done at once, or by one ministry; but they operate by parts, and by moral operation, by the length of time, and whole order of piety, and holy ministries; every man is *συνεργός του Θεου*, "a fellow-worker with God," in the work of his salvation; and as in our devotion, no one prayer of our own alone prevails upon God for grace and salvation, but all the devotions of our life are upon God's account for them; so is the blessing of God brought upon the people by all the parts of their religion, and by all the assistances of holy people, and by the ministries, not of one, but of all God's ministers, and relies finally upon our own faith, and obedience, and the mercies of God in Jesus Christ; but yet, for want of holy persons to minister, much diminution of blessing and a loss of advantage is unavoidable; therefore, if they have great necessities, they can best hope, that God will be moved to mercy on their behalf, if their necessities be recommended to God by persons of a great piety, of a holy calling, and by the most solemn offices.

Lastly, I promised to consider concerning the signs of having our prayers heard: concerning which, there is not much of particular observation; but if our prayers be according to the warrant of God's word, if we ask according to God's will things honest and profitable, we are to rely upon the promises; and we are sure that they are heard, and, besides this, we can have no sign but "the thing signified;" when we feel the effect, then we are sure God hath heard us; but till then we are to leave it with God, and not to ask a sign of that, for which he hath made us a promise. And yet Cassian hath named one sign, which, if you give me leave, I will name unto you. "It is a sign we shall prevail in our prayers, when the Spirit of God moves us to pray,—*cum fiducia et quasi securitate impetrandi*,' 'with a confidence and a holy security of receiving what we ask.'"[†] But this is no otherwise a sign, but because it is a part of the duty; and trusting in God is an endearing him, and doubting is a dishonour to him; and he that doubts hath no faith; for all good prayers rely upon God's word, and we must judge of the effect by Providence; for he that asks what is "not lawful," hath made an unholy prayer; if it be lawful and "not profitable" we are then heard, when God denies us;

* Ep. 9. Tom. 3. ad Micael. imperator. d. in 4. dist. 13.

† Collat. ix. c. 23.

and if both these be in the prayer, "he that doubts is a sinner," and then God will not hear him; but beyond this I know no confidence is warrantable; and if this be a sign of prevailing, then all the prudent prayers of all holy men shall certainly be heard; and because that is certain, we need no farther inquiry into signs.

I sum up all in the words of God by the prophet; "Run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if you can find a man; if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh truth, 'virum quærentem fidem,' 'a man that seeketh for faith;' 'et propitius ero ei,' and I will pardon it.'"* God would pardon all Jerusalem for one good man's sake; there are such days and opportunities of mercy, when God, at the prayer of one holy person, will save a people; and Ruffinus spake a great thing, but it was hugely true; "Quis dubitet mundum stare precibus sanctorum?" "the world itself is established and kept from dissolution by the prayers of saints;" and the prayers of saints shall hasten the day of judgment; and we cannot easily find two effects greater. But there are many other very great ones; for the prayers of holy men appease God's wrath, drive away temptations, and resist and overcome the devil: holy prayer procures the ministry and service of angels, it rescinds the decrees of God, it cures sicknesses and obtains pardon, it arrests the sun in its course, and stays the wheels of the chariot of the moon; it rules over all God's creatures, and opens and shuts the storehouses of rain; it unlocks the cabinet of the womb, and quenches the violence of fire; it stops the mouths of lions, and reconciles our sufferance and weak faculties, with the violence of torment and sharpness of persecution; it pleases God and supplies all our needs. But prayer that can do thus much for us, can do nothing at all without holiness; for "God heareth not sinners, but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth."

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SERMON VII.

OF GODLY FEAR, &c.

PART I.

Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God with reverence and godly fear. For our God is

* Jer. v. 1.

a consuming fire.—Heb. xii. part of the 28th and 29th verses.

ΕΚΩΜΕΝ τὴν χάριν, so our Testaments usually read it, from the authority of Theophylact; "Let us have grace," but some copies read in the indicative mood, ἔχομεν. "We have grace, by which we do serve;" and it is something better consonant to the discourse of the apostle. For having enumerated the great advantages, which the gospel hath above those of the law, he makes an argument "a majori;" and answers a tacit objection. The law was delivered by angels, but the gospel by the Son of God: the law was delivered from mount Sinai, the gospel from mount Sion, from "the heavenly Jerusalem:" the law was given with terrors and noises, with amazements of the standers-by, and Moses himself, "the minister, did exceedingly quake and fear," and gave demonstration how infinitely dangerous it was by breaking that law to provoke so mighty a God, who with his voice did shake the earth; but the gospel was given by a meek Prince, a gentle Saviour, with a still voice, scarce heard in the streets. But that this may be no objection, he proceeds and declares the terror of the Lord: "Deceive not yourselves, our Lawgiver appeared so upon earth, and was so truly, but now he is ascended into heaven, and from thence he speaks to us." See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if they escaped not, who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven;"* for as God once shook the earth, and that was full of terror, so our Lawgiver shall do, and much more, and be far more terrible, Ἐτι ἀπαξ ἐγὼ σεισῶ τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ τὴν ἕρπην, said the prophet Haggai, which the apostle quotes here, he once shook the earth. But "once more I shake;"† *σεισῶ*, it is in the prophecy, "I will shake, not the earth only, but also heaven,"‡ with a greater terror than was upon mount Sinai, with the voice of an archangel, with the trumpet of God, with a concussion so great, that heaven and earth shall be shaken in pieces, and new ones come in their room. This is an unspeakable and an unimaginable terror: Mount Sinai was shaken, but it stands to this day; but when that shaking shall be, "the things that are shaken shall be no more; that those things that cannot be shaken may

* Heb. xii. 25. † ii. 6.

remain:" that is, not only that the celestial Jerusalem may remain for ever, but that you, who do not turn away from the faith and obedience of the Lord Jesus, you, who cannot be shaken nor removed from your duty, you may remain for ever; that when the rocks rend, and the mountains fly in pieces, like the drops of a broken cloud, and the heavens shall melt, and the sun shall be a globe of consuming fire, and the moon shall be dark like an extinguished candle, then you poor men, who could be made to tremble with an ague, or shake by the violence of a northern wind, or be removed from your dwellings by the unjust decree of a persecutor, or be thrown from your estates by the violence of an unjust man, yet could not be removed from your duty, and though you went trembling, yet would go to death for the testimony of a holy cause, and you that would die for your faith, would also live according to it; you shall be established by the power of God, and supported by the arm of your Lord, and shall in all this great shaking be unmovable; as the cornerstone of the gates of the New Jerusalem, you shall remain and abide for ever. This is your case. And, to sum up the whole force of the argument, the apostle adds the words of Moses: as it was then, so it is true now, "Our God is a consuming fire;"* he was so to them that brake the law, but he will be much more to them that disobey his Son; he made great changes then, but those which remain are far greater, and his terrors are infinitely more intolerable; and therefore, although he came not in the spirit of Elias, but with meekness and gentle insinuations, soft as the breath of heaven, not willing to disturb the softest stalk of a violet, yet his second coming shall be with terrors such as shall amaze all the world, and dissolve it into ruin and a chaos. This truth is of so great efficacy to make us do our duty, that now we are sufficiently enabled with this consideration. This is the grace which we have to enable us, this terror will produce fear, and fear will produce obedience, and "we therefore have grace," that is, we have such a motive to make us reverence God and fear to offend him, that he that dares continue in sin, and refuses to hear him that speaks to us from heaven, and from thence shall come with terrors, this man despises the grace of God, he is a graceless, fearless, impudent man, and he shall find

that true in "hypothesi," and in his own ruin, which the apostle declares in "thesi," and by way of caution, and provisional terror, "Our God is a consuming fire;" this is the sense and design of the text.

Reverence and godly fear, they are the effects of this consideration, they are the duties of every Christian, they are the graces of God. I shall not press them only to purposes of awfulness and modesty of opinion and prayers, against those strange doctrines, which some have introduced into religion, to the destruction of all manners and prudent apprehensions of the distances of God and man; such as are the doctrine of necessity of familiarity with God, and a civil friendship, and a party of estate, and an evenness of adoption; from whence proceed rudeness in prayer, flat and indecent expressions, affected rudeness, superstitious sitting at the holy sacrament, making it to be a part of religion to be without fear and reverence; the stating of the question is a sufficient reproof of this folly; whatsoever actions are brought into religion without "reverence and godly fear," are therefore to be avoided, because they are condemned in this advice of the apostle, and are destructive of those effects which are to be imprinted upon our spirits by the terrors of the day of judgment. But this fear and reverence, the apostle intends, should be a delatory to all sin whatsoever; φοβερὸν δηλατέριον φόβος, φυγή says the Etymologicum: "Whatever is terrible, is destructive of that thing for which it is so;" and if we fear the evil effects of sin, let us fly from it, we ought to fear its alluring face too; let us be so afraid, that we may not dare to refuse to hear him whose throne is heaven, whose voice is thunder, whose tribunal is clouds, whose seat is the right hand of God, whose word is with power; whose law is given with mighty demonstration of the Spirit, who shall reward with heaven and joys eternal, and who punishes his rebels, that will not have him to reign over them, with brimstone and fire, with a worm that never dies, and a fire that never is quenched; let us fear him who is terrible in his judgments, just in his dispensation, secret in his providence, severe in his demands, gracious in his assistances, bountiful in his gifts, and is never wanting to us in what we need; and if all this be not argument strong enough to produce fear, and that fear great enough to secure obedience, all arguments are useless, all discourses are vain, the grace of God is ineffective, and we

*Deut. iv. 24.

are as dull as the Dead sea; inactive as a rock, and we shall never dwell with God in any sense, but as "he is a consuming fire," that is, dwell in everlasting burnings.

Αἰδώς καὶ εὐλάβεια, Reverence and caution, modesty and fear, μετὰ εὐλαβείας καὶ δέους, so it is in some copies, with *caution* and *fear*; or if we render *εὐλάβεια* to be "fear of punishment," as it is generally understood by interpreters of this place, and is in Hesychius *εὐλαβεῖσθαι, φυλάττεσθαι, φοβεῖσθαι*, then the expression is the same in both words, and it is all one with the other places of Scripture, "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling," degrees of the same duty; and they signify all those actions and graces, which are the proper effluxes of fear; such as are reverence, prudence, caution, and diligence, chastity, and a sober spirit; *εὐλάβεια, σεμνότης*, so also say the grammarians; and it means plainly this: since our God will appear so terrible at his second coming, "let us pass the time of our sojourning here in fear,"* that is, modestly, without too great confidence of ourselves; soberly, without bold crimes, which when a man acts, he must put on shamelessness; reverently towards God, as fearing to offend him; diligently observing his commandments, inquiring after his will, trembling at his voice, attending to his word, reverencing his judgments, fearing to provoke him to anger; for "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Thus far it is a duty.

Concerning which, that I may proceed orderly, I shall first consider how far fear is a duty of Christian religion. 2. Who and what states of men ought to fear, and upon what reasons. 3. What is the excess of fear, or the obliquity and irregularity whereby it becomes dangerous, penal, and criminal; a state of evil, and not a state of duty.

1. Fear is taken sometimes in Holy Scripture for the whole duty of man, for his whole religion towards God. "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God?"†—*fear is obedience*, and *fear is love*, and *fear is humility*, because it is the parent of all these, and is taken for the whole duty to which it is an introduction. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and a good understanding have all they that do thereafter; the praise of it endureth for ever:‡" and, "Fear God and keep his com-

mandments, for this is the whole duty of man:"§ and thus it is also used in the New Testament: "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."¶

2. *Fear* is sometimes taken for *worship*: for so our blessed Saviour expounds the words of Moses in Matt. iv. 10, taken from Deut. x. 20. "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God," so Moses; "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," said our blessed Saviour; and so it was used by the prophet Jonah; "I am a Hebrew, and I fear the Lord the God of heaven,"‡ that is, I worship him; he is the Deity that I adore, that is, my worship and my religion; and because the new colony of Assyrians did not do so, at the beginning of their dwelling there, "they feared not the Lord," that is, they worshipped other gods, and not the God of Israel, therefore God sent lions among them, which slew many of them.¶ Thus far fear is not a distinct duty, but a word signifying something besides itself; and therefore cannot come into the consideration of this text. Therefore, 3. *Fear*, as it is a religious passion, is divided as the two Testaments are; and relates to the old and new covenant, and accordingly hath its distinction. In the law, God used his people like servants; in the gospel, he hath made us to be sons. In the law, he enjoined many things, hard, intricate, various, painful, and expensive; in the gospel, he gave commandments, not hard, but full of pleasure, necessary and profitable to our life, and well-being of single persons and communities of men. In the law, he hath exacted those many precepts by the covenant of exact measures, grains and scruples; in the gospel, he makes abatement for human infirmities, temptations, moral necessities, mistakes, errors, for every thing that is pitiable, for every thing that is not malicious and voluntary. In the law, there are many threatenings, and but few promises, the promise of temporal prosperities branched into single instances; in the gospel, there are but few threatenings, and many promises: and when God by Moses gave the ten commandments, only one of them was sent out with a promise, the precept of obedience to all our parents and superiors; but when Christ in his first sermon recommended eight duties, § Christian

* 1 Pet. i. 17. † Deut. x. 12. ‡ Psal. cxi. 10.

* Eccles. xii. 13. † 2 Cor. vii. 1. ‡ Jonah i. 9. § 2 Kings xvii. 25. ¶ Matt. v. ad v. 10.

duties to the college of disciples, every one of them begins with a blessing and ends with a promise, and therefore *grace* is opposed to *law*.^{*} So that upon these different interests, the world put on the affections of servants, and sons; they of old feared God as a severe Lord, much in his commands, abundant in threatenings, angry in his executions, terrible in his name, in his majesty and appearance dreadful unto death; and this the apostle calls πνεῦμα δουλείας, “the spirit of bondage,” or of a servant. But we have not received that Spirit, εἰς φόβον, “unto fear,” not a servile fear, “but the spirit of adoption” and filial fear we must have; †— God treats us like sons, he keeps us under discipline, but designs us to the inheritance: and his government is paternal, his disciplines are merciful, his conduct gentle, his Son is our Brother, and our Brother is our Lord, and our Judge is our Advocate, and our priest hath felt our infirmities, and therefore knows how to pity them, and he is our Lord, and therefore he can relieve them: and from hence we have affections of sons; so that a fear we must not have, and yet a fear we must have; and by these proportions we understand the difference: “Malo vereri quàm timeri me a meis,” said one in the comedy, “I had rather be revered than feared by my children.” The English doth not well express the difference, but the apostle doth it rarely well. For that which he calls πνεῦμα δουλείας in Rom. viii. 15, he calls πνεῦμα δευλείας, 2 Tim. i. 7. The spirit of bondage is the spirit of *timorousness*, or *fearfulness*, rather than *fear*; when we are fearful that God will use us harshly; or when we think of the accidents that happen, worse than the things are, when they are proportioned by measures of eternity; and from this opinion conceive forced resolutions and unwilling obedience. Χείρους δὲ ὅσοι οὐ διὰ ἀδῶ, ἀλλὰ διὰ φόβον αὐτοῦ δρῶσι, καὶ φεύγοντες οὐ τὸ αἰσχρὸν, ἀλλὰ τὸ λυπηρὸν, said Aristotle; “Good men are guided by reverence, not by fear, and they avoid not that which is afflictive, but that which is dishonest;” they are not so good whose rule is otherwise. But that we may take more exact measures, I shall describe the proportions of Christian or godly fear by the following propositions.

I. Godly fear is ever without despair;— because Christian fear is an instrument of

duty, and that duty without hope can never go forward. For what should that man do, who, like Nausiclides, οὐτε ἔαρ, οὐτε φιλίους ἔχρη, “hath neither spring nor harvest,” friends nor children, rewards nor hopes? A man will very hardly be brought to deny his own pleasing appetite, when for so doing he cannot hope to have recompense; when the mind of a man is between hope and fear, it is intent upon its work; “At postquam adempta spes est, lassus, curâ confectus, stupet,” “If you take away the hope, the mind is weary, spent with care, hindered by amazements:” “Aut aliquem sumpserimus temeraria in Deos desperatione,” saith Arnobius; “A despair of mercy makes men to despise God:” and the damned in hell, when they shall for ever be without hope, are also without fear; their hope is turned into despair, and their fear into blasphemy, and they curse the fountain of blessing, and revile God to eternal ages. When Dyonysius the tyrant imposed intolerable tributes upon his Sicilian subjects, it amazed them, and they petitioned and cried for help, and flattered him, and feared and obeyed him carefully; but he imposed still new ones, and greater, and at last left them poor as the valleys of Vesuvius, or the top of Ætna; but then, all being gone, the people grew idle and careless, and walked in the markets and public places, cursing the tyrant, and bitterly scoffing his person and vices; which when Dionysius heard, he caused his publicans and committees to withdraw their impost: for “now (says he) they are dangerous, because they are desperate,” εὐν γὰρ, οὐδὲν ἔχουσιν, ὅτε καταφρονοῦσιν ἡμῶν. When men have nothing left, they will despise their rulers: and so it is in religion; “Audaces cogimur esse metu.” If our fears be unreasonable, our diligence is none at all; and from whom we hope for nothing, neither benefit nor indemnity, we despise his command, and break his yoke, and trample it under our most miserable feet; and therefore, Æschylus calls these people θερμούς, “hot,” mad, and furious, careless of what they do, and he opposes them to pious and holy people. Let your confidence be allayed with fear, and your fear be sharpened with the intertextures of a holy hope, and the active powers of our souls are furnished with feet and wings, with eyes and hands, with consideration and diligence, with reason and encouragements: but despair is part of the punishment that is in hell, and the devils still do

* John i. 17. † Rom. vi. 14, 15. ‡ Rom. viii. 15.

evil things, because they never hope to receive a good, nor find a pardon.

2. Godly fear must always be with honourable opinion of God,—without disparagements of his mercies, without quarrellings at the intrigues of his providence, or the rough ways of his justice; and therefore it must be ever relative to ourselves and our own failings and imperfections.

Θαρσείτ' οὐπὼ Ζεὺς ἀνέχεται λοξὸν ἔχει.

“God never walks perversely towards us, unless we walk crookedly towards him:” and therefore persons,—that only consider the greatness and power of God, and dwell for ever in the meditation of those severe executions, which are transmitted to us by story, or we observe by accident and conversation,—are apt to be jealous concerning God, and fear him as an enemy, or as children fear fire, or women thunder, only because it can hurt them; Sæpius illud cogitant, quid possit is, cujus in ditione sunt, quam quid debeat facere” (*Cicero pro Quinctio*): “They remember oftener what God can do, than what he will;” being more affrighted at his judgments, than delighted with his mercy. Such as were the Lacedæmonians, whenever they saw a man grow popular, or wise, or beloved, and by consequence powerful, they turned him out of the country: and because they were afraid of the power of Ismenias, and knew that Pelopidas and Pherenicus and Androcydes could hurt them, if they listed, they banished them from Sparta, but they let Epaminondas alone, ὡς διὰ μὲν φιλοσοφίαν ἀπράγμωνα διὰ δὲ πενίαν ἀδύνατον, “as being studious and therefore inactive, and poor and therefore harmless:” it is harder when men use God thus, and fear him as the great justiciary of the world; who sits in heaven, and observes all we do, and cannot want excuse to punish all mankind. But this caution I have now inserted for their sakes, whose schools and pulpits raise doctrinal fears concerning God; which, if they were true, the greatest part of mankind would be tempted to think, they have reason not to love God; and all the other part, that have not apprehended a reason to hate him, would have very much reason to suspect his severity, and their own condition. Such are they, which say, That God hath decreed the greatest part of mankind to eternal damnation; and that only to declare his severity, and to manifest his glory by a triumph in our torments, and rejoicings in the gnashing

of our teeth. And they also fear God unreasonably, and speak no good things concerning his name, who say, That God commands us to observe laws which are impossible; that think he will condemn innocent persons for errors of judgment, which they cannot avoid; that condemn whole nations for different opinions, which they are pleased to call heresy; that think God will exact the duties of a man by the measures of an angel, or will not make abatement for all our pitiable infirmities. The precepts of this caution are, that we remember God’s mercies to be over all his works, that is, that he shows mercy to all his creatures that need it; that God delights to have his mercy magnified in all things, and by all persons, and at all times, and will not suffer his greatest honour to be most of all undervalued; and therefore as he, that would accuse God of injustice, were a blasphemer, so he that suspects his mercy, dishonours God as much, and produces in himself that fear, which is the parent of trouble, but no instrument of duty.

3. Godly fear is operative, diligent, and instrumental to caution and strict walking: for so fear is the mother of holy living; and the apostle urges it by way of upbraiding: “What! do we provoke God to anger? Are we stronger than he?”* meaning, “that if we be not strong enough to struggle with a fever, if our voices cannot outroar thunder, if we cannot check the ebbing and flowing of the sea, if we cannot add one cubit to our stature, how shall we escape the mighty hand of God?” And here, heighten your apprehensions of the Divine power, of his justice and severity, of the fierceness of his anger, and the sharpness of his sword, the heaviness of his hand and the swiftness of his arrows, as much as ever you can; provided the effect pass on no farther, but to make us reverent and obedient: but that fear is unreasonable, servile, and unchristian, that ends in bondage and servile affections, scruple and trouble, vanity and incredulity, superstition and desperation: its proper bounds are “humble and devout prayers,” and “a strict and holy piety” according to his laws, and glorification of God,” or speaking good things of his holy name; and then it cannot be amiss: we must be full of confidence towards God, we must with cheerfulness rely upon God’s goodness for the issue of

* 1 Cor. x. 22.

our souls, and our final interests; but this expectation of the Divine mercy must be in the ways of piety: "Commit yourselves to God in well-doing as unto a faithful Creator."* Alcibiades was too timorous; who being called from banishment refused to return, and being asked, If he durst not trust his country, answered, *Τὰ μὲν ἄλλα πάντα, περὶ δὲ ψυχῆς τῆς ἐμῆς οὐδὲ τῆ μητρὶ' μήπως ἀγνοήσασα, τὴν μέλαιναν ἀντὶ τῆς λευκῆς ἐπενέγκη Φήρον*, "In every thing else, but in the question of his life he would not trust his mother, lest ignorantly she should mistake the black bean for the white, and intending a favour should do him a mischief." We must, we may most safely, trust God with our souls; the stake is great, but the venture is none at all: for he is our Creator, and he is faithful; he is our Redeemer, and he bought them at a dear rate; he is our Lord, and they are his own, he prays for them to his heavenly Father, and therefore he is an interested person. So that he is a party, and an advocate, and a judge too; and therefore there can be no greater security in the world on God's part; and this is our hope, and our confidence: but because we are but earthen vessels under a law, and assaulted by enemies, and endangered by temptations; therefore it concerns us to fear, lest we make God our enemy, and a party against us. And this brings me to the next part of the consideration; Who and what states of men ought to fear, and for what reasons? For, as the former cautions did limit, so this will encourage; those did direct, but this will exercise our godly fear.

1. I shall not here insist upon the general reason of fear, which concerns every man, though it be most certain, that every one hath cause to fear, even the most confident and holy, because his way is dangerous and narrow, troublesome and uneven, full of ambushes and pitfalls; and I remember what Polynices said in the tragedy, when he was unjustly thrown from his father's kingdom, and refused to treat of peace but with a sword in his hand, *Ἄπαντα γὰρ τοῦ μῶσι δεινὸν φαίνεται. Ὅταν δὲ ἐχθρὰς ποίς ἀμείβηται χθονός*† "Every step is a danger for a valiant man, when he walks in his enemy's country;" and so it is with us: we are espied by God, and observed by angels: we are betrayed within, and assaulted without; the devil is our enemy, and we are fond of his mischiefs; he is crafty, and we

love to be abused; he is malicious, and we are credulous; he is powerful and we are weak; he is too ready of himself, and yet we desire to be tempted; the world is alluring, and we consider not its vanity; sin puts on all pleasures, and yet we take it, though it puts us to pain: in short, we are vain, and credulous, and sensual, and trifling; we are tempted, and tempt ourselves, and we sin frequently, and contract evil habits, and they become second natures, and bring in a second death miserable and eternal: every man hath need to fear because every man hath weakness, and enemies, and temptations, and dangers, and causes, of his own. But I shall only instance in some peculiar sorts of men, who, it may be, least think of it, and, therefore, have most cause to fear.

1. Are those of whom the apostle speaks, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."* *Ἐν ξυνοῖ ἐχθρὸν ἀπάθαι οὐκ ἐνεύεισι*, (ὡς φησὶν ὁ Δημόκριτος) said the Greek proverb, "In ordinary fish we shall never meet with thorns, and spiny prickles:" and in persons of ordinary even course of life, we find in it too often, that they have no checks of conscience, or sharp reflections upon their condition; they fall into no horrid crimes, and they think all is peace round about them. But you must know, that as grace is the improvement and bettering of nature, and Christian graces are the perfections of moral habits, and are but new circumstances, formalities, and degrees; so it grows in natural measures by supernatural aids, and it hath its degrees, its strengths and weaknesses, its promotions and arrests, its stations and declensions, its direct sicknesses and indispositions: and there is a state of grace that is next to sin; it inclines to evil and dwells with a temptation; its acts are imperfect, and the man is within the kingdom, but he lives in its borders, and is "dubiæ jurisdictionis." These men have cause to fear; these men seem to stand, but they reel indeed, and decline towards danger and death. "Let these men (saith the apostle) take heed lest they fall," for they shake already; such are persons, whom the Scriptures call "weak in faith." I do not mean new beginners in religion, but such, who have dwelt long in its confines, and yet never enter into the heart of the country; such whose faith is tempted, whose piety does not grow; such who yield a little;

* 1 Pet. iv. 19. † Apud Empir. in Phœnissis.

* 1 Cor. x. 12.

people that do all that they can lawfully do, and study how much is lawful, that they may lose nothing of a temporal interest; people that will not be martyrs in any degree, and yet have good affections; and love the cause of religion, and yet will suffer nothing for it: these are such of which the apostle speaks, *δοκῶν ἰστᾶναι*, "they think they stand," and so they do upon one leg, that is, so long as they are untempted; but when the tempter comes, then they fall and bemoan themselves, that by losing peace they lost their inheritance. There are a great many sorts of such persons: some, when they are full, are content and rejoice in God's providence; but murmur and are amazed, when they fall into poverty. They are chaste, so long as they are within the protection of marriage, but when they return to liberty, they fall into bondage, and complain they cannot help it. They are temperate and sober, if you let them alone at home; but call them abroad, and they will lose their sober thoughts, as Dinah did her honour, by going into new company. These men in these estates think they stand, but God knows they are soon weary, and stand stiff as a cane, which the heat of the Syrian star, or the flames of the sun, cannot bend; but one sigh of a northern wind shakes them into the tremblings of a palsy: in this the best advice is, that such persons should watch their own infirmities, and see on which side they are most open, and by what enemies they use to fall, and to fly from such parties, as they would avoid death. But certainly they have great cause to fear, who are sure to be sick when the weather changes: or can no longer retain their possession, but till an enemy please to take it away; or will preserve their honour, but till some smiling temptation ask them to forego it.

2. They also have great reason to fear, whose repentance is broke into fragments, and is never a whole or entire change of life: I mean those, that resolve against a sin, and pray against it, and hate it in all the resolutions of their understanding, till that unlucky period comes, in which they use to act it; but then they sin as certainly, as they will infallibly repent it, when they have done: there are a great many Christians, who are esteemed of the better sort of penitents, yet feel this feverish repentance to be their best state of health; they fall certainly in the returns of the same circumstances, or at a certain distance of time; but,

God knows, they do not get the victory over their sin, but are within its power. For this is certain, they who sin and repent, and sin again in the same or like circumstances, are in some degree under the power and dominion of sin; when their action can be reduced to an order or a method, to a rule or a certainty, that oftener hits than fails, that sin is habitual; though it be the least habit, yet a habit it is; every course, or order, or method of sin, every constant or periodical return, every return that can be regularly observed, or which a man can foresee, or probably foretell, even then when he does not intend it, but prays against it, every such sin is to be reckoned, not for a single action, or upon the accounts of a pardonable infirmity, but it is a combination, an evil state, such a thing as the man ought to fear concerning himself, lest he be surprised and called from this world, before this evil state be altered: for if he be, his securities are but slender, and his hopes will deceive him. It was a severe doctrine that was maintained by some great clerks and holy men in the primitive church, "That repentance was to be but once after baptism:" "One faith, one Lord, one baptism, one repentance;"* all these the Scripture saith; and it is true, if by repentance we mean the entire change of our condition; for he that returns willingly to the state of an unbelieving, or heathen, profane person, entirely and choosingly, in defiance of, and apostasy from, his religion, cannot be renewed again; as the apostle twice affirms in his epistle to the Hebrews. But then, concerning this state of apostasy, when it happened in the case, not of faith, but of charity and obedience, there were many fears and jealousies: they were, therefore, very severe in their doctrines, lest men should fall into so evil a condition, they enlarged their fear, that they might be stricter in their duty; and generally this they did believe, that every second repentance was worse than the first, and the third worse than the second, and still as the sin returned, the Spirit of God did the less love to inhabit; and if he were provoked too often, would so withdraw his aids and comfortable cohabitation, that the church had little comfort in such children; so said Clemens Alexandr. *Stromat.* 2. *Αἱ δὲ συνεχεῖς καὶ ἐπ' ἀλλήλαις ἐπὶ τοῖς ἁμαρτήμασι μετανοοῖαι, οὐδὲν τῶν καθάρων μὴ πεπιστευκότων διαφέρουσιν*

* Heb. vi. 6. x. 26. 2 Pet. ii. 22.

“Those frequent and alternate repentances, that is, repentances and sinnings interchangeably, differ not from the conditions of men that are not within the covenant of grace, from them that are not believers,” ἢ μόνον τῷ οὐκ ἀποδέξασθαι ὅτι ἀμαρτάνουσι, “save only (says he) that these men perceive that they sin;” they do it more against their conscience than infidels and unbelievers; and therefore they do it with less honesty and excuse, καὶ οὐκ ἂν ὑπότερον αὐτοῖς χεῖρον, ἢ τὸ εἰδὸτα ἀμαρτάνειν, ἢ μετανοήσαντα, ἐφ’ οἷς ἡμάρτον, πλημμελεῖν αὐθις: “I know not which is worse, either to sin knowingly or willingly; or to repent of our sin, and sin it over again.” And the same severe doctrine is delivered by Theodoret in his twelfth book against the Greeks, and is hugely agreeable to the discipline of the primitive church: and it is a truth of so great severity, that it ought to quicken the repentance and sour the gaieties of easy people, and make them fear: whose repentance is, therefore, ineffectual, because it is not integral or united, but broken in pieces by the intervention of new crimes; so that the repentance is every time to begin anew; and then let it be considered, what growth that repentance can make, that is never above a week old, that is for ever in its infancy, that is still in its birth, that never gets the dominion over sin. These men, I say, ought to fear, lest God reject their persons, and deride the folly of their new-begun repentances, and at last be weary of giving them more opportunities, since they approve all, and make use of none; their understanding is right, and their will a slave, their reason is for God, and their affections for sin; these men (as the apostle’s expression is) “walk not as wise, but as fools:” for we deride the folly of those men, that resolve upon the same thing a thousand times, and never keep one of those resolutions. These men are vain and light, easy and effeminate, childish and abused; these are they of whom our blessed Saviour said these sad decretory words, “Many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able.”

 SERMON VII

PART II.

3. **THEY** have great reason to fear, whose sins are not yet remitted; for they are within

the dominion of sin, within the kingdom of darkness, and the regions of fear: light makes us confident; and sin checks the spirit of a man into pusillanimity and cowardice of a girl or a conscious boy: and they do their work in the days of peace and wealthy fortune, and come to pay their symbol in a war or in a plague; then they spend of their treasure of wrath, which they laid up in their vessels of dishonour: and, indeed, want of fear brought them to it; for if they had known how to have accounted concerning the changes of mortality, if they could have reckoned right concerning God’s judgments falling upon sinners, and remembered, that themselves are no more to God than that brother of theirs that died in a drunken surfeit, or was killed in a rebel war, or was, before his grave, corrupted by the shames of lust; if they could have told the minutes of their life, and passed on towards their grave at least in religious and sober thoughts, and considered that there must come a time for them to die, and “after death comes judgment,” a fearful and an intolerable judgment,—it would not have come to this pass, in which their present condition of affairs does amaze them, and their sin hath made them liable unto death, and that death is the beginning of an eternal evil. In this case it is natural to fear; and if men consider their condition, and know that all the felicity, and all the security, they can have, depends upon God’s mercy pardoning their sins,—they cannot choose but fear infinitely, if they have not reason to hope that their sins are pardoned. Now concerning this, men indeed have generally taken a course to put this affair to a very speedy issue. “God is merciful,” and “God forgive me,” and all is done: it may be, a few sighs, like the deep sobbings of a man that is almost dead with laughter, that is, a trifling sorrow, returning upon a man after he is full of sin, and hath pleased himself with violence, and revolving only by a natural change from sin to sorrow, from laughter to a groan, from sunshine to a cloudy day; or, it may be, the good man hath left some one sin quite, or some degrees of all sin, and then the conclusion is firm, he is “rectus in curia,” his sins are pardoned, he was indeed in an evil condition, but “now he is purged,” he “is sanctified” and clean. These things are very bad; but it is much worse that men should continue in their sin, and grow old in it, and arrive at con-

firmation, and the strength of habitual wickedness, and grow fond of it; and yet think if they die, their account stands as fair in the eyes of God's mercy, as St. Peter's, after his tears and sorrow. Our sins are not pardoned easily and quickly; and the longer and the greater hath been the iniquity, the harder and more difficult and uncertain is the pardon; it is a great progress to return from all the degrees of death to life, to motion, to quickness, to purity, to acceptance, to grace, to contention, and growth in grace, to perseverance, and so to pardon: for pardon stands no where but at the gates of heaven. It is a great mercy, that signifies a final and universal acquittance. God sends it out in little scrolls, and excuses you from falling by the sword of an enemy, or the secret stroke of an angel in the days of the plague; but these are but little entertainments and enticings of our hopes to work on towards the great pardon, which is registered in the leaves of the book of life. And it is a mighty folly to think, that every little line of mercy signifies glory and absolution from the eternal wrath of God; and therefore, it is not to be wondered at, that wicked men are unwilling to die; it is a greater wonder, that many of them die with so little resentment of their danger and their evil. There is reason for them to tremble, when the Judge summons them to appear. When his messenger is clothed with horror, and speaks in thunder; when their conscience is their accuser, and their accusation is great, and their bills uncanceled, and they have no title to the cross of Christ, no advocate, no excuse; when God is their enemy, and Christ is the injured person, and the Spirit is grieved, and sickness and death come to plead God's cause against the man; then there is reason, that the natural fears of death should be high and pungent, and those natural fears increased by the reasonable and certain expectations of that anger, which God hath laid up in heaven for ever, to consume and destroy his enemies.

And, indeed, if we consider upon how trifling and inconsiderable grounds most men hope for pardon, (if at least that may be called hope, which is nothing but a careless boldness, and an unreasonable wilful confidence,) we shall see much cause to pity very many, who are going merrily to a sad and intolerable death. Pardon of sins is a mercy, which Christ purchased with his dearest blood, which he ministers to us upon conditions of an infinite kindness, but yet of

great holiness and obedience, and an active living faith; it is a grace, that the most holy persons beg of God with mighty passion, and labour for with a great diligence, and expect with trembling fears, and concerning it many times suffer sadnesses with uncertain souls, and receive it by degrees, and it enters upon them by little portions, and it is broken as their sighs and sleeps. But so have I seen the returning sea enter upon the strand; and the waters, rolling towards the shore, throw up little portions of the tide, and retire as if nature meant to play, and not to change the abode of waters; but still the flood crept by little steppings, and invaded more by his progressions than he lost by his retreat: and having told the number of its steps, it possesses its new portion till the angel calls it back, that it may leave its unfaithful dwelling of the sand: so is the pardon of our sins; it comes by slow motions, and first quits a present death, and turns, it may be, into a sharp sickness; and if that sickness prove not health to the soul, it washes off, and, it may be, will dash against the rock again, and proceed to take off the several instances of anger and the periods of wrath, but all this while it is uncertain concerning our final interest, whether it be ebb or flood: and every hearty prayer, and every bountiful alms, still enlarges the pardon, or adds a degree of probability and hope; and then a drunken meeting, or a covetous desire, or an act of lust, or looser swearing, idle talk, or neglect of religion, makes the pardon retire; and while it is disputed between Christ and Christ's enemy, who shall be Lord, the pardon fluctuates like the wave, striving to climb the rock, and is washed off like its own retinue, and it gets possession by time and uncertainty, by difficulty and the degrees of a hard progression. When David had sinned but in one instance, interrupting the course of a holy life by one sad calamity, it pleased God to pardon him; but see upon what hard terms: he prayed long and violently, he wept sore, he was humbled in sack-cloth and ashes, he ate the bread of affliction and drank his bottle of tears; he lost his princely spirit, and had an amazed conscience; he suffered the wrath of God, and the sword never did depart from his house: his son rebelled, and his kingdom revolted; he fled on foot, and maintained spies against his child; he was forced to send an army against him that was dearer than his own eyes, and to fight against him whom he

would not hurt for all the riches of Syria and Egypt; his concubines were defiled by an incestuous mixture, in the face of the sun, before all Israel; and his child, that was the fruit of sin, after a seven day's fever, died, and left him nothing of his sin to show, but sorrow, and the scourges of the Divine vengeance; and after all this, God pardoned him finally, because he was for ever sorrowful, and never did the sin again. He that hath sinned a thousand times for David's once, is too confident if he thinks that all his shall be pardoned at a less rate than was used to expiate that one mischief of the religious king: "the Son of David" died for his father David, as well as he did for us; he was "the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world;" and yet the death, and that relation, and all the heap of the Divine favours, which crowned David with a circle richer than the royal diadem, could not exempt him from the portion of sinners, when he descended into their pollutions. I pray God we may find the "sure mercies of David," and may have our portion in the redemption wrought by the "Son of David;" but we are to expect it upon such terms as are revealed, such which include time, and labour, and uncertainty, and watchfulness, and fear, and holy living. But it is a sad observation, that the case of pardon of sins is so administered, that they that are most sure of it, have the greatest fears concerning it; and they to whom it doth not belong at all, are as confident as children and fools, who believe every thing they have a mind to, not because they have reason so to do, but because without it they are presently miserable. The godly and holy persons of the church "work out their salvation with fear and trembling;" and the wicked go to destruction with gaiety and confidence: these men think all is well, while they are "in the gall of bitterness;" and good men are tossed in a tempest, crying and praying for a safe conduct; and the sighs of their fears, and the wind of their prayers, waft them safely to their port. Pardon of sins is not easily obtained; because they who only certainly can receive it, find difficulty, and danger, and fears, in the obtaining it; and therefore, their case is pitiable and deplorable, who, when they have least reason to expect pardon, yet are most confident and careless.

But because there are sorrows on one side, and dangers on the other, and temptations on both sides, it will concern all sorts of men to know when their sins are par-

doned. For then, when they can perceive their signs certain and evident, they may rest in their expectations of the Divine mercies; when they cannot see the signs, they may leave their confidence, and change it into repentance, and watchfulness, and stricter observation; and, in order to this, I shall tell you that which shall never fail you; a certain sign that you may know whether or no; and when, and in what degree, your persons are pardoned.

1. I shall not consider the evils of sin by any metaphysical and abstracted effects, but by sensible, real, and material. He that revenges himself of another, does something that will make his enemy grieve, something that shall displease the offender as much as sin did the offended; and therefore, all the evils of sins are such as relate to us, and are to be estimated by our apprehensions. Sin makes God angry; and God's anger, if it be not turned aside, will make us miserable and accursed; and therefore, in proportion to this we are to reckon the proportion of God's mercy in forgiveness, or his anger in retaining.

2. Sin hath obliged us to suffer many evils, even whatsoever the anger of God is pleased to inflict; sickness and dishonour, poverty and shame, a caitiff spirit and a guilty conscience, famine and war, plague and pestilence, sudden death and a short life, temporal death or death eternal, according as God in the several covenants of the law and gospel hath expressed.

3. For in the law of Moses, sin bound them to nothing but temporal evils, but they were sore, and heavy, and many; but these only there were threatened: in the gospel, Christ added the menaces of evils spiritual and eternal.

4. The great evil of the Jews was their abscission and cutting off from being God's people, to which eternal damnation answers amongst us; and as sickness, and war, and other intermedial evils, were lesser strokes, in order to the final anger of God against their nation; so are these and spiritual evils intermedial, in order to the eternal destruction of sinning and unrepenting Christians.

5. When God had visited any of the sinners of Israel with a grievous sickness, then they lay under the evil of their sin, and were not pardoned till God took away the sickness; but the taking the evil away, the evil of the punishment, was the pardon of the sin; "to pardon the sin is to spare the sinner:" and this appears; for when

Christ had said to the man sick of the palsy, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee,"* the Pharisees accused him of blasphemy, because none had power to forgive sins but God only; Christ to vindicate himself, gives them an ocular demonstration, and proves his words: "That ye may know, the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, he saith to the man sick of the palsy, Arise, and walk;" then he pardoned the sin, when he took away the sickness, and proved the power by reducing it to act: for if pardon of sins be any thing else, it must be easier or harder: if it be easier, then sin hath not so much evil in it as a sickness, which no religion as yet ever taught: if it be harder, then Christ's power to do that which was harder, could not be proved by doing that which was easier. It remains, therefore, that it is the same thing to take the punishment away, as to procure or give the pardon; because, as the retaining the sin was an obligation to the evil of punishment, so the remitting the sin is the disobliging to its penalty. So far then the case is manifest.

6. The next step is this; that, although in the gospel God punishes sinners with temporal judgments, and sicknesses, and deaths, with sad accidents, and evil angels, and messengers of wrath; yet besides these lesser strokes, he hath scorpions to chastise, and loads of worse evils to oppress the disobedient: he punishes one sin with another, vile acts with evil habits, these with a hard heart, and this with obstinacy, and obstinacy with impenitence, and impenitence with damnation. Now, because the worst of evils which are threatened to us, are such which consign to hell by persevering in sin, as God takes off our love and our affections, our relations and bondage under sin, just in the same degree he pardons us; because the punishment of sin being taken off and pardoned, there can remain no guilt. Guiltiness is an insignificant word, if there be no obligation to punishment. Since, therefore, spiritual evils, and progressions in sin, and the spirit of reprobation, and impenitence, and accursed habits, and perseverance in iniquity, are the worst of evils; when these are taken off, the sin hath lost its venom and appendant curse: for sin passes on to eternal death only by the line of impenitence, and it can never carry us to hell, if we repent timely and effectually; in the same degree, therefore, that any man leaves his sin, just

in the same degree he is pardoned, and he is sure of it: for although curing the temporal evil was the pardon of sins among the Jews, yet we must reckon our pardon by curing the spiritual. If I have sinned against God in the shameful crime of lust, then God hath pardoned my sins, when, upon my repentance and prayers, he hath given me the grace of chastity. My drunkenness is forgiven when I have acquired the grace of temperance, and a sober spirit. My covetousness shall no more be a damning sin, when I have a loving and charitable spirit; loving to do good, and despising the world: for every further degree of sin being a nearer step to hell, and by consequence the worst punishment of sin, it follows inevitably, that according as we are put into a contrary state, so are our degrees of pardon, and the worst punishment is already taken off.— And, therefore, we shall find, that the great blessing, and pardon, and redemption, which Christ wrought for us, is called "sanctification, holiness," and "turning us away from our sins:" so St. Peter; "Ye know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation;"* that is your redemption, that is your deliverance: you were taken from your sinful state; that was the state of death, this of life and pardon; and therefore they are made *synonyma* by the same apostle; "According as his Divine power hath given us all things that pertain to life and godliness:"† "to live" and "to be godly," is all one; to remain in sin and abide in death, is all one; to redeem us from sin, is to snatch us from hell; he that gives us godliness, gives us life, and that supposes the pardon, or the abolition of the rites of eternal death: and this was the conclusion of St. Peter's sermon, and the sum total of our redemption and of our pardon; "God having raised up his Son, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquity;"‡ this is the end of Christ's passion and bitter death, the purpose of all his and all our preaching, the effect of baptism, purging, washing, sanctifying; the work of the sacrament of the Lord's supper; and the same body that was broken, and the same blood that was shed for our redemption, is to conform us into his image and likeness of living and dying, of doing and suffering. The case is plain: just as we leave our sins, so God's wrath shall be taken from us; as we get the graces

* Matt. ix. 2.

* 1 Pet. i. 18. † 2 Pet. i. 3. ‡ Acts iii. 26.

contrary to our former vices, so infallibly we are consigned to pardon. If therefore you are in contestation against sin, while you dwell in difficulty and sometimes yield to sin, and sometimes overcome it, your pardon is uncertain, and is not discernible in its progress; but when sin is mortified, and your lusts are dead, and under the power of grace, and you are "led by the Spirit," all your fears concerning your state of pardon are causeless, and afflictive without reason; but so long as you live at the old rate of lust or intemperance, of covetousness or vanity, of tyranny or oppression, of carelessness or irreligion, flatter not yourselves; you have no more reason to hope for pardon than a beggar for a crown, or a condemned criminal to be made heir-apparent to that prince whom he would traitorously have slain.

4. They have great reason to fear concerning their condition, who having been in the state of grace, who having begun to lead a good life, and given their names to God by solemn deliberate acts of will and understanding, and made some progress in the way of godliness, if they shall retire to folly, and unravel all their holy vows, and commit those evils, from which they formerly ran as from a fire or inundation; their case hath in it so many evils, that they have great reason to fear the anger of God, and concerning the final issue of their souls. For return to folly hath in it many evils beyond the common state of sin and death; and such evils, which are most contrary to the hopes of pardon. 1. He that falls back into those sins he hath repented of, does "grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by which he was sealed to the day of redemption." For so the antithesis is plain and obvious: if "at the conversion of a sinner there is joy before the beatified spirits, the angels of God," and that is the consummation of our pardon and our consignment to felicity, then we may imagine how great an evil it is to "grieve the Spirit of God," who is greater than the angels. The children of Israel were carefully warned, that they should not offend the angel: "Behold, I send an angel before thee, beware of him, and obey his voice; provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions,"* that is, he will not spare to punish you if you grieve him: much greater is the evil, if we grieve him who sits upon the throne

of God, who is the Prince of all the spirits; and besides, grieving the Spirit of God is an affection, that is as contrary to his felicity as lust is to his holiness; both which are essential to him. "Tristitia enim omnium spirituum nequissima est, et pessima servis Dei, et omnium spiritus exterminat, et cruciat Spiritum sanctum," said Hennas: "Sadness is the greatest enemy to God's servants; if you grieve God's Spirit, you cast him out;" for he cannot dwell with sorrow and grieving; unless it be such a sorrow, which by the way of virtue passes on to joy and never-ceasing felicity. Now by grieving the Holy Spirit, is meant those things which displease him, doing unkindness to him; and then the grief, which cannot in proper sense seize upon him, will in certain effects return upon us: "Ita enim dico (said Seneca); sacer intra nos Spiritus sedet, bonorum malorumque nostrorum observator et custos; hic prout a nobis tractatus est, ita nos ipse tractat." "There is a Holy Spirit dwells in every good man, who is the observer and guardian of all our actions; and as we treat him, so will he treat us." "Now we ought to treat him sweetly and tenderly, thankfully and with observation: "Deus præcepit, Spiritum Sanctum, utpote pro naturæ suæ bono tenerum et delicatum, tranquillitate, et lenitate, et quiete, et pace tractare," said Tertullian "de Spectaculis." The Spirit of God is a loving and kind Spirit, gentle and easy, chaste and pure, righteous and peaceable; and when he hath done so much for us as to wash us from our impurities, and to cleanse us from our stains, and straighten our obliquities, and to instruct our ignorances, and to snatch us from an intolerable death, and to consign us to the day of redemption, that is, to the resurrection of our bodies from death, corruption, and the dishonours of the grave, and to appease all the storms and uneasiness, and to "make us free as the sons of God," and furnished with the riches of the kingdom; and all this with innumerable arts, with difficulty, and in despite of our lusts and reluctances, with parts and interrupted steps, with waitings and expectations, with watchfulness and stratagems, with inspirations and collateral assistances; after all this grace, and bounty, and diligence, that we should despite this grace, and trample upon the blessings, and scorn to receive life at so great an expense, and love of God: this is so great a baseness and unworthiness, that by troubling the

* Exod. xxiii. 20, 21.

tenderest passions, it turns into the most bitter hostilities; by abusing God's love it turns into jealousy, and rage, and indignation. "Go and sin no more, lest a worse thing happen to thee."

2. Falling away after we have begun to live well, is a great cause of fear; because there is added to it the circumstance of inexcusableness. The man hath been taught the secrets of the kingdom, and therefore his understanding hath been instructed; he hath tasted the pleasures of the kingdom, and therefore his will hath been sufficiently entertained. He was entered into the state of life, and renounced the ways of death; his sin began to be pardoned, and his lusts to be crucified; he felt the pleasures of victory, and the blessings of peace, and therefore fell away, not only against his reason, but also against his interest; and to such a person the questions of his soul have been so perfectly stated, and his prejudices and enviable abuses so clearly taken off, and he was so made to view the paths of life and death, that if he chooses the way of sin again, it must be, not by weakness, or the infelicity of his breeding, or the weakness of his understanding, but a direct preference or prelation, a preferring sin before grace, the spirit of lust before the purities of the soul, the madness of drunkenness before the fulness of the Spirit, money before our friend, and above our religion, and heaven, and God himself. This man is not to be pitied upon pretence that he is betrayed; or to be relieved, because he is oppressed with potent enemies; or to be pardoned, because he could not help it: for he once did help it, he did overcome his temptation, and choose God, and delight in virtue, and was an heir of heaven, and was a conqueror over sin, and delivered from death; and he may do so still, and God's grace is upon him more plentifully, and the lust does not tempt so strongly; and if it did, he hath more power to resist it; and therefore, if this man falls, it is because he wilfully chooses death, it is the portion that he loves and descends into with willing and unpitied steps. "Quam vilis facta es, nimis iterans vias tuas!" said God to Judah.*

3. He that returns from virtue to his old vices, is forced to do violence to his own reason, to make his conscience quiet: he does so unreasonably, so against all his fair

inducements, so against his reputation, and the principles of his society, so against his honour, and his promises, and his former discourses and his doctrines; his censuring of men for the same crimes, and the bitter invectives and reproofs which in the days of his health and reason he used against his erring brethren, that he is now constrained to answer his own arguments, he is entangled in his own discourses, he is ashamed with his former conversation; and it will be remembered against him, how severely he reproved and how reasonably he chastised the lust, which now he runs to in despite of himself and all his friends. And because this is his condition, he hath no way left him, but either to be impudent, which is hard for him at first; it being too big a natural change to pass suddenly from grace to immodest circumstances and hardnesses of face and heart: or else, therefore, he must entertain new principles, and apply his mind to believe a lie; and then begins to argue, "There is no necessity of being so severe in my life; greater sinners than I have been saved; God's mercies are greater than all the sins of man; Christ died for us, and if I may not be allowed to sin this sin, what ease have I by his death? or, This sin is necessary, and I cannot avoid it; or, It is questionable, whether this sin be of so deep a dye as is pretended; or, Flesh and blood is always with me, and I cannot shake it off; or, There are some sects of Christians that do allow it, or, if they do not, yet they declare it easy pardonable, upon no hard terms, and very reconcilable with the hopes of heaven; or, The Scriptures are not rightly understood in their pretended condemnations; or else, Other men do as bad as this, and there is not one in ten thousand but hath his private retirements from virtue; or else, When I am old, this sin will leave me, and God is very pitiful to mankind."—But while the man, like an entangled bird, flutters in the net, and wildly discomposes that which should support him, and that which holds him, the net and his own wings, that is, the laws of God and his own conscience and persuasion, he is resolved to do the thing, and seeks excuses afterward; and when he hath found out a fig-leaved apron that he could put on, or a cover for his eyes, that he may not see his own deformity, then he fortifies his error with irresolution and inconsideration; and he believes it, because he will; and he will, because it serves his turn:

* Jer. ii. 36.

then he is entered upon his state of fear; and if he does not fear concerning himself, yet his condition is fearful, and the man hath *νοὺν ἀδόκιμον*, "a reprobate mind," that is, a judgment corrupted by lust: vice hath abused his reasoning, and if God proceeds in the man's method, and lets him alone in his course, and gives him over to believe a lie, so that he shall call good evil, and evil good, and come to be heartily persuaded that his excuses are reasonable, and his pretences fair,—then the man is desperately undone "through the ignorance that is in him," as St. Paul describes his condition; "his heart is blind, he is past feeling, his understanding is darkened;" then he may "walk in the vanity of his mind," and "give himself over to lasciviousness," and shall "work all uncleanness with greediness;"* then he needs no greater misery: this is the state of evil, which his fear ought to have prevented, but now it is past fear, and is to be recovered with sorrow, or else to be run through, till death and hell are become his portion; "fiunt novissima illius pejora prioribus;" "His latter end is worse than his beginning."†

4. Besides all this, it might easily be added, that he that falls from virtue to vice again, adds the circumstance of ingratitude to his load of sins; he sins against God's mercy, and puts out his own eyes, he strives to unlearn what with labour he hath purchased, and despises the trouble of his holy days, and throws away the reward of virtue for an interest, which himself despised the first day in which he began to take sober counsels; he throws himself back in the accounts of eternity, and slides to the bottom of the hill, from whence with sweat and labour of his hands and knees he had long been creeping; he descends from the spirit to the flesh, from honour to dishonour, from wise principles to unthrifty practices; like one of "the vainer fellows," who grows a fool, and a prodigal, and a beggar, because he delights in inconsideration, in madness of drunkenness, and the quiet of a lazy and unprofitable life. So that this man hath great cause to fear; and, if he does, his fear is as the fear of enemies and not sons: I do not say, that it is a fear that is displeasing to God; but it is such a one, as may arrive at goodness, and the fear of sons, if it be rightly managed.

For we must know, that no fear is displeasing to God; no fear of itself, whether it be fear of punishment, or fear to offend; the "fear of servants," or the "fear of sons:" but the effects of fear do distinguish the man, and are to be entertained or rejected accordingly. If a servile fear makes us to remove our sins, and so passes us towards our pardon, and the receiving such graces which may endear our duty and oblige our affection; that fear is imperfect, but not criminal; it is "the beginning of wisdom," and the first introduction to it; but if that fear sits still, or rests in a servile mind, or a hatred of God, or speaking evil things concerning him, or unwillingness to do our duty, that which at first was indifferent, or at the worst imperfect, proves miserable and malicious; so we do our duty, it is no matter upon what principles we do it; it is no matter where we begin, so from that beginning we pass on to duties and perfection. If we fear God as an enemy, an enemy of our sins, and of our persons for their sakes, as yet this fear is but a servile fear; it cannot be a filial fear, since we ourselves are not sons; but if this servile fear makes us to desire to be reconciled to God, that he may no longer stay at enmity with us, from this fear we shall soon pass to carefulness, from carefulness to love, from love to diligence, from diligence to perfection; and the enemies shall become servants, and the servants shall become adopted sons, and pass into the society and the participation of the inheritance of Jesus: for this fear is also reverence, and then our God, instead of being "a consuming fire," shall become to us the circle of a glorious crown, and a globe of eternal light.

SERMON IX.

PART III.

I AM NOW to give account concerning the excess of fear, not directly and abstractedly, as it is a passion, but as it is subjected in religion, and degenerates into superstition: for so among the Greeks, fear is the ingredient and half of the constitution of that folly; *Δεισιδαιμονία, φοβόθεια*, said Hesychius, "it is a fear of God." *Δεισιδαίμων, δειλος*, that is more; it is a timorousness; "the superstitious man is afraid of the

* Ephes. iv. 17, 18. † Matt. xii. 45. Vide 2 Pet. ii. 20.

gods," (said the etymologist,) *δειδώς τοὺς θεοὺς ὡς περ τοὺς τυράνους*, "fearing of God, as if he were a tyrant," and an unreasonable exacter of duty upon unequal terms, and disproportionable, impossible degrees, and unreasonable, and great and little instances.

1. But this fear some of the old philosophers thought unreasonable in all cases, even towards God himself; and it was a branch of the Epicurean doctrine, that God meddled not with any thing below, and was to be loved and admired, but not feared at all; and therefore they taught men neither to fear death, nor to fear punishment after death, nor any displeasure of God: "His terroribus ab Epicuro soluti non metuimus Deos," said Cicero;* and thence came this acceptance of the word, that superstition should signify "an unreasonable fear of God:" it is true, he and all his scholars extended the case beyond the measure, and made all fear unreasonable; but then if we, upon grounds of reason and Divine revelation, shall better discern the measure of the fear of God; whatsoever fear we find to be unreasonable, we may by the same reason call it superstition, and reckon it criminal, as they did all fear; that it may be called superstition, their authority is sufficient warrant for the grammar of the appellative; and that it is criminal, we shall derive from better principles.

But, besides this, there was another part of its definition, *Δεισιδαιμόμων, ὃ τὰ εἰδωλα σέβων εἰδωλολάτρης*, "The superstitious man is also an idolater," *δειδώς παρὰ θεοῦς*, "one that is afraid of something besides God." The Latins, according to their custom, imitating the Greeks in all their learned notices of things, had also the same conception of this, and by their word *superstitio* understood "the worship of demons," or separate spirits; by which they meant, either their *minores deos*, or else their *ἡρώας ἀποθεωθέντας*, "their braver personages, whose souls were supposed to live after death;" the fault of this was the object of their religion; they gave a worship or a fear to whom it was not due; for whenever they worshipped the great God of heaven and earth, they never called that superstition in an evil sense, except the *Ἄθεοι*, "they that believed there was no God at all." Hence came the etymology of superstition: it was a worshipping or fearing the spirits of their dead heroes, "quos superstites credebant," "whom they

thought to be alive" after their ἀποθείωσις, or deification, "quos superstites credebant," "standing in places and thrones above us; and it alludes to that admirable description of old oge, which Solomon made beyond all the rhetoric of the Greeks and Romans; "Also they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way;"[†] intimating the weakness of old persons, who, if ever they have been religious, are apt to be abused into superstition; they are "afraid of that which is high;" that is, of spirits, and separate souls of those excellent beings, which dwell in the regions above; meaning, that then they are superstitious. However, fear is most commonly its principle, always its ingredient. For if it enter first by credulity and a weak persuasion, yet it becomes incorporated into the spirit of a man, and thought necessary, and the action it persuades to, dares not be omitted, for fear of evil themselves dream of; upon this account the sin is reducible to two heads: the 1. is superstition of an undue object; 2. superstition of an undue expression to a right object.

1. Superstition of an undue object, is that which the etymologist calls τῶν εἰδώλων σέβασμα, "the worshipping of idols; the Scripture adds *θύειν δαίμονιους*, "a sacrificing to demons," in St. Paul,† and in Baruch;‡ where, although we usually read it "sacrificing to devils," yet it was but accidental that they were such; for those indeed were evil spirits who had seduced them, and tempted them to such ungodly rites; (and yet they who were of the Pythagorean sect, pretended a more holy worship, and did their devotion to angels); but whosoever shall worship angels, do the same thing; they worshipped them because they are good and powerful, as the Gentiles did the devils, whom they thought so; and the error which the apostle reproves, was not in matter of judgment, in mistaking bad angels for good, but in matter of manners and choice; they mistook the creature for the Creator; and therefore, it is more fully expressed by St. Paul, in a general signification, "they worshipped the creature," *παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα*, "besides the Creator;"§ so it should be read; if we worship any creature besides God, worshipping so as the worship of him becomes a part of religion, it is also a direct superstition; but,

* Lib. de Nat. Deorum.

† Eccles. xii. 5.

‡ 1 Cor. x. 20.

‡ Bar. iv. 7.

§ Rom. i. 25.

concerning this part of superstition, I shall not trouble this discourse, because I know no Christians blamable in this particular but the church of Rome, and they that communicate with her in the worshipping of images, of angels, and saints, burning lights and perfumes to them, making offerings, confidences, advocations, and vows to them; and direct and solemn Divine worshipping the symbols of bread and wine, when they are consecrated in the holy sacrament. These are direct superstition, as the word is used by all authors, profane and sacred, and are of such evil report, that wherever the word superstition does signify any thing criminal, these instances must come under the definition of it. They are *λατρεία της κτίσεως*. A *λατρεία παρά τον κτίσαντα* a "cultus superstitum" a "cultus dæmonum;" and therefore, besides that they have *ιδιον ἔλεγχον*, "a proper reproof" in Christian religion, are condemned by all wise men which call superstition criminal.

But as it is superstition to worship any thing *παρά τον κτίσαντα*, "besides the Creator;" so it is superstition to worship God *παρά τὸ εὐσεβημον, παρά τὸ κρίνον, καὶ ὃ δεῖ*, "otherwise than is decent, proportionable, or described." Every inordination of religion, that is not in defect, is properly called superstition: *ὁ μὲν εὐσεβῆς φίλος Θεῷ ὃ δὲ δεισιδαίμων κόλαξ Θεοῦ*, said Maximus Tyrius; "The true worshipper is a lover of God, the superstitious man loves him not, but flatters." To which if we add, that fear, unreasonable fear, is also superstition, and an ingredient in its definition, we are taught by this word to signify all irregularity and inordination in actions of religion. The sum is this: the atheist called all worship of God superstition; the Epicurean called all fear of God superstition, but did not condemn his worship; the other part of wise men called all unreasonable fear and inordinate worship superstition, but did not condemn all fear: but the Christian, besides this, calls every error in worship, in the manner, or excess, by this name, and condemns it.

Now because the three great actions of religion are, "to worship God," "to fear God," and "to trust in him," by the inordination of these three actions, we may reckon three sorts of this crime; "the excess of fear," and "the obliquity in trust," and "the errors in worship," are the three sorts of superstition: the first of which is only pertinent to our present consideration.

1. Fear is the duty we owe to God, as being the God of power and justice, the great Judge of heaven and earth, the avenger of the cause of widows, the patron of the poor, and the advocate of the oppressed, a mighty God and terrible: and so essential an enemy to sin, that he spared not his own Son, but gave him over to death, and to become a sacrifice, when he took upon him our nature, and became a person obliged for our guilt. Fear is the great bridle of intemperance, the modesty of the spirit, and the restraint of gaities and dissolutions; it is the girdle to the soul, and the handmaid to repentance; the arrest of sin, and the cure or antidote to the spirit of reprobation; it preserves our apprehensions of the Divine Majesty, and hinders our single actions from combining to sinful habits; it is the mother of consideration, and the nurse of sober counsels; and it puts the soul to fermentation and activity, making it to pass from trembling to caution, from caution to carefulness, from carefulness to watchfulness, from thence to prudence; and, by the gates and progresses of repentance, it leads the soul on to love, and to felicity, and to joys in God, that shall never cease again. Fear is the guard of a man in the days of prosperity; and it stands upon the watch-towers and spies the approaching danger, and gives warning to them that laugh loud and feast in the chambers of rejoicing, where a man cannot consider by reason of the noises of wine, and jest, and music: and if prudence takes it by the hand, and leads it on to duty, it is a state of grace, and a universal instrument to infant religion, and the only security of the less perfect persons; and, in all senses, is that homage we owe to God, who sends often to demand it, even then, when he speaks in thunder, or smites by a plague, or awakens us by threatenings, or discomposes our easiness by sad thoughts, and tender eyes, and fearful hearts, and trembling considerations.

But this so excellent grace is soon abused in the best and most tender spirits; in those who are softened by nature and by religion, by infelicities or cares, by sudden accidents or a sad soul: and the devil observing that fear, like spare diet, starves the fevers of lust, and quenches the flames of hell, endeavours to heighten this abstinence so much as to starve the man, and break the spirit into timorousness and scruple, sadness and unreasonable tremblings, credulity and trifling observation, suspicion and false

accusations of God; and then vice, being turned out at the gate, returns in at the postern, and does the work of hell and death by running too inconsiderately in the paths which seem to lead to heaven. But so have I seen a harmless dove, made dark with an artificial night, and her eyes sealed and locked up with a little quill, soaring upward and flying with amazement, fear, and an undiscerning wing; she made towards heaven, but knew not that she was made a train and an instrument, to teach her enemy to prevail upon her and all her defenceless kindred: so is a superstitious man, zealous and blind, forward and mistaken, he runs towards heaven as he thinks, but he chooses foolish paths; and out of fear takes any thing that he is told; or fancies and guesses concerning God by measures taken from his own diseases and imperfections. But fear, when it is inordinate, is never a good counsellor, nor makes a good friend; and he that fears God as his enemy, is the most completely miserable person in the world. For if he with reason believes God to be his enemy, then the man needs no other argument to prove that he is undone than this, that the fountain of blessing (in this state in which the man is) will never issue any thing upon him but cursings. But if he fears this without reason, he makes his fears true by the very suspicion of God, doing him dishonour, and then doing those fond and trifling acts of jealousy, which will make God to be what the man feared he already was. We do not know God, if we can think any hard thing concerning him. If God be merciful, let us only fear to offend him; but then let us never be fearful that he will destroy us, when we are careful not to displease him. There are some persons so miserable and scrupulous, such perpetual tormentors of themselves with unnecessary fears, that their meat and drink is a snare to their consciences; if they eat, they fear they are gluttons; if they fast, they fear they are hypocrites; and if they would watch, they complain of sleep as of a deadly sin; and every temptation, though resisted, makes them cry for pardon; and every anger of God will break them in pieces.

These persons do not believe noble things concerning God; they do not think that he is as ready to pardon them, as they are to pardon a sinning servant; they do not believe how much God delights in mercy, nor how wise he is to consider and to make

abatement for our unavoidable infirmities: they make judgment of themselves by the measures of an angel, and take the account of God by the proportions of a tyrant. The best that can be said concerning such persons is, that they are hugely tempted, or hugely ignorant. For though "ignorance," is by some persons named the "mother of devotion;" yet, if it falls in a hard ground, it is the "mother of atheism:" if in a soft ground, it is the "parent of superstition;" but if it proceeds from evil or mean opinions of God, (as such scruples and unreasonable fears do many times,) it is an evil of a great impiety, and in some sense, if it were in equal degrees, is as bad as atheism: for so he that says, There was no such man as Julius Cæsar, does him less displeasure, than he that says, There was, but that he was a tyrant, and a bloody parricide. And the Cimmerians were not esteemed impious for saying, that there was no sun in the heavens; but Anaxagoras was esteemed irreligious for saying, the sun was a very stone: and though to deny there is a God is a high impiety and intolerable, yet he says worse who, believing there is a God, says, He delights in human sacrifices, in miseries and death, in tormenting his servants, and punishing their very infelicities and unavoidable mischances. To be God, and to be essentially and infinitely good, is the same thing; and therefore, to deny either, is to be reckoned among the greatest crimes in the world.

Add to this, that he that is afraid of God, cannot in that disposition love him at all; for what delight is there in that religion, which draws me to the altar as if I were going to be sacrificed, or to the temple as to the dens of bears? "Oderunt quos metuunt, sed colunt tamen:" "Whom men fear, they hate certainly, and flatter readily, and worship timorously;" and he that saw Hermolaus converse with Alexander, and Pausanias follow Philip the Macedonian, or Chæreas kissing the feet of Caius Caligula, would have observed how sordid men are made with fear, and how unhappy and how hated tyrants are in the midst of those acclamations, which are loud, and forced, and unnatural, and without love or fair opinion. And therefore, although the atheist says, "There is no God," the scrupulous, fearful, and superstitious man, does heartily wish what the other does believe.

But that the evil may be proportionable

to the folly, and the punishment to the crime, there is no man more miserable in the world than the man who fears God as his enemy, and religion as a snare, and duty intolerable, and the commandments as impossible, and his Judge as implacable, and his anger as certain, insufferable, and unavoidable: whither shall this man go? where shall he lay his burden? where shall he take sanctuary? for he fears the altars as the places where his soul bleeds and dies; and God, who is his Saviour, he looks upon as his enemy; and because he is Lord of all, the miserable man cannot change his service, unless it be apparently for a worse. And therefore, of all the evils of the mind, fear is certainly the worst and the most intolerable: levity and rashness have in them some sprightfulness, and greatness of action; anger is valiant; desire is busy and apt to hope; credulity is oftentimes entertained and pleased with images and appearances: but fear is dull, and sluggish, and treacherous and flattering, and dissembling, and miserable, and foolish. Every false opinion concerning God is pernicious and dangerous; but if it be joined with trouble of spirit, as fear, scruple, or superstition are, it is like a wound with an inflammation, or a strain of a sinew with a contusion or contrition of the part, painful and unsafe; it puts on two actions when itself is driven: it urges reason and circumscribes it, and makes it pitiable, and ridiculous in its consequent follies; which, if we consider it, will sufficiently reprove the folly, and declare the danger.

Almost all ages of the world have observed many instances of fond persuasions and foolish practices proceeding from violent fears and scruples in matter of religion. Diomedon and many other captains were condemned to die, because after a great naval victory they pursued the flying enemies, and did not first bury their dead. But Chabrias, in the same case, first buried the dead, and by that time the enemy rallied, and returned, and beat his navy, and made his masters pay the price of their importune superstition: they feared where they should not, and where they did not, they should. From hence proceeds observation of signs and unlucky days; and the people did so, when the Gregorian account began, continuing to call those unlucky days which were so signified in their tradition or *erra pater*, although the day upon this account fell ten days sooner; and men were transported

with many other trifling contingencies and little accidents; which, when they are once entertained by weakness, prevail upon their own strength, and in sad natures and weak spirits have produced effects of great danger and sorrow. Aristodemus, king of the Messenians, in his war against the Spartans, prevented the sword of the enemy by a violence done upon himself, only because his dogs howled like wolves; and the soothsayers were afraid, because the briony grew up by the walls of his father's house: and Nicias, general of the Athenian forces, sat with his arms in his bosom, and suffered himself and forty thousand men tamely to fall by the insolent enemy, only because he was afraid of the labouring and eclipsed moon. When the marble statues in Rome did sweat, (as naturally they did against all rainy weather,) the augurs gave an alarm to the city; but if lightning struck the spire of the capitol, they thought the sum of affairs, and the commonwealth itself, was endangered. And this heathen folly hath stuck so close to the Christians, that all the sermons of the church for sixteen hundred years have not cured them all: but the practices of weaker people, and the artifice of ruling priests, have superinduced many new ones. When Pope Eugenius sang mass at Rheims, and some few drops from the chalice were spilt upon the pavement, it was thought to foretell mischief, wars, and bloodshed to all christendom, though it was nothing but carelessness and mischance of the priest: and because Thomas Beckett, archbishop of Cantebury, sang the mass of requiem upon the day he was reconciled to his prince, it was thought to foretell his own death by that religious office: and if men can listen to such whispers, and have not reason and observation enough to confute such trifles, they shall still be affrighted with the noise of birds, and every night-raven shall foretell evil as Micaiah to the king of Israel, and every old woman shall be a prophetess, and the events of human affairs, which should be managed by the conduct of counsel, of reason, and religion shall succeed by chance, by the flight of birds, and the meeting with an evil eye, by the falling of the salt, or the decay of reason, of wisdom, and the just religion of a man.

To this may be reduced the observation of dreams, and fears commenced from the fancies of the night. For the superstitious man does not rest even when he sleeps;

neither is he safe, because dreams usually are false, but he is afflicted for fear they should tell true. Living and waking men have one world in common, they use the same air and fire, and discourse by the same principles of logic and reason; but men that are asleep, have every one a world to himself, and strange perceptions; and the superstitious hath none at all: his reason sleeps, and his fears are waking; and all his rest, and his very securities, to the fearful man turn into affrights and insecure expectation of evils, that never shall happen; they make their rest uneasy and chargeable, and they still vex their weary soul, not considering there is no other sleep for sleep to rest in: and therefore, if the sleep be troublesome, the man's cares be without remedy till they be quite destroyed. Dreams follow the temper of the body, and commonly proceed from trouble or disease, business or care, an active head and a restless mind, from fear or hope, from wine or passion, from fulness or emptiness, from fantastic remembrances, or from some demon, good or bad: they are without rule and without reason, they are as contingent, as if a man should study to make a prophecy, and by saying ten thousand things may hit upon one true, which was therefore not foreknown, though it was forespoken; and they have no certainty, because they have no natural causality nor proportion to those effects, which many times they are said to foreshignify. The dream of the yolk of an egg importeth gold (saith Artemidorus); and they that use to remember such fantastic idols, are afraid to lose a friend when they dream their teeth shake, when naturally it will rather signify a scurvy; for a natural indisposition and an imperfect sense of the beginning of a disease, may vex the fancy into a symbolical representation; for so the man that dreamed he swam against the stream of blood, had a pleurisy beginning in his side; and he that dreamt he dipped his foot into water, and that it was turned to a marble, was enticed into the fancy by a beginning dropsy; and if the events do answer in one instance, we become credulous in twenty. For want of reason we discourse ourselves into folly and weak observation, and give the devil power over us in those circumstances, in which we can least resist him. *Ἐν ὄρῳνι δραπέτης μέγα σθένει*, "A thief is confident in the twilight;"* if you suffer

impressions to be made upon you by dreams, the devil hath the reins in his own hands, and can tempt you by that, which will abuse you, when you can make no resistance. *Dominica*, the wife of *Valens* the emperor, dreamed that God threatened to take away her only son for her despiteful usage of *St. Basil*: the fear proceeding from this instance was safe and fortunate; but if she had dreamed in the behalf of a heretic, she might have been cozened into a false proposition upon a ground weaker than the discourse of a waking child. Let the grounds of our actions be noble, beginning upon reason, proceeding with prudence, measured by the common lines of men, and confident upon the expectation of a usual providence. Let us proceed from causes to effects, from natural means to ordinary events, and believe felicity not to be a chance but a choice; and evil to be the daughter of sin and the Divine anger, not of fortune and fancy; let us fear God, when we have made him angry, and not be afraid of him, when we heartily and laboriously do our duty; our fears are to be measured by open revelation and certain experience, by the threatenings of God and the sayings of wise men, and their limit is reverence, and godliness is their end; and then fear shall be a duty, and a rare instrument of many: in all other cases it is superstition or folly, it is sin or punishment, the ivy of religion, and the misery of an honest and a weak heart; and is to be cured only by reason and good company, a wise guide and a plain rule, a cheerful spirit and a contented mind, by joy in God according to the commandments, that is, "a rejoicing evermore."

2. But besides this superstitious fear, there is another fear directly criminal, and it is called "worldly fear," of which the Spirit of God hath said, "But the fearful and incredulous shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death;"* that is, such fears, which make men to fall in the time of persecution, those that dare not own their faith in the face of a tyrant, or in despite of an accursed law. For though it be lawful to be afraid in a storm, yet it is not lawful to leap into the sea; though we may be more careful for our fears, yet we must be faithful too; and we may fly from the persecution till it overtakes us; but when it does, we must not change our

* Eurip.

* Rev. xxi. 8.

religion for our safety, or leave the robe of baptism in the hand of the tempter, and run away by all means. St. Athanasius for forty-six years did run and fight, he disputed with the Arians and fled from their officers; and he that flies, may be a man worth preserving, if he bears his faith along with him, and leaves nothing of his duty behind. But when duty and life cannot stand together, he that then flies a persecution by delivering up his soul, is one that hath no charity, no love to God, no trust in promises, no just estimation of the rewards of a noble contention. "Perfect love casts out fear" (saith the apostle); that is, he that loves God, will not fear to die for him, or for his sake to be poor. In this sense, no man can fear man and love God at the same time; and when St. Lawrence triumphed over Valerianus, St. Sebastian over Dioclesian, St. Vincentius over Dacianus, and the armies of martyrs over the pro-consuls, accusers, and executioners, they showed their love to God by triumphing over fear, and "leading captivity captive," by the strength of their Captain, whose "garments were red from Bozrah."

3. But this fear is also tremulous and criminal, if it be a trouble from the apprehension of the mountains and difficulties of duty, and is called pusillanimity. For some see themselves encompassed with temptations, they observe their frequent falls, their perpetual returns from good purposes to weak performances, the daily mortifications that are necessary, the resisting natural appetites, and the laying violent hands upon the desires of flesh and blood, the uneasiness of their spirits, and their hard labours, and therefore this makes them afraid; and because they despair to run through the whole duty, in all its parts and periods, they think it as good not to begin at all, as after labour and expense to lose the jewel and the charges of their venture. St. Augustine compares such men to children and fantastic persons, affrighted with phantasms and spectres; "terribiles visu formæ," the sight seems full of horror; but touch them and they are very nothing, the mere daughters of a sick brain and a weak heart, an infant experience and a trifling judgment: so are the illusions of a weak piety, or an unskilful confident soul: they fancy to see mountains of difficulty; but touch them, and they seem like clouds riding upon the wings of the wind, and put on shapes as we please to dream. He that

denies to give alms for fear of being poor, or to entertain a disciple for fear of being suspected of the party, or to own a duty for fear of being put to venture for a crown; he that takes part of the intemperance, because he dares not displease the company, or in any sense fears the fears of the world, and not the fear of God,—this man enters into his portion of fear betimes, but it will not be finished to eternal ages. To fear the censures of men, when God is your judge; to fear their evil, when God is your defence; to fear death, when he is the entrance to life and felicity, is unreasonable and pernicious; but if you will turn your passion into duty, and joy, and security, fear to offend God, to enter voluntarily into temptation; fear the alluring face of lust, and the smooth entertainments of intemperance: fear the anger of God, when you have deserved it; and when you have recovered from the snare, then infinitely fear to return into that condition, in which whosoever dwells, is the heir of fear and eternal sorrow.

Thus far I have discoursed concerning good fear and bad, that is, filial and servile: they are both good, if by servile we intend initial, or the new beginning fear of penitents; a fear to offend God upon less perfect considerations: but servile fear is vicious, when it still retains the affection of slaves, and when its effects are hatred, weariness, displeasure, and want of charity: and of the same cognations are those fears, which are superstitious, and wordly.

But to the former sort of virtuous fear, some also add another, which they call angelical, that is, such a fear as the blessed angels have, who before God hide their faces, and tremble at his presence, and "fall down before his footstool," and are ministers of his anger and messengers of his mercy, and night and day worship him with the profoundest adoration. This is the same that is spoken of in the text: "Let us serve God with reverence and godly fear;" all holy fear partakes of the nature of this which divines call angelical, and it is expressed in acts of adoration, of vows and holy prayers, in hymns and psalms, in the eucharist and reverential addresses; and while it proceeds in the usual measures of common duty, it is but human: but as it rises to great degrees, and to perfection, it is angelical and Divine; and then it appertains to mystic theology, and therefore is to be considered in another place; but, for the

present, that which will regularly concern all our duty, is this, that when the fear of God is the instrument of our duty, or God's worship, the greater it is, it is so much the better. It was an old proverbial saying among the Romans, "Religentem esse, oportet; religiosum, nefas;" "Every excess in the actions of religion is criminal;" they supposing, that, in the services of their gods, there might be too much. True it is, there may be too much of their undecent expressions; and in things indifferent, the very multitude is too much, and becomes an undecency: and if it be in its own nature undecent or disproportionate to the end, or the rules, or the analogy, of the religion, it will not stay for numbers to make it intolerable; but in the direct actions of glorifying God, in doing any thing of his commandments, or any thing which he commands, or counsels, or promises to reward, there can never be excess or superfluity: and therefore, in these cases, do as much as you can; take care that your expressions be prudent and safe, consisting with thy other duties; and for the passions of virtues themselves, let them pass from beginning to great progresses, from man to angel, from the imperfection of man to the perfections of the sons of God; and, whenever we go beyond the bounds of nature, and grow up with all the extension, and in the very commensuration of a full grace, we shall never go beyond the excellencies of God: for ornament may be too much, and turn to curiosity; cleanness may be changed into niceness; and civil compliance may become flattery; and mobility of tongue may rise into garrulity; and fame and honour may be great unto envy; and health itself, if it be athletic, may by its very excess become dangerous: but wisdom, and duty, and comeliness, and discipline, a good mind, and the fear of God, and doing honour to his holy name, can never exceed: but if they swell to great proportions, they pass through the measures of grace, and are united to felicity in the comprehensions of God, in the joys of an eternal glory.

SERMON X.

THE FLESH AND THE SPIRIT.

PART I.

The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.
 Matt. xxvi. 41; latter part.

FROM the beginning of days, man hath

been so cross to the Divine commandments, that in many cases there can be no reason given, why a man should choose some ways, or do some actions, but only because they are forbidden. When God bade the Israelites rise and go up against the Canaanites and possess the land, they would not stir; the men were Anakims, and the cities were impregnable; and there was a lion in the way: but, presently after, when God forbade them to go, they would and did go, though they died for it. I shall not need to instance in particulars, when the whole life of man is a perpetual contradiction; and the state of disobedience is called the "contradictions of sinners;" even the man in the gospel, that had two sons, they both crossed him, even he that obeyed him, and he that obeyed him not: for the one said he would, and did not; the other said he would not, and did; and so do we: we promise fair, and do nothing; and they that do best, are such as come out of darkness into light, such as said "they would not," and at last have better bethought themselves. And who can guess at any other reason, why men should refuse to be temperate? For he that refuseth the commandment, first does violence to the commandment, and puts on a preternatural appetite; he spoils his health and he spoils his understanding; he brings to himself a world of diseases and a healthless constitution; smart and sickly nights, a loathing stomach and a staring eye, a giddy brain and a swelled belly, gouts and dropsies, catarrhs and oppilations. If God should enjoin men to suffer all this, heaven and earth should have heard our complaints against unjust laws, and impossible commandments: for we complain already, even when God commands us to drink so long as it is good for us; this is one of the impossible laws: it is impossible for us to know when we are dry, or when we need drink; for if we do know, I am sure it is possible enough, not to lift up the wine to our heads. And when our blessed Saviour hath commanded us to love our enemies, we think we have so much reason against it, that God will excuse our disobedience in this case; and yet there are some enemies, whom God hath commanded us not to love, and those we dote on, we cherish and feast them, and, as St. Paul in another case, "upon our uncomely parts we bestow more abundant comeliness." For whereas our body itself is a servant to our soul, we make it the heir of all things, and treat it

here already as if it were in majority; and make that, which at the best was but a weak friend, to become a strong enemy; and hence proceed the vices of the worst, and the follies and imperfections of the best: the spirit is either in slavery or in weakness, and when the flesh is not strong to mischief, it is weak to goodness; and even to the apostles our blessed Lord said, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

"The spirit," that is, *ὁ ἕσω ἀνθρώπου*, "the inward man," or the reasonable part of man, especially as helped by the Spirit of grace, that is willing; for it is the principle of all good actions, the *ἐνεργητικὸν*, "the power of working" is from the spirit; but the flesh is but a dull instrument, and a broken arm, in which there is a principle of life, but it moves uneasily; and the flesh is so weak, that in Scripture to be "in the flesh," signifies a state of weakness and infirmity: so the humiliation of Christ is expressed by being "in the flesh," *θεὸς φανερωθεὶς ἐν σαρκί*, "God manifested in the flesh;" and what St. Peter calls "put to death in the flesh," St. Paul calls "crucified through weakness;" and "ye know that through the infirmity of the flesh I preached unto you," said St. Paul: but here, flesh is not opposed to the Spirit as a direct enemy, but as a weak servant: for if the flesh be powerful and opposite, the Spirit stays not there:

—*veniunt ad candida tecta Columbæ: (OVID.)*

The old man and the new cannot dwell together; and therefore here, where the spirit inclining to good, well disposed, and apt to holy counsels, does inhabit in society with the flesh, it means only a weak and unapt nature, or a state of infant grace; for in both these, and in these only, the text is verified.

1. Therefore we are to consider the infirmities of the flesh naturally. 2. Its weakness in the first beginnings of the state of grace, its daily pretensions and temptations, its excuses and lessening of duty. 3. What remedies are there in the spirit to cure the evils of nature. 4. How far the weakness of the flesh can consist with the Spirit of grace in well-grown Christians. This is the sum of what I intend upon those words.

1. Our nature is too weak, in order to our duty and final interest, that at first it cannot move one step towards God, unless God, by his preventing grace, puts into it a new possibility.

Οὐδὲν ἀκιδνότερον γαῖα κρέφει ἀνθρώπου,
Πάντων, ὅσατέ γυῖαν ἐπιπνέετε καὶ ἔρπει. Od.

"There is nothing that creeps upon the earth, nothing that ever God made, weaker than man;" for God fitted horses and mules with strength, bees and pismires with sagacity, harts and hares with swiftness, birds with feathers and a light airy body; and they all know their times, and are fitted for their work, and regularly acquire the proper end of their creation; but man, that was designed to an immortal duration, and the fruition of God for ever, knows not how to obtain it; he is made upright to look up to heaven, but he knows no more how to purchase it than to climb to it. Once, man went to make an ambitious tower to outreach the clouds, or the preternatural risings of the water, but could not do it; he cannot promise himself the daily bread of his necessity upon the stock of his own wit or industry; and for going to heaven, he was so far from doing that naturally, that as soon as ever he was made, he became the son of death, and he knew not how to get a pardon for eating of an apple against the Divine commandment: *Καὶ ἤμεν φύσει τέκνα ὀργῆς*, said the apostle: "By nature we are the sons of wrath," that is, we were born heirs of death, which death came upon us from God's anger for the sin of our first parents; or by nature, that is, *ὄντως ἀπηθῶς*, "really," not by the help of fancy, and fiction of law, for so Œcumenius and Theophylact expound it;* but because it does not relate to the sin of Adam in its first intention, but to the evil state of sin, in which the Ephesians walked before their conversion; it signifies, that our nature of itself is a state of opposition to the Spirit of grace; it is privately opposed, that is, that there is nothing in it that can bring us to felicity; nothing but an obdiential capacity; our flesh can become sanctified; as "the stones can become children unto Abraham," or as dead seed can become living corn; and so it is with us, that it is necessary God should make us a new creation, if he means to save us; he must take our hearts of stone away, and give us hearts of flesh; he must purge the old leaven, and make us a new conspersion; he must destroy the flesh, and must breathe into us "spiritum vitæ," the celestial breath of life, without which we can neither live, nor move, nor have our being. "No man can come unto me, (said Christ,) unless my Father draw him:" *ἐπ' ἔρωτος ἀρπασθέντες οὐρανοῦ, καθάπερ αἱ βακχεύομενοι καὶ κορυβαντιῶνες ἰθουσιαῖοι,*

*Ephes. ii. 3.

μάχρῃς ἂν τὸ ποθοῦμενον ἰδῶσι. "The Divine love must come upon us and snatch us" from our imperfection, enlighten our understanding, move and stir our affections, open the gates of heaven, turn our nature into grace, entirely forgive our former prevarications, take us by the hand, and lead us all along; and we only contribute our assent unto it, just as a child when he is tempted to learn to go, and called upon, and guided, and upheld, and constrained to put his feet to the ground, lest he feel the danger by the smart of a fall; just so is our nature and our state of flesh. God teaches us and invites us, he makes us willing, and then makes us able, he lends us helps, and guides our hands and feet; and all the way constrains us, but yet so as a reasonable creature can be constrained; that is, made willing with arguments and new inducements, by a state of circumstances and conditional necessities: and as this is a great glorification of the free grace of God, and declares our manner of co-operation, so it represents our nature to be weak as a child, ignorant as infancy, helpless as an orphan, averse as an uninstructed person, in so great degrees that God is forced to bring us to a holy life, by arts great and many as the power and principles of the creation; with this only difference, that the subject matter and object of this new creation is a free agent: in the first it was purely obediential and passive; and as the passion of the first was an effect of the same power that reduced it to act, so the freedom of the second is given us in our nature by Him, that only can reduce it to act; for it is a freedom that cannot therefore choose, because it does not understand, nor taste, nor perceive, the things of God; and therefore must by God's grace be reduced to action, as at first the whole matter of the world was by God's almightiness; for so God "worketh in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure." But that I may instance in particulars: our natural weakness appears best in two things, even in the two great instances of temptations, pleasure, and pain; in both which the flesh is destroyed, if it be not helped by a mighty grace, as certainly as the canes do bow their heads before the breath of a mighty wind.

1. In pleasure we see it by the public miseries and follies of the world. An old Greek said well, Ὡν οὐδὲν ἀσεχνῶς ὑγιές ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ εἶναι τοῦ κέρους ἀπαντες ἤττονες. "There is amongst men nothing perfect, because men carry themselves as persons that are

less than money, servants of gain and interest; we are like the foolish poet that Horace tells of:

Gestit enim nummum in loculos demittere; post
hoc
Securus, cadat, an recto stet fabula talo.

Let him but have money for rehearsing his comedy, he cares not whether you like it or no; and if a temptation of money comes strong and violent, you may as well tie a wild dog to quietness with the guts of a tender kid, as suppose that most men can do virtuously, when they sin at a great price. Men avoid poverty, not only because it hath some inconveniences, for they are few and little; but because it is the nurse of virtue; they run from it as children from strict parents and tutors, from those that would confine them to reason and sober counsels, that would make them labour, that they may become pale and lean, that they may become wise: but because riches is attended by pride and lust, tyranny and oppression, and hath in its hand all that it hath in its heart; and sin waits upon wealth ready dressed and fit for action; therefore, in some temptations they confess, how little their souls are, they cannot stand that assault; but because this passion is the daughter of voluptuousness, and very often is but a servant-sin, ministering to sensual pleasures, the great weakness of the flesh is more seen in the matter of carnal crimes, lust and drunkenness. "Nemo enim se adsuefacit ad vitandum et ex animo evellendum ea, quæ molesta ei non sunt." "Men are so in love with pleasure, that they cannot think of mortifying or crucifying their lust; we do violence to what we hate, not to what we love." But the weakness of the flesh, and the empire of lust, are visible in nothing so much, as in the captivity and folly of wise men. For you shall see some men fit to govern a province, sober in their counsels, wise in the conduct of their affairs, men of discourse and reason, fit to sit with princes, or to treat concerning peace and war, the fate of empires and the changes of the world; yet these men shall fall at the beauty of a woman, as a man dies at the blow of an angel, or gives up his breath at the sentence and decree of God. Was not Solomon glorious in all things, but when he bowed to Pharaoh's daughter, and then to devils? And is it not published by the sentence and observation of all the world, that the bravest men have been softened into effeminacy by the

lispings charms and childish noises of women and imperfect persons? A fair slave bowed the neck of stout Polydamas, which was stiff and inflexible to the contentions of an enemy: and suppose a man set, like the brave boy of the king of Nicomedia, in the midst of temptation by a witty beauty, tied upon a bed with silk and pretty violences, courted with music and perfumes, with promises and easy postures, invited by opportunity and importunity, by rewards and impunity, by privacy and a guard; what would his nature do in this throng of evils and vile circumstances? The grace of God secured the young gentleman, and the spirit rode in triumph; but what can flesh do in such a day of danger? Is it not necessary, that we take in auxiliaries from reason and religion, from heaven and earth, from observation and experience, from hope and fear, and cease to be what we are, lest we become what we ought not? It is certain that in the cases of temptations to voluptuousness, a man is naturally, as the prophet said of Ephraim, "like a pigeon that hath no heart," no courage, no conduct, no resolution, no discourse, but falls as the waters of Nilus when it comes to its cataracts,—it falls infinitely and without restraint: and if we consider, how many drunken meetings the sun sees every day, how many markets, and fairs, and clubs, that is; so many solemnities of drunkenness, are at this instant under the eye of heaven, that many nations are marked for intemperance, and that it is less noted because it is so popular, and universal, and that even in the midst of the glories of Christianity there are so many persons drunk, or too full with meat, or greedy of lust; even now that the Spirit of God is given to us to make us sober, and temperate, and chaste,—we may well imagine, since all men have flesh, and all men have not the Spirit, the flesh is the parent of sin and death, and it can be nothing else.

5. And it is no otherwise, when we are tempted with pain. We are so impatient of pain, that nothing can reconcile us to it; not the laws of God, nor the necessities of nature, not the society of all our kindred, and of all the world, not the interest of virtue, not the hopes of heaven; we will submit to pain upon no terms, but the basest and most dishonourable; for if sin brings us to pain, or affront, or sickness, we choose that, so it be in the retinue of a lust, and a base desire; but we accuse nature, and blaspheme God, we murmur and are impa-

tient, when pain is sent to us, from him that ought to send it, and intends it as a mercy when it comes. But in the matter of afflictions and bodily sickness, we are so weak and broken, so uneasy and unapt to sufferance, that this alone is beyond the cure of the old philosophy. Many can endure poverty, and many can retire from shame and laugh at home, and very many can endure to be slaves; but when pain and sharpness are to be endured for the interests of virtue, we find but few martyrs; and they that are, suffer more within themselves by their fears and their temptations, by their uncertain purposes and violence to nature, than the hangman's sword; the martyrdom is within; and then he hath won his crown, not when he hath suffered the blow, but when he hath overcome his fears, and made his spirit conqueror. It was a sad instance of our infirmity, when of the forty martyrs of Cappadocia, set in a freezing lake, almost consummate, and an angel was reaching the crown, and placing it upon their brows, the flesh failed one of them, and drew the spirit after it; and the man was called off from his scene of noble contention, and died in warm water:

—Odi artus, frailemque hunc corporis usum
Desertorem animi—

We carry about us the body of death, and we bring evils upon ourselves by our follies, and then know not how to bear them; and the flesh forsakes the spirit. And, indeed, in sickness the infirmity is so very great, that God in a manner at that time hath reduced all religion into one virtue; patience with its appendages is the sum total of almost all our duty, that is proper to the days of sorrow; and we shall find it enough to entertain all our powers, and to employ all our aids; the counsels of wise men and the comforts of our friends, the advices of Scripture and the results of experience, the graces of God, and the strength of our own resolutions, are all then full of employments, and find it work enough to secure that one grace. For then it is, that a cloud is wrapped about our heads, and our reason stoops under sorrow; the soul is sad, and its instrument is out of tune; the auxiliaries are disordered, and every thought sits heavily; then a comfort cannot make the body feel it, and the soul is not so abstracted to rejoice much without its partner; so that the proper joys of the soul,—such as are hope, and wise discourses, and satisfactions of reason, and the offices of religion,—are

felt, just as we now perceive the joys of heaven, with so little relish, that it comes as news of a victory to a man upon the rack, or the birth of an heir to one condemned to die; he hears a story, which was made to delight him, but it came when he was dead to joy, and in all its capacities; and, therefore, sickness, though it be a good monitor, yet it is an ill stage to act some virtues in; and a good man cannot then do much; and therefore, he that is in the state of flesh and blood, can do nothing at all.

But in these considerations we find our nature in disadvantages; and a strong man may be overcome, when a stronger comes to disarm him; and pleasure and pain are the violences of choice and chance; but it is no better in any thing else: for nature is weak in all its strengths, and in its fights, at home and abroad, in its actions and passions; we love some things violently, and hate others unreasonably; any thing can fright us when we would be confident, and nothing can scare us when we ought to fear; the breaking of a glass puts us into a supreme anger, and we are dull and indifferent as a stoic when we see God dishonoured; we passionately desire our preservation, and yet we violently destroy ourselves, and will not be hindered; we cannot deny a friend, when he tempts us to sin and death, and yet we daily deny God, when he passionately invites us to life and health; we are greedy after money, and yet spend it vainly upon our lusts; we hate to see any man flattered but ourselves, and we can endure folly, if it be on our side, and a sin for our interest; we desire health, and yet we exchange it for wine and madness; we sink when a persecution comes, and yet cease not daily to persecute ourselves, doing mischiefs worse than the sword of tyrants, and great as the malice of a devil.

But to sum up all the evils that can be spoken of the infirmities of the flesh; the proper nature and habitudes of men are so foolish and impotent, so averse and peevish to all good, that a man's will is of itself only free to choose evils. Neither is it a contradiction to say liberty, and yet suppose it determined to one object only; because that one object is the thing we choose. For although God hath set life and death before us, fire and water, good and evil, and hath primarily put man into the hands of his own counsel, that he might have chosen good as well as evil; yet because he did not, but fell into an evil condition and corrupted

manners, and grew in love with it, and infected all his children with vicious examples; and all nations of the world have contracted some universal stains, and "the thoughts of men's hearts are only evil, and that continually," and "there is not one that doeth good, no, not one that sinneth not;" since (I say) all the world have sinned, we cannot suppose a liberty of indifferency to good and bad; it is impossible in such a liberty, that there should be no variety, that all should choose the same thing; but a liberty of complacency or delight we may suppose; that is so, that though naturally he might choose good, yet morally he is so determined with his love to evil, that good seldom comes into dispute; and a man runs to evil as he runs to meat or sleep; for why else should it be, that every one can teach a child to be proud, or to swear, to lie, or to do little spites to his playfellow, and can train him up to infant follies? But the severity of tutors, and the care of parents, discipline and watchfulness, art and diligence, all is too little to make him love but to say his prayers, or to do that, which becomes persons designed for honest purposes, and his malice shall outrun his years; he shall be a man in villainy, before he is by law capable of choice or inheritance; and this indisposition lasts upon us for ever; even as long as we live, just in the same degrees as flesh and blood do rule us: *Σώματος μὲν γὰρ ἀβυσσῶν ἰάται τέχνη, ψυχῆς δὲ νόσθημα ἰατρὸς ἰάται θάνατος*: "Art of Physicians can cure the evils of the body, but this strange propensity to evil nothing can cure but death;" the grace of God eases the malignity here, but it cannot be cured but by glory: that is, this freedom of delight, or perfect unabated election of evil, which is consequent to the evil manners of the world, although it be lessened by the intermedial state of grace, yet it is not cured until it be changed into its quite contrary; but as it is in heaven, all that is happy, and glorious, and free, yet can choose nothing but the love of God, and excellent things, because God fills all the capacities of saints, and there is nothing without him that hath any degrees of amiability; so in the state of nature, of flesh and blood; there is so much ignorance of spiritual excellencies, and so much proportion to sensual objects, which in most instances and in many degrees are prohibited, that, as men naturally know no good, but to please a wild, undetermined, infinite

appetite, so they will nothing else but what is good in their limit and proportion; and it is with us as it was with the she-goat that suckled the wolf's whelp; he grew up by his nurse's milk, and at last having forgot his foster-mother's kindness, ate that udder which gave him drink and nourishment:

Improbitas nullo flectitur obsequio;

For no kindness will cure an ill nature and a base disposition: so are we in the first constitution of our nature; so perfectly given to natural vices, that by degrees we degenerate into unnatural, and no education or power of art can make us choose wisely or honestly: *Ἐγὼ δὲ μίαν εὐγένειαν οὐδα τῆν ἀρετὴν*, said Phalaris; "There is no good nature but only virtue:" till we are new created, we are wolves and serpents, free and delighted in the choice of evil, but stones and iron to all excellent things and purposes.

2. Next I am to consider the weakness of the flesh, even when the state is changed, in the beginning of the state of grace: for many persons, as soon as the grace of God rises in their hearts, are all on fire, and inflamed; it is with them as Homer said of the Sirian star:

Λαμπρότατος μὲν ὄγ' ἐστὶ, κακὸν δὲ τὸ σῆμα τέτυκται,

Καί τε φέρει πολλὸν πυρετὸν δειλοῖσι βροτοῖσιν. II. "It shines finely, and brings fevers;" splendour and zeal are the effects of the first grace, and sometimes the first turns into pride, and the second into uncharitableness; and either by too dull and slow motions, or by too violent and unequal, the flesh will make pretences, and too often prevail upon the spirit, even after the grace of God hath set up its banners in our hearts.

1. In some dispositions that are forward and apt, busy and unquiet, when the grace of God hath taken possession, and begins to give laws, it seems so pleasant and gay to their undiscerning spirits to be delivered from the sottishness of lust, and the follies of drunkenness, that, reflecting upon the change, they begin to love themselves too well, and take delight in the wisdom of the change, and the reasonableness of the new life; and then they, hating their own follies, begin to despise them that dwell below: it was the trick of the old philosophers whom Aristophanes thus describes, *τοὺς ἀλαζόνας, τοὺς ὑχρῶντας, τοὺς ἀνποδῆτους λέγει*: "pale, and barefoot, and proud;" that is, persons singular in their habit, eminent in their institution, proud and pleased in their persons,

and despisers of them that are less glorious in their virtue than themselves; and for this very thing our blessed Saviour remarks the Pharisees, they were severe and fantastical advancers of themselves, and judges of their neighbours; and here, when they have mortified corporal vices, such which are scandalous and punishable by men, they keep the spiritual, and those that are only discernible by God: these men do but change their sin from scandal to danger, and that they may sin more safely, they sin more spiritually.

2. Sometimes the passions of the flesh spoil the changes of the spirit, by natural excesses, and disproportion of degrees; it mingles violence with industry, and fury with zeal, and uncharitableness with reproof, and censuring with discipline, and violence with desires, and immortifications in all the appetites and prosecutions of the soul. Some think it is enough in all instances, if they pray hugely and fervently; and that it is religion, impatiently to desire a victory over our enemies, or the life of a child, or an heir to be born; they call it holy, so they desire it in prayer; that if they reprove a vicious person, they may say what they list, and be as angry as they please; that when they demand but reason, they may enforce it by all means; that when they exact duty of their children, they may be imperious and without limit; that if they design a good end, they may prosecute it by all instruments; that when they give thanks for blessings, they may value the things as high as they list, though their persons come into a share of the honour; here the spirit is willing and holy, but the flesh creeps too busily, and insinuates into the substance of good actions, and spoils them by unhandsome circumstances; and then the prayer is spoiled for want of prudence or conformity to God's will, and discipline and government are imbittered by an angry spirit; and the father's authority turns into an uneasy load; by being thrust like an unequal burden to one side, without allowing equal measures to the other: and if we consider it wisely, we shall find, that in many good actions the flesh is the bigger ingredient, and we betray our weak constitutions, even when we do justice, or charity; and many men pray in the flesh, when they pretend they pray by the Spirit.

3. In the first changes and weak progresses of our spiritual life, we find a long weakness upon us, because we are long

before we begin, and the flesh was powerful, and its habits strong, and it will mingle indirect pretences with all the actions of the spirit; if we mean to pray, the flesh thrusts in thoughts of the world; and our tongue speaks one thing, and our heart means another; and we are hardly brought to say our prayers, or to undertake a fasting-day, or to celebrate a communion: and if we remember all these holy actions, and that we have many opportunities of doing them all, and yet do them very seldom, and then very coldly, it will be found at the foot of the account, that our flesh and our natural weakness prevail oftener than our spiritual strengths: *οἱ πολλοὶ χρόνον δεθέετες, καὶ λαθεῖεν, οὐ δυνάμενοι βαδίζειν, ἰσοσκελίζονται* "they are bound long in chains, feel such a lameness, in the first restitutions of their liberty," *ὑπὸ τῆς πολυχρονίου τῶν δεσμῶν σιγηθείας*, "by reason of the long-accustomed chain and pressure," that they may stay till nature hath set them free, and the disease be taken off as well as the chain; and when the soul is got free from her actual pressure of sins, still the wound remains, and a long habitude, and longing after it, a looking back; and upon the presenting the old object, the same company, or the remembrance of the delight, the fancy strikes, and the heart fails, and the temptations return and stand dressed in form and circumstances, and ten to one but the man dies again.

4. Some men are wise and know their weaknesses, and to prevent their startings back will make fierce and strong resolutions, and bind up their gaps with thorns, and make a new hedge about their spirits; and what then? This shows, indeed, that "the spirit is willing;" but the storm arises, and winds blow, and rain descends, and presently the earth trembles, and the whole fabric falls into ruin and disorder. A resolution (such as we usually make) is nothing but a little trench, which every child can step over; and there is no civil man that commits a willing sin, but he does it against his resolution; and what Christian lives, that will not say and think that he hath repented in some degree; and yet still they commit sin, that is, they break all their holy purposes as readily as they lose a dream; and so great is our weakness, that to most men the strength of a resolution is just such a restraint as he suffers, who is imprisoned in a curtain, and secured with doors and bars of the finest linen: for though "the spirit be strong" to resolve, "the flesh is weak" to keep it.

5. But when they have felt their follies, and see the linen veil rent, some, that are desirous to please God, back their resolutions with vows, and then the spirit is fortified, and the flesh may tempt and call, but the soul cannot come forth, and therefore it triumphs, and acts its interest easily and certainly; and then the flesh is mortified: it may be so. But do not many of us inquire after a vow? And if we consider, it may be it was rash, or it was an impossible matter, or without just consideration and weighing of circumstances, or the case is altered, and there is a new emergent necessity, or a vow is no more than a resolution made in matter of duty; both are made for God, and in his eye and witness; or if nothing will do it, men grow sad and weary, and despair, and are impatient, and bite the knot in pieces with their teeth, which they cannot by disputing, and the arts of the tongue. A vow will not secure our duty, because it is not stronger than our appetite; and the spirit of man is weaker than the habits and superinduced nature of the flesh: but by little and little it falls off, like the finest thread twisted upon the traces of a chariot, it cannot hold long.

6. Beyond all this, some choose excellent guides, and stand within the restraints of modesty, and a severe monitor; and the Spirit of God hath put a veil upon our spirits; and by modesty in women and young persons, by reputation in the more aged, and by honour in the more noble, and by conscience in all, hath fortified the spirit of man, that men dare not prevaricate their duty, though they be tempted strongly, and invited perpetually; and this is a partition-wall, that separates the spirit from the flesh, and keeps it in its proper strengths and retirements. But here the spirit of man, for all that it is assisted, strongly breaks from the enclosure, and runs into societies of flesh, and sometimes despises reputation, and sometimes supplies it with little arts of flattery and self-love; and is modest as long as it can be secret; and when it is discovered, it grows impudent; and a man shelters himself in crowds and heaps of sinners, and believes that it is no worse with him than with other mighty criminals, and public persons, who bring sin into credit among fools and vicious persons: or else men take false measures of fame or public honesty, and the world being broken into so many parts of disunion, and agreeing in nothing but in confederate vice, and grown so remiss in governments, and severe accounts, every

thing is left so loose, that honour and public fame, modesty and shame, are now so slender guards to the spirit, that the flesh breaks in, and makes most men more bold against God than against men, and against the laws of religion than of the commonwealth.

7. When the spirit is made willing by the grace of God, the flesh interposes in deceptions and false principles. If you tempt some man to a notorious sin, as to rebellion, to deceive his trust, or to be drunk, he will answer, he had rather die than do it: but put the sin civilly to him, and let it be disguised with little excuses, such things which indeed are trifles, but yet they are colours fair enough to make a weak pretence, and the spirit yields instantly. Most men choose the sin, if it be once disputable whether it be a sin or no. If they can but make an excuse, or a colour, so that it shall not rudely dash against the conscience with an open professed name of sin, they suffer the temptation to do its worst. If you tempt a man, you must tell him it is no sin, or it is excusable; this is not rebellion, but necessity, and self-defence; it is not against my allegiance, but is a performing of my trust; I do it for my friend, not against my superior; I do it for a good end, and for his advantage; this is not drunkenness, but free mirth, and fair society; it is refreshment, and entertainment of some supernumerary hours, but it is not a throwing away my time, or neglecting a day of salvation; and if there be anything more to say for it, though it be no more than Adam's fig-leaves, or the excuses of children and truants, it shall be enough to make the flesh prevail, and the spirit not to be troubled; for so great is our folly, that the flesh always carries the cause, if the spirit can be cozened.

8. The flesh is so mingled with the spirit, that we are forced to make distinctions in our appetite, to reconcile our affections to God and religion, lest it be impossible to do our duty; we weep for our sins, but we weep more for the death of our dearest friends, or other temporal sadnesses; we say we had rather die than lose our faith, and yet we do not live according to it; we lose our estates, and are impatient; we lose our virtue, and bear it well enough; and what virtue is so great, as more to be troubled for having sinned, than for being ashamed, and beggared, and condemned to die? Here we are forced to a distinction; there is a valuation of price, and a valuation of sense; or the spirit hath one rate of things, and the flesh hath another; and what we believe the

greatest evil, does not always cause to us the greatest trouble; which shows plainly, that we are imperfect carnal persons, and the flesh will in some measure prevail over the spirit; because we will suffer it in too many instances, and cannot help it in all.

9. The spirit is abated and interrupted by the flesh, because the flesh pretends it is not able to do those ministries which are appointed in order to religion; we are not able to fast; or, if we watch, it breeds gouts and catarrhs; or, charity is a grace too expensive, our necessities are too big to do it; or, we cannot suffer pain; and sorrow breeds death, and therefore our repentances must be more gentle, and we must support ourselves in all our calamities: for we cannot bear our crosses without a freer refreshment, and this freedom passes on to license; and many melancholy persons drown their sorrows in sin and forgetfulness, as if sin were more tolerable than sorrow, and the anger of God an easier load than a temporal care; here the flesh betrays its weakness and its follies: for the flesh complains too soon, and the spirit of some men, like Adam being too fond of his Eve, attends to all its murmurs and temptations; and yet the flesh is able to bear far more than is required of it in usual duties. Custom of suffering will make us endure much, and fear will make us suffer more, and necessity makes us suffer any thing; and lust and desire make us to endure more than God is willing we should; and yet we are nice, and tender, and indulgent to our weaknesses, till our weaknesses grow too strong for us. And what shall we do to secure our duty, and to be delivered of ourselves, that the body of death, which we bear about us, may not destroy the life of the spirit?

I have all this while complained, and you see not without cause; I shall afterward tell you the remedies for all this evil. In the mean time, let us have but mean opinions of ourselves; let us watch every thing of ourselves as of suspected persons, and magnify the grace of God, and be humbled for our stock and spring of follies, and let us look up to him, who is the Fountain of grace and spiritual strengths:

Ζεῦ βασιλεῦ, τὰ μὲν ἐσθλὰ καὶ εὐχομένους καὶ ἀνεύχοις

Ἄμμι δίδου· τὰ δὲ λυγρὰ καὶ εὐχομένων ἀπερύχοις·
and pray that God would give us what we ask, and what we ask not; for we want more helps than we understand, and we are

nearer to evil than we perceive, and we bear sin and death about us, and are in love with it; and nothing comes from us but false principles, and silly propositions, and weak discourses, and startings from our holy purposes, and care of our bodies and of our palates, and the lust of the lower belly; these are the employment of our lives; but if we design to live happily, and in a better place, it must be otherwise with us; we must become new creatures; and have another definition, and have new strengths, which we can only derive from God, whose "grace is sufficient for us," and strong enough to prevail over all our follies and infirmities.

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SERMON XI.

PART II.

3. IF it be possible to cure an evil nature, we must inquire after remedies for all this mischief. In order to which I shall consider; 1. That since it is our flesh and blood that is the principle of mischief, we must not think to have it cured by washings and light medicaments; the physician that went to cure the hectic with quicksilver and fasting-spittle, did his patient no good, but himself became a proverb; and he that by easy prayers and a seldom fast, by the scattering of a little alms, and the issues of some more natural virtue, thinks to cure his evil nature, does fortify his indisposition, as a stick is hardened by a little fire, which by a great one is devoured. "Quanto satius est mentem potius eluere, quæ malis cupiditatibus sordidatur, et, uno virtutis ac fidei lavacro, universa vitia depellere?"* "Better it is by an entire body of virtue, by a living and active faith, to cleanse the mind from every vice, and to take off all superinduced habits of sin;" "Quod qui fecerit, quamlibet inquinatum ac sordidum corpus gerat, satis purus est." If we take this course, although our body is foul, and our affections unquiet, and our rest discomposed, yet we shall be masters of our resolution, and clean from habitual sins, and so cure our evil nature. For our nature was not made evil but by ourselves; but yet we are naturally evil, that is, by a superinduced nature; just as drunkards and intemperate persons have

* Lactantius.

made it necessary to drink extremely, and their nature requires it, and it is health to them; they die without it, because they have made themselves a new constitution, and another nature, but much worse than that which God made; their sin made this new nature; and this new nature makes sin necessary and unavoidable: so it is in all other instances; our nature is evil, because we have spoiled it; and, therefore, the removing the sin which we have brought in, is the way to cure our nature: for this evil nature is not a thing which we cannot avoid; we made it, and, therefore, we must help it; but as in the superinducing this evil nature, we were thrust forward by the world and the devil, by all objects from without, and weakness from within; so in the curing it, we are to be helped by God and his most holy Spirit.

Βαθειαν ἀλοχα διὰ φρενὸς καρπούμενος,

Ἄφ' ἧς τὰ κενὰ βλαστάνει βουλευματα.—ÆSCH.

We must have a new nature put into us, which must be the principle of new counsels and better purposes, of holy actions and great devotion; and this nature is derived from God, and is a grace and a favour of heaven. The same Spirit, that caused the holy Jesus to be born after a new and strange manner, must also descend upon us, and cause us to be born again, and to begin a new life upon the stock of a new nature. Ἀπ' ἐκείνου ἤρξατο θεία καὶ ἀνθρώπινη συνφάνεσθαι φύσις, ἐν ἡ ἀνθρώπινη τῆ πρὸς τὸ θεϊότερον κοινωνία γίνεται θεία, said Origen; "From him it first began that a Divine and human nature were weaved together, that the human nature by communication with the celestial may also become Divine;" οὐκ ἐν μόνῳ τῷ Ἰησοῦ, ἀλλὰ ἐν πανὶ τοῖς μετὰ τὸ πιστεῦν ἀναλαμβάνουσι βίον, ὃν Ἰησοῦς ἐδίδαξεν; "not only in Jesus, but in all that first believe in him, and then obey him, living such a life as Jesus taught:" and this is the sum total of the whole design; as we have lived to the flesh, so we must hereafter live to the Spirit: as our nature hath been flesh, not only in its original, but in habits and affection; so our nature must be spirit in habit and choice, in design and effectual prosecutions; for nothing can cure our old death, but this new birth: and this is the recovery of our nature, and the restitution of our hopes, and, therefore, the greatest joy of mankind.

—φίλον μὲν φέγγος ἡλίου τὸ δέ,

Καλλὸν δὲ ποῦτος χεῖμ' ἰδεῖν εἰγήμεον,

Ἐγ' τ' ἐρινὸν θάλλουσα πλουσιόθ' ἴδωρ.—EURIP.

"It is a fine thing to see the light of the sun, and it is pleasant to see the storm allayed and turned into a smooth sea and a fresh gale; our eyes are pleased to see the earth begin to live, and to produce her little issues with parti-coloured coats:"

— Ἄλλ' οὐδὲν οὕτω λαμπρὸν,
Ὡς τοῖς ἀπάτῃ καὶ τῷφ' δεδρημένοις
Παιδῶν νεογνῶν ἐν δόμοις ἰδεῖν φάος.

"Nothing is so beautiful as to see a new birth in a childless family;" and it is excellent to hear a man discourse the hidden things of nature, and unriddle the perplexities of human notices and mistakes; it is comely to see a wise man sit in the gates of the city, and give right judgment in difficult causes: but all this is nothing to the excellencies of a new birth; to see the old man carried forth to funeral with the solemn tears of repentance, and buried in the grave of Jesus, and in his place a new creation to arise, a new heart, and a new understanding, and new affections, and excellent appetites: for nothing less than this can cure all the old distempers.

2. Our life, and all our discourses, and every observation, and a state of reason, and a union of sober counsels, are too little to cure a peevish spirit, and a weak reasoning, and silly principles, and accursed habits, and evil examples, and perverse affections, and a whole body of sin and death. It was well said in the comedy:

Nunquam ita quisquam bene subducta ratione
ad vitam fuit,

Quin ætas, usus semper aliquid apportet novi,
Aliquid moneat; ut illa, quæ soire credas,
nescias,

Et quæ tibi putas prima, in experiundo repudies.

Men at first think themselves wise, and are always most confident when they have the least reason; and to-morrow they begin to perceive yesterday's folly, and yet they are not wise; but as the little embryo, in the natural sheet and lap of its mother, first distinguishes into a little knot, and that in time will be the heart, and then into a bigger bundle, which after some days' abode grows into two little spots, and they, if cherished by nature, will become eyes, and each part by order commences into weak principles, and is preserved with nature's greatest curiosity; that it may assist first to distinction, then to order, next to usefulness, and from thence to strength, till it arrive at beauty, and a perfect creature; so are the necessities, and so are the discourses of men; we first learn the principles of rea-

son, which break obscurely through a cloud, and bring a little light, and then we discern a folly, and by little and little leave it, till that enlightens the next corner of the soul: and then there is a new discovery; but the soul is still in infancy and childish follies; and every day does but the work of one day; but therefore art and use, experience and reason, although they do something, yet they cannot do enough, there must be something else: but this is to be wrought by a new principle, that is, by the Spirit of grace: nature and reason alone cannot do it, and therefore the proper cure is to be wrought by those general means of inviting and cherishing, of getting and entertaining God's Spirit, which when we have observed, we may account ourselves sufficiently instructed towards the repair of our breaches, and reformation of our evil nature.

1. The first great instrument of changing our whole nature into the state of grace, flesh into the spirit, is a firm belief, and a perfect assent to, and hearty entertainment of, the promises of the gospel; for Holy Scripture speaks great words concerning faith. "It quenches the fiery darts of the devil," saith St. Paul;* "it overcomes the world," saith St. John;† it is the fruit of the Spirit, and the parent of love; it is obedience, and it is humility, and it is a shield, and it is a breastplate, and a work, and a mystery, it is a fight, and it is a victory, it is pleasing God, and it is that "whereby the just do live;" by "faith we are purified," and by "faith we are sanctified," and by "faith we are justified," and by "faith we are saved:" by this "we have access to the throne of grace," and by it our prayers shall prevail "for the sick," by it we stand, and by it we walk, and by this "Christ dwells in our hearts," and by it all the miracles of the church have been done: it gives great patience to suffer, and great confidence to hope, and great strength to do, and infallible certainty to enjoy the end of all our faith, and satisfaction of all our hopes, and the reward of all our labours, even "the most mighty prize of our high calling:" and if faith be such a magazine of spiritual excellencies, of such universal efficacy, nothing can be a greater antidote against the venom of a corrupted nature. But then this is not a grace seated finally in the understanding, but the principle that is

designed to, and actually productive of, a holy life; it is not only a believing the propositions of Scripture as we believe a proposition in the metaphysics, concerning which a man is never the honestest whether it be true or false; but it is a belief of things that concern us infinitely, things so great that if they be so true as great, no man that hath his reason and can discourse, that can think and choose, that can desire and work towards an end, can possibly neglect. The greatest object of our faith, to which all other articles do minister, is resurrection of our bodies and souls to eternal life, and glories infinite. Now is it possible that a man that believes this, and that he may obtain it for himself, and that it was prepared for him, and that God desires to give it him,—that he can neglect and despise it, and not work for it, and perform such easy conditions upon which it may be obtained? Are not most men of the world made miserable at a less price than a thousand pounds a year? Do not all the usurers and merchants, all tradesmen and labourers under the sun, toil and care, labour and contrive, venture and plot, for a little money; and no man gets, and scarce any man desires, so much of it as he can lay upon three acres of ground; not so much as will fill a great house. And is this sum, that is such a trifle, such a poor limited heap of dirt, the reward of all the labour, and the end of all the care, and the design of all the malice, and the recompence of all the wars, of the world; and can it be imaginable, that life itself, and a long life, an eternal and happy life, a kingdom, a perfect kingdom and glorious, that shall never have ending, nor ever shall be abated with rebellion, or fears, or sorrow, or care; that such a kingdom should not be worth the praying for, and quitting of an idle company, and a foolish humour, or a little drink, or a vicious silly woman, for it? Surely men believe no such thing: they do not rely upon those fine stories that are read in books, and published by preachers, and allowed by the laws of all the world. If they did, why do they choose intemperance and a fever, lust and shame, rebellion and danger, pride and a fall, sacrilege and a curse, gain and passion, before humility and safety, religion and a constant joy, devotion and peace of conscience, justice and a quiet dwelling, charity and a blessing; and, at the end of all this, a kingdom more glorious than all the beauties the sun

did ever see. “*Fides est velut quoddam æternitatis exemplar, præterita simul et præsentia et futura sinu quodam vastissimo comprehendit, ut nihil ei prætereat, nil pereat, præeat nihil;*” now, “Faith is a certain image of eternity, all things are present to it, things past and things to come,” are all so before the eyes of faith, that he in whose eye that candle is enkindled, beholds heaven as present, and sees how blessed a thing it is to die in God’s favour, and to be chimed to our grave with the music of a good conscience. Faith converses with the angels, and antedates the hymns of glory: every man that hath this grace, is as certain that there are glories for him, if he perseveres in duty, as if he had heard and sung the thanksgiving-song for the blessed sentence of doomsday. And therefore it is no matter, if these things are separate and distant objects; none but children and fools are taken with the present trifle, and neglect a distant blessing, of which they have credible and believed notices. Did the merchant see the pearls and the wealth he designed to get in the trade of twenty years? And is it possible that a child should, when he learns the first rudiments of grammar, know what excellent things there are in learning, whether he designs his labour and his hopes? We labour for that which is uncertain, and distant, and believed, and hoped for with many allays, and seen with diminution, and a troubled ray; and what excuse can there be that we do not labour for that, which is told us by God, and preached by his only Son, and confirmed by miracles, and which Christ himself died to purchase, and millions of martyrs died to witness, and which we see good men and wise believe with an assent stronger than their evidence, and which they do believe because they do love, and love because they do believe? There is nothing to be said, but that faith which did enlighten the blind, and cleanse the lepers, and washed the soul of the Æthiopian; that faith that cures the sick, and strengthens the paralytic, and baptizes the catechumens, and justifies the faithful, and repairs the penitent, and confirms the just, and crowns the martyrs; that faith, if it be true and proper, christian and alive, active and effective in us, is sufficient to appease the storm of our passions, and to instruct all our ignorances, and to make us wise unto salvation; it will, if we let it do its first intention, chastise our errors, and discover

our follies; it will make us ashamed of trifling interests and violent prosecutions, of false principles and the evil disguises of the world; and then our nature will return to the innocence and excellency in which God first estated it; that is, our flesh will be a servant of the soul, and the soul a servant to the spirit; and then, because faith makes heaven to be the end of our desires, and God the object of our love and worshippings, and the Scripture the rule of our actions, and Christ our lord and master, and the Holy Spirit our mighty assistant and our counsellor, all the little uglinesses of the world and the follies of the flesh, will be uneasy and unsavoury, unreasonable and a load; and then that grace, the grace of faith, that lays hold upon the holy Trinity, although it cannot understand it, and beholds heaven before it can possess it, shall also correct our weaknesses, and master all our aversations: and though we cannot in this world be perfect masters, and triumphant persons, yet we be conquerors and more; that is, conquerors of the direct hostility, and sure of a crown to be revealed in its due time.

2. The second great remedy of our evil nature, and of the loads of the flesh, is devotion, or a state of prayer and intercourse with God. For the gift of the Spirit of God, which is the great antidote of our evil natures, is properly and expressly promised to prayer: "If you, who are evil, give good things to your children that ask you, how much more shall your Father from heaven give his Holy Spirit to them that ask it?" That which in St. Luke* is called ἅγιον πνεῦμα, "the Holy Spirit," is called in St. Matthew, τὰ ἀγαθὰ,† "good things;" that is, the Holy Spirit is all that good that we shall need towards our pardon, and our sanctification, and our glory, and this is promised to prayer; to this purpose Christ taught us the Lord's Prayer, by which we are sufficiently instructed in obtaining this magazine of holy and useful things. But prayer is but one part of devotion, and though of admirable efficacy towards the obtaining this excellent promise, yet it is to be assisted by the other parts of devotion, to make it a perfect remedy to our great evil. He that would secure his evil nature, must be a devout person; and he that is devout, besides that he prays frequently, he delights in it as it is a conver-

sation with God; he rejoices in God, and esteems him the light of his eyes, and the support of his confidence, the object of his love, and the desire of his heart; the man is uneasy but when he does God service; and his soul is at peace and rest, when he does what may be accepted: and this is that which the apostle counsels and gives in precept; "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice;"* that is, as the Levites were appointed to rejoice, because God was their portion in tithes and offerings, so now that in the spiritual sense God is our portion, we should rejoice in him, and make him our inheritance, and his service our employment, and the peace of conscience to be our rest, and then it is impossible we should be any longer slaves to sin, and afflicted by the baser employments of the flesh, or carry burdens for the devil; and therefore the scholiast upon Juvenal observed well, "Nullum malum gaudium est," "No true joy can be evil;" and therefore it was improperly said of Virgil, "Mala gaudia mentis," calling lust and wild desires, "the evil joys of the mind;" "Gaudium enim nisi sapienti non contingere," said Seneca; "None but a wise and a good man can truly rejoice;" the evil laugh loud, and sigh deeply, they drink drunk, and forget their sorrows, and all the joys of evil men are only arts of forgetfulness, devices to cover their sorrow, and make them not see their death, and its affrighting circumstances; but the heart never can rejoice and be secure, be pleased and be at rest, but when it dwells with holiness: the joys that come from thence are safe and great, unchangeable and unabated, healthful and holy; and this is true joy: and this is that which can cure all the little images of pleasure and temptation, which debauch our nature, and make it dwell with hospitals, in the region of diseases and evil sorrows. St. Gregory well observed the difference, saying that "Corporeal pleasures, when we have them not, enkindle a flame and a burning desire in the heart, and make a man very miserable before he tastes them; the appetite to them is like the thirst and desires of a fever;" the pleasure of drinking will not pay for the pain of the desire; and "when they are enjoyed, they instantly breed satiety and loathing. But spiritual rejoicings and delights are loathed by them that have them not, and despised

* Luke xi. 13.

† Matt. vii. 11.

* Phil. iv. 4.

by them that never felt them;" but when they are once tasted, they increase the appetite and swell into bigger capacities; and the more they are eaten, the more they are desired; and cannot become a weariness, because they satisfy all the way, and only increase the desire, because themselves grow bigger and more amiable. And therefore when this new and stranger appetite, and consequent joy, arises in the heart of man, it so fills the faculties, that there is no gust, no desire left for toads and vipers, for hemlock and the deadly nightshade.

Sirenas, hilarem navigantium pœnam,
Blandasque mortes, gaudiumque crudele,
Quas nemo quondam deserebat auditas,
Prudens Ulysses dicitur reliquisse.—MART.

Then a man can hear the music of songs and dances, and think them to be heathenish noises; and if he be engaged in the society of a woman-singer, he can be as unconcerned as a marble statue; he can be at a feast and not be defiled, he can pass through theatres as through a street; then he can look on money as his servant, "nec distant æra lupinis;" he can use it as the Greeks did their sharp coins, to cast accounts withal, and not from thence take the accounts of his wealth or his felicity. If you can once obtain but a delight in prayer, and to long for the day of a communion, and to be pleased with holy meditation, and to desire God's grace with great passion, and an appetite keen as a wolf upon the void plains of the north; if you can delight in God's love, and consider concerning his providence, and busy yourselves in the pursuit of the affairs of his kingdom, then you have the grace of devotion, and your evil nature shall be cured.

3. Because this great cure is to be wrought by the Spirit of God, which is a new nature in us, we must endeavour to abstain from those things, which, by a special malignity, are directly opposite to the spirit of reason and the Spirit of grace; and those are drunkenness and lust. He that is full of wine, cannot be full of the Spirit of God: St. Paul noteth the hostility; "Be not drunk with wine, but be filled with the Spirit:"* a man that is a drunkard, does *perire cito*, "he perishes quickly," his temptations that come to him, make but short work with him; a drunkard is *ἀσωτος*; our English well expresses it, it is "a sottishness," and the man is *ἀκολαστος*, *ἀχρηστος*, *ἀχρηστος*, "a

useless, senseless person:" *εἰτ' οὐχ' ἀπάστων ἐστὶ τὸ μῦθον κακῶν μίγιστον ἀνθρώποις καὶ βλαβερώτατον*; "Of all the evils of the world, nothing is worse to a man's self, nothing is more harmful than this;" *ἀποστεροῦντα ἑαυτὸν τοῦ φρονεῖν, ὁ μίγιστον ἡμῖν ἀγαθὸν ἔχει ἡ φύσις*, said Crobylus; it deprives a wise man of his counsel and his understanding." Now, because it is the greatest good that nature hath, that which takes it away must needs be our greatest enemy. Nature is weak enough of itself, but drunkenness takes from it all the little strengths that are left to it, and destroys the Spirit; and the man can neither have the strengths of nature, nor the strengths of grace; and how then can the man do wisely or virtuously? "Spiritus sanctus amat sicca corda," "The Spirit of God loves dry hearts," said the Christian proverb; and Josephus said of Samson, *Δῆλον ἦν προφητεύουσαν ἀπὸ τῆς περὶ τὴν, διαίταν σοφροσύνης*, "It appears he was a prophet, or a man full of the Spirit, by the temperance of his diet;" and now that all the people are holy unto the Lord, they must *ἀσώτους ἀχρηστούς ἔχειν*, as Plutarch said of their consecrated persons; they must have "dry and sober purities:" for by this means their reason is useful, and their passions not violent, and their discourse united, and the precious things of their memory at hand, and they can pray and read, and they can meditate and practise, and then they can learn where their natural weaknesses are most urgent, and how they can be tempted, and can secure their aids accordingly; but how is it possible that such a man should cure all the evils of his nature, and repair the breaches of Adam's sin, and stop all the effect which is upon him from all the evils of the world, if he delights in seas of drink, and is pleased with the follies of distempered persons, and laughs loud at the childish humours and weak discourses of the man, that can do nothing but that for which Dionysius slew Antiphon, and Timagenes did fall from Cæsar's friendship; that is, play the fool and abuse his friend; he cannot give good counsel or spend an hour in wise sayings; but half a day they can talk "ut foret, unde corona cacinnum tollere possit," to make the crowd laugh, and consider not.

And the same is the case of lust; because it is exactly contrary to Christ the king of virgins, and his Holy Spirit, who is the prince of purities and holy thoughts; it is a captivity of the reason and an enraging

* Ephes. v. 18.

of the passions, it wakens every night and rages every day, it desires passionately and prosecutes violently, it hinders business and distracts counsel, it brings jealousies and enkindles wars, it sins against the body and weakens the soul, it defiles a temple and drives the Holy Spirit forth; and it is so entire a prosecution of the follies and weaknesses of nature, such a snare and a bait to weak and easy fools, that it prevails infinitely, and rages horribly, and rules tyrannically; it is a very fever in the reason, and a calenture in the passions; and therefore either it must be quenched, or it will be impossible to cure our evil natures: the curing of this is not the remedy of a single evil, but it is a doing violence to our whole nature; and therefore hath in it the greatest courage and an equal conduct, and supposes spiritual strengths great enough to contest against every enemy.

4. Hitherto is to be reduced, that we avoid all flatterers and evil company; for it was impossible that Alexander should be wise and cure his pride and his drunkenness, so long as he entertained Agesius and Agnon, Bagoas and Demetrius, and slew Parmenio and Philotas, and murdered wise Callisthenes; for he that loves to be flattered, loves not to change his pleasure; but had rather to hear himself called wise, than to be so. Flattery does bribe an evil nature, and corrupt a good one; and make it love to give wrong judgment and evil sentences: he that loves to be flattered, can never want some to abuse him, but he shall always want one to counsel him, and then he can never be wise.

5. But I must put these advices into a heap: he therefore that will cure his evil nature, must set himself against his chiefest lust, which when he hath overcome, the lesser enemies will come in of themselves. He must endeavour to reduce his affections to an indifferency; for all violence is an enemy to reason and counsel, and is that state of disease for which he is to inquire remedies.

6. It is necessary that in all actions of choice he deliberate and consider, that he may never do that for which he must ask a pardon, and he must suffer shame and smart: and therefore Cato did well reprove Aulus Albinus for writing the Roman story in the Greek tongue, of which he had but imperfect knowledge; and himself was put to make his apology for so doing: Cato told him that he was mightily in love with

a fault, that had rather beg a pardon than be innocent. Who forced him to need the pardon? And when beforehand we know we must change from what we are or do worse, it is a better compendium not to enter in from whence we must uneasily retire.

7. In all the contingencies of chance and variety of action, remember that thou art the maker of thy own fortune, and of thy own sin; charge not God with it either before or after; the violence of thy own passion is no superinduced necessity from him, and the events of providence in all its strange variety can give no authority or patronage to a foul forbidden action, though the next chance of war or fortune be prosperous and rich. An Egyptian robber, sleeping under a rotten wall, was awakened by Serapis, and sent away from the ruin; but being quit from the danger, and seeing the wall to slide, he thought that the demon loved his crime, because he had so strangely preserved him from a sudden and a violent death. But Serapis told him, *Θάνατος μὲν ἄλλοπονὸν ἐφυγες, σταυρῶ δ' ἰσθι φυλαττόμενος*, "I saved you from the wall, to reserve you for the wheel;" from a short and private death, to a painful and disgraceful; and so it is very frequently in the event of human affairs: men are saved from one death, and reserved for another; or are preserved here, to be destroyed hereafter; and they that would judge of actions by events, must stay till all events are passed, that is, till all their posterity be dead, and the sentence is given at dooms-day; in the mean time the evils of our nature are to be looked upon without all accidental appendages; as they are in themselves, as they have an irregularity and disorder, an unreasonableness and a sting; and be sure to rely upon nothing, but the truth of laws and promises; and take severe accounts by those lines, which God gave us on purpose to reprove our evil habits and filthy inclinations. Men that are not willing to be cured, are glad of any thing to cozen them; but the body of death cannot be taken off from us, unless we be honest in our purposes, and severe in our counsels, and take just measures, and glorify God, and set ourselves against ourselves, that we may be changed into the likeness of the sons of God.

8. Avoid all delay in the counsels of religion. Because the aversion and perverseness of a child's nature may be corrected easily; but every day of indulgence

and excuse increases the evil, and makes it still more natural, and still more necessary.

9. Learn to despise the world; or, which is a better compendium in the duty, learn but truly to understand it; for it is a cozenage all the way; the head of it is a rainbow, and the face of it is flattery; its words are charms, and all its stories are false; its body is a shadow, and its hands do knit spiders' webs; it is an image and a noise, with an hyena's lip and a serpent's tail; it was given to serve the needs of our nature; and instead of doing it, it creates strange appetites, and nourishes thirsts and fevers; it brings care and debauches our nature, and brings shame and death as the reward of all our cares. Our nature is a disease, and the world does nourish it; but if you leave to feed upon such unwholesome diet, your nature reverts to its first purities, and to the entertainments of the grace of God.

4. I am now to consider, how far the infirmities of the flesh can be innocent, and consist with the Spirit of grace. For all counsels are to be entertained into a willing spirit, and not only so, but into an active; and so long as the spirit is only willing, the weakness of the flesh will in many instances become stronger than the strengths of the spirit. For he that hath a good will, and does not do good actions, which are required of him, is hindered, but not by God that requires them, and therefore by himself, or his worst enemy. But the measures of this question are these:

1. If the flesh hinders us of our duty, it is our enemy; and then our misery is not, that the flesh is weak, but that it is too strong; but, 2. when it abates the degrees of duty and stops its growth, or its passing on to action and effect, then it is weak, but not directly nor always criminal. But to speak particularly,

1. If our flesh hinders us of any thing that is a direct duty, and prevails upon the spirit to make it do an evil action, or contract an evil habit, the man is in a state of bondage and sin; his flesh is the mother of corruption and an enemy to God. It is not enough to say, I desire to serve God, and cannot as I would: I would fain love God above all things in the world, but the flesh hath appetites of its own that must be observed: I pray to be forgiven as I forgive others; but flesh and blood cannot put up such an injury: for know that no infirmity, no unavoidable accident, no necessity, no poverty, no business, can hinder us from

the love of God, or forgiving injuries, or being of a religious and a devout spirit: poverty and the intrigues of the world are things, that can no more hinder the spirit in these duties, than a strong enemy can hinder the sun to shine, or the clouds to drop rain. These things which God requires of us, and exacts from us with mighty penalties, these he hath made us able to perform; for he knows that we have no strength but what he gives us; and therefore, as he binds burdens upon our shoulders, so he gives us strength to bear them: and therefore, he that says he cannot forgive, says only that his lust is stonger than his religion; his flesh prevails upon his spirit. For what necessity can a man have to curse him, whom he calls his enemy? or to sue him, or kill him, or do him any spite? A man may serve all his needs of nature, though he does nothing of all this; and if he be willing, what hinders him to love, to pardon, to wish well, to desire? The willing is the doing in this case; and he that says he is willing to do his duty, but he cannot, does not understand what he says. For all the duty of the inner man consists in the actions of the will, and there they are seated, and to it all the inferior faculties obey in those things which are direct emanations and effects of will. He that desires to love God, does love him; indeed men are often cozened with pretences, and in some good mood, or warmed with a holy passion, but it signifies nothing; because they will not quit the love of God's enemies; and therefore, they do not desire what they say they do: but if the will and heart be right, and not false and dissembling, this duty is or will be done infallibly.

2. If the spirit and the heart be willing, it will pass on to outward actions in all things, where it ought, or can. He that hath a charitable soul, will have a charitable hand; and will give his money to the poor, as he hath given his heart to God. For these things which are in our hand, are under the power of the will, and therefore are to be commanded by it. He that says to the naked, "Be warm and clothed," and gives him not the garment that lies by him, or money to buy one, mocks God, and the poor, and himself. "Nequam illud verbum est, 'Bene vult,' nisi qui bene facit," said the comedy; "It is an evil saying, 'He wishes well,' unless he do well."*

* Trinummus.

3. Those things which are not in our power, that is, such things in which the flesh is inculpably weak, or naturally or politically disabled, the will does the work of the outward and of the inward man; we cannot clothe Christ's body, he needs it not, and we cannot approach so sacred and separate a presence; but if we desire to do it, it is accounted as if we had. The ignorant man cannot discourse wisely and promote the interest of souls, but he can love souls, and desire their felicity; though I cannot build hospitals and colleges, or pour great sums of money into the lap of the poor, yet if I encourage others and exhort them, if I commend and promote the work, I have done the work of a holy religion. For in these and the like cases, the outward work is not always set in our power, and therefore, without our fault, is omitted, and can be supplied by that which is in our power.

4. For that is the last caution concerning this question. No man is to be esteemed of a willing spirit, but he that endeavours to do the outward work, or to make all the supplies that he can; not only by the forwardness of his spirit, but by the compensation, of some other charities, or devotion, or religion. "Silver and gold have I none," and therefore I can give you none: but I wish you well; how will that appear? Why thus, "Such as I have I will give you; rise up and walk." I cannot give you gold, but I can give you counsel; I cannot relieve your need, but I can relieve your sadness; I cannot cure you, but I can comfort you; I cannot take away your poverty, but I can ease your spirit: and "God accepts us" (saith the apostle) "according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not." Only as our desires are great, and our spirits are willing, so we shall find ways to make supply of our want of ability and expressed liberality.

Et labor ingenium misero dedit, et sua quemque Advigilare sibi jussit fortuna premedo.

What the poor man's need will make him do, that also the good man's charity will; it will find out ways and artifices of relief, in kind or in value; in comfort or in prayers; in doing it himself or procuring others.

Πάντα δε ταύτη' εδίδαξε πικρή πάντολμος ἀνάγκη.

The necessity of our fortune and the willingness of our spirits will do all this; all that it can, and something that it cannot; "You have relieved the saints" (saith St.

Paul) "according to your power, yea, and beyond your power;" only let us be careful in all instances, that we yield not to the weakness of the flesh, nor listen to its fair pretences; for the flesh can do more than it says, we can do more than we think we can; and if we do some violence to the flesh, to our affairs, and to the circumstances of our fortune, for the interest of our spirit, we shall make our flesh useful, and the spirit strong; the flesh and its weakness shall no more be an objection, but shall comply, and co-operate, and serve all the necessities of the spirit.

SERMON XII.

OF LUKEWARMNESS AND ZEAL; OR, SPIRITUAL FERVOUR.

PART I.

Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully. Jer. xlviii. 10. ver. first part.

CHRIST'S kingdom,—being in order to the kingdom of his Father, which shall be manifest at the day of judgment,—must therefore be spiritual; because then it is, that all things must become spiritual, not only by way of eminency, but by entire constitution and perfect change of natures. Men shall be like angels, and angels shall be comprehended in the lap of spiritual and eternal felicities; the soul shall not understand by material phantasms, neither be served by the provisions of the body, but the body itself shall become spiritual, and the eye shall see intellectual objects, and the mouth shall feed upon hymns and glorifications of God; the belly shall be then satisfied by the fulness of righteousness, and the tongue shall speak nothing but praises, and the propositions of a celestial wisdom; the motion shall be the swiftness of an angel, and it shall be clothed with white as with a garment; holiness is the sun and righteousness is the moon in that region; our society shall be choirs of singers, and our conversation wonder; contemplation shall be our food, and love shall be "the wine of elect souls." And as to every natural appetite there is now proportioned an object crass, material, unsatisfying and allayed with sorrow and uneasiness; so there be new capacities and equal objects, the desires shall be fruition, and the appetite

shall not suppose want, but a faculty of delight, and an immeasurable complacency: the will and the understanding, love and wonder, joys every day and the same for ever; this shall be their state who shall be accounted worthy of the resurrection to this life; where the body shall be a partner, but no servant; where it shall have no work of its own, but it shall rejoice with the soul; where the soul shall rule without resistance or an enemy; and we shall be fitted to enjoy God who is the Lord and Father of spirits. In this world, we see it is quite contrary: we long for perishing meat, and fill our stomachs with corruption; we look after white and red, and the weaker beauties of the night; we are passionate after rings and seals, and enraged at the breaking of a crystal; we delight in the society of fools and weak persons; we laugh at sin and contrive mischiefs; and the body rebels against the soul, and carries the cause against all its just pretences; and our soul itself is, above half of it, earth and stone, in its affections and distempers; our hearts are hard and inflexible to the softer whispers of mercy and compassion, having no love for any thing but strange flesh, and heaps of money, and popular noises, for misery and folly; and therefore we are a huge way off from the kingdom of God, whose excellencies, whose designs, whose ends, whose constitution, is spiritual and holy, and separate, and sublime, and perfect. Now between these two states of natural flesh and heavenly spirit, that is, the powers of darkness and the regions of light, the miseries of man and the perfections of God, the imperfection of nature where we stand by our creation, and supervening follies, and that state of felicities, whither we are designed by the mercies of God,—there is a middle state, “the kingdom of grace,” wrought for us by our Mediator, the man Christ Jesus, who came to perfect the virtue of religion, and the designs of God, and to reform our nature, and to make it possible for us to come to that spiritual state, where all felicity does dwell. The religion that Christ taught, is a spiritual religion; it designs (so far as the state can permit) to make us spiritual; that is, so as the Spirit be the prevailing ingredient. God must now be worshipped in spirit, and not only so, but with a fervent spirit; and though God in all religions did seize upon the spirit, and even under Moses’s law did, by the shadow of the ceremony, require the

substantial worship, and, by cutting off the flesh, intended the circumcision of the heart; yet because they were to mind the outward action, it took off much from the intention and activity of the spirit; man could not do both busily. And then they failed also in the other part of a spiritual religion; for the nature of a spiritual religion is, that in it we serve God with our hearts and affections; and because while the spirit prevails, we do not to evil purposes of abatement converse with flesh and blood, this service is also fervent, intense, active, wise, and busy, according to the nature of things spiritual. Now because God always perfectly intended it, yet because he less perfectly required it in the law of Moses, I say they fell short in both.

For, 1. They so rested in the outward action, that they thought themselves chaste if they were no adulterers, though their eyes were wanton as kids, and their thoughts polluted as the springs of the wilderness, when a panther and a lioness descend to drink and lust; and if they did not rob the temple, they accounted it no sin if they murmured at the riches of religion; and Josephus reproves Polybius, for saying that Antiochus was punished for having a design of sacrilege; and therefore Tertullian says of them, they were “*nec plænæ, nec adeo timendæ disciplinæ ad innocentia veritatem*,” this was “their righteousness,” which Christ said unless we will “exceed, we shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven,” where all spiritual perfections are in state and excellency.

2. The other part of a spiritual worship is a fervour and a holy zeal of God’s glory, greatness of desire, and quickness of action: of all this the Jews were not careful at all, excepting the zealots amongst them, and they were not only fervent but inflamed; and they had the earnestness of passion for the holy warmth of religion, and instead of an earnest charity they had a cruel discipline, and for fraternal correction, they did destroy a sinning Israelite: and by both these evil states of religion they did “the work of the Lord deceitfully;” they either gave him the action without the heart, or zeal without charity, or religion without zeal, or ceremony without religion, or indifferency without desires; and then God is served by the outward man and not the inward; or by part of the inward and not at all; by the understanding and not by the will; or by the will, when the affections are

cold and the body unapt, and the lower faculties in rebellion, and the superior in disorder, and the work of God is left imperfect, and our persons ungracious, and our ends unacquird, and the state of a spiritual kingdom not at all set forward towards any hope or possibility of being obtained. All this Christ came to mend; and by his laws did make provision that God should be served entirely, according as God always designed, and accordingly required by his prophets, and particularly in my text, that his work be done sincerely, and our duty with great affection; and by these two provisions, both the intention and the extension are secured; our duty shall be entire, and it shall be perfect, we shall be neither lame nor cold, without a limb nor without natural heat, and then "the work of the Lord will prosper in our hands;" but if we fail in either, we do "the Lord's work deceitfully," and then we are accursed. For so saith the Spirit of God, "Cursed be he, that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully."

1. Here then is the duty of us all: 1. God requires of us to serve him with an integral, entire, or a whole worship and religion. 2. God requires of us to serve him with earnest and intense affections; the entire purpose of both which, I shall represent in its several parts by so many propositions. 3. I shall consider concerning the measures of zeal and its inordinations.

1. He that serves God with the body without the soul, serves God deceitfully. "My son, give me thy heart;" and though I cannot think that nature was so sacramental, as to point out the holy and mysterious Trinity by the triangle of the heart, yet it is certain that the heart of man is God's special portion, and every angle ought to point out towards him directly; that is, the soul of man ought to be presented to God, and given him as an oblation to the interest of his service.

1. For, to worship God with our souls confesses one of his glorious attributes; it declares him to be the searcher of hearts, and that he reads the secret purposes, and beholds the smallest arrests of fancy, and bends in all the flexures and intrigues of crafty people; and searches out every plot and trifling conspiracy against him, and against ourselves, and against our brethren.

2. It advances the powers and concerns of his providence, and confesses all the affairs of men, all their cabinets and

their mighty counsels, their snares and two-edged mischiefs, to be overruled by him; for what he sees he judges, and what he judges he rules, and what he rules must turn to his glory; and of this glory he reflects rays and influences upon his servants, and it shall also turn to their good.

3. This service distinguishes our duty towards God from all our conversation with man, and separates the Divine commandments from the imperfect decrees of princes and republics: for these are satisfied by the outward work, and cannot take any other cognizance of the heart, and the will of man, but as himself is pleased to signify. He that wishes the "fiscus" empty, and that all the revenues of the crown were in his counting-house, cannot be punished by the laws, unless himself become his own traitor and accuser; and therefore what man cannot discern, he must not judge, and must not require. But God sees it, and judges it, and requires it, and therefore reserves this as his own portion, and the chiefest feudal right of his crown.

4. He that secures the heart, secures all the rest; because this is the principle of all the moral actions of the whole man, and the hand obeys this, and the feet walk by its prescriptions; we eat and drink by measures which the soul desires and limits; and though the natural actions of men are not subject to choice and rule, yet the animal actions are under discipline; and although it cannot be helped but we shall desire, yet our desires can receive measures, and the laws of circumstances, and be reduced to order, and nature be changed into grace, and the actions animal (such as are, eating, drinking, laughing, weeping, &c.) shall become actions of religion; and those that are simply natural (such as, being hungry and thirsty) shall be adopted in the retinue of religion, and become religious by being ordered, or chastised, or suffered, or directed; and therefore God requires the heart, because he requires all; and all cannot be secured without the principle be enclosed. But he that seals up a fountain, may drink up all the waters alone, and may best appoint the channel where it shall run, and what grounds it shall refresh.

5. That I may sum up many reasons in one; God by requiring the heart secures the perpetuity and perseverance of our duty, and its sincerity, and its integrity, and its perfection: for so also God takes account of little things; it being all one in the heart

of man, whether maliciously it omits a duty in a small instance or in a great; for although the expression hath variety and degrees in it, in relation to those purposes of usefulness and charity whither God designs it, yet the obedience and disobedience are all one, and shall be equally accounted for; and therefore the Jew Tryphon disputed against Justin, that the precepts of the gospel were impossible to be kept, because it also requiring the heart of man, did stop every egression of disorders: for making the root holy and healthful, as the balsam of Judea, or the drops of manna in the evening of the sabbath; it also causes that nothing spring thence but gums fit for incense, and oblations for the altar of proposition, and a cloud of perfume fit to make atonement for our sins; and being united to the great sacrifice of the world, to reconcile God and man together. Upon these reasons you see it is highly fit that God should require it, and that we should pay the sacrifice of our hearts; and not at all think that God is satisfied with the work of the hands, when the affections of the heart are absent. He that prays because he would be quiet, and would fain be quit of it, and communicates for fear of the laws, and comes to church to avoid shame, and gives alms to be eased of an importunate beggar, or relieves his old parents because they will not die in their time, and provides for his children lest he be compelled by laws and shame, but yet complains of the charge of God's blessings; this man is a servant of the eyes of men, and offers parchment or a white skin in sacrifice, but the flesh and the inwards he leaves to be consumed by a stranger fire. And therefore, this is a deceit that robs God of the best, and leaves that for religion which men pare off; it is sacrilege, and brings a double curse.

2. He that serves God with the soul without the body, when both can be conjoined, "doth the work of the Lord deceitfully."—Paphnutius, whose knees were cut for the testimony of Jesus, was not obliged to worship with the humble flexures of the bending penitents; and blind Bartimeus could not read the holy lines of the law, and therefore that part of the work was not his duty; and God shall not call Lazarus to account for not giving alms, nor St. Peter and St. John for not giving silver and gold to the lame man, nor Epaphroditus for not keeping his fasting-days when he had

his sickness. But when God hath made the body an apt minister to the soul, and hath given money for alms, and power to protect the oppressed, and knees to serve in prayer, and hands to serve our needs, then the soul alone is not to work; but as Rachel gave her maid to Jacob, and she bore children to her lord upon her mistress's knees; and the children were reckoned to them both, because the one had fruitful desires, and the other a fruitful womb: so must the body serve the needs of the spirit; that what the one desires the other may effect, and the conceptions of the soul may be the productions of the body, and the body must bow when the soul worships, and the hand must help when the soul pities, and both together do the work of a holy religion; the body alone can never serve God without the conjunction and preceding act of the soul; and sometimes the soul without the body is imperfect and vain; for in some actions there is a body and a spirit, a material and a spiritual part: and when the action hath the same constitution that a man hath, without the act of both, it is as imperfect as a dead man; the soul cannot produce the body of some actions any more than the body can put life into it; and therefore an ineffective pity and a lazy counsel, an empty blessing and gay words, are but deceitful charity.

Quod peto, da, Cai; non peto consilium. MART. He that gave his friend counsel to study the law, when he desired to borrow twenty pounds, was not so friendly in his counsel as he was useless in his charity; spiritual acts can cure a spiritual malady, but if my body needs relief, because you cannot feed me with diagrams, or clothe me with Euclid's Elements, you must minister a real supply by a corporal necessity. This proposition is not only useful in the doctrine of charity, and the virtue of religion, but in the professions of faith, and requires that it be public, open, and ingenuous. In matters of necessary duty it is not sufficient to have it to ourselves, but we must also have it to God, and all the world; and as in the heart we believe, so by the mouth we confess unto salvation: he is an ill man that is only a christian in his heart, and is not so in his profession and publications; and as your heart must not be wanting in any good professions and pretences, so neither must public profession be wanting in every good and necessary persuasion. The faith and the cause of God must be

owned publicly; for if it be the cause of God, it will never bring us to shame. I do not say, whatever we think we must tell it to all the world, much less at all times, and in all circumstances; but we must never deny that which we believe to be the cause of God, in such circumstances, in which we can and ought to glorify him. But this extends also to other instances. He that swears a false oath with his lips, and unswears it with his heart, hath deceived one more than he thinks for; himself is the most abused person: and when my action is contrary to men, they will reprove me; but when it is against my own persuasion, I cannot but reprove myself; and am witness, and accuser, and party, and guilty, and then God is the judge, and his anger will be a fierce executioner, because we do the Lord's work deceitfully.

3. They are "deceitful in the Lord's work," that reserve one faculty for sin, or one sin for themselves; or one action to please their appetite, and many for religion.—Rabbi Kimchi taught his scholars, "*Cogitationem pravam Deus non habet vice facti, nisi concepta fuerit in Dei fidem et religionem;*" "That God is never angry with an evil thought, unless it be a thought of apostasy from the Jews' religion;" and therefore, provided that men be severe and close in their sect and party, they might roll in lustful thoughts; and the torches they light up in the temple, might smoke with anger at one end, and lust at the other, so they did not flame out in egressions of violence and injustice, in adulteries and fouler complications: nay, they would give leave to some degrees of evil actions; for R. Moses and Selomoh taught, that if the most part of a man's actions were holy and just, though in one he sinned often, yet the greater ingredient should prevail, and the number of good works should outweigh the lesser account of evil things; and this pharisaical righteousness is too frequent even among christians. For who almost is there that does not count fairly concerning himself, if he reckons many virtues upon the stock of his religion, and but one vice upon the stock of his infirmity; half a dozen to God, and one for his company or his friend, his education or his appetite? And if he hath parted from his folly, yet he will remember the flesh-pots, and please himself with a fantastic sin, and call it home through the gates of his memory, and place it at the door of fancy, that there he

may behold it, and consider concerning what he hath parted withal, out of the fears and terrors of religion, and a necessary unavoidable conscience. Do not many men go from sin to sin, even in their repentance? they go backward from sin to sin, and change their crime as a man changes his uneasy load, and shakes it off from one shoulder to support it with the other. How many severe persons, virgins and widows, are so pleased with their chastity, and their abstinence even from lawful mixtures, that by this means they fall into a worse pride? Insomuch that I remember St. Augustine said, "*Audeo dicere superbis continentibus expedit cadere,*" "They that are chaste and proud, it is sometimes a remedy for them to fall into sin," and by the shame of lust to cure the devil of pride, and by the sin of the body to cure the worsor evils of the spirit: and therefore he adds, that he did believe, God in a severe mercy did permit the barbarous nations, breaking in upon the Roman empire, to violate many virgins professed in cloisters and religious families to be as a mortification of their pride, lest the accidental advantages of a continent life should bring them into the certain miseries of a spiritual death, by taking away their humility, which was more necessary than their virgin-state; it is not a cure that men may use, but God permits it sometimes with greater safety through his wise conduct and overruling providence; St. Peter was safer by his fall (as it fell out in the event of things) than by his former confidence. Man must never cure a sin by a sin; but he that brings good out of our evil, he can when he please. But I speak it, to represent how deceitfully many times we do the work of the Lord. We reprove a sinning brother, but do it with a pompous spirit; we separate from scandal, and do it with glory, and a gaudy heart; we are charitable to the poor, but will not forgive our unkind enemies; or, we pour relief into their bags, but we please ourselves and drink drunk, and hope to commute with God, giving the fruit of our labours or effluxes of money for the sin of our souls: and upon this account it is, that two of the noblest graces of a christian are to very many persons made a savour of death, though they were intended for the beginning and the promotion of an eternal life; and those are faith and charity: some men think if they have faith, it is enough to answer all the accusations of sin, which

our consciences or the devils make against us; if I be a wanton person, yet my faith shall hide it, and faith shall cover the follies of drunkenness, and I may all my life rely upon faith at last to quit my scores. For he that is most careful is not innocent, but must be saved by faith; and he that is least careful may have faith, and that will save him. But because these men mistake concerning faith, and consider not, that charity or a good life is a part of that faith that saves us, they hope to be saved by the word, they fill their bellies with the story of Trimalcion's banquet, and drink drunk with the news of wine; they eat shadows, and when they are drowning, catch at the image of the trees, which hang over the water, and are reflected from the bottom.

But thus many men do with charity; "Give alms and all things shall be clean unto you," said our blessed Saviour: and therefore, many keep a sin alive, and make account to pay for it, and God shall be put to relieve his own poor at the price of the sin of another of his servants; charity shall take lust or intemperance into protection, and men will not be kind to their brethren, unless they will be also at the same time unkind to God. I have understood concerning divers vicious persons, that none have been so free in their donatives and offerings to religion and the priest as they; and the hospitals that have been built, and the highways mended at the price of souls, are too many for christendom to boast of in behalf of charity. But as others mistake concerning faith, so these do concerning its twin-sister. The first had faith without charity, and these have charity without hope; "For every one that hath this hope," that is, the hope of receiving the glorious things of God promised in the gospel, "purifies himself even as God is pure:" faith, and charity too, must both suppose repentance; and repentance is the abolition of the whole body of sin, the purification of the whole man. But the sum of the doctrine and case of conscience in this particular is this,

1. Charity is a certain cure of sins that are past, not that are present.—He that repents and leaves his sin, and then relieves the poor, and pays for his folly by a diminution of his own estate, and the supplies of the poor, and his ministering to Christ's poor members, turns all his former crimes into holiness; he purges the stains and makes amends for his folly, and commutes

for the baser pleasure with a more noble usage: so said Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar, "Break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor:"* first be just, and then be charitable; for it is pity, alms—which is one of the noblest services of God, and the greatest mercy to thy brother—should be spent upon sin, and thrown away upon folly.

2. Faith is the remedy of all our evils; but then, it is never of force, but when we either have endeavoured or undertaken to do all good; this in baptism, that after; faith and repentance at first, and faith and charity at last: and, because we fail often by infirmity and sometimes by inadvertency, sometimes by a surprise and often by omission; and all this even in the midst of a sincere endeavour to live justly and perfectly; therefore the passion of our Lord pays for this, and faith lays hold upon that. But without a hearty and sincere intent, and vigorous prosecution of all the parts of our duty, faith is but a word, not so much as a cover to a naked bosom, nor a pretence big enough to deceive persons, that are not willing to be cozened.

3. The bigger ingredient of virtue and evil actions will prevail, but it is only when virtue is habitual, and sins are single, interrupted, casual, and seldom, without choice and without affection; that is, when our repentance is so timely, that it can work for God more than we served under the tyranny of sin; so that if you will account the whole life of man, the rule is good, and the greater ingredient shall prevail; and he shall certainly be pardoned and accepted, whose life is so reformed, whose repentance is so active, whose return is so early, that he hath given bigger portions to God, and to God's enemy. But if we account so, as to divide the measures in present possession, the bigger part cannot prevail; a small or a seldom sin spoils not the sea of piety; but when the affection is divided, a little ill destroys the whole body of good; the cup in a man's right hand must be ἀπαρτος κεκρασμένον, it "must be pure, although it be mingled;" that is, the whole affection must be for God, that must be pure and unmingled; if sin mingles in seldom and unapproved instances, the drops of water are swallowed up with a whole vintage of piety, and the bigger ingredient is the prevailing; in all other cases it is not so: for one sin that we

* Dan. iv. 27.

choose and love and delight in, will not be excused by twenty virtues; and as one broken link dissolves the union of the whole chain, and one jarring, untuned string spoils the whole music; so is every sin that seizes upon a portion of our affections; if we love one, that one destroys the acceptance of all the rest: and as it is in faith, so it is in charity. He that is a heretic in one article, hath no saving faith in the whole; and so does every vicious habit, or unreformed sin, destroy the excellency of the grace of charity; a wilful error in one article is heresy, and every vice in one instance is malice, and they are perfectly contrary, and a direct darkness to the two eyes of the soul, faith and charity.

4. There is one deceit more yet, in the matter of the extension of our duty, destroying the integrity of its constitution: for they do the work of God deceitfully, who think God sufficiently served with abstinence from evil, and converse not in the acquisition and pursuit of holy charity and religion. This Clemens Alexandrinus affirms of the Pharisees; they were *μετὰ ἀποχρῆν κακῶν δικαιοῦμενοι*, they hoped to be "justified by abstinence from things forbidden;" but if we will be *βασιλικοί*, "sons of the kingdom," we must *μετὰ τῆς ἐν τούτοις τελειώσεως καὶ τὸν πληθὺν ἀγαπᾶν, καὶ εὐεργετεῖν*; besides this, and "supposing a proportionable perfection in such an innocence, we must love our brother and do good to him," and glorify God by a holy religion, in the communion of saints, in faith and sacraments, in alms and counsel, in forgivenesses and assistances. "Flee from evil, and do the thing that is good, and dwell for evermore," said the Spirit of God in the Psalms: and St. Peter, "Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust, give all diligence to add to your faith virtue, to virtue patience, to patience godliness, and brotherly-kindness, and charity." Many persons think themselves fairly assoiled, because they are no adulterers, no rebels, no drunkards, not of scandalous lives; in the mean time, like the Laodiceans, they are "naked and poor;" they have no catalogue of good things registered in heaven, no treasures in the repositories of the poor, neither have the poor often prayed concerning them, "Lord, remember thy servants for this thing at the day of judgment." A negative religion is in many things the effects of laws, and the appendage of sexes, the product of education, the issues of company and of the public, or the daughter of fear and natural

modesty, or their temper and constitution, and civil relations, common fame, or necessary interest. Few women swear and do the debaucheries of drunkards; and they are guarded from adulterous complications by spies and shame, by fear and jealousy, by the concernment of families, and reputation of their kindred, and therefore they are to account with God beyond this civil and necessary innocence, for humility and patience, for religious fancies and tender consciences, for tending the sick and dressing the poor, for governing their house and nursing their children; and so it is in every state of life. When a prince or prelate, a noble and a rich person, hath reckoned all his immunities and degrés of innocence from those evils that are incident to inferior persons, or the worst sort of their own order, they do "the work of the Lord" and their own too, very "deceitfully," unless they account correspondences of piety to all their powers and possibilities: they are to reckon and consider concerning what oppressions they have relieved, what causes and what fatherless they have defended, how the work of God and of religion, of justice and charity, hath thrived in their hands. If they have made peace, and encouraged religion by their example and by their laws, by rewards and collateral encouragements, if they have been zealous for God and for religion, if they have employed ten talents to the improvement of God's bank, then they have done God's work faithfully; if they account otherwise, and account only by ciphers and negatives, they can expect only the rewards of innocent slaves; they shall escape the "furca" and the wheel, the torments of lustful persons, and the crown of flames that is reserved for the ambitious; or they shall not be gnawn with the vipers of the envious, or the shame of the ungrateful; but they can never upon this account hope for the crowns of martyrs, or the honourable rewards of saints, the coronets of virgins, and chaplets of doctors and confessors: and though murderers and lustful persons, the proud and the covetous, the heretic and schismatic, are to expect flames and scorpions, pains and smart ("pœnam sensus," the schools call it); yet the lazy and the imperfect, the harmless sleeper and the idle worker, shall have "pœnam damni," the loss of all his hopes, and the dishonours of the loss; and in the sum of affairs it will be no great difference whether we have loss or pain, because there can be no greater pain

imaginable than to lose the sight of God to eternal ages.

5. Hither are to be reduced as deceitful workers, those that promise to God, but mean not to pay what they once intended; people that are confident in the day of ease, and fail in the danger; they that pray passionately for a grace, and if it be not obtained at that price go no further, and never contend in action for what they seem to contend in prayer; such as delight in forms and outsides, and regard not the substance and design of every institution; that think it a great sin to taste bread before the receiving the holy sacrament, and yet come to communicate with an ambitious and revengeful soul; that make a conscience of eating flesh, but not of drunkenness; that keep old customs and old sins together; that pretend one duty to excuse another; religion against charity, or piety to parents against duty to God, private promises against public duty, the keeping of an oath against breaking of a commandment, honour against modesty, reputation against piety, the love of the world in civil instances to countenance enmity against God; these are the deceitful workers of God's work; they make a schism in the duties of religion, and a war in heaven worse than that between Michael and the dragon; for they divide the Spirit of God, and distinguish his commandments into parties and factions; by seeking an excuse, sometimes they destroy the integrity and perfect constitution of duty, or they do something whereby the effect and usefulness of the duty is hindered: concerning all which this only can be said, they who serve God with a lame sacrifice and an imperfect duty, a duty defective in its constituent parts, can never enjoy God; because he can never be divided: and though it be better to enter into heaven with one foot, and one eye, than that both should be cast into hell, because heaven can make recompence for this loss; yet nothing can repair his loss, who for being lame in his duty shall enter into hell, where nothing is perfect, but the measures and duration of torment, and they both are next to infinite.

SERMON XIII.

PART II.

2. THE next inquiry, is into the intention of our duty; and here it will not be amiss

to change the word "fraudulenter," or "dolose," into that which some of the Latin copies do use, "Maledictus, qui facit opus Dei negligenter," "Cursed is he, that doth the work of the Lord negligently, or remissly; and it implies, that as our duty must be whole, so it must be fervent; for a languishing body may have all its parts, and yet be useless to many purposes of nature; and you may reckon all the joints of a dead man, but the heart is cold, and the joints are stiff and fit for nothing but for the little people that creep in graves: and so are very many men; if you sum up the accounts of their religion, they can reckon days and months of religion, various offices, charity and prayers, reading and meditation, faith and knowledge, catechism and sacraments, duty to God and duty to princes, paying debts and provision for children, confessions and tears, discipline in families, and love of good people; and, it may be, you shall not reprove their numbers, or find any lines unfilled in their tables of accounts; but when you have handled all this and considered, you will find at last you have taken a dead man by the hand, there is not a finger wanting, but they are stiff as icicles, and without flexure as the legs of elephants: such are they whom St. Bernard describes, "Whose spiritual joy is allayed with tediousness, whose compunction for sins is short and seldom, whose thoughts are animal and their designs secular, whose religion is lukewarm; their obedience is without devotion, their discourse without profit, their prayer without intention of heart, their reading without instruction, their meditation is without spiritual advantages, and is not the commencement and strengthening of holy purposes; and they are such whom modesty will not restrain, nor reason bridle, nor discipline correct, nor the fear of death and hell can keep from yielding to the imperiousness of a foolish lust, that dishonours a man's understanding, and makes his reason, in which he most glories, to be weaker than the discourse of a girl and the dreams of the night. In every action of religion God expects such a warmth and a holy fire to go along, that it may be able to enkindle the wood upon the altar, and consume the sacrifice; but God hates an indifferent spirit. Earnestness and vivacity, quickness and delight, perfect choice of the service, and a delight in the prosecution, is all that the spirit of a man can yield towards his religion: the outward work

is the effect of the body ; but if a man does it heartily and with all his mind, then religion hath wings and moves upon wheels of fire ; and therefore, when our blessed Saviour made those capitulars and canons of religion, to “love God,” and to “love our neighbour ;” besides, that the material part of the duty, “love,” is founded in the spirit, as its natural seat, he also gives three words to involve the spirit in the action, and but one for the body : “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind ;” and, lastly, “with all thy strength ;” this brings in the body too ; because it hath some strength, and some significations of its own ; but heart and soul and mind mean all the same thing in a stronger and more earnest expression ; that is, that we do it hugely, as much as we can, with a clear choice, with a resolute understanding, with strong affections, with great diligence : “*Enerves animos odisse virtus solet,*” “Virtue hates weak and ineffective minds,” and tame easy prosecutions ; Loricides, people whose arm is all flesh, “whose foot is all leather,” and an unsupporting skin ; they creep like snakes, and pursue the noblest mysteries of religion, as Naaman did the mysteries of Rimmon, only in a compliment, or for secular regards ; but without the mind, and therefore without zeal : “I would thou wert either hot or cold,” said the Spirit of God to the angel or bishop of Laodicea. In feasts or sacrifices the ancients did use “*apponere frigidam,*” or “*calidam ;*” sometimes they drank hot drink, sometimes they poured cold upon their graves or in their wines, but no services of tables or altars were ever with lukewarm. God hates it worse than stark cold ; which expression is the more considerable, because in natural and superinduced progressions, from extreme to extreme, we must necessarily pass through the midst ; and therefore it is certain, a lukewarm religion is better than none at all, as being the doing some parts of the work designed, and nearer to perfection than the utmost distance could be ; and yet that God hates it more, must mean, that there is some appendant evil in this state which is not in the other, and that accidentally it is much worse : and so it is, if we rightly understand it ; that is, if we consider it, not as a being in or passing through the middle way, but as a state and a period of religion. If it be in motion, a lukewarm religion is pleasing to God ; for

God hates it not for its imperfection, and its natural measures of proceeding ; but if it stands still and rests there, it is a state against the designs, and against the perfection of God : and it hath in it these evils :

1. It is a state of the greatest imprudence in the world ; for it makes a man to spend his labour for that which profits not, and to deny his appetite for an unsatisfying interest ; he puts his monies in a napkin, and he that does so, puts them into a broken bag ; he loses the principal for not increasing the interest. He that dwells in a state of life that is unacceptable, loses the money of his alms, and the rewards of his charity, his hours of prayer, and his parts of justice, he confesses his sins and is not pardoned, he is patient but hath no hope, and he that is gone so far out of his country, and stands in the middle way, hath gone so far out of his way ; he had better have stayed under a dry roof, in the house of banishment, than to have left his Gyarus, the island of his sorrow, and to dwell upon the Adriatic ; so is he that begins a state of religion, and does not finish it ; he abides in the highway, and though he be nearer the place, yet is as far from the rest of his country as ever ; and therefore, all that beginning of labour was in the prejudice of his rest, but nothing to the advantages of his hopes. He that hath never begun, hath lost no labour ; “*Jactura præteritorum,*” “the loss of all that he hath done,” is the first evil of the negligent and lukewarm Christian ; according to the saying of Solomon : “He that is remiss or idle in his labour, is brother to him that scattereth his goods.”*

2. The second appendant evil is, that lukewarmness is the occasion of greater evil ;—because the remiss easy Christian shuts the gate against the heavenly breathings of God’s Holy Spirit ; he thinks every breath, that is fanned by the wings of the holy Dove, is not intended to encourage his fires, which burn and smoke, and peep through the cloud already ; it tempts him to security ; and, if an evil life be a certain inlet to a second death, despair on one side, and security on the other, are the bars and locks to that door, he can never pass forth again while that state remains ; whoever slips in his spiritual walking does not presently fall ; but if that slip does not awaken his diligence, and his caution, then his ruin begins, “*vel prævar institutionis deceptus*

* Prov. xviii. 9.

exordio, aut per longam mentis incuriam, et virtute animi decidente," as St. Austin observes; "either upon the pursuit of his first error, or by a careless spirit, or a decaying slackened resolution:" all which are the direct effects of lukewarmness. But so have I seen a fair structure begun with art and care, and raised to half its stature, and then it stood still by the misfortune or negligence of the owner, and the rain descended, and dwelt in its joints, and supplanted the contexture of its pillars, and having stood awhile, like the antiquated temple of a deceased oracle, it fell into a hasty age, and sunk upon its own knees, and so descended into ruin: so is the imperfect, unfinished spirit of a man; it lays the foundation of a holy resolution, and strengthens it with vows and arts of prosecution, it raises up the walls, sacraments, and prayers, reading, and holy ordinances; and holy actions begin with a slow motion, and the building stays, and the spirit is weary, and the soul is naked, and exposed to temptation, and in the days of storm take in every thing that can do it mischief; and it is faint and sick, listless and tired, and it stands till its own weight wears the foundation, and then declines to death and sad disorder, being so much the worse, because it hath not only returned to its first follies, but hath superadded unthankfulness and carelessness, a positive neglect and a despite of holy things, a setting a low price to the things of God, laziness and wretchedness: all which are evils superadded to the first state of coldness, whither he is with all these loads and circumstances of death easily revolved.

3. A state of lukewarmness is more incorrigible than a state of coldness; while men flatter themselves that their state is good, that they are rich and need nothing, that their lamps are dressed, and full of ornament. There are many, that think they are in their country as soon as ever they are weary, and measure not the end of their hopes by the possession of them, but by their precedent labour: which they overvalue, because they have easy and effeminate souls. St. Bernard complains of some that say, "Sufficit nobis, nolumus esse meliores quam patres nostri:" "It is enough for us to be as our forefathers," who were honest and useful in their generations, but be not over-righteous. These men are such as think they have knowledge enough to need no teacher, devotion enough

to need no new fires, perfection enough to need no new progress, justice enough to need no repentance; and then because the spirit of a man and all the things of this world are in perpetual variety and change, these men decline when they have gone their period; they stand still, and then revert; like a stone returning from the bosom of a cloud, where it rested as long as the thought of a child, and fell to its natural bed of earth, and dwelt below for ever. He that says, he will take care he be no worse, and that he desires to be no better, stops his journey into heaven, but cannot be secure against descending into hell: and Cassian spake a hard saying: "Frequenter vidimus de frigidis et carnalibus ad spirituales venisse fervorem, de tepidis et animalibus omnino non vidimus:" "Many persons from vicious, and dead, and cold, have passed into life and an excellent grace, and a spiritual warmth, and holy fires; but from lukewarm and indifferent never any body came to an excellent condition, and state of holiness:" "rarissime," St. Bernard says, "very extremely seldom;" and our blessed Saviour said something of this. "The publicans and harlots go before you into the kingdom of heaven;" they are moved by shame, and punished by disgrace, and remarked by punishments, and frightened by the circumstances and notices of all the world, and separated from sober persons by laws and an intolerable character, and the sense of honour, and the care of their persons, and their love of civil society, and every thing in the world can invite them towards virtues. But the man that is accounted honest, and does justice, and some things of religion, unless he finds himself but upon his way, and feels his wants, and groans under the sense of his infirmities, and sighs under his imperfections, and accounts himself "not to have comprehended," but "still presses towards the mark of his calling," unless (I say) he still increases in his appetites of religion, as he does in his progression, he will think he needs no counsellor, and the Spirit of God whispers to an ear, that is already filled with noises, and cannot attend to the heavenly calling. The stomach that is already full, is next to loathing; and that is the prologue to sickness, and a rejecting the first wholesome nutriment, which was entertained to relieve the first natural necessities; "Qui non proficit, vult deficere," said St. Bernard: "He that goes not

forward in the love of God, and of religion, does not stand still, but goes for all that;” but whither such a motion will lead him, himself without a timely care shall feel by an intolerable experiment.

In this sense and for these reasons it is, that although a lukewarm Christian hath gone forward some steps towards a state of holiness, and is advanced beyond him that is cold, and dead, and unconcerned; and therefore, speaking absolutely and naturally, is nearer the kingdom of God than he that is not yet set out; yet accidentally, and by reason of these ill appendages, he is worse, in greater danger, in a state equally unacceptable, and therefore must either go forward, and still do the work of God carefully and diligently, with a fervent spirit and an active hand, with a willing heart and a cheerful eye, or it had been better he had never begun.

2. It concerns us next to inquire concerning the duty in its proper instances, that we may perceive to what parts and degrees of duty it amounts; we shall find it especially in the duties of faith, of prayer, and of charity.

1. Our faith must be strong, vigorous, active, confident, and patient, reasonable, and unalterable, without doubting, and fear, and partiality. For the faith of very many men seems a duty so weak and indifferent, is so often untwisted by violence, or ravelled and entangled in weak discourses, or so false and fallacious by its mixture of interest, that though men usually put most confidence in the pretences of faith, yet no pretences are more unreasonable.

1. Our faith and persuasion in religion is most commonly imprinted in us by our country, and we are Christians at the same rate as we are English or Spaniards, or of such a family; our reason is first stained and spotted with the dye of our kindred and country, and our education puts it in grain, and whatsoever is against this we are taught to call a temptation: in the mean time, we call these accidental and artificial persuasions by the name of faith, which is only the air of the country, or an heir-loom of the family, or the daughter of a present interest. Whatever it was that brought us in, we are to take care, that when we are in, our faith be noble, and stand upon its most proper and most reasonable foundation; it concerns us better to understand that religion, which we call faith, and that faith whereby we hope to be saved.

2. The faith and the whole religion of many men is the production of fear. Men are threatened into their persuasions, and the iron rod of a tyrant converts whole nations to his principles, when the wise discourses of the religion seems dull as sleep, and unprevailing as the talk of childhood. That is but a deceitful faith, which our timorousness begot, and our weakness nurses, and brings up. The religion of a Christian is immortal, and certain, and persuasive, and infallible, and unalterable, and therefore needs not to be received by human and weak convoys, like worldly and mortal religions: that faith is lukewarm, and easy, and trifling, which is only a belief of that, which a man wants courage to disbelieve.

3. The faith of many men is such, that they dare not trust it: they will talk of it, and serve vanity, or their lust, or their company, or their interest by it, but when the matter comes to a pinch, they dare not trust it; when Antisthenes was initiated into the mysteries of Orpheus, the priest told him, that all that were of that religion, immediately after death should be perfectly happy; the philosopher asked him, Why he did not die, if he believed what he said? Such a faith as that was fine to talk of at table, or eating the sacrifices of the religion, when the mystic man was *ἔνθεος*, full of wine and flesh, of confidence and religion; but to die, is a more material consideration, and to be chosen upon no grounds, but such a faith, which really comes from God, and can secure our reason, and our choice, and perfect our interest and designs. And it hath been long observed concerning those bold people, that use their reason against God that gave it, they have one persuasion in their health, and another in their sickness and fears; when they are well, they blaspheme; when they die, they are superstitious. It was Bias's case, when he was poisoned by the atheisms of Theodorus, no man died more like a coward and a fool; “as if the gods were to come and go as Bias pleased to think and talk:” so one said of his folly. If God be to be feared when we die, he is also to be feared in all our life, for he can for ever make us die; he that will do it once, and that when he please, can always. And therefore, all those persuasions against God, and against religion,

*His qui sacris visis abeunt ad inferos,
Homines beati sunt, solis quia vivere
Contingit illie istis; turba cætera
Omnium malorum generi incidit.

are only the production of vicious passions, of drink or fancy, of confidence and ignorance, of boldness or vile appetites, of vanity or fierceness, of pride or flatteries; and atheism is a proportion so unnatural and monstrous, that it can never dwell in a man's heart as faith does, in health and sickness, in peace and war, in company and alone, at the beginning and at the end of a design; but comes from weak principles, and leaves shallow and superficial impressions: but when men endeavour to strengthen and confirm it, they only strive to make themselves worse than they can. Naturally a man cannot be an atheist: for he that is so, must have something within him that is worse either than man or devil.

4. Some measure their faith by shows and appearances, by ceremonies and names, by professions and little institutions. Diogenes was angry at the silly priest, that thought he should be immortal because he was a priest, and would not promise so concerning Agesilaus and Epaminondas, two noble Greeks, that had preserved their country, and lived virtuously. The faith of a Christian hath no signification at all but obedience and charity; if men be just, and charitable, and good, and live according to their faith, then only they are Christians; whatsoever else is pretended is but a shadow, and the image of a grace; for since in all the sects and institutions of the world, the professors did, in some reasonable sort, conform to the rules of the profession, (as appears in all the schools of philosophers, and religions of the world, and the practices of the Jews, and the usages and the country-customs of the Turks,) it is a strange dishonour to christianity, that in it alone men should pretend to the faith of it, and do nothing of what it persuades and commands upon the account of those promises, which it makes us to believe. He that means to please God by his faith, must have his faith begotten in him by the Spirit of God, and proper arguments of religion; he must profess it without fear, he must dare to die for it, and resolve to live according to its institution; he must grow more confident and more holy, have fewer doubts and more virtues, he must be resolute and constant, far from indifferency, and above secular regards; he must by it regulate his life, and value it above his life; he must "contend earnestly for the faith," by the most prevailing arguments, by the arguments of holy living and ready dying,

by zeal and patience, by conformity and humility, by reducing words to actions, fair discourses to perfect persuasions, by loving the article, and increasing in the knowledge and love of God, and his Son Jesus Christ; and then his faith is not negligent, deceitful, artificial, and improper; but true, and holy, and reasonable, and useful, zealous and sufficient; and therefore can never be improved.

2. Our prayers and devotions must be fervent and zealous, not cold, patient, easy, and soon rejected; but supported by a patient spirit, set forwards by importunity, continued by perseverance, waited on by attention and a present mind, carried along with holy, but strong desires; and ballasted with resignation, and conformity to the Divine will; and then it is as God likes it, and does the work to God's glory and our interest effectively. He that asks with a doubting mind and a lazy desire, begs for nothing but to be denied; we must in our prayers be earnest and fervent, or else we shall have but a cold answer; for God gives his grace according as we can receive it; and whatsoever evil returns we meet in our prayers, when we ask for good things, is wholly by reason of our wandering spirits and cold desires; we have reason to complain that our minds wander in our prayers, and our diversions are more prevailing than all our arts of application and detention; an we wander sometimes even when we pray against wandering: and it is in some degrees natural and inevitable: but although the evil is not wholly to be cured, yet the symptoms are to be eased; and if our desires were strong and fervent, our minds would in the same proportion be present: we see it by a certain and regular experience; what we love passionately, we perpetually think on, and it returns upon us whether we will or no; and in a great fear, the apprehension cannot be shaken off; and therefore if our desires of holy things were strong and earnest, we should most certainly attend our prayers: it is a more violent affection to other things, that carries us off from this; and therefore, if we loved passionately what we ask for daily, we should ask with hearty desires, and an earnest appetite, and a present spirit; and however it be very easy to have our thoughts wander, yet it is our indifferency and lukewarmness that make it so natural; and you may observe it, that so long as the light shines bright, and the fires of devotion and desires

flame out, so long the mind of a man stands close to the altar, and waits upon the sacrifice; but as the fires die, and desires decay, so the mind steals away, and walks abroad to see the little images of beauty and pleasure, which it beholds in the falling stars and little glow-worms of the world. The river that runs slow and creeps by the banks, and begs leave of every turf to let it pass, is drawn into little hollownesses, and spends itself in smaller portions, and dies with diversion; but when it runs with vigorousness and a full stream, and breaks down every obstacle, making it even as its own brow, it stays not to be tempted with little avocations, and to creep into holes, but runs into the sea through full and useful channels; so is a man's prayer, if it moves upon the feet of an abated appetite; it wanders into the society of every trifling accident, and stays at the corners of the fancy, and talks with every object it meets, and cannot arrive at heaven; but when it is carried upon the wings of passion and strong desires, a swift motion and a hungry appetite, it passes on through all the inter-medial regions of clouds, and stays not till it dwells at the foot of the throne, where mercy sits, and thence sends holy showers of refreshment. I deny not but some little drops will turn aside, and fall from the full channel by the weakness of the banks, and hollowness of the passage; but the main course is still continued; and although the most earnest and devout persons feel and complain of some looseness of spirit, and unfixed attentions, yet their love and their desire secure the main portions, and make the prayer to be strong, fervent, and effectual. Any thing can be done by him, that earnestly desires what he ought; secure but your affections and passions, and then no temptation will be too strong; "A wise man, and a full resolution, and an earnest spirit, can do any thing of duty;" but every temptation prevails, when we are willing to die; and we usually lend nothing to devotion but the offices that flatter our passions; we can desire and pray for any thing, that may serve our lust, or promote those ends which we covet, but ought to fear and flee from; but the same earnestness, if it were transplanted into religion and our prayers, would serve all the needs of the spirit, but for want of it we do "the Lord's work deceitfully."

3. Our charity also must be fervent: "Malus est miles qui ducem suum gemens

sequitur;" "He that follows his general with a heavy march and a heavy heart, is but an ill soldier;" but our duty to God should be hugely pleasing, and we should rejoice in it; it must pass on to action, and do the action vigorously; it is called in Scripture *κόπος αγάπης*, "the labour" and travail "of love." "A friend at a sneeze and an alms-basket full of prayers," a love that is lazy, and a service that is useless, and a pity without support, are the images and colours of that grace, whose very constitution and design is, beneficence and well-doing. He that loves passionately, will not only do all that his friend needs, but all that himself can; for although the law of charity is fulfilled by acts of profit, and bounty, and obedience, and labour, yet it hath no other measures but the proportions and abundance of a good mind; and according to this, God requires that we be *περισσεύοντες εν τῷ ἔργῳ τοῦ Κυρίου*, "abounding," and that "always in the work of the Lord;" if we love passionately, we shall do all this; for love endures labour and calls it pleasure, it spends all and counts it a gain, it suffers inconveniences and is quickly reconciled to them; if dishonours and affronts be to be endured, love smiles and calls them favours, and wears them willingly.

—Alii jacuere ligati
Turpiter, atque aliquis de Diis non tristibus optat
Sic fieri turpis,

"It is the Lord," said David, and "I will yet be more vile, and it shall be honour unto me;" thus did the disciples of our Lord go "from tribunals, rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer stripes for that beloved name;" and we are commanded "to rejoice in persecutions, to resist unto blood, to strive to enter in at the strait gate, not to be weary of well-doing;" do it hugely, and do it always. "Non enim votis neque suppliciis mulieribus auxilia Deorum parantur; sed vigilando, agendo, bene consulendo, omnia prospere cedunt." No man can obtain the favour of God by words and imperfect resolutions, by lazy actions and a remiss piety; but by severe counsels and sober actions, by watchfulness and prudence, by doing excellent things with holy intentions and vigorous prosecutions. "Ubi socordiae et ignaviae te tradideris, nequicquam Deos implorabis;" if your virtues be lazy, your vices will be bold and active: and therefore Democritus said well, that the painful and the soft-handed people

in religion differ just as good men and bad; "nimirum, spe bonâ," the labouring charity hath "a good hope," but a cool religion hath none at all; and the distinction will have a sad effect to eternal ages.

These are the great scenes of duty, in which we are to be fervent and zealous; but because earnestness and zeal are circumstances of a great latitude, and the zeal of the present age is stark cold, if compared to the fervours of the apostles, and other holy primitives; and in every age a good man's care may turn into scruple, if he sees that he is not the best man, because he may reckon his own estate to stand in the confines of darkness, because his spark is not so great as his neighbour's fires, therefore it is fit that we consider concerning the degrees of the intention and forward heats; for when we have found out the lowest degrees of zeal, and a holy fervour, we know that duty dwells there, and whatsoever is above it, is a degree of excellence; but all that is less than it, is lukewarmness, and the state of an ungracious and an unaccepted person.

1. No man is fervent and zealous as he ought, but he that prefers religion before business, charity before his own ease, the relief of his brother before money, heaven before secular regards, and God before his friend or interest. Which rule is not to be understood absolutely, and in particular instances, but always generally; and when it descends to particulars, it must be in proportion to circumstances, and by their proper measures: for,

1. In the whole course of life it is necessary, that we prefer religion before any state that is either contrary to it, or a lessening of its duties.—He that hath a state of life, in which he cannot at all, in fair proportions, tend to religion, must quit great proportions of that, that he may enjoy more of this; this is that which our blessed Saviour calls "pulling out the right eye, if it offend thee."

2. In particular actions, when the necessity is equal, he, that does not prefer religion, is not at all zealous;—for although all natural necessities are to be served before the circumstances and order of religion, yet our belly and our back, our liberty and our life, our health and a friend, are to be neglected rather than a duty, when it stands in its proper place, and is required.

3. Although the things of God are by a necessary zeal to be preferred before the

things of the world, yet we must take heed, that we do not reckon religion, and orders of worshipping, only to be "the things of God," and all other duties to be "the things of the world;" for it was a pharisaical device to cry *Corban*, and to refuse to relieve their aged parents: it is good to give to a church, but it is better to give to the poor; and though they must be both provided for, yet in cases of dispute mercy carries the cause against religion and the temple. And although Mary was commended for choosing the better part, yet Mary had done worse, if she had been at the foot of her Master when she should have relieved a perishing brother. Martha was troubled with much serving; that was "more than need," and therefore she was to blame; and sometimes hearing in some circumstances may be "more than needs;" and some women are "troubled with overmuch hearing," and then they had better have been serving the necessities of their house.

4. This rule is not to be extended to the relatives of religion; for although the things of the Spirit are better than the things of the world, yet a spiritual man is not in human regards to be preferred before princes and noble personages. Because a man is called spiritual in several regards, and for various measures and manners of partaking of the Spirit of grace, or co-operating towards the works of the Spirit. A king and a bishop both have callings in order to godliness, and honesty, and spiritual effects, towards the advancement of Christ's kingdom, whose representatives severally they are. But whether of these two works more immediately, or more effectively, cannot at all times be known; and therefore from hence no argument can be drawn concerning doing them civil regards; and possibly, "the partaking the Spirit" is a nearer relation to him, than doing his ministries, and serving his ends upon others; and if relation to God and God's Spirit could bring an obligation of giving proportionable civil honour, every holy man might put in some pretence for dignities above some kings and some bishops. But as the things of the Spirit are in order to the affairs of another world, so they naturally can infer only such a relative dignity, as can be expressed in spiritual manners. But because such relations are subjected in men of this life, and we now converse especially in material and secular significations, therefore we are

to express our regards to men of such relations by proportionable expressions: but because civil excellencies are the proper ground of receiving and exacting civil honours, and spiritual excellencies do only claim them accidentally and indirectly; therefore, in titles of honour and human regards, the civil pre-eminence is the appendix of the greatest civil power and employment, and is to descend in proper measures; and for a spiritual relation to challenge a temporal dignity, is as if the best music should challenge the best clothes, or a lutestring should contend with a rose for the honour of the greatest sweetness. Add to this, that although temporal things are in order to spiritual, and therefore are less perfect, yet this is not so naturally; for temporal things are properly in order to the felicity of man in his proper and present constitution; and it is by a supernatural grace, that now they are thrust forward to a higher end of grace and glory; and therefore temporal things, and persons, and callings, have properly the chiefest temporal regard; and Christ took nothing of this away from them, but put them higher, by sanctifying and ennobling them. But then the higher calling can no more suppose the higher man, than the richest trade can suppose the richest man. From callings to men, the argument is fallacious; and a smith is a more useful man than he that teaches logic, but not always to be more esteemed, and called to stand at the chairs of princes and nobles. Holy persons and holy things, and all great relations, are to be valued by general proportions to their correlatives; but if we descend to make minute and exact proportions, and proportion an inch of temporal to a minute of spiritual, we must needs be hugely deceived, unless we could measure the motion of an angel by a string, or the progressions of the Spirit by weight and measure of the staple. And yet if these measures were taken, it would be unreasonable that the lower of the higher kind should be preferred before the most perfect and excellent in a lower order of things. A man generally is to be esteemed above a woman, but not the meanest of her subjects before the most excellent queen; not always this man before this woman. Now kings and princes are the best in all temporal dignities; and therefore if they had in them no spiritual relations and consequent excellencies, (as they have very many,) yet are not to be

undervalued to spiritual relations, which in this world are very imperfect, weak, partial; and must stay till the next world before they are in a state of excellency, propriety, and perfection; and then also all shall have them, according to the worth of their persons, not of their calling.

But, lastly, what men may not challenge, is not their just and proper due; but spiritual persons and the nearest relatives to God stand by him but so long as they dwell low and safe in humility, and rise high in nothing but in labours, and zeal of souls, and devotion. In proportion to this rule, a church may be pulled down to save a town, and the vessels of the church may be sold to redeem captives, when there is a great calamity imminent, and prepared for relief, and no other way to succour it.

But in the whole, the duty of zeal requires, that we neglect an ordinary visit rather than an ordinary prayer, and a great profit rather than omit a required duty. No excuse can legitimate a sin; and he that goes about to distinguish between his duty and his profit, and if he cannot reconcile them, will yet tie them together like a hyena and a dog, this man pretends to religion but secures the world, and is indifferent and lukewarm towards that, so he may be warm and safe in the possession of this.

2. To that fervour and zeal that is necessary and a duty, it is required that we be constant and persevering. "Esto fidelis ad mortem," said the Spirit of God to the angel of the church of Smyrna, "Be faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." For he that is warm to-day and cold to-morrow, zealous in his resolution and weary in his practices, fierce in the beginning and slack and easy in his progress, hath not yet well chosen what side he will be of; he sees not reason enough for religion, and he hath not confidence enough for its contrary; and therefore he is "duplicis animi," as St. James calls him; "of a doubtful mind." For religion is worth as much to-day as it was yesterday, and that cannot change though we do; and if we do, we have left God, and whither he can go that goes from God, his own sorrows will soon enough instruct him. This fire must never go out, but it must be like the fire of heaven, it must shine like the stars, though sometimes covered with a cloud, or obscured by a greater light; yet they dwell for ever in their orbs, and walk in their circles, and

observe their circumstances, but go not out by day nor night, and set not when kings die, nor are extinguished when nations change their government; so must the zeal of a Christian be, a constant incentive of his duty; and though sometimes his hand is drawn back by violence or need, and his prayers shortened by the importunity of business, and some parts omitted by necessities and just compliances, yet still the fire is kept alive; it burns within when the light breaks not forth, and is eternal as the orb of fire, or the embers of the altar of incense.

3. No man is zealous as he ought, but he that delights in the service of God:—without this no man can persevere, but must faint under the continual pressure of an uneasy load. If a man goes to his prayers as children go to school, or give alms as those that pay contribution, and meditate with the same willingness with which young men die, this man does “*personam sustinere*,” “he acts a part” which he cannot long personate, but will find so many excuses and silly devices to omit his duty, such tricks to run from that which will make him happy; he will so watch the eyes of men, and be so sure to do nothing in private; he will so often distinguish and mince the duty into minutes and little particles, he will so tie himself to the letter of the law, and be so careless of the intention and spiritual design, he will be punctual in the ceremony and trifling in the secret, and he will be so well pleased when he is hindered by an accident not of his own procuring, and will have so many devices to defeat his duty, and to cozen himself, that he will certainly manifest, that he is afraid of religion, and secretly hates it; he counts it a burden, and an objection, and then the man is sure to leave it, when his circumstances are so fitted. But if we delight in it, we enter into a portion of the reward, as soon as we begin the work, and the very grace shall be stronger than the temptation in its very pretence of pleasure; and therefore it must needs be pleasing to God, because it confesses God to be the best master, religion the best work, and it serves God with choice and will, and reconciles our nature to it, and entertains our appetite; and then there is no “*ansa*” or “*handle*” left, whereby we can easily be drawn from duty, when all parties are pleased with the employment. But this delight is not to be understood as if it were always required that we should feel

an actual cheerfulness and sensible joy; such as was that of Jonathan, when he had newly tasted honey, and the light came into his eyes, and he was refreshed and pleasant. This happens sometimes, when God pleases to entice, or reward a man’s spirit, with little antepasts of heaven; but such a delight only is necessary, and a duty, that we always choose our duty regularly, and undervalue the pleasures of temptation, and proceed in the work of grace with a firm choice and unabated election; our joy must be a joy of hope, a joy at the least of confident sufferers, the joys of faith and expectation; “*rejoicing in hope*,” so the apostle calls it; that is, a going forward upon such a persuasion as sees the joys of God laid up for the children of men: and so the sun may shine under a cloud; and a man may rejoice in persecution, and delight in losses; that is, though his outward man groans, and faints, and dies, yet his spirit, *ὁ ἴσως ἄσθρατος*, “the inner man,” is confident and industrious, and hath a hope by which it lives and works unto the end: it was the case of our blessed Saviour in his agony; his “soul was exceeding sorrowful unto death,” and the load of his Father’s anger crushed his shoulder, and bowed his knees to the ground; and yet he chose it, and still went forward, and resolved to die, and did so; and what we choose we delight in; and we think it to be eligible, and therefore amiable, and fit by its proper excellencies and appendages to be delighted in; it is not pleasant to the flesh at all times, for its dignity is spiritual and heavenly; but therefore it is proportioned to the spirit, which is as heavenly as the reward, and therefore can feel the joys of it, when the body hangs the head, and is uneasy and troubled.

These are the necessary parts of zeal; of which if any man fails, he is in a state of lukewarmness: and that is a spiritual death. As a banished man or a condemned person is dead civilly; he is “*diminutus capite*,” he is not reckoned in the “*census*,” nor partakes of the privileges, nor goes for a person, but is reckoned among things in the possession of others: so is a lukewarm person; he is “*corde diminutus*,” he is spiritually dead, his heart is estranged from God, his affections are lessened, his hope diminished, and his title cancelled; and he remains so, unless, 1. He prefers religion before the world, and, 2. Spiritually rejoices in doing his duty, and, 3. Does it

constantly, and with perseverance. These are the heats and warmth of life; whatsoever is less than this, is a disease, and leads to the coldness and dishonours of the grave.

SERMON XIV.

PART III.

3. So long as our zeal and forwardness in religion hath only these constituent parts, it hath no more than can keep the duty alive: but beyond this, there are many degrees of earnestness and vehemence, which are progressions towards the state of perfection, which every man ought to design and desire to be added to his portion: of this sort I reckon frequency in prayer, and alms above our estate. Concerning which two instances, I have these two cautions to insert.

1. Concerning frequency in prayer, it is an act of zeal so ready and prepared for the spirit of a man, so easy and useful, so without objection, and so fitted for every man's affairs, his necessities and possibilities, that he that prays but seldom cannot in any sense pretend to be a religious person. For in Scripture there is no other rule for the frequency of prayer given us, but by such words which signify we should do it "always," "pray continually;" and, "men ought always to pray and not to faint." And then men have so many necessities, that if we should esteem our needs to be the circumstances and positive determination of our times of prayer, we should be very far from admitting limitation of the former words, but they must mean, that we ought to pray frequently every day. For in danger and trouble, natural religion teaches us to pray; in a festival fortune, our prudence and our needs enforce us equally. For though we feel not a present smart, yet we are certain then is our biggest danger: and if we observe how the world treats her darlings, men of riches and honour, of prosperity and great success, we cannot but confess them to be the most miserable of all men, as being in the greatest danger of losing their biggest interest. For they are bigger than the iron hand of law, and they cannot be restrained with fear: the hand grasps a power of doing all that which their evil heart can desire, and they cannot be restrained with disability to sin; they are

flattered by all mean, and base, and undiligent persons, which are the greatest part of mankind; but few men dare reprove a potent sinner; he shall every day be flattered and seldom counselled: and his great reflections and opinions of his condition make him impatient of reproof, and so he cannot be restrained with modesty: and therefore as the needs of the poor man, his rent-day, and the cries of his children, and the oppression he groans under, and his *δυσκολόκοιτος μέριμνα*, his uneasy, "ill-sleeping care," will make him run to his prayers, that in heaven a new decree may be passed every day for the provisions of his daily bread: so the greater needs of the rich, their temptations, and their dangers, the flattery and the vanity, the power and the pride, their business and evil estate of the whole world upon them, call upon them to be zealous in this instance, that they "pray often," that they "pray without ceasing;" for there is great reason they should do so, and great security and advantage, if they do; for he that prays well and prays often, must needs be a good and a blessed man; and truly he that does not, deserves no pity for his misery. For when all the troubles and dangers of his condition may turn into his good, if he will but desire they should; when upon such easy terms he may be happy, for there is no more trouble in it than this, "Ask and ye shall receive;" that is all that is required; no more turnings and variety in their road: when (I say) at so cheap a rate, a poor man may be provided for, and a rich man may escape damnation, he that refuses to apply himself to this remedy, quickly, earnestly, zealously, and constantly, deserves the smart of his poverty, and the care of it, and the scorn, if he be poor; and if he be rich, it is fit he should (because he desires it) die by the evils of his proper danger. It was observed by Cassian, "Orationibus maxime insidiantur dæmones;" "The devil is more busy to disturb our prayers, than to hinder any thing else." For else it cannot be imagined, why we should be brought to pray so seldom; and to be so listless to them, and so trifling at them. No, the devil knows upon what hard terms he stands with the praying man; he also knows, that it is a mighty emanation of God's infinite goodness and a strange desire of saving mankind, that he hath to so easy a duty promised such mighty blessings. For God knowing, that upon hard terms we would not accept

of heaven itself, and yet hell was so intolerable a state, that God who loved us, would affix heaven to a state of prayer and devotion; this, because the devil knows to be one of the greatest arts of the Divine mercy, he labours infinitely to supplant; and if he can but make men unwilling to pray, or to pray coldly, or to pray seldom, he secures his interest, and destroys the man's; and it is infinitely strange, that he can and doth prevail so much in this so unreasonable temptation. "Opposuiti nubem, ne transiret oratio," the mourning prophet complained,* "there was a cloud passed between heaven and the prayer of Judah;" a little thing God knows; it was a wall, which might have been blown down with a few hearty sighs and a few penitential tears; or if the prayers had ascended in a full and numerous body, themselves would have broken through that little partition; but so the devil prevails often "opponit nubem," "he claps a cloud between:" some little objection; "a stranger is come;" or, "my head aches;" or, "the church is too cold;" or, "I have letters to write;" or, "I am not disposed;" or, "it is not yet time;" or, "the time is past:" these, and such as these, are the clouds the devil claps between heaven and us; but these are such impotent objections, that they were as soon confuted as pretended, by all men that are not fools, or professed enemies of religion, but that they are clouds, which sometimes look like lions and bears, castles and walls of fire, armies and horses; and indeed are any thing that a man will fancy; and the smallest article of objection managed and conducted by the devil's arts, and meeting with a wretched, careless, undevout spirit, is a lion in the way, and a deep river; it is impassable, and it is impregnable. *Γίνονται πάνθ' ὅ, τι ἂν βούλωνται κερῆσαι λύκοι ἐὰν Σίμωνα εἰσίδωσι, ἐλαφοὶ τῷ Κλεωνύμῳ;*† as the sophister said in the Greek comedy, "Clouds become any thing as they are represented; wolves to Simon, harts to Cleonymus;" for the devil fits us with clouds, according as we can be abused; and if we love the affairs of the world, he can contrive its circumstances so, that they shall cross our prayers; and so it is in every instance: and the best way to cure this evil is prayer; pray often, and pray zealously, and the Sun of righteousness will scatter these clouds and warm our hearts with his holy fires: but

it is in this as in all acquired habits; the habit makes the action easy and pleasant; but this habit cannot be gotten without frequent actions: habits are the daughters of action; but then they nurse their mother, and produce daughters after her image, but far more beautiful and prosperous. For in frequent prayer there is so much rest and pleasure, that as soon as ever it is perceived, the contrary temptation appears unreasonable; none are so unwilling to pray, as they that pray seldom; for they that do pray often, and with zeal, and passion, and desire, feel no trouble so great, as when they are forced to omit their holy offices and hours of prayers. It concerns the devil's interest to keep us from all the experience of the rewards of a frequent and holy prayer; and so long as you will not try and "taste how good and gracious the Lord is" to the praying man, so long you cannot see the evil of your coldness and lukewarm state; but if you would but try, though it be but for curiosity's sake, and inform yourselves in the vanity of things, and the truth of pretences, and the certainty of theological propositions, you should find yourselves taken in a golden snare, which will tie you to nothing but felicity, and safety, and holiness, and pleasure. But then the caution, which I intended to insert, is this; that frequency in prayers, and that part of zeal which relates to it, is to be upon no account but of a holy spirit, a wise heart, and reasonable persuasion; for if it begin upon passion or fear, in imitation of others, or desires of reputation, honour, and fantastic principles, it will be unblest and weary, unprosperous, and without return of satisfaction; therefore if it happen to begin upon a weak principle, be very curious to change the motive, and with all speed let it be turned into religion and the love of holy things: then, let it be as frequent as it can prudently, it cannot be amiss.

When you are entered into a state of zealous prayer, and a regular devotion, whatever interruption you can meet with, observe their causes, and be sure to make them irregular, seldom, and contingent, that your omissions may be seldom and casual, as a bare accident; for which no provisions can be made: for if ever it come, that you take any thing habitually and constantly from your prayers, or that you distract from them very frequently, it cannot be but you will become troublesome to yourself; your

* Lam. iii. 44.

† Arist. *Νεφέλαι*.

prayers will be uneasy, they will seem hindrances to your more necessary affairs of passion and interest, and the things of the world: and it will not stand still, till it comes to apostasy, and a direct dispute and contempt of holy things. For it was an old rule, and of a sad experience, "*Tepiditas, si callum obduxerit, fiet apostasia:*" "If your lukewarmness be habitual and a state of life, if it once be hardened by the usages of many days, it changes the whole state of the man, it makes him an apostate to devotion." Therefore be infinitely careful in this particular, always remembering the saying of St. Chrysostom; "*Docendi, prædicandi officia et alia cessant suo tempore, præcandi autem nunquam;*" "There are reasons for teaching, and preaching, and other outward offices; but prayer is the duty of all times, and of all persons, and in all contingencies: from other things, in many cases, we may be excused, but from prayer never." In this, therefore, *καλὸν ζήλοῦσθαι*, "it is good to be zealous."

2. Concerning the second instance I named, viz. To give alms above our estate, it is an excellent act of zeal, and needs no other caution to make it secure from illusion and danger, but that our egressions of charity do not prejudice justice. See that your alms do not other men wrong; and let them do what they can to thyself, they will never prejudice thee by their abundance; but then be also careful, that the pretences of justice do not cozen thyself of thy charity, and the poor of thine alms, and thy soul of the reward. He that is in debt, is not excused from giving alms till his debts are paid; but only from giving away such portions which should and would pay them, and such which he intended should do it: there are "*lacernæ divitiarum,*" and crumbs from the table, and the gleanings of the harvest, and the scatterings of the vintage, which in all estates are the portions of the poor, which being collected by the hand of Providence, and united wisely, may become considerable to the poor, and are the necessary duties of charity; but beyond this also, every considerable relief to the poor is not a considerable diminution to the estate; and yet if it be, it is not always considerable in the accounts of justice; for nothing ought to be pretended against the zeal of alms, but the certain omissions, or the very probable retarding the doing that, to which we are otherwise obliged. He that is going to pay a debt,

and in the way meets an indigent person that needs it all, may not give it to him, unless he knows by other means to pay the debt; but if he can do both, he hath his liberty to lay out his money for a crown. But then in the case of provision for children, our restraint is not so easy, or discernible; 1. Because we are not bound to provide for them in a certain portion, but may do it by the analogies and measures of prudence, in which there is a great latitude. 2. Because our zeal of charity is a good portion for them, and lays up a blessing for inheritance. 3. Because the fairest portions of charity are usually short of such sums, which can be considerable in the duty of provision for our children. 4. If we for them could be content to take any measure less than all, any thing under every thing that we can, we should find the portions of the poor made ready to our hands sufficiently to minister to zeal, and yet not to intrench upon this case of conscience; but the truth is, we are so careless, so unskilled, so unstudied, in religion,—that we are only glad to make an excuse, and to defeat our souls of the reward of the noblest grace: we are contented, if we can but make a pretence; for we are highly pleased if our conscience be quiet, and care not so much that our duty be performed, much less that our eternal interest be advanced in bigger portions. We care not, we strive not, we think not, of getting the greater rewards of heaven; and he whose desires are so indifferent for the greater, will not take pains to secure the smallest portion; and it is observable, that *ἐλάχιστος ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ*, "the least in the kingdom of heaven,"* is as much as *οὐδείς*, "as good as none;" if a man will be content with his hopes of the lowest place there, and will not labour for something beyond it, he does not value it at all; and it is ten to one, but he will lose that for which he takes so little pains, and is content with so easy a security. He,—that does his alms, and resolves that in no case he will suffer inconvenience for his brother, whose case it may be is intolerable,—should do well to remember, that God, in some cases, requires a greater charity; and it may be, we shall be called to die for the good of our brother; and that although it always supposes a zeal, and a holy fervour, yet sometimes it is also a duty, and we lose our lives if we go to save them; and so we do with

* Matt. v. 16.

our estates, when we are such good husbands in our religion, that we will serve all our own conveniences before the great needs of a hungry and afflicted brother, God oftentimes takes from us that which with so much curiosity we would preserve, and then we lose our money and our reward too.

3. Hither is to be reduced the accepting and choosing the counsels evangelical: the virgin or widow estate in order to religion: selling all, and giving it to the poor: making ourselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven: offering ourselves to death voluntarily, in exchange or redemption of the life of a most useful person, as "Aquila and Priscilla, who ventured their lives for St. Paul:" the zeal of souls: St. Paul's preaching to the Corinthian church without wages: remitting of rights and forgiving of debts, when the obliged person could pay, but not without much trouble: protection of calamitous persons with hazard of our own interest and a certain trouble; concerning which and all other acts of zeal, we are to observe the following measures, by which our zeal will become safe and holy, and by them also we shall perceive the excesses of zeal, and its inordinations: which is the next thing I am to consider.

1. The first measure, by which our zeal may comply with our duty, and its actions become laudable, is charity to our neighbour. For since God receives all that glorification of himself, whereby we can serve and minister to his glory, reflected upon the foundation of his own goodness, and bounty, and mercy, and all the hallelujahs that are or ever shall be sung in heaven, are praises and thanksgivings; and that God himself does not receive glory from the acts of his justice, but then when his creatures will not rejoice in his goodness and mercy; it follows that we imitate this original excellency, and pursue God's own method; that is, glorify him "in via misericordie," "in the way of mercy" and bounty, charity and forgiveness, love and fair compliances: there is no greater charity in the world than to save a soul, nothing that pleases God better, nothing that can be in our hands greater or more noble, nothing that can be a more lasting and delightful honour, than that a perishing soul,—snatched from the flames of an intolerable hell, and borne to heaven upon the wings of piety and mercy by the ministry of angels, and the graces of the Holy Spirit,—shall to eternal

ages bless God and bless thee; Him, for the author and finisher of salvation, and thee for the minister and charitable instrument: that bright star must needs look pleasantly upon thy face for ever, which was by thy hand placed there, and, had it not been for thy ministry, might have been a sooty coal in the regions of sorrow. Now, in order to this, God hath given us all some powers and ministries, by which we may by our charity promote this religion, and the great interest of souls: counsels and prayers, preaching and writing, passionate desires and fair examples, going before others in the way of godliness, and bearing the torch before them, that they may see the way and walk in it. This is a charity, that is prepared more or less for every one; and, by the way, we should do well to consider, what we have done towards it. For as it will be a strange arrest at the day of judgment to Dives, that he fed high and suffered Lazarus to starve, and every garment,—that lies by thee and perishes, while thy naked brother does so too for want of it,—shall be a bill of indictment against thy unmerciful soul; so it will be in every instance: in what thou couldst profit thy brother and didst not, thou art accountable; and then tell over the times, in which thou hast prayed for the conversion of thy sinning brother; and compare the times together, and observe, whether thou hast not tempted him or betrayed him to sin, or encouraged him in it, or didst not hinder him, when thou mightest, more frequently than thou hast, humbly, and passionately, and charitably, and zealously, bowed thy head, and thy heart, and knees, to God to redeem that poor soul from hell, whither thou seest him descending with as much indifferency as a stone into the bottom of the well. In this thing *καλὸν ζηλοῦσθαι*, "it is a good thing to be zealous," and put forth all your strength, for you can never go too far. But then be careful, that this zeal of thy neighbour's amendment be only expressed in ways of charity, not of cruelty, or importune justice. "He that strikes the prince for justice," as Solomon's expression is, "is a companion of murderers;" and he that, out of zeal of religion, shall go to convert nations to his opinion by destroying Christians, whose faith is entire and summed up by the apostles, this man breaks the ground with a sword, and sows tares, and waters the ground with blood, and ministers to envy and cruelty, to errors and

mistake, and there comes up nothing but poppies to please the eye and fancy, disputes and hypocrisy, new summaries of religion estimated by measures of anger, and accursed principles; and so much of religion as is necessary to salvation, is laid aside, and that brought forth that serves an interest, not holiness; that fills the schools of a proud man, but not that which will fill heaven. Any zeal is proper for religion, but the zeal of the sword and the zeal of anger; this is *πικρία ζήλου*, "the bitterness of zeal;"* and it is a certain temptation to every man against his duty: for if the sword turns preacher, and dictates propositions by empire instead of arguments, and engraves them in men's hearts with a poniard, that it shall be death to believe what I innocently and ignorantly am persuaded of, it must needs be unsafe to "try the spirits, to try all things," to make inquiry; and yet without this liberty, no man can justify himself before God and man, nor confidently say that his religion is best: since he cannot without a final danger make himself able to give a right sentence, and to follow that which he finds to be the best; this may ruin souls by making hypocrites, or careless and compliant against conscience or without it; but it does not save souls, though peradventure it should force them to a good opinion: this is inordination of zeal; for Christ,—by reproving St. Peter, drawing his sword, even in the cause of Christ, for his sacred, and yet injured person, *διδάσκει μὴ χηρῆσαι μαχαίρα πᾶν τὸν Θεὸν δοκεῖ τις ἐδικεῖν*, (saith Theophylact),—"teaches us not to use the sword though in the cause of God, or for God himself;" because he will secure his own interest, only let him be served as himself is pleased to command: and it is like Moses' passion, it throws the tables of the law out of our hands, and breaks them in pieces out of indignation to see them broken. This is zeal that is now in fashion, and hath almost spoiled religion; men, like the zealots of the Jews, cry up their sect, and in it their interest; *ζηλοῦσι μαθητὰς, καὶ μαχαίρας ἀνασείρονται*; "they affect disciples and fight against the opponents;" and we shall find in Scripture, that when the apostles began to preach the meekness of the Christian institution, salvations and promises, charity and humility, there was a zeal set up against them; the apostles were zealous for the gospel, the Jews were zeal-

ous for the law: and see what different effects these two zeals did produce; the zeal of the law came to this, *ἔθορον τὴν πόλιν*, and *ἐδίωξαν μέχρι θανάτου*, and *ἀνασείρονται*, and *ὄχλοποιήσαντες*, "they stirred up the city, they made tumults, they persecuted this way unto the death, they got letters from the high priest, they kept Damascus with a garrison," they sent parties of soldiers, to silence and to imprison the preachers, and thought they did God service, when they put the apostles to death, and they swore "neither to eat nor to drink, till they had killed Paul." It was an old trick of the Jewish zeal,

Non monstrare vias, eadem nisi sacra colenti:
Quaesitum ad fontem solos deducere verpos. Juv.

They would not show the way to a Samaritan, nor give a cup of cold water but to a circumcised brother; that was their zeal. But the zeal of the apostles was this, they preached publicly and privately, they prayed for all men, they wept to God for the hardness of men's hearts, they "became all things to all men, that they might gain some," they travelled through deeps and deserts, they endured the heat of the Sirian star, and the violence of Euroclydon, winds and tempests, seas and prisons, mockings and scourgings, fastings and poverty, labour and watching, they endured every man and wronged no man, they would do any good thing and suffer any evil, if they had but hopes to prevail upon a soul; they persuaded men meekly, they entreated them humbly, they convinced them powerfully, they watched for their good, but meddled not with their interest; and this is the Christian zeal, the zeal of meekness, the zeal of charity, the zeal of patience, *ἐν τοῦτοις καλὸν ζηλοῦσθαι*, "In these it is good to be zealous," for you can never go far enough.

2. The next measure of zeal is prudence. For, as charity is the matter of zeal; so is discretion the manner. It must always be for good to our neighbour, and there need no rules for the conducting of that, provided the end be consonant to the design, that is, that charity be intended, and charity be done. But there is a zeal also of religion or worshipping, and this hath more need of measures and proper cautions. For religion can turn into a snare; it may be abused into superstition, it may become weariness in the spirit, and tempt to tediousness, to hatred, and despair: and many persons, through their indiscreet conduct,

* James iii. 14.

and furious marches, and great loads taken upon tender shoulders and inexperienced, have come to be perfect haters of their joy, and despisers of all their hopes; being like dark lanterns, in which a candle burns bright, but the body is encompassed with a crust and a dark cloud of iron; and these men keep the fires and light of holy propositions within them, but the darkness of hell, the hardness of a vexed heart, hath shaded all the light, and makes it neither apt to warm nor to enlighten others, but it turns to fire within, a fever and a distemper dwell there, and religion is become their torment.

1. Therefore our zeal must never carry us beyond that which is profitable. There are many institutions, customs, and usages, introduced into religion upon very fair motives, and adapted to great necessities; but to imitate those things, when they are disrobed of their proper ends, is an impertinent zeal, and signifies nothing but a forward mind, and an easy heart, and an imprudent head; unless these actions can be invested with other ends and useful purposes. The primitive church were strangely inspired with a zeal of virginity, in order to the necessities of preaching and travelling, and easing the troubles and temptations of persecution; but when the necessity went out, and drove the holy men into deserts, that made colleges of religious, and their manner of life was such, so united, so poor, so dressed, that they must love "more non seculari," "after the manner of men divorced from the usual intercourses of the world:" still their desire of single life increased, because the old necessity lasted, and a new one did supervene. Afterwards the case was altered, and then the single life was not to be chosen for itself, nor yet in imitation of the first precedents; for it could not be taken out from their circumstances and be used alone. He therefore that thinks he is a more holy person for being a virgin or a widower, or that he is bound to be so because they were so; or that he cannot be a religious person because he is not so: hath zeal indeed, but not according to knowledge. But now if the single state can be taken out and put to new appendages, and fitted to the end of another grace or essential duty of religion, it will well become a Christian zeal to choose it so long, as it can serve the end with advantage and security. Thus also a zealous person is to choose his fastings,

while they are necessary to him, and are acts of proper mortification, while he is tempted, or while he is under discipline, while he repents, or while he obeys; but some persons fast in zeal, but for nothing else; fast when they have no need, when there is need they should not; but call it religion to be miserable or sick; here their zeal is folly, for it is neither an act of religion nor of prudence, to fast when fasting probably serves no end of the spirit; and therefore in the fasting-days of the church, although it is warrant enough to us to fast, if we had no end to serve in it but the mere obedience, yet it is necessary that the superiors should not think the law obeyed, unless the end of the first institution be observed: a fasting-day is a day of humiliation and prayer; and fasting being nothing itself, but wholly the handmaid of a further grace, ought not to be divested of its holiness and sanctification, and left like the walls of a ruinous church where there is no duty performed to God, but there remains something of that, which used to minister to religion. The want of this consideration hath caused so much scandal and dispute, so many snares and schisms, concerning ecclesiastical fasts. For when it was undressed and stripped of all the ornaments and useful appendages, when from a solemn day it grew to be common; from thence to be less devout by being less seldom and less useful; and then it passed from a day of religion to be a day of order, and from fasting till night to fasting till evening-song, and evening-song to be sung about twelve o'clock; and from fasting it was changed to a choice of food, from eating nothing to eating fish, and that the latter began to be stood upon, and no usefulness remained but what every one of his own piety should put into it, but nothing was enjoined by the law, nothing of that exacted by the superiors, then the law fell into disgrace, and the design became suspected, and men were first insnared and then scandalized, and then began to complain without remedy, and at last took remedy themselves without authority; the whole affair fell into a disorder and mischief; and zeal was busy on both sides, and on both sides was mistaken, because they fell not upon the proper remedy, which was to reduce the law to the usefulness and advantages of its first intention. But this I intended not to have spoken.

2. Our zeal must never carry us beyond

that which is safe. Some there are, who in their first attempts and entries upon religion, while the passion, that brought them in, remains, undertake things as great as their highest thoughts; no repentance is sharp enough, no charities expensive enough, no fastings afflictive enough, then "totis quinquatribus orant;" and finding some deliciousness at the first contest, and in that activity of their passion, they make vows to bind themselves for ever to this state of delicacies. The onset is fair: but the event is this. The age of a passion is not long, and the flatulent spirit being breathed out, the man begins to abate of his first heats, and is ashamed: but then he considers that all that was not necessary, and therefore he will abate something more; and from something to something, at last it will come to just nothing, and the proper effect of this is, indignation, and hatred of holy things, an impudent spirit, carelessness or despair. Zeal sometimes carries a man into temptation; and he that never thinks he loves God dutifully or acceptably, because he is not imprisoned for him or undone, or designed to martyrdom, may desire a trial that will undo him. It is like fighting of a duel to show our valour. Stay till the king commands you to fight and die, and then let zeal do its noblest offices. This irregularity and mistake was too frequent in the primitive church, when men and women would strive for death, and be ambitious to feel the hangman's sword; some miscarried in the attempt, and became sad examples of the unequal yoking a frail spirit with a zealous driver.

3. Let zeal never transport us to attempt any thing but what is possible. M. Teresa made a vow, that she would do always that, which was absolutely the best. But neither could her understanding always tell her which was so, nor her will always have the same fervours; and it must often breed scruples, and sometimes tediousness, and wishes that the vow were unmade. He that vows never to have an ill thought, never to commit an error, hath taken a course, that his little infirmities shall become crimes, and certainly be imputed by changing his unavoidable infirmity into vow-breach. Zeal is a violence to a man's spirit, and unless the spirit be secured by the proper nature of the duty, and the circumstances of the action, and the possibilities of the man; it is like a great fortune in the meanest person, it bears him beyond his limit,

and breaks him into dangers and passions, transportations and all the furies of disorder, that can happen to an abused person.

4. Zeal is not safe, unless it be "in re probabili" too, it must be "in a likely matter." For we that find so many excuses to untie all our just obligations, and distinguish our duty into so much fineness, that it becomes like leaf-gold, apt to be gone at every breath; it cannot be prudent that we zealously undertake what is not probable to be effected: if we do, the event can be nothing but portions of the former evil, scruple and snares, shameful retreats and new fantastic principles. In all our undertakings we must consider what is our state of life, what our natural inclinations, what is our society, and what are our dependencies; by what necessities we are borne down, by what hopes we are biased; and by these let us measure our heats and their proper business. A zealous man runs up a sandy hill; the violence of motion is his greatest hinderance: and a passion in religion destroys as much of our evenness of spirit, as it sets forward any outward work; and therefore, although it be a good circumstance and degree of a spiritual duty, so long as it is within, and relative to God and ourselves, so long it is a holy flame; but if it be in an outward duty, or relative to our neighbours, or in an instance not necessary, it sometimes spoils the action, and always endangers it. But I must remember, we live in an age in which men have more need of new fires to be kindled within them and round about them, than of any thing to allay their forwardness: there is little or no zeal now but the zeal of envy, and killing as many as they can, and damning more than they can; *καύσεις* and *καυτός καυσεως*, "smoke and lurking fires," do corrode and secretly consume: therefore this discourse is less necessary. A physician would have but small employment near the Riphæan mountains, if he could cure nothing but calentures; catarrhs, and dead palsies, colds and consumptions, are their evils, and so is lukewarmness and deadness of spirit the proper maladies of our age: for though some are hot when they are mistaken, yet men are cold in a righteous cause; and the nature of this evil is to be insensible; and the men are farther from a cure, because they neither feel their evil nor perceive their danger. But of this I have already given account; and to it I shall only add what an old spiritual person

told a novice in religion, asking him the cause why he so frequently suffered tediousness in his religious offices; "Nondum vidisti requiem quam speramus, nec tormenta que timemus?"—"Young man, thou hast not seen the glories which are laid up for the zealous and devout, nor yet beheld the flames which are prepared for the lukewarm, and the haters of strict devotion." But the Jews tell, that Adam having seen the beauties and tasted the delicacies of paradise, repented and mourned upon the Indian mountains for three hundred years together: and we who have a great share in the cause of his sorrows, can by nothing be invited to a persevering, a great, a passionate religion, more than by remembering what he lost, and what is laid up for them whose hearts are burning lamps, and are all on fire with Divine love, whose flames are fanned with the wings of the Holy Dove, and whose spirits shine and burn with that fire which the Holy Jesus came to enkindle upon the earth.

SERMON XV.

THE HOUSE OF FEASTING; OR, THE EPICURE'S MEASURES.

PART I.

Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.—
1 Cor. xv. 32. last part.

This is the epicure's proverb, begun upon a weak mistake, started by chance from the discourses of drink, and thought witty by the undiscerning company, and prevailed infinitely, because it struck their fancy luckily, and maintained the merry meeting; but as it happens commonly to such discourses, so this also, when it comes to be examined by the consultations of the morning, and the sober hours of the day, it seems the most witlest and the most unreasonable in the world. When Seneca describes the spare diet of Epicurus and Metrodorus, he uses this expression: "Liberaliora sunt alimenta carceris: sepositos ad capitale supplicium, non tam anguste, qui occisurus est, pascit." "The prison keeps a better table; and he that is to kill the criminal to-morrow-morning, gives him a better supper overnight." By this he intended to represent his meal to be very short; for as dying persons have but little stomach to feast high, so they that mean to cut their throat,

will think it a vain expense to please it with delicacies, which, after the first alteration, must be poured upon the ground, and looked upon as the worst part of the accursed thing. And there is also the same proportion of unreasonableness, that because men shall "die to-morrow," and by the sentence and unalterable decree of God they are now descending to their graves, that therefore they should first destroy their reason, and then force dull times to run faster, that they may die sottish as beasts, and speedily as a fly; but they thought there was no life after this; or if there were, it was without pleasure, and every soul thrust into a hole, and a dorter of a span's length allowed for his rest and for his walk; and in the shades below no numbering of healths by the numeral letters of Philenium's name, no fat mullets, no oysters of Lucrinus, no Lesbian or Chian wines. Τοῦτο σαφῶς, ἀνθρώποι, μαθὼν εἴρηαινε σεαυτὸν. Therefore now enjoy the delicacies of nature, and feel the descending wines distilling through the limbeck of thy tongue and larynx, and suck the delicious juice of fishes, the marrow of the laborious ox, and the tender lard of Apulian swine, and the condited bellies of the scarus; but lose no time, for the sun drives hard, and the shadow is long, and "the days of mourning are at hand," but the number of the days of darkness and the grave cannot be told.

Thus they thought they discoursed wisely, and their wisdom was turned into folly; for all their arts of providence, and witty securities of pleasure, were nothing but unmanly prologues to death, fear and folly, sensuality and beastly pleasures. But they are to be excused rather than we. They placed themselves in the order of beasts and birds, and esteemed their bodies nothing but receptacles of flesh and wine, larders and pantries; and their soul the fine instrument of pleasure and brisk perception of relishes and gusts, reflections and duplications of delight; and therefore they treated themselves accordingly. But then, why we should do the same things, who are led by other principles, and a more severe institution, and better notices of immortality, who understand what shall happen to a soul hereafter, and know that this time is but a passage to eternity, this body but a servant to the soul, this soul a minister to the Spirit, and the whole man in order to God and to felicity; this, I say, is more unreasonable than to eat *aconita* to preserve our health,

and to enter into the flood that we may die a dry death; this is a perfect contradiction to the state of good things, whither we are designed, and to all the principles of a wise philosophy, whereby we are instructed that we may become "wise unto salvation." That I may therefore do some assistances towards the curing the miseries of mankind, and reprove the follies and improper motions towards felicity, I shall endeavour to represent to you—

1. That plenty and the pleasures of the world are no proper instruments of felicity.

2. That intemperance is a certain enemy to it; making life unpleasant, and death troublesome and intolerable.

3. I shall add the rules and measures of temperance in eating and drinking, that nature and grace may join to the constitution of man's felicity.

1. Plenty and the pleasures of the world are no proper instruments of felicity. It is necessary that a man have some violence done to himself, before he can receive them; for nature's bounds are, "non esurire, non sitire, non algere," "to be quit from hunger, and thirst, and cold," that is, to have nothing upon us that puts us to pain; against which she hath made provisions by the fleece of the sheep, and the skins of the beasts, by the waters of the fountain, and the herbs of the field, and of these no good man is destitute, for that share that he can need to fill those appetites and necessities, he cannot otherwise avoid; τῶν ἀρκούντων οὐδὲν πένος ἐστί. For it is unimaginable that nature should be a mother, natural and indulgent to the beasts of the forest, and the spawn of fishes, to every plant and fungus, to cats and owls, to moles and bats, making her storehouses always to stand open to them; and that, for the Lord of all these, even to the noblest of her productions, she should have made no provisions, and only produced in us appetites sharp as the stomach of wolves, troublesome as the tiger's hunger, and then run away, leaving art and chance, violence and study to feed us and to clothe us. This is so far from truth, that we are certainly more provided for by nature than all the world besides; for every thing can minister to us; and we can pass into none of nature's cabinets, but we can find our table spread; so that what David said to God, "Whither shall I go from thy presence? If I go to heaven, thou art there; if I descend to the deep, thou art there also; if I take the wings of

the morning, and flee into the uttermost parts of the wilderness, even there thou wilt find me out, and thy right hand shall uphold me," we may say it concerning our table, and our wardrobe; if we go into the fields, we find them tilled by the mercies of heaven, and watered with showers from God to feed us, and to clothe us; if we go down into the deep, there God hath multiplied our stores, and filled a magazine which no hunger can exhaust; the air drops down delicacies, and the wilderness can sustain us, and all that is in nature, that which feeds lions, and that which the ox eats, that which the fishes live upon, and that which is the provision for the birds, all that can keep us alive; and if we consider that of the beasts and birds, for whom nature hath provided but one dish, it may be flesh or fish, or herbs or flies, and these also we secure with guards from them, and drive away birds and beasts from that provision which nature made for them, yet seldom can we find that any of these perish with hunger; much rather shall we find that we are secured by the securities proper for the more noble creatures by that Providence that disposes all things, by that mercy that gives us all things, which to other creatures are ministered singly; by that labour, that can procure what we need; by that wisdom, that can consider concerning future necessities; by that power, that can force it from inferior creatures; and by that temperance, which can fit our meat to our necessities. For if we go beyond what is needful, as we find sometimes more than was promised, and very often more than we need, so we disorder the certainty of our felicity, by putting that to hazard which nature hath secured. For it is not certain, that if we desire to have the wealth of Susa, or garments stained with the blood of the Tyrian fish, that if we desire to feed like Philoxenus, or to have tables laden like the boards of Vitellius, that we shall never want. It is not nature that desires these things, but lust and violence; and by a disease we entered into the passion and the necessity, and in that state of trouble it is likely we may dwell for ever, unless we reduce our appetites to nature's measures.

Si ventri bene, si lateri est pedibusque tuis, nil Divitiarum poterunt regales addere majus.—HORACE.

And therefore it is, that plenty and pleasures are not the proper instruments of felicity. Because felicity is not a jewel that can be

locked in one man's cabinet. God intended that all men should be made happy, and he, that gave to all men the same natural desires, and to all men provision of satisfactions by the same meats and drinks, intended, that it should not go beyond that measure of good things, which corresponds to those desires which all men naturally have.

He that cannot be satisfied with common provision, hath a bigger need than he that can; it is harder, and more contingent, and more difficult, and more troublesome for him to be satisfied; βρῦλζω τῷ κατὰ τὸ σωματικὸν ἦδει, ὕδατι καὶ ἄρτῳ χρώμενος, προσπτύω ταῖς ἐκ πολυτελείας ἥδοναῖς, said Epicurus; "I feed sweetly upon bread and water, those sweet and easy provisions of the body, and I defy the pleasures of costly provisions;" and the man was so confident that he had the advantage over wealthy tables, that he thought himself happy as the immortal gods, ἐτοίμος ἔρχεσθαι τῷ Δεῖ ὑπὲρ εὐδαμονίας διαγωνίζεσθαι, μάζαν ἔχων καὶ ὕδωρ: for these provisions are easy, they are to be gotten without amazing cares; no man needs to flatter if he can live as nature did intend: "Magna pars libertatis est bene moratus venter:"* he need not swell his accounts, and intricate his spirit with arts of subtilty and contrivance; he can be free from fears, and the chances of the world cannot concern him. And this is true, not only in those severe and anchoretical and philosophical persons, who lived meanly as a sheep, and without variety as the Baptist, but in the same proportion it is also true in every man that can be contented with that which is honestly sufficient. Maximus Tyrius considers concerning the felicity of Diogenes, a poor Sinopean, having not so much nobility as to be born in the better parts of Greece: but he saw that he was compelled by no tyrant to speak or do ignobly; he had no fields to till, and therefore took no care to buy cattle and to hire servants; he was not distracted when a rent-day came, and feared not when the wise Greeks played the fool and fought who should be lord of that field that lay between Thebes and Athens: he laughed to see men scramble for dirty silver, and spend ten thousand Attick talents for the getting the revenues of two hundred philippicks; he went with his staff and bag into the camp of Phocenses, and the

soldiers revered his person and despised his poverty, and it was truce with him whosoever had wars; and the diadem of kings and the purple of the emperors, the mitre of high priests and the divining-staff of soothsayers, were things of envy and ambition, the purchase of danger, and the rewards of a mighty passion; and men entered into them by trouble and extreme difficulty, and dwelt under them as a man under a falling roof, or as Damocles under the tyrant's sword,

Nunc lateri incumbens—mox deinde supinus, Nunc cubat in faciem, nunc recto pectore surgens, sleeping like a condemned man; and let there be what pleasure men can dream of in such broken slumbers, yet the fear of waking from this illusion, and parting from this fantastic pleasure, is a pain and torment which the imaginary felicity cannot pay for. "Cui cum paupertate bene convenit, dives est: non qui parum habet, sed qui plus cupit, pauper est." All our trouble is from within us; and if a dish of lettuce and a clear fountain can cool all my heats, so that I shall have neither thirst nor pride, lust nor revenge, envy nor ambition, I am lodged in the bosom of felicity; and, indeed, no men sleep so soundly, as they that lay their head upon nature's lap. For a single dish, and a clean chalice lifted from the springs, can cure my hunger and thirst: but the meat of Abasuerus's feast cannot satisfy my ambition and my pride. "Nullâ re egere, Dei proprium; quàm paucissimis autem, Deo proximum," said Socrates. He, therefore, that hath the fewest desires and the most quiet passions, whose wants are soon provided for, and whose possessions cannot be disturbed with violent fears, he that dwells next door to satisfaction, and can carry his needs and lay them down where he please,—this man is the happy man; and this is not to be done in great designs and swelling fortunes. "Dives jam factus desiit gaudere lente; carius edit et bibit, et lætatur dives, quàm pauper, qui in quolibet, in parato, inempto gaudet, et facile epulari potest; dives nunquam." For as it is in plants which nature thrusts forth from her navel, she makes regular provisions, and dresses them with strength and ornament, with easiness and full stature; but if you thrust a jessamine there where she would have had a daisy grow, or bring the tall fir from dwelling in his own country, and transport the orange or the almond-tree near the fringes of the north-

* Senec.

star, nature is displeas'd, and becomes unnatural, and starves her sucklings, and renders you a return less than your charge and expectation: so it is in all our appetites; when they are natural and proper, nature feeds them and makes them healthful and lusty, as the coarse issue of the Scythian clown; she feeds them and makes them easy without cares and costly passion; but if you thrust an appetite into her, which she intended not, she gives you sickly and uneasy banquets, you must struggle with her for every drop of milk she gives beyond her own needs; you may get gold from her entrails, and at a great charge provide ornaments for your queens and princely women: but our lives are spent in the purchase; and when you have got them, you must have more: for these cannot content, nor nourish the spirit. "Ad supervacua sudatur;" "A man must labour infinitely to get more than he needs;" but to drive away thirst and hunger, a man needs not sit in the fields of the oppressed poor, nor lead armies, nor break his sleep, "et contumeliosam humanitatem pati," "and to suffer shame," and danger, and envy, and affront, and all the retinue of infelicity.

—Quis non Epicurum
Suspicit, exigui lætum plantaribus horti?—Juv.

If men did but know what felicity dwells in the cottage of a virtuous poor man, how sound his sleeps, how quiet his breast, how composed his mind, how free from care, how easy his provision, how healthful his morning, how sober his night, how moist his mouth, how joyful his heart, they would never admire the noises and the diseases, the throng of passions, and the violence of unnatural appetites, that fill the houses of the luxurious and the heart of the ambitious.

Nam neque divitibus contingunt gaudia solis.

Hor.

These which you call pleasures, are but the imagery and fantastic appearances, and such appearances even poor men may have. It is like felicity, that the king of Persia should come to Babylon, in the winter, and to Susa in the summer; and be attended with all the servants of one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, and with all the princes of Asia. It is like this, that Diogenes went to Corinth in the time of vintage, and to Athens when winter came; and instead of courts, visited the temples and the schools, and was pleased in the society of scholars and learned men, and conversed with the students of all Asia and Europe. If a man

loves privacy, the poor fortune can have that when princes cannot; if he loves noises, he can go to markets and to courts, and may glut himself with strange faces, and strange voices, and stranger manners, and the wild designs of all the world: and when that day comes in which we shall die, nothing of the eating and drinking remains, nothing of the pomp and luxury, but the sorrow to part with it, and shame to have dwelt there where wisdom and virtue seldom come, unless it be to call men to sober counsels, to a plain, and a severe, and a more natural way of living; and when Lucian derides the dead princes and generals, and says that in hell they go up and down selling salt meats and crying muscles, or begging; and he brings in Philip of Macedon, *ἐν γωνιδίῳ τῶν μισθῶν ἀκούμενοι τὰ σαβὰ τῶν ὑποδημάτων*, "mending of shoes in a little stall;" he intended to represent, that in the shades below, and in the state of the grave, the princes and voluptuous have a being different from their present plenty; but that their condition is made contemptible and miserable by its disproportion to their lost and perishing voluptuousness. The result is this, that Tiresias told the ghost of Menippus, inquiring what state of life was nearest to felicity, *Ὁ τῶν ἰδιωτῶν ἀριστος βίος, καὶ σωφρονέστερος*, "The private life, that which is freest from tumult and vanity," noise and luxury, business and ambition, nearest to nature and a just entertainment to our necessities; that life is nearest to felicity. *Τοιαῦτα λήρον ἡγησάμενος, τοῦτο μόνον ἐξ ἀπαντος θηρίσι, ὅπως, τὸ παρὼν εὐδέμενος, παραδράμης γελῶν τὰ πολλὰ καὶ περὶ μηδὲν ἐσπουδακώς*, therefore despise the swellings and the diseases of a disordered life and a proud vanity; be troubled for no outward thing beyond its merit, enjoy the present temperately, and you cannot choose but be pleased to see that you have so little share in the follies and miseries of the intemperate world.

2. Intemperance in eating and drinking is the most contrary course to the epicure's design in the world; and the voluptuous man hath the least of pleasure; and upon this proposition, the consideration is more material and more immediately reducible to practice, because in eating and drinking, men please themselves so much, and have the necessities of nature to usher in the inordination of gluttony and drunkenness, and our need leads in vice by the hand, that we know not how to distinguish our friend from our enemy; and St. Austin is sad

upon this point; "Thou, O Lord, hast taught me that I should take my meat as I take my physic; but while I pass from the trouble of hunger to the quietness of satisfaction, in the very passage I am insnared by the cords of my own concupiscence. Necessity bids me pass, but I have no way to pass from hunger to fulness, but over the bridge of pleasure; and although health and life be the cause of eating and drinking, yet pleasure, a dangerous pleasure, thrusts herself into attendance, and sometimes endeavours to be the principal; and I do that for pleasure's sake which I would only do for health; and yet they have distinct measures, whereby they can be separated, and that which is enough for health is too little for delight, and that which is for my delight destroys my health, and still it is uncertain for what end I do indeed desire; and the worst of the evil is this, that the soul is glad because it is uncertain, and that an excuse is ready, that under the pretence of health, 'obumbret negotium voluptatis,' 'the design of pleasure may be advanced and protected.'" How far the ends of natural pleasure may lawfully be enjoyed, I shall afterwards consider: in the mean time, if we remember that the epicure's design is pleasure principally, we may the better reprove his folly by considering, that intemperance is a plain destruction to all that which can give real and true pleasure.

1. It is an enemy to health, without which it is impossible to feel any thing of corporal pleasure. 2. A constant full table hath in it less pleasure than the temperate provisions of the hermit, or the philosophical table of scholars, and the just pleasures of the virtuous. 3. Intemperance is an impure fountain of vice, and a direct nurse of uncleanness. 4. It is a destruction of wisdom. 5. It is a dishonour and disreputation to the person and the nature of the man.

1. It is an enemy to health; which is, as one calls it, "ansa voluptatum et condimentum vitæ;" it is "that handle by which we can apprehend, and perceive pleasures, and that sauce that only makes life delicate;" for what content can a full table administer to a man in a fever? And he that hath a sickly stomach, admires at his happiness, that can feast with cheese and garlic, unctuous beverages, and the low-tasted spinach: health is the opportunity of wisdom, the fairest scene of religion, the advantages

of the glorifications of God, the charitable ministries to men; it is a state of joy and thanksgiving, and in every of its periods feels a pleasure from the blessed emanations of a merciful Providence. The world does not minister, does not feel, a greater pleasure, than to be newly delivered from the racks of the gratings of the stone, and the torments and convulsions of a sharp colic: and no organs, no harp, no lute, can sound out the praises of the Almighty Father so spritely, as the man that rises from his bed of sorrows, and considers what an excellent difference he feels from the groans and intolerable accents of yesterday. Health carries us to church, and makes us rejoice in the communion of saints: and an intemperate table makes us to lose all this. For this is one of those sins, which St. Paul affirms to be *πρόδηλοι, προάγονσαι εἰς κρίσιν*, "manifest, leading before unto judgment." It bears part of its punishment in this life, and hath this appendage, like the sin against the Holy Ghost, that it is not remitted in this world, nor in the world to come: that is, if it be not repented of, it is punished here and hereafter, which the Scripture does not affirm concerning all sins, and all cases.

But in this the sinner gives sentence with his mouth, and brings it to execution with his hands;

Pœna tamen præsens, cum tu deponis amictum Turgidus, et crudum pavonem in balnea portas.
Juv.

The old gluttons among the Romans, Hellogabalus, Tigellius, Crispus, Montanus, "notæque per oppida buccæ,"* famous epicures, mingled their meats with vomitings; so did Vitellius, and entered into their baths to digest their pheasants, that they might speedily return to the mullet and the eels of Syène, and then they went home and drew their breath short till the morning, and it may be not at all before night:

Hinc subitæ mortes, atque intestata senectus. Juv.

Their age is surprised at a feast, and gives them not time to make their will, but either they are choked with a large morsel, and there is no room for the breath of the lungs, and the motions of the heart; or a fever burns their eyes out, or a quinsy punishes that intemperate throat that had no religion, but the eating of the fat sacrifices, the portions of the poor and of the priest; or else they are condemned to a lethargy if their

* Juvenal.

constitutions be dull; and, if active, it may be they are wild with watching.

Plurimus hinc æger moritur vigilando: sed illum Languorem peperit cibus imperfectus, et hærens Ardenti stomacho ——— Juv.

So that the epicure's genial proverb may be a little altered, and say, "Let us eat and drink, for by this means to-morrow we shall die;" but that is not all, for these men live a healthless life; that is, are long, are every day dying, and at last die with torment. Menander was too short in his expression, *μόνος ὀτος φαίνεται εὐθανάτος*; that it is indeed death, but gluttony is "a pleasant death."

Ἐχοντα πολλὴν τὴν χοιλίαν παχύν,
Καὶ μόλις λαλοῦντα, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμ' ἔχοντα παν ἄνω,
Ἐρδόνοντα καὶ λεγοντα, Σήπομι' ὑπὸ τῆς ἡδονῆς.

For this is the glutton's pleasure, "To breathe short and difficultly, scarce to be able to speak, and when he does, he cries out, I die and rot with pleasure." But the folly is as much to be derided as the men to be pitied, that we daily see men afraid of death with a most intolerable apprehension, and yet increase the evil of it, the pain, and the trouble, and the suddenness of its coming, and the appendage of an insufferable eternity.

Rem struere exoptant cæso bove, Mercuriumque
Arcessunt fibra ——— PERS.

They pray for herds of cattle, and spend the breeders upon feasts and sacrifices. For why do men go to temples and churches, and make vows to God and daily prayers, that God would give them a healthful body, and take away their gout and their palsies, their fevers and apoplexies, the pains of the head and the gripings of the belly, and arise from their prayers, and pour in loads of flesh and seas of wine, lest there should not be matter enough for a lusty disease?

Pocis opem nervis, corpusque fidele senectæ:
Esto age: sed grandes patinæ fruticetaque crassa
Annure his superos vetuere, Jovemque morantur. ——— PERS.

But this is enough that the rich glutton shall have his dead body condied and embalmed; he may be allowed to stink and suffer corruption while he is alive: these men are for the present living sinners and walking rottenness, and hereafter will be dying penitents and perfumed carcasses, and their whole felicity is lost in the confusions of their unnatural disorder. When Cyrus had espied Astyages and his fellows coming drunk from a banquet loaden with variety of follies and filthiness, their legs failing them, their eyes red and staring, cozened with a moist cloud and abused by a doubled object,

their tongues full of sponges, and their heads no wiser, he thought they were poisoned, and he had reason: for what malignant quality can be more venomous and hurtful to a man than the effect of an intemperate goblet and a full stomach? It poisons both the soul and the body. All poisons do not kill presently, and this will in process of time, and hath formidable effects at present.

But therefore methinks the temptations, which men meet withal from without, are in themselves most unreasonable and soonest confuted by us. He that tempts me to drink beyond my measure, civilly invites me to a fever; and to lay aside my reason as the Persian women did their garments and their modesty at the end of the feasts: and all the question then will be, Which is the worse evil, to refuse your uncivil kindness, or to suffer a violent head-ach, or to lay up heaps big enough for an English surfeit? Creon in the tragedy said well;

Κρείσσον δὲ μοὶ νῦν πρὸς ὁ ἀπειθεῖσθαι, ξένη,
Ἦ μαλακίῳ δένδ' ὕστερον μέγα στένειν, ΕΥΡΙΠ.

"It is better for me to grieve thee, O stranger, or to be affronted by thee, than to be tormented by thy kindness the next day and the morrow after;" and the freedman of Domitius, the father of Nero, suffered himself to be killed by his lord: and the son of Praxaspes by Cambyses, rather than they would exceed their own measures up to a full intemperance, and a certain sickness and dishonour. For, as Plutarch said well, to avoid the opinion of an uncivil man, or being clownish, to run into a pain of thy sides or belly, into madness or a head-ach, is the part of a fool and a coward, and of one that knows not how to converse with men, "citra pocula et nidorem," in anything but in the famelic smells of meat and virginal drinkings.

Ebrius et petulans, qui nullum forte cecidit,
Dat pœnas, noctem patitur, lugentis amicum,
Pelidæ ——— Juv.

"A drunkard and a glutton feels the torments of a restless night, although he hath not killed a man;" that is, just like murderers, and persons of an affrighted conscience; so wakes the glutton, so broken, and sick, and disorderly are the slumbers of the drunkard. Now let the epicure boast his pleasures, and tell how he hath swallowed the price of provinces, and gobbets of delicious flesh, purchased with the reward of souls; let him brag "furorem illum conviviorum, et fœdisimum patrimoniorum exitium culinam,"

"of the madness of delicious feasts, and that his kitchen hath destroyed his patrimony;" let him tell that he takes in every day,*

Quantum Sauseia bibebat,

As much wine as would refresh the sorrows of forty languishing prisoners; or let him set up his vain-glorious triumph,

Ut quod 'multi Damalin meri
'Bassum Threicia' vicit 'amystide'; Hor.

That he hath knocked down Damalis with the twenty-fifth bottle, and hath outfeasted Antony or Cleopatra's luxury; it is a goodly pleasure, and himself shall bear the honour.

—Rarum et memorabile magni
Gutturis exemplum, conducen dusque magister.
Juv.

But for the honour of his banquet he hath some ministers attending that he did not dream of, and in the midst of his loud laughter, the gripes of the belly, and the fevers of the brain, "Pallor et genæ pendulæ, oculorum ulcera, tremulæ manus, furiales somni, iniquies nocturna," as Pliny reckons them, "paleness and hanging cheeks, ulcers of the eyes, and trembling hands, dead or distracted sleeps," these speak aloud, that to-day you "eat and drink, that to-morrow you die," and die forever.

It is reported concerning Socrates, that when Athens was destroyed by the plague, he in the midst of all the danger escaped untouched by sickness, because by a spare and severe diet, he had within him no tumult of disorderly humours, no factions in his blood, no loads of moisture prepared for charnel-houses, or the sickly hospitals; but a vigorous heat, and a well-proportioned radical moisture; he had enough for health and study, philosophy and religion, for the temples and the academy, but no superfluities to be spent in groans and sickly nights; and all the world of gluttons is hugely convinced of the excellency of temperance in order to our temporal felicity and health, because when themselves have left virtue, and sober diet, and counsels, and first lost their temperance, and then lost their health, they are forced to run to temperance and abstinence for their cure. "Vilis enim tenuisque mensa (ut loquuntur pueri) sanitatis mater est,"† then a thin diet and an humble body, fasting and emptiness, and arts of scattering their sin and sickness, is in season; but by the same means they might preserve

their health, by which they do restore it; but when they are well, if they return to their full tables and oppressing meals, their sickness was but like Vitellius' vomiting, that they might eat again; but so they may entail a fit of sickness upon every full moon, till both their virtue and themselves decrease into the corruptions and rottenness of the grave. But if they delight in sharp fevers and horrid potions, in sour palates and that heaps of which must be carried forth, they may reckon their wealthy pleasures to be very great and many, if they will but tell them one by one with their sicknesses, and the multitude of those evils they shall certainly feel, before they have thrown their sorrows forth. "These men (as St. Paul's expression is) heap up wrath against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the day of God's most righteous judgments." Strange therefore it is, that for the stomach, which is scarce a span long, there should be provided so many furnaces and ovens, huge fires, and an army of cooks, cellars swimming with wine, and granaries sweating with corn; and that into one belly should enter the vintage of many nations, the spoils of distant provinces, and the shell-fishes of several seas. When the heathens feasted their gods, they gave nothing but a fat ox, a ram, or a kid; they poured a little wine upon the altar, and burned a handful of gum: but when they feasted themselves, they had many vessels filled with Campanian wine, turtles of Liguria, Sicilian beeves, and wheat from Egypt, wild boars from Illyrium, and Grecian sheep, variety, and load, and cost, and curiosity: and so do we. It is so little we spend in religion, and so very much upon ourselves, so little to the poor, and so without measure to make ourselves sick, that we seem to be in love with our own mischief, and so passionate for necessity and want, that we strive all the ways we can to make ourselves need more than nature intended. I end this consideration with the saying of the cynic: It is to be wondered at, that men eat so much for pleasure's sake; and yet for the same pleasure should not give over eating, and be-take themselves to the delights of temperance, since to be healthful and holy is so great a pleasure. However, certain it is, that no man ever repented, that he arose from the table sober, healthful, and with his wits about him; but very many have repented, that they sat so long, till their bellies swelled and their health, and their virtue, and their God, is departed from them.

* Juvenal.

† Chrysost.

SERMON XVI.

PART II.

2. A CONSTANT full table is less pleasant than the temperate provisions of the virtuous, or the natural banquets of the poor. *Χάρης τῇ μακαρίᾳ φύσει, ὅτι τὰ ἀναγκαῖα ἐποίησεν εὐτάρακτα, τὰ δὲ δυσπόριστα οὐκ ἀναγκαῖα,* said Epicurus; "Thanks be to the God of nature that he hath made that which is necessary to be ready at hand, and easy to be had; and that which cannot easily be obtained, is not necessary it should be at all;" which in effect is to say, It cannot be constantly pleasant: for necessity and want makes the appetite, and the appetite makes the pleasure; and men are infinitely mistaken when they despise the poor man's table, and wonder how he can endure that life, that is maintained without the exercise of pleasure, and that he can suffer his day's labour, and recompense it with unsavoury herbs, and potent garlic, with water-cresses, and bread coloured like the ashes that gave it hardness: he hath a hunger that gives it deliciousness; and we may as well wonder that a lion eats raw flesh, or that a wolf feeds upon the turf; they have an appetite proportionable to this meat; and their necessity, and their hunger, and their use and their nature, are the cooks that dress their provisions, and make them delicate: and yet if water and pulse, natural provision, and the simple diet, were not pleasant, as indeed they are not to them who have been nursed up and accustomed to the more delicious, *ἔπειτα πλουτῶν οὐκ ἴθ' ἴδεται φακῶν,* yet it is a very great pleasure to reduce our appetites to nature, and to make our reason rule our stomach, and our desires comply with our fortunes, and our fortunes be proportionable to our persons. "Non est voluptas aqua et polenta (said a philosopher); sed summa voluptas est, posse ex his capere voluptatem," "It is an excellent pleasure to be able to take pleasure in words and water," in bread and onions; for then a man can never want pleasure when it is so ready for him, that nature hath spread it over all its provisions. Fortune and art give delicacies; nature gives meat and drink; and what nature gives, fortune cannot take away; but every change can take away what only is given by the bounty of a full fortune; and if in satisfaction and freedom from care, and security and proportions to our own natural appetite, there can be pleasure, then we may know how

to value the sober and natural tables of the virtuous and wise, before that state of feastings which a war can lessen, and a tyrant can take away, or the pirates may intercept, or a blast may spoil, and is always contingent, and is so far from satisfying, that either it destroys the appetite, and capacity of pleasure, or increases it beyond all the measures of good things.

He that feasts every day, feasts no day; *ἐτρίφησεν ὥστε μὴ πολὺν τρυφᾶν χρόνον.* And however you treat yourselves, sometimes you will need to be refreshed beyond it; but what will you have for a festival, if you wear crowns every day? even a perpetual fulness will make you glad to beg pleasure from emptiness, and variety from poverty or an humble table.

*Plerumque gratæ principibus vices.
Mundæque parvo sub lare pauperum
Cœnæ, sine aulæis, et ostro,
Sollicitam explicuere frontem.* HOR.

But, however, of all things in the world a man may best and most easily want pleasure, which if you have enjoyed, it passes away at the present, and leaves nothing at all behind it, but sorrow and sour remembrances. No man felt a greater pleasure in a goblet of wine than Lysimachus, when he fought against the Getæ, and himself and his whole army were compelled by thirst to yield themselves to bondage; but when the wine was sunk as far as his navel, the pleasure was gone, and so was his kingdom and his liberty: for though the sorrow dwells with a man pertinaciously, yet the pleasure is swift as lightning, and more pernicious; but the pleasures of a sober and temperate table are pleasures till the next day, *καὶ τῇ ὑστεραίᾳ ἡδέως γίνονται,* as Timotheus said of Plato's scholars; they converse sweetly, and "are of perfect temper and delicacy of spirit even the next morning:" whereas the intemperate man is forced to lie long in bed, and forget that there is a sun in the sky; he must not be called till he hath concocted, and slept his surfeit into a truce and a quiet respite; but whatsoever this man hath suffered, certain it is that the poor man's head did not ache, neither did he need the juice of poppies, or costly cordials, physicians or nurses, to bring him to his right shape again, like Apuleius's ass, with eating roses: and let him turn his hour glass, he will find his head aches longer than his throat was pleased; and, which is worst, his glass runs out with joggings and violence, and every such concussion with a surfeit makes

his life look nearer its end, and ten to one but it will, before its natural period, be broken in pieces. If these be the pleasures of an epicure's table, I shall pray that my friends may never feel them; but he that sinneth against his Maker, shall fall into the calamities of intemperance.

3. Intemperance is the nurse of vice; Ἀφροδίτης γάλα, "Venus-milk," so Aristophanes calls wine; πάντων δεινῶν μητρόσπις, "the mother of all grievous things;" so Pontianus. For by the experience of all the world, it is the bawd to lust: and no man must ever dare to pray to God for a pure soul in a chaste body, if himself does not live temperately, if himself "make provisions for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts of it;" for in this case he shall find "that which enters into him, shall defile him" more than he can be cleansed by those vain prayers, that come from his tongue, and not from his heart. Intemperance makes rage and choler, pride and fantastic principles; it makes the body a sea of humours, and those humours the seat of violence: by faring deliciously every day, men become senseless of the evils of mankind, inapprehensive of the troubles of their brethren, unconcerned in the changes of the world, and the cries of the poor, the hunger of the fatherless, and the thirst of widows: οὐκ ἐκ τῶν μαζοπαγίων οἱ τύραννοι, ἀλλ' ἐκ τῶν τρυφωμένων, said Diogenes; "Tyrants never come from the cottages of them that eat pulse and coarse fare, but from the delicious beds and banquets of the effeminate and rich feeders." For, to maintain plenty and luxury, sometimes wars are necessary, and oppressions and violence: but no landlord did ever grind the face of his tenants, no prince ever sucked blood from his subjects for the maintenance of a sober and a moderate proportion of good things. And this was intimated by St. James, "Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment-seat?"* For all men are passionate to live according to that state in which they were born, or to which they are devolved, or which they have framed to themselves; those therefore that love to live high and deliciously,

Et quibus in solo vivendi causa palato. Juv. who live not to God but to their belly, not to sober counsels but to an intemperate table, have framed to themselves a manner

of living, which oftentimes cannot be maintained but by injustice and violence, which coming from a man whose passions are made big with sensuality and an habitual folly, by pride and forgetfulness of the condition and miseries of mankind, are always unreasonable and sometimes intolerable.

—regustatem digito terebrare salinum
Contentus perages, si vivere cum Jove tendis.
PERS.

Formidable is the state of an intemperate man, whose sin begins with sensuality, and grows up in folly and weak discourses, and is fed by violence, and applauded by fools and parasites, full bellies and empty heads, servants and flatterers, whose hands are full of flesh and food, and their hearts empty of pity and natural compassion; where religion cannot inhabit, and the love of God must needs be a stranger; whose talk is loud and trifling, injurious and impertinent; and whose employment is the same with the work of the sheep or the calf, always to eat; their loves are the lusts of the lower belly; and their portion is in the lower regions to eternal ages, where their thirst, and their hunger, and their torment, shall be infinite.

4. Intemperance is a perfect destruction of wisdom. Παχειά γαστήρ λεπτόν οὐ τίθει νόον, "A full-gorged belly never produced a sprightly mind:" and therefore these kind of men are called γαστέρες ἀργαί, "slow bellies," so St. Paul concerning the intemperate Cretans out of their own poet: they are like the tigers of Brazil, which when they are empty, are bold and swift, and full of sagacity; but being full, sneak away from the barking of a village dog. So are these men, wise in the morning, quick and fit for business; but when the sun gives the sign to spread the tables, and intemperance brings in the messes, and drunkenness fills the bowls, then the man falls away, and leaves a beast in his room; ναύ, worse, νεκρὸς μεσάνυχτας, they are dead all but their throat and belly, so Aristophanes hath fitted them with a character, "Carcasses above half way." Plotinus descends one step lower yet; affirming such persons, ἀποθεωδρωθῆναι, "to be made trees," whose whole employment and life is nothing but to feed and suck juices from the bowels of their nurse and mother; and indeed commonly they talk as trees in a wind and tempest, the noise is great and querulous, but it signifies nothing but trouble and disturbance.

* James ii. 6.

A full meal like Sisera's banquet, at the end of which there is a nail struck into a man's head : ὡς συγκολληθεὶς καὶ οἶνον καθηλθούσα τὴν ψυχὴν πρὸς τὴν τοῦ σώματος ἀπόλαυσιν, so Porphyry; "it knocks a man down, and nails his soul to the sensual mixtures of the body." For what wisdom can be expected from them, whose soul dwells in clouds of meat, and floats up and down in wine, like the spilled cups which fell from their hands, when they could lift them to their heads no longer? πολλὰκις γὰρ ἐν οἴνῳ κύμασι τις ναυαγεῖ: it is a perfect shipwreck of a man, the pilot is drunk, and the helm dashed in pieces, and the ship first reels, and by swallowing too much is itself swallowed up at last. And therefore the Navis Agrigentina, the madness of the young fellows of Agrigentum, who being drunk, fancied themselves in a storm, and the house the ship, was more than the wild fancy of their cups; it was really so, they were all cast away, they were broken in pieces by the foul disorder of the storm.

*Hinc Vini atque somni degener socordia,
Libido sordens, inverecundus lepos,
Variæque pestes languidorum sensuum.
Hinc et frequenti marcidæ oblectamine
Scintilla mentis intorpescit nobilis,
Animusque pigris stertit in præcordiis.*
PRUDENT. hym. de Jejun.

"The senses languish, the spark of Divinity that dwells within is quenched; and the mind snorts, dead with sleep and fulness in the fouler regions of the belly."

So have I seen the eye of the world looking upon a fenny bottom, and drinking up too free draughts of moisture, gathered them into a cloud, and that cloud crept about his face, and made him first look red, and then covered him with darkness and an artificial night: so is our reason at a feast,

*Putrem resudans crapulam
Obstrangulatæ mentis ingenium premit.*

The clouds gather about the head, and according to the method and period of the children, and productions of darkness, it first grows red, and that redness turns into an obscurity, and a thick mist, and reason is lost to all use and profitableness of wise and sober discourses; ἀναθυμιάσις βολυδεστέρα οὐσα ἐπισκοπεῖ τῇ ψυχῇ,* "a cloud of folly and distraction darkens the soul," and makes it crass and material, polluted and heavy, clogged and laden like the body: ψυχῇ

κάθυδρος ταῖς ἐκ τοῦ οἴνου ἀναθυμιάσει καὶ νεφέλαις δίχην σώματος ποιουμένη. "And there cannot be any thing said worse, reason turns into folly, wine and flesh into a knot of clouds, the soul itself into a body," and the spirit into corrupted meat; there is nothing left but the rewards and portions of a fool to be reaped and enjoyed there, where flesh and corruption shall dwell to eternal ages; and therefore in Scripture such men are called βαρνακάρδιαι. "Hesternis vitis animinum quoque prægravant:" Their heads are gross, their souls are emerged in matter, and drowned in the moistures of an unwholesome cloud; they are dull of hearing, slow in apprehension, and to action they are as unable as the hands of a child, who too hastily hath broken the enclosures of his first dwelling.

But temperance is reason's girdle and passion's bridle; σοὰ φρόνησις, so Homer in Stobæus; that is σωφροσύνη; "prudence is safe" while the man is temperate; and therefore σώφρον is opposed τῷ χαλφρονι, "A temperate man is no fool;" for temperance is the σωφροσύνη, such as Plato appointed to night-walkers, a prison to restrain their inordinations; it is βίωμη ψυχῆς, as Pythagoras calls it; κρηπίς ἀρετῆς, so Socrates; κόσμος ἀγαθῶν πάντων, so Plato; ἀσφάλεια τῶν καλλίστων ἔξεων, so Jamblichus; it is "the strength of the soul, the foundation of virtue, the ornament of all good things, and the corroborative of all excellent habits."

5. After all this, I shall the less need to add, that intemperance is a dishonour, and disreputation to the nature, and the person, and the manners of a man. But naturally men are ashamed of it, and the needs of nature shall be the veil for their gluttony, and the night shall cover their drunkenness; τέγγε πνεύμονα οἴνο, τὸ γὰρ ἄστρον περιστέλλεται, † which the apostle rightly renders, "They that are drunk, are drunk in the night;" but the priests of Heliopolis never did sacrifice to the sun with wine; meaning, that this is so great a dishonour, that the sun ought not to see it; and they that think there is no other eye but the sun that sees them, may cover their shame by choosing their time; just as children do their danger by winking hard, and not looking on. Σκυθίζειν, καὶ ζωρότερον πίνειν, καὶ δεινῶς φαγεῖν, "To drink sweet drinks and hot, to quaff great draughts, and to eat greedily;" Theophrastus makes them characters of a clown. †

*Clem. Alexand.

†Alcæus.

† Cap. 4.

3. And now that I have told you the foulness of the epicure's feasts and principles, it will be fit that I describe the measures of our eating and drinking, that the needs of nature may neither become the cover to an intemperate dish, nor the freer refreshment of our persons be changed into scruples, that neither our virtue nor our conscience fall into an evil snare.

1. The first measure of our eating and drinking, is our "natural needs," μήτε ἀγγίν κατά σῶμα, μήτε παρὰ ττοσθαι κατά ψυχὴν; these are the measures of nature, "that the body be free from pain, and the soul from violence." Hunger, and thirst, and cold, are the natural diseases of the body; and food and raiment are their remedies, and therefore are the measures.

In quantum sitis atque fames et frigora poscunt,
Quantum, Epicure, tibi parvis sufficit in hortis.

JUVENAL.

But in this there are two cautions. 1. Hunger and thirst are only to be extinguished while they are violent and troublesome, and are not to be provided for to the utmost extent and possibilities of nature; a man is not hungry so long till he can eat no more, but till its sharpness and trouble is over, and he that does not leave some reserves for temperance, gives all that he can to nature, and nothing at all to grace; for God hath given a latitude in desires and degrees of appetite; and when he hath done, he laid restraint upon it in some whole instances, and of some parts in every instance; that man might have something to serve God of his own, and something to distinguish him from a beast in the use of their common faculties. Beasts cannot refrain, but fill all the capacity when they can; and if a man does so, he does what becomes a beast, and not a man. And therefore there are some little symptoms of this inordination, by which a man may perceive himself to have transgressed his measures; "ructation, uneasy loads, singing, looser pratings, importune drowsiness, provocation of others to equal and full chalices;" and though in every accident of this signification it is hard for another to pronounce that the man hath sinned, yet by these he may suspect himself, and learn the next time to hold the bridle harder.

2. "This hunger must be natural," not artificial and provoked; for many men make necessities to themselves, and then think they are bound to provide for them. It is necessary to some men to have garments

made of the Calabrian fleece, stained with the blood of the *murex*, and to get money to buy pearls round and orient; "scelerata hoc fecit culpa;" but it is the man's luxury that made it so; and by the same principle it is, that in meats, what is abundant to nature is defective and beggarly to art; and when nature willingly rises from table, when the first course of flesh plain and natural is done, then art, and sophistry, and adulterate dishes, invite him to taste and die, μέχρι τως ἴσμεν σάρκεις, μέχρι τως τῆς γῆς κύντομεν;* well may a sober man wonder that men should be so much in love with earth and corruption, the parent of rottenness and a disease, that even then, when by all laws, witches and enchanters, murderers and man-stealers, are chastised and restrained with the iron hands of death; yet that men should at great charges give pensions to an order of men, whose trade it is to rob them of their temperance, and wittily to destroy their health; κατωφερείς καὶ χαμαιζήτους καὶ τοὺς ἐκ τῆς γῆς κενολογοῦντας, the Greek fathers call such persons;

—curvæ in terris animæ et cœlestium inanes;

people bowed down to the earth; "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God:" "Arentinas mentes," so Antidamus calls them, men framed in the furnaces of Etruria, "Aretine spirits,"† beginning and ending in the flesh and filthiness; dirt and clay all over. But go to the crib, thou glutton, and there it will be found that when the charger is clean, yet nature's rules were not prevaricated; the beast eats up all his provisions because they are natural and simple; or if he leaves any, it is because he desires no more than till his needs be served; and neither can a man (unless he be diseased in body or in spirit, in affection or in habit) eat more of natural and simple food than to the satisfaction of his natural necessities. He that drinks a draught or two of water and cools his thirst, drinks no more till his thirst returns; but he that drinks wine, drinks again longer than it is needful, even so long as it is pleasant. Nature best provides for herself when she spreads her own table; but when men have gotten superinduced habits, and new necessities, art that brought them in must maintain them, but "wantonness and folly wait at the table, and sickness and death take away."

* Chrysost.

† Viz. ab Areto, unde sicut ex aliis Etruriæ figuris, testacea vasa Romam deferebant.

2. Reason is the second measure, or rather the rule whereby we judge of intemperance; for whatsoever loads of meat and drink make the reason useless or troubled, are effects of this deformity; not that reason is the adequate measure; for a man may be intemperate upon other causes, though he do not force his understanding, and trouble his head. Some are strong to drink, and can eat like a wolf, and love to do so, as fire to destroy the stubble; such were those harlots in the comedy, "Quæ cum amatore suo cum cœnant liguriunt;"* these persons are to take their accounts from the measures of religion, and the Spirit: though they can talk still or transact the affairs of the world, yet if they be not fitted for the things of the spirit, they are too full of flesh or wine, and cannot, or care not, to attend to the things of God. But reason is the limit, beyond which temperance never wanders; and in every degree in which our discourse is troubled, and our soul is lifted from its wheels, in the same degree the sin prevails. "Dum sumus in quâdam delinquendi libidine, nebulis quibusdam insipientiæ mens obducitur," saith St. Ambrose: when the flesh-pots reek, and the uncovered dishes send forth a nidor and hungry smells, that cloud hides the face, and puts out the eye of reason; and then tell them, "Mors in ollâ," that "Death is in the pot," and folly is in the chalice; that those smells are fumes of brimstone, and vapours of Egypt; that they will make their hearts easy, and their head sottish, their colour pale, and their hands trembling, and their feet tormented.

Mullorum, leporumque et suminis exitus hic est, Sulphureusque color, carnificesque pedes. MART.

For that is the end of delicacies, δυσωδία, λεικος ὀδὴν, ἐντριφερός, αἰθρίας καὶ πόνων ἀπειρος, as Dio Chrysostom, "paleness and effeminacy, and laziness, and folly;" yet under the dominion of the pleasures of sensuality, men are so stripped of the use of reason, that they are not only useless in wise counsels and assistances, but they have not reason enough to avoid the evils of their own throat and belly; when once their reason fails, we must know, that their temperance and their religion went before.

3. Though reason be so strictly to be preserved at our tables as well as at our prayers, and we can never have leave to do any violence to it; yet the measures of nature may be enlarged beyond the bounds of prime

and common necessity. For besides hunger and thirst, there are some labours of the body, and others of the mind, and there are sorrows and loads upon the spirit by its communications with the indispositions of the body; and as the labouring man may be supplied with bigger quantities, so the student and contemplative man with more delicious and sprightly nutriment: for as the tender and more delicate easily-digested meats will not help to carry burdens upon the neck, and hold the plough in society and yokes of the laborious oxen; so neither will the pulse and the leeks, Lavinian sausages, and the Cisalpine suckets or gobbets of condited bull's-flesh, minister such delicate spirits to the thinking man; but his notion will be flat as the noise of the Arcadian porter, and thick as the first juice of his country lard, unless he makes his body a fit servant to the soul, and both fitted for the employment.

But in these cases necessity, and prudence, and experience, are to make the measures and the rule; and so long as the just end is fairly designed, and aptly ministered to, there ought to be no scruple concerning the quantity or quality of the provision; and he that would stint a swain by the commons of a student, and give Philotas the Candian the leavings of Plato, does but ill serve the ends of temperance, but worse of prudence and necessity.

4. Sorrow and a wounded spirit may as well be provided for in the quantity and quality of meat and drink, as any other disease; and this disease by this remedy as well as by any other. For, great sorrow and importune melancholy may be as great a sin as great anger; and if it be a sin in its nature, it is more malignant and dangerous in its quality; as naturally tending to murmur and despair, weariness of religion and hatred of God, timorousness and jealousies, fantastic images of things, and superstition; and therefore, as it is necessary to restrain the fevers of anger, so also to warm the freezings and dullness of melancholy by prudent and temperate, but proper and apportioned diets; and if some meats and drinks make men lustful, or sleepy, or dull, or lazy, or sprightly, or merry; so far as meats and drinks can minister to the passion, and the passion ministers to virtue, so far by this means they may be provided for, "Give strong drink to him that is ready to perish, and wine to those that be of heavy hearts; let him drink and forget his poverty, and

* Eunuch. 5. 4. 14.

remember his misery no more,"* said King Lemuel's mother. But this is not intended to be an habitual cure, but single and occasional; for he that hath a pertinacious sorrow, is beyond the cure of meat and drink, and if this becomes every day's physic, it will quickly become every day's sin. Then, it must always keep within the bounds of reason, and never seize upon any portions of affection: the Germans used to mingle music with their bowls, and drink by the measures of the six notes of music;

Ut relevet miserum fatum solitoseque labores.

But they sing so long that they forget not their sorrow only, but their virtue also, and their religion; and there are some men that fall into drunkenness, because they would forget a lighter calamity, running into the fire to cure a calenture, and beating their brains out to be quit of the aching of their heads. A man's heaviness is refreshed long before he comes to drunkenness; for when he arrives thither, he hath but changed his heaviness, and taken a crime to boot.

5. Even when a man hath no necessity upon him, no pungent sorrow, or natural or artificial necessity, it is lawful in some cases of eating and drinking to receive pleasure and intend it. For whatsoever is natural and necessary, is therefore not criminal, because it is of God's procuring; and since we eat for need, and the satisfaction of our need is a removing of a pain, and that in nature is the greatest pleasure, it is impossible that in its own nature it should be a sin. But in this case of conscience these cautions are to be observed:

1. So long as nature ministers the pleasure and not art, it is materially innocent. "Si tuo veniat jure, luxuria est:"† but it is safe while it enters upon nature's stock; for it is impossible that the proper effect of health, and temperance, and prudent abstinence, should be vicious; and yet these are the parents of the greatest pleasure in eating and drinking. "Malum panem expecta, bonus fiet; etiam illum tenerum tibi et sili-gineum fames reddet:" "If you abstain and be hungry, you shall turn the meanest provision into delicate and desirable."

2. Let all the pleasure of meat and drink be such as can minister to health, and be within the former bounds. For since pleasure in eating and drinking is its natural appendage, and like a shadow follows the sub-

stance, as the meat is to be accounted, so is the pleasure; and if these be observed, there is no difference whether nature or art be the cook. For some constitutions, and some men's customs, and some men's educations, and necessities, and weaknesses, are such, that their appetite is to be invited, and their digestion helped, but all this while we are within the bounds of nature and need.

3. It is lawful when a man needs meat to choose the pleasanter, even merely for their pleasures; that is; because they are pleasant, besides that they are useful; this is as lawful as the smell of a rose, or to lie in feathers, or change the posture of our body in bed for ease, or to hear music, or to walk in gardens rather than the highways; and God has given us leave to be delighted in those things, which he made to that purpose, that we may also be delighted in him that gives them. For so as the more pleasant may better serve for health, and directly to refreshment, so collaterally to religion; always provided, that if be in its degree moderate, and we temperate in our desires, without transportation and violence, without unhandsome usages of ourselves, or taking from God and from religion any minutes and portions of our affections. When Epicadastes, the epicure, saw a goodly dish of hot meat served up, he sung the verse of Homer,

Τοῦ δ' ἐγὼ ἄντως εἶμι, καὶ ἐν πυρὶ χεῖρας ἵσκει,

and swallowed some of it greedily, till by its hands of fire it curled his stomach, like parchment in the flame, and he was carried from his banquet to his grave.

Non poterat letho nobiliore mori: MART.

It was fit he should die such a death, but that death bids us beware of that folly.

4. Let the pleasure, as it came with meat, so also pass away with it. Philoxenus was a beast; *ᾤθετο ποτὶ τὴν γερανὸν ἀχέαια ἔχειν*, "he wished his throat as long as a crane's," that he might be long in swallowing his pleasant morsels; "Mæret quod magna pars felicitatis exclusa esset corporis angustia;" "he mourned because the pleasure of eating was not spread over all his body," that he might have been an epicure in his hands; and indeed, if we consider it rightly, great eating and drinking is not the greatest pleasure of the taste, but of the touch; and Philoxenus might

* Prov. xxxi. 6.

† Seneca.

feel the unctuous juice slide softly down his throat, but he could not taste it in the middle of the long neck; and we see that they who mean to feast exactly, or delight the palate, do "libare," or "pitissare," take up little proportions and spread them upon the tongue or palate; but full morsels and great draughts are easy and soft to the touch; but so is the feeling of silk, or handling of a melon, or a mole's skin, and as delicious too as eating when it goes beyond the appetites of nature, and the proper pleasures of taste, which cannot be perceived but by a temperate man. And therefore let not the pleasure be intended beyond the taste; that is, beyond those little natural measures in which God intended that pleasure should accompany your tables. Do not run to it beforehand, nor chew the cud when the meal is done; delight not in fancies, and expectations, and remembrances of a pleasant meal; but let it descend "in latinam," together with the meals whose attendant pleasure is.

5. Let pleasure be the less principal, and used as a servant; it may be modest and prudent to strew the dish with sugar, or to dip thy bread in vinegar; but to make thy meal of sauces, and to make the accessory become the principal, and pleasure to rule the table, and all the regions of thy soul, is to make a man less and lower than an oglio, of a cheaper value than a turbot; a servant and a worshipper of sauces, and cooks, and pleasure, and folly.

6. Let pleasure, as it is used in the regions and limits of nature and prudence, so also be changed into religion and thankfulness. "Turtures cum bibunt, non resupinant colla," say naturalists; "Turtles when they drink, lift not up their bills;" and if we swallow our pleasures without returning the honour and the acknowledgment to God that gave them, we may "large bibere, jumentorum modo," "drink draughts as large as an ox," but we shall die like an ox, and change our meats and drinks into eternal rottenness. In all religions it hath been permitted to enlarge our tables in the days of sacrifices and religious festivity.

Qui Veientanum festis potare diebus
Campana solitus trulla, vappamque profestis.

HOR.

For then the body may rejoice in fellowship with the soul, and then a pleasant meal is religious, if it be not inordinate.

But if our festival-days, like the gentile sacrifices, end in drunkenness,* and our joys in religion pass into sensuality and beastly crimes, we change the holyday into a day of death, and ourselves become a sacrifice as in the day of slaughter.

To sum up this particular; there are, as you perceive, many cautions to make our pleasure safe, but any thing can make it inordinate, and then scarce any thing can keep it from becoming dangerous.

Habet omnis hoc voluptas:
Stimulus agit furentes,
Apiumque par volantum,
Ubi grata mella fudit,
Fugit, et nimis tenaci
Ferit icta corda morsu.

BOETIUS, l. 3. Metr. 7.

* And the pleasure of the honey will not pay for the smart of the sting. "Amores enim et deliciae maturè et celeriter deflorescunt, et in omnibus rebus, voluptatibus maximis fasidium finitimum est:" "Nothing is so soon ripe and rotten as pleasure; and upon all possessions and states of things, loathing looks as being not far off; but it sits upon the skirts of pleasure."

Ὁ δὲ τραπίζας
Ἐποριζόμενος μελιχρῶν ἔθιγεν,
Ἡ μέγα κλαύσει πικρὰν μερίδα,
Τῶν ἀντίξων συνεφαλαχόμενων.

"He that greedily puts his hand to a delicious table, shall weep bitterly when he suffers the convulsions and violence by the divided interests of such contrary juices:"

Ὅδε γὰρ χθονίας θέσμος ἀνάγκης
Διχόθεν θάνατος βίον οὐροίγει.

"For this is the law of our nature and fatal necessity; life is always poured forth from two goblets."

And now, and after all this, I pray consider, what a strange madness and prodigious folly possess many men, that they love to swallow death and diseases and dishonour, with an appetite which no reason can restrain. We expect our servants should not dare to touch what we have forbidden to them; we are watchful that our children should not swallow poisons, and filthiness, and unwholesome nourishment; we take care that they should be well-mannered, and civil, and of fair demeanour; and we ourselves desire to be, or at least to be accounted, wise, and would infinitely

* Μεδύσει, μετὰ τὸ θῦναι.

scorn to be called fools; and we are so great lovers of health, that we will buy it at any rate of money or observance; and then for honour, it is that which the children of men pursue with passion, it is one of the noblest rewards of virtue, and the proper ornament of the wise and valiant; and yet all these things are not valued or considered, when a merry meeting, or a looser feast, calls upon the man to act a scene of folly and madness, and healthlessness and dishonour. We do to God what we severely punish in our servants; we correct our children for their meddling with dangers, which themselves prefer before immortality; and though no man think himself fit to be despised, yet he is willing to make himself a beast, a sot, and a ridiculous monkey, with the follies and vapours of wine; and when he is high in drink or fancy, proud as a Grecian orator in the midst of his popular noises, at the same time he shall talk such dirty language, such mean low things, as may well become a changeling and a fool, for whom the stocks are prepared by the laws, and the just scorn of men. Every drunkard clothes his head with a mighty scorn; and makes himself lower at that time than the meanest of his servants; the boys can laugh at him when he is led like a cripple, directed like a blind man, and speaks like an infant imperfect noises, lisping with a full and spongy tongue, and an empty head, and a vain and foolish heart: so cheaply does he part with his honour for drink or loads of meat; for which honour he is ready to die, rather than hear it to be disparaged by another: when himself destroys it, as bubbles perish with the breath of children. Do not the laws of all wise nations mark the drunkard for a fool, with the meanest and most scornful punishment? and is there any thing in the world so foolish as a man that is drunk? But, good God! what an intolerable sorrow hath seized upon great portions of mankind, that this folly and madness should possess the greatest spirits, and the wittiest men, the best company, the most sensible of the word honour, and the most jealous of losing the shadow, and the most careless of the thing! Is it not a horrid thing, that a wise or a crafty, a learned or a noble person, should dishonour himself as a fool, destroy his body as a murderer, lessen his estate as a prodigal, disgrace every good cause that he can pre-

tend to by his relation, and become an appellative of scorn, a scene of laughter or derision, and all for the reward of forgetfulness and madness? for there are in immoderate drinking no other pleasures.

Why do valiant men and brave personages fight and die rather than break the laws of men, or start from their duty to their prince, and will suffer themselves to be cut in pieces rather than deserve the name of a traitor, or perjured? and yet these very men, to avoid the hated name of glutton or drunkard, and to preserve their temperance, shall not deny themselves one luscious morsel, or pour a cup of wine on the ground, when they are invited to drink by the laws of the circle or wilder company.

Methinks it were but reason, that if to give life to uphold a cause be not too much, they should not think it too much to be hungry and suffer thirst for the reputation of that cause; and, therefore, much rather that they would think it but duty to be temperate for its honour, and eat and drink in civil and fair measures, that themselves might not lose the reward of so much suffering, and of so good a relation, nor that which they value most be destroyed by drink.

There are in the world a generation of men that are engaged in a cause which they glory in, and pride themselves in its relation and appellative: but yet for that cause they will do nothing but talk and drink; they are valiant in wine, and witty in healths, and full of stratagem to promote debauchery; but such persons are not considerable in wise accounts; that which I deplore is, that some men prefer a cause before their life, and yet prefer wine before that cause, and by one drunken meeting set it more backward in its hopes and blessings, than it can be set forward by the counsels and arms of a whole year. God hath ways enough to reward a truth without crowning it with success in the hands of such men. In the mean time they dishonour religion, and make truth be evil spoken of, and innocent persons to suffer by their very relation, and the cause of God to be reproached in the sentences of erring and abusing people; and themselves lose their health and their reason, their honour and their peace, the rewards of sober counsels, and the wholesome effects of wisdom.

Areanum neque tu scrutaberis illius unquam;
Commissumque teges, et vino tortus et irā.
HOR.

Wine discovers more than the rack, and he that will be drunk is not a person fit to be trusted: and though it cannot be expected men should be kinder to their friend, or their prince, or their honour, than to God, and to their own souls, and to their own bodies; yet when men are not moved by what is sensible and material, by that which smarts and shames presently, they are beyond the cure of religion, and the hopes of reason; and therefore they must "lie in hell like sheep, death gnawing upon them, and the righteous shall have dominion over them in the morning" of the resurrection.

Seras tutior ibis ad lucernas:
Hæc hora est tua, cum furit Lyæus,
Cum regnant rosæ, cum madent capilli.
MART.

Much safer it is to go to the severities of a watchful and a sober life; for all that time of life is lost, when wine, and rage, and pleasure, and folly, steal away the heart of a man, and make him go singing to his grave.

I end with the saying of a wise man: He is fit to sit at the table of the Lord, and to feast with saints, who moderately uses the creatures which God hath given him: but he that despises even lawful pleasures, οὐ μόνον συμπότης τῶν Θεῶν ἀλλὰ καὶ συνάρχων, "shall not only sit and feast with God, but reign together with him," and partake of his glorious kingdom.

SERMON XVII.

THE MARRIAGE RING; OR, THE MYSTERIOUS-
NESS AND DUTIES OF MARRIAGE.

PART I.

This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.—Ephes. v. 32, 33.

THE first blessing God gave to man was society: and that society was a marriage, and that marriage was confederate by God himself, and hallowed by a blessing: and at the same time, and for very many descending ages, not only by the instinct of

nature, but by a superadded forwardness, (God himself inspiring the desire,) the world was most desirous of children, impatient of barrenness, accounting single life a curse, and a childless person hated by God.* The world was rich and empty, and able to provide for a more numerous posterity than it had.

—Ἐξείς, Νουμήνιε, τέκνα,
Χάλκον ἔχων πτωχὸς δ' οὐδὲ τὰ τέκνα φιλεῖ.
BRONCK.

You that are rich, Numenius, you may multiply your family; poor men are not so fond of children, but when a family could drive their herds, and set their children upon camels, and lead them till they saw a fat soil watered with rivers, and there sit down without paying rent, they thought of nothing but to have great families, that their own relations might swell up to a patriarchate, and their children be enough to possess all the regions that they saw, and their grandchildren become princes, and themselves build cities, and call them by the name of a child, and become the fountain of a nation. This was the consequent of the first blessing, "increase and multiply." The next blessing was, "the promise of the Messias," and that also increased in men and women a wonderful desire of marriage: for as soon as God had chosen the family of Abraham to be the blessed line, from whence the world's Redeemer should descend according to the flesh, every of his daughters hoped to have the honour to be his mother, or his grandmother, or something of his kindred: and to be childless in Israel was a sorrow to the Hebrew women great as the slavery of Egypt, or their dishonour in the land of their captivity.†

But when the Messias was come, and the doctrine was published, and his ministers but few, and his disciples were to suffer persecution, and to be of an unsettled dwelling, and the nation of the Jews, in the bosom and society of which the church especially did dwell, were to be scattered and broken

* Quemlibet hominem cui non est uxor, minime esse hominem; cum etiam in scripturâ dicatur, "Masculum et fœminam creavit eos, et vocavit nomen eorum Adam seu hominem." R. Eliezer dixit in Gen. Bab. Quicunque negligit præceptum de multiplicatione humani generis, habendum esse velut homicidam.

† Christiani et apud Athenas. τὰς τοῦ ἀρχαίου καὶ ὑψηλοῦ δικαιο, refert Julius Pollux l. 3. παρὶ ἀρχαίου. Idem etiam Lacedæmonie et Romæ. Vide Festum verb. Uxorium atque ibi Jos. Scal.

all in pieces with fierce calamities, and the world was apt to calumniate and suspect and dishonour Christians upon pretences and unreasonable jealousies, and that to all these purposes the state of marriage brought many inconveniences; it pleased God in this new creation to inspire into the hearts of his servants a disposition and strong desires to live a single life, lest the state of marriage should in that conjunction of things become an accidental impediment to the dissemination of the gospel, which called men from a confinement in their domestic charges, to travel, and flight, and poverty, and difficulty, and martyrdom: upon this necessity the apostles and apostolical men published doctrines, declaring the advantages of single life, not by any commandment of the Lord, but by the spirit of prudence, διὰ τὴν ἐνεστῶσαν ἀνάγκην, “for the present and then incumbent necessities,” and in order to the advantages which did accrue to the public ministries and private piety.* “There are some (said our blessed Lord) who make themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven,” that is, for the advantages and the ministry of the Gospel, “non ad vitæ bonæ meritum” (as St. Austin in the like case); not that it is a better service of God in itself,† but that it is useful to the first circumstances of the gospel and the infancy of the kingdom, because the unmarried person does μεριμᾶν τὰ τοῦ κυρίου, “is apt to spiritual and ecclesiastical employments;” first ἅγιος, and then ἀγιαζόμενος, “holy in his own person, and then sanctified to public ministries;” and it was also of ease to the Christians themselves, because, as then it was, when they were to flee, and to flee for aught they knew in winter, and they were persecuted to the four winds of heaven; and the nurses and the women with child were to suffer a heavier load of sorrow because of the imminent persecutions; and above all, because of the great fatality of ruin upon the whole nation of the Jews, well it might be said by St. Paul, θλίψαν τῆσιν σαρκὶ ἐξουσιαν οἱ τοιοῦτοι, “such shall have

trouble in the flesh,” that is, they that are married shall, and so at that time they had: and therefore it was an act of charity to the Christians to give that counsel, ἐγὼ δὲ ὑμῶν φείδομαι, “I do this to spare you,” and θέλω ὑμᾶς ἀμερίμους εἶναι: for when the case was altered, and that storm was over, and the first necessities of the gospel served, and “the sound was gone out into all nations;” in very many persons it was wholly changed, and not the married but the unmarried had θλίψαν ἐν σαρκί, “trouble in the flesh;” and the state of marriage returned to its first blessing, “et non erat bonum homini esse solitarium,” “and it was not good for man to be alone.”

But in this first interval, the public necessity and the private zeal mingling together did sometimes overact their love of single life, even to the disparagement of marriage, and to the scandal of religion; which was increased by the occasion of some pious persons renouncing their contract of marriage, not consummate, with believers. For when Flavia Domitilla, being converted by Nereus and Achilleus the eunuchs, refused to marry Aurelianus, to whom she was contracted; if there were not some little envy and too sharp hostility in the eunuchs to a marriage state, yet Aurelianus thought himself an injured person, and caused St. Clemens, who veiled her, and his spouse both, to die in the quarrel. St. Thecla being converted by St. Paul, grew so in love with virginity, that she leaped back from the marriage of Tamyris, where she was lately engaged. St. Iphigenia denied to marry king Hyrtacus, and it is said to be done by the advice of St. Matthew. And Susanna, the niece of Dioclesian, refused the love of Maximianus the emperor; and these all had been betrothed; and so did St. Agnes, and St. Felicula, and divers other then and afterward: insomuch, that it was reported among the gentiles, that the Christians did not only hate all that were not of their persuasion, but were enemies of the chaste laws of marriage; and indeed some that were called Christians were so; “forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats.” Upon this occasion it grew necessary for the apostle to state the question right, and to do honour to the holy rite of marriage, and to snatch the mystery from the hands of zeal and folly, and to place it in Christ’s right hand, that all its beauties might appear, and a present con-

* Etiam Judæi, qui præceptum esse viris παρδοποιεῖν aiunt, uno ore concedunt, tamen dispensatum esse cum iis qui assiduo legis studio vacare volunt, alias etiam immunius ab acriori carnis stimulo.—Maimon. 15. Halach. Isoth.

† Οὐ ψέγω δὲ τοῦ, λοιποῦ μακαρίους, ὅτι γάρτοι προσημίησαν ἢν ἐπιθήσθην ἄρεσιν εὐλόγοις γὰρ ἄξιος θεοῦ εὐθελῆς πρὸς τοὺς ἔνεσαν αὐτῶς εὐθελῆς αἱ ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ ὡς Ἀβραάμ, καὶ Ἰσαὰκ, καὶ Ἰακώβ, ὡς Ἰωσήφ, καὶ Ἰεσσαὶον καὶ τῶν ἄλλων προφητῶν, ὡς Πέτρον καὶ Παύλον, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀποστόλων, &c.—Epist. ad Philadelph.

venience might not bring in a false doctrine, and a perpetual sin, and an intolerable mischief. The apostle, therefore, who himself* had been a married man, but was now a widower, does explicate the mysteriousness of it, and describes its honours, and adorns it with rules and provisions of religion, that, as it begins with honour, so it may proceed with piety, and end with glory.

For although single life hath in it privacy and simplicity of affairs, such solitariness and sorrow, such leisure and inactive circumstances of living, that there are more spaces for religion if men would use them to these purposes; and because it may have in it much religion and prayers, and must have in it a perfect mortification of our strongest appetites, it is therefore a state of great excellency; yet concerning the state of marriage, we are taught from Scripture and the sayings of wise men, great things and honourable. "Marriage is honourable in all men;" so is not single life; for in some it is a snare and a *πύρωσις*, "a trouble in the flesh," a prison of unruly desires, which is attempted daily to be broken. Celibate or single life is never commanded; but in some cases marriage is; and he that burns, sins often if he marries not; he that cannot contain must marry, and he that can contain is not tied to a single life, but may marry and not sin. Marriage was ordained by God, instituted in Paradise, was the relief of a natural necessity, and the first blessing from the Lord; he gave to man not a friend, but a wife, that is, a friend and a wife too (for a good woman is in her soul the same that a man is, and she is a woman only in her body; that she may have the excellency of the one, and the usefulness of the other, and become amiable in both): it is the seminary of the church, and daily brings forth sons and daughters unto God: it was ministered to by angels, and Raphael waited upon a young man that he might have a blessed marriage, and that that marriage might repair two sad families, and bless all their relatives. Our blessed Lord, though he was born of a maiden, yet she was veiled under the cover of marriage, and she was married to a widower; for Joseph the supposed father of our Lord had

children by a former wife. The first miracle that ever Jesus did, was to do honour to a wedding; marriage was in the world before sin, and is in all ages of the world the greatest and most effectual antidote against sin, in which all the world had perished, if God had not made a remedy: and although sin hath soured marriage, and stuck the man's head with cares, and the woman's bed with sorrows in the production of children; yet these are but throes of life and glory, and "she shall be saved in child-bearing, if she be found in faith and righteousness." Marriage is a school and exercise of virtue; and though marriage hath cares, yet the single life hath desires, which are more troublesome and more dangerous, and often end in sin, while the cares are but instances of duty and exercises of piety: and therefore, if single life hath more privacy of devotion, yet marriage hath more necessities and more variety of it, and is an exercise of more graces. In two virtues, celibate or single life may have the advantage of degrees ordinarily and commonly,—that is, in chastity and devotion: but as in some persons this may fail, and it does in very many, and a married man may spend as much time in devotion as any virgins or widows do; yet as in marriage even those virtues of chastity and devotion are exercised; so in other instances, this state hath proper exercises and trials for those graces, for which single life can never be crowned; here is the proper scene of piety and patience, of the duty of parents and the charity of relatives;* here kindness is spread abroad, and love is united and made firm as a centre: marriage is the nursery of heaven; the virgin sends prayers to God, but she carries but one soul to him; but the state of marriage fills up the numbers of the elect, and hath in it the labour of love, and the delicacies of friendship, the blessing of society, and the union of hands and hearts; it hath in it less of beauty, but more of safety, than the single life; it hath more care, but less danger; it is more merry, and more sad; is fuller of sorrows, and fuller of joys; it lies under more burdens, but is supported by all the strengths of love and charity,

* Ως Πέτρον και Παύλου και των Ἀποστόλων των γάμοις προσηκολούθησαν οὐκ ἐπὶ προθυμίας τῆς περὶ τὸ πραγμα, ἀλλ' ἐν ἰσότητι, ἵνα τὸν τοῦ γένους ἴσῳν ἐκείνους. Ignatius epistol. ad Philadelph. Et Clemens idem ait apud Eusebium Hist. Eccles. lib. 3. sed tamen eam non circumduxit sicut Petrus: probat autem ex Philip. 4.

† Καὶ τῆς ἀετῆρου φύσεως ἀντίχρῳσαι τῷ παιδάς παιδῶν καταλείποντι αἱ τῷ θεῷ ὑπημάτας ἀπὸ αὐτοῦ παραδίδουσι.—PLATO.
Adde quod Eunuchus nulla pietate movetur, Nec generi natisve cavet: clementia cunctis In similes, animosque ligant consortia damni.
CLAUDIAN.

and those burdens are delightful. Marriage is the mother of the world,* and preserves kingdoms, and fills cities, and churches, and heaven itself. Celibate, like the fly in the heart of an apple, dwells in a perpetual sweetness, but sits alone, and is confined and dies in singularity; but marriage, like the useful bee, builds a house and gathers sweetness from every flower, and labours and unites into societies and republics, and sends out colonies, and feeds the world with delicacies, and obeys their king, and keeps order, and exercises many virtues, and promotes the interest of mankind, and is that state of good things to which God hath designed the present constitution of the world.

Τοῦνεκεν ἐπιθέστας ἄλοχον λαβέ, καὶ τῖνα κότμω
Δὸς βροτῶν ἀντὶ σέθεν. φείγῃ δὲ μαχλοσύνην.

BRUN.

Single life makes men in one instance to be like angels, but marriage in very many things makes the chaste pair to be like to Christ. "This is a great mystery," but it is the symbolical and sacramental representation of the greatest mysteries of our religion. Christ descended from his father's bosom, and contracted his divinity with flesh and blood, and married our nature, and we became a church, the spouse of the Bridegroom, which he cleansed with his blood, and gave her his Holy Spirit for a dowry, and heaven for a jointure; begetting children unto God by the gospel. This spouse he hath joined to himself by an excellent charity, he feeds her at his own table, and lodges her nigh his own heart, provides for all her necessities, relieves her sorrows, determines her doubts, guides her wanderings, he is become her head, and she is a signet upon his right hand; he first indeed was betrothed to the synagogue, and had many children by her, but she forsook her love, and then he married the church of the gentiles, and by her as by a second venter had a more numerous issue, "atque una domus est omnium filiorum ejus," "all the children dwell in the same house," and are heirs of the same promises, entitled to the same inheritance. Here is the eternal conjunction, the indissoluble knot, the exceeding love of Christ, the obedience of the spouse, the

communicating of goods, the uniting of interests, the fruit of marriage, a celestial generation, a new creature: "Sacramentum hoc magnum est;" "This is the sacramental mystery," represented by the holy rite of marriage; so that marriage is divine in its institution, sacred in its union, holy in the mystery, sacramental in its signification, honourable in its appellative, religious in its employments: it is advantage to the societies of men, and it is "holiness to the Lord." "Dico autem in Christo et ecclesiâ," "It must be in Christ and the church."

If this be not observed, marriage loses its mysteriousness: but because it is to effect much of that which it signifies, it concerns all that enter into those golden fetters to see that Christ and his church be in at every of its periods, and that it be entirely conducted and overruled by religion; for so the apostle passes from the sacramental rite to the real duty; "Nevertheless," that is, although the former discourse were wholly to explicate the conjunction of Christ and his church by this similitude, yet it hath in it this real duty, "that the man love his wife, and the wife reverence her husband;" and this is the use we shall now make of it, the particulars of which precept I shall thus dispose:

1. I shall propound the duty as it generally relates to man and wife in conjunction.
2. The duty and power of the man. 3. The rights and privileges and the duty of the wife.

1. "In Christo et ecclesiâ;" that begins all, and there is great need it should be so: for they that enter into the state of marriage, cast a die of the greatest contingency, and yet of the greatest interest in the world, next to the last throw for eternity.

Νῦν γὰρ δὴ πάντεσσαν ἐπὶ ξυροῦ ἵσταται ἀκμῆς,
Ἡ μάλ᾽ ἀνηρὸς ἀλεθρὸς Ἀχαιοῖς, ἧς βίωσαν.

ILIAD.

Life or death, felicity or a lasting sorrow, are in the power of marriage. A woman indeed ventures most, for she hath no sanctuary to retire to from an evil husband; she must dwell upon her sorrow, and hatch the eggs which her own folly or infelicity hath produced; and she is more under it, because her tormentor hath a warrant of prerogative, and the woman may complain to God as subjects do of tyrant princes, but otherwise she hath no appeal in the cause of unkindness. And though the man can run from many hours of his sadness, yet he must return to it again, and when he sits

* Καὶ τὴν πᾶσι θεοῖς κενώλια παρθεὶν δὲ
Τὴν ἀνὴρ ὄδωσεν ἢ πᾶσι φυλαττομένην.—BRUNCK.
Siquis patriam majorem parentem extinguit, in eo culpa est, quod facit pro sua parte qui se eunuchat aut aliqua liberos producit, i. e. differt eorum procreationem. Varro in "lege Mænie."

among his neighbours, he remembers the objection that lies in his bosom, and he sighs deeply.

Ah tunc te miserum, malique fati,
Quem, attractis pedibus, patente portâ,
Pereunt mugilesque raphanisque. CATULL.

The boys, and the pedlers, and the fruiters, shall tell of this man, when he is carried to his grave, that he lived and died a poor wretched person. The stags in the Greek epigram, whose knees were clogged with frozen snow upon the mountains, came down to the brooks of the valleys, *χλιῆναι νοσερός νάμασιν ἀπὸ γόνυ*, "hoping to thaw their joints with the waters of the stream;"* but there the frost overtook them and bound them fast in ice, till the young herdsmen took them in their stranger snare. It is the unhappy chance of many men, finding many inconveniencies upon the mountains of single life, they descend into the valleys of † marriage to refresh their troubles, and there they enter into fetters, and are bound to sorrow by the cords of a man's or woman's peevishness: and the worst of the evil is, they are to thank their own follies; for they fell into the snare by entering an improper way: Christ and the church were no ingredients in their choice: but as the Indian women enter into folly for the price of an elephant, and think their crime warrantable; so do men and women change their liberty for a rich fortune, (like Eriphyle the Argive, "Ἡ χρυσόν φίλου ἀνδρός εἰδέξατο τιμήντα," "she preferred gold before a good man,") and show themselves to be less than money, by overvaluing that to all the content and wide felicity of their lives; and when they have counted the money and their sorrows together, how willingly would they ‡ buy, with the loss of all that money, modesty, or sweet nature, to their relative! the odd thousand pounds would gladly be allowed in good nature and fair manners. As very a fool is he that chooses for beauty § principally; "cui sunt eruditæ oculi, et stultæ mens," (as one said,) "whose eyes are witty, and their souls sensual;" it is an ill

band of affections to tie two hearts together by a little thread of red and white.

Οὐδέμιαν (φῆσιν ἢ τραγωδία)
Ἄνησε κάλλος εἰς πόσιν ξυναορον.

And they can love no longer but until the next ague comes; and they are fond of each other but at the chance of fancy, or the small-pox, or childbearing, or care, or time, or any thing that can destroy a pretty flower.* But it is the basest of all, when lust is the paranymp, and solicits the suit, and makes the contract, and joins the hands; for this is commonly the effect of the former, according to the Greek proverb:

Ἄλλ' ἤτοι πρῶτιστα λέων γένετ' ἤγυένεος,
Αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα δράκων, ἢ λέαρδαλις, ἢ δὲ μέγας σὺς.
ODYS.

At first for his fair cheeks and comely beard, "the beast is taken for a lion, but at last he is turned to a dragon, or a leopard, or a swine." That which is at first beauty on the face, may prove lust in the manners.

Αὐτοῖς δὲ τοῖς θεοῖσι τὴν κέρχρον πόνη
Καὶ μῆρόν, ὡσπερ παιδιδρασταῖς, ζῆυτε.

So Eubulus wittily reprehended such impure contracts: they offer in their marital sacrifices nothing but the thigh, and that which the priests cut from the goats, when they were laid to bleed upon the altars. "Ἐὰν εἰς κάλλος σώματος βλέψῃ τις, (ὁ λόγος φησί,) καὶ αὐτῷ ἢ σάρξ εἶναι κατ' ἐπιθυμίαν δόξῃ καλῆ, σαρκικῶς ἰδὼν, καὶ ἀμαρτηκῶς δὲ οὐ τεθαύμακε, κρινεται," said St. Clement: "He or she that looks too curiously upon the beauty of the body, looks too low, and hath flesh and corruption in his heart, and is judged sensual and earthly in his affections and desires." Begin therefore with God; Christ is the president of marriage, and the Holy Ghost is the fountain of purities and chaste loves, and he joins the hearts; and therefore let our first suit be in the court of heaven, and with designs of piety, or safety, or charity; let no impure spirit defile the virgin purities and "castifications of the soul" (as St. Peter's phrase is); let all such contracts begin with religious affections.

Conjugium petimus, partumque uxoris; at illis Notum, que pueri, qualisque futura sit uxor. JUV.

"We sometimes beg of God for a wife or a

* Tres rugæ subeant, et se cutis arida laxet,
Fiant obscuri dentes, oculique minores,
"Collige sarcinulas (dicit libertus) et exi."
JUVEN. Sat. 6.

* Brunck, An. 2. 135.

† Ἀχαιὸν ἢ ἡ ἄμασος, Νευμίνε, πάντα δοκεῖ σοῖ
Ἐν τῷ ζῶντι εἶναι τῆσθε τὸν ἀγαθόν.

‡ Ἐἴθ' ὅταν εἰσὶν ἐν γαμετῇ, πάλιν αὐτοῦ δοκεῖ σοι

Ἐν τῷ ζῶντι εἶναι πάντα κακῶν τὰ κακά.

§ Ἀλλὰ χρεὼν τίθειαι, &c.

‡ Non ego illam mihi dotem duco esse, quæ dos dicitur;

Sed pudicitiam, et pudorem, et sedatum, cupidinem,

Deum metum, parentum amorem, et cognatum concordiam.

PLAUT. in Amphit. 2. 2. 209.

§ Facies, non uxor amatur.

child; and he alone knows what the wife shall prove, and by what dispositions and manners, and into what fortune that child shall enter:" but we shall not need to fear concerning the event of it, if religion, and fair intentions, and prudence, manage and conduct it all the way. The preservation of a family, the production of children, the avoiding fornications, the refreshment of our sorrows by the comforts of society; all these are fair ends of marriage, and hallow the entrance; but in these there is a special order; society was the first designed, "It is not good for man to be alone;"—children was the next, "Increase and multiply;"—but the avoiding fornication came in by the superfection of the evil accidents of the world. The first makes marriage delectable, and the second necessary to the public, and the third necessary to the particular; this is for safety, for life, and heaven itself;

Nam simulac venas inflavit tetra libido,
Huc juvenes æquum est descendere;—HOR.

The other have in them joy and a portion of immortality: the first makes the man's heart glad; the second is the friend of kingdoms, and cities, and families; and the third is the enemy to hell, and an antidote of the chiefest inlet to damnation; but of all these the noblest end is the multiplying children. "Mundus cum patet, Deorum tristitia atque inferum quasi patet janua; propterea uxorem, liberorum quærendorum causâ, ducere religiosum est," said Varro; "it is religion to marry for children;"* and Quintilian put it into the definition of a wife, "est enim uxor quam jungit, quam diducit utilitas; cujus hæc reverentia est, quod videtur inventa in causa liberorum;" and therefore St. Ignatius, when he had spoken of Elias, and Titus, and Clement, with an honourable mention of their virgin-state, lest he might seem to have lessened the married apostles, at whose feet in Christ's kingdom he thought himself unworthy to sit, he gives this testimony,—they were τοῖς γάμοις προσομιήσαντες οὐχ ὑπὸ προθυμίας τῆς περὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα, ἀλλ' ἐπ' ἰσότητος ἑαυτῶν τοῦ γένους ἔρχον ἐκείνους, "that they might not be disparaged in their great names of holiness and severity, they were secured by not marrying to satisfy their lower appetites, but out of desire of children."† Other considerations, if they be incident and by way of appendage, are also considerable in the accounts of prudence: but when they

become principles, they defile the mystery, and make the blessing doubtful: "Amabit sapiens, cupient cæteri," said Afranius; "Love is a fair inducement, but desire and appetite are rude, and the characteristics of a sensual person:"—"Amare justi et boni est, cupere impotentis;" "To love belongs to a just and a good man: but to lust, or furiously or passionately to desire, is the sign of impotency and an unruly mind."

2. Man and wife are equally concerned to avoid all offences of each other in the beginning of their conversation: every little thing can blast an infant blossom; and the breath of the south can shake the little rings of the vine, when first they begin to curl like the locks of a new-weaned boy; but when by age and consolidation they stiffen into the hardness of a stem, and have, by the warm embraces of the sun and the kisses of heaven, brought forth their clusters, they can endure the storms of the north, and the loud noises of a tempest, and yet never be broken: so are the early unions of an unfixed marriage; watchful and observant, jealous and busy, inquisitive and careful, and apt to take alarm at every unkind word. For infirmities do not manifest themselves in the first scenes, but in the succession of a long society; and it is not chance or weakness when it appears at first, but it is want of love or prudence, or it will be so expounded; and that which appears ill at first, usually affrights the inexperienced man or woman, who makes unequal conjectures, and fancies mighty sorrows by the proportions of the new and early unkindness. It is a very great passion, or a huge folly, or a certain want of love, that cannot preserve the colours and beauties of kindness, so long as public honesty requires a man to wear their sorrows for the death of a friend. Plutarch compares a new marriage to a vessel before the hoops are on; μετὰ ἀρχῆς μὲν ὑπὸ τῆς τυχεύουσης ῥαδίως διασπᾶται προφάσειως, "every thing dissolves their tender compaignations; χρόνῳ τῶν ἀμῶν συμπηξὺν λαβόντων, μόγις ὑπὸ πυρός καὶ σιδήρου διαλύεται, "but when the joints are stiffened and are tied by a firm compliance and proportioned binding, scarcely can it be dissolved without fire or the violence of iron." After the hearts of the man and the wife are endeared and hardened by a mutual confidence, and experience longer than artifice and pretence can last, there are a great many remembrances, and some things present, that dash

* Macrobius ex Varrone.
† Epist. ad Philadelph.

all little unkindnesses in pieces. The little boy in the Greek epigram,* that was creeping down a precipice, was invited to his safety by the sight of his mother's pap, when nothing else could entice him to return: and the bond of common children, and the sight of her that nurses what is most dear to him, and the endearments of each other in the course of a long society, and the same relation, is an excellent security to redintegrate and to call that love back, which folly and trifling accidents would disturb.

— Tormentum ingens nubentibus hæret,
Quæ nequeunt parere, et partu retinere maritos.
JUV.

When it is come thus far, it is hard untwisting the knot; but be careful in its first coalition, that there be no rudeness done; for, if there be, it will for ever after be apt to start and to be diseased.

3. Let man and wife be careful to stifle little things,† that, as fast as they spring, they be cut down and trod upon; for if they be suffered to grow by numbers, they make the spirit peevish, and the society troublesome, and the affections loose and easy by an habitual aversion. Some men are more vexed with a fly than with a wound; and when the gnats disturb our sleep, and the reason is disquieted but not perfectly awakened, it is often seen that he is fuller of trouble than if, in the daylight of his reason, he were to contest with a potent enemy. In the frequent little accidents of a family, a man's reason cannot always be awake; and when his discourses are imperfect, and a trifling trouble makes him yet more restless, he is soon betrayed to the violence of passion. It is certain that the man or woman are in a state of weakness and folly then, when they can be troubled with a trifling accident; and therefore, it is not good to tempt their affections, when they are in that state of danger. In this case the caution is, to subtract fuel from the sudden flame; for stubble, though it be quickly kindled, yet it is as soon extinguished, if it be not blown by a pertinacious breath, or fed with new materials. Add no new provocations to the accident, and do not inflame this, and peace will soon return, and the discontent will pass away soon, as the sparks from the collision of a flint: ever

remembering, that discontents proceeding from daily little things, do breed a secret undiscernible disease, which is more dangerous than a fever proceeding from a discerned notorious surfeit.

4. Let them be sure to abstain from all those things, which by experience and observation they find to be contrary to each other. They that govern elephants never appear before them in white; and the masters of bulls keep from them all garments of blood and scarlet, as knowing that they will be impatient of civil usages and discipline, when their natures are provoked by their proper antipathies. The ancients in their marital hieroglyphics used to depict Mercury standing by Venus, to signify, that by fair language and sweet entreaties, the minds of each other should be united; and hard by them, "Suadam et Gratias describunt," they would have all deliciousness of manners, compliance, and mutual observance to abide.*

5. Let the husband and wife infinitely avoid a curious distinction of mine and thine; for this hath caused all the laws, and all the suits, and all the wars, in the world; let them, who have but one person, have also but one interest. The husband and wife are heirs to each other (as Dionysius Halicarnasseus relates from Romulus) if they die without children; but if there be children, the wife is τοῖς παισὶν ἰσόμοιρος, "a partner in the inheritance." But during their life, the use and employment is common to both their necessities, and in this there is no other difference of right, but that the man hath the dispensation of all, and may keep it from his wife, just as the governor of a town may keep it from the right owner; he hath the power, but no right to do so. And when either of them begins to inappropriate, it is like a tumour in the flesh, it draws more than its share; but what it feeds on, turns to a bile; and therefore, the Romans forbade any donations to be made between man and wife, because neither of them could transfer a new right of those things, which already they had in common; but this is to be understood only concerning the uses of necessity and personal conveniences; for so all may be the woman's, and all may be the man's, in several regards. Corvinus dwells in a farm and receives all its profits,

* Μαζόν τοῦ λοιμοῦ λίτορα καὶ θανάτου.—BRUNCK.
† Quædam parva quidem, sed non toleranda maritis.—JUV.

* — Hujus enim rari summique voluptas
Nulla boni, quoties animo corrupta superbo
Plus aloes quam mellis habet— JUVEN. Sat. 6.

and reaps and sows as he please, and eats of the corn and drinks of the wine—it is his own; but all that also is his lord's, and for it Corvinius pays acknowledgment; and his patron hath such powers and uses of it as are proper to the lords; and yet for all this, it may be the king's too, to all the purposes that he can need, and is all to be accounted in the census and for certain services and times of danger: so are the riches of a family; they are a woman's as well as a man's; they are hers for need, and hers for ornament, and hers for modest delight, and for the uses of religion and prudent charity; but the disposing them into portions of inheritance, the assignation of charges and governments, stipends and rewards, annuities and greater donatives, are the reserves of the superior right, and not to be invaded by the under-possessors. But in those things, where they ought to be common, if the spleen of the belly swells and draws into its capacity much of that which should be spent upon those parts, which have an equal right to be maintained,—it is a dropsy or a consumption of the whole, something that is evil because it is unnatural and monstrous. Macarius, in his thirty-second Homily, speaks fully in this particular; a woman betrothed to a man bears all her portion, and with a mighty love pours it into the hands of her husband, and says, *ἐμὸν οὐδὲν ἔχω*, “I have nothing of my own;” my goods, my portion, my body, and my mind, are yours. *Νόμος γὰρ πάντα γίνεται τοῦ γεγαμηκότος, τὸν πλοῦτον, τὴν δόξαν, τοὺς ἐπαίνοισι*, “All that a woman hath, is reckoned to the right of her husband; not her wealth and her person only, but her reputation and her praise;” so Lucian.* But as the earth, the mother of all creatures here below, sends up all its vapours and proper emissions at the command of the sun, and yet requires them again to refresh her own needs, and they are deposited between them both in the bosom of a cloud, as a common receptacle, that they may cool his flames, and yet descend to make her fruitful; so are the proprieties of a wife to be disposed of by her lord; and yet all are for her provisions, it being a part of his need to refresh and supply hers, and it serves the interest of both while it serves the necessities of either.

These are the duties of them both, which have common regards and equal necessities

and obligations; and, indeed, there is scarce any matter of duty, but it concerns them both alike, and is only distinguished by names, and hath its variety by circumstances and little accidents: and what in one is called “love,” in the other is called “reverence;” and what in the wife is “obedience,” the same in the man is “duty.” He provides, and she dispenses; he gives commandments, and she rules by them; he rules by authority, and she rules him by love; she ought by all means to please him, and he must by no means displease her. For as the heart is set in the midst of the body, and though it strikes to one side by the prerogative of nature, yet those throbs and constant motions are felt on the other side also, and the influence is equal to both: so it is in conjugal duties; some motions are to the one side more than to the other, but the interest is on both, and the duty is equal in the several instances. If it be otherwise, the man enjoys a wife as Periander did his dead Melissa, by an unnatural union, neither pleasing nor wholly useless to all the purposes of society, and dead to content.

SERMON XVIII.

PART II.

THE next inquiry is more particular, and considers the power and duty of the man; “Let every one of you so love his wife even as himself;” she is as himself, the man hath power over her as over himself, and must love her equally. A husband's power over his wife is paternal and friendly, not magisterial and despotic. The wife is in “perpetua tutela,” under conduct and counsel; for the power a man hath, is founded in the understanding, not in the will or force; it is not a power of coercion, but a power of advice, and that government that wise men have over those, who are fit to be conducted by them: “Et vos in manu et in tutela non in servitio debetis habere eas; et malle patres vos, et viros, quam dominos deci,” said Valerius in Livy; “husbands should rather be fathers than lords.” Homer adds more soft appellatives to the character of a husband's duty; *παιτὴρ μὲν γὰρ ἐστὶ ἀντὶ καὶ πότνια μητὴρ, ἡδὲ κασιγνήτος*, “Thou art to be a father and a mother to her, and a brother:” and great reason, unless the state of marriage should be no better than the condition of an orphan. For

* Ρητόρων διδασκαλος.

she that is bound to leave father, and mother, and brother for thee, either is miserable like a poor fatherless child, or else ought to find all these, and more, in thee. Medea in Euripides had cause to complain when she found it otherwise.

Πάντων δ' ὅσ' ἔστ' ἔμφυχα, καὶ γνώμην ἔχει,
Γυναίξίς ἐμὴν ἀσπλιώτατον φύτον.
Ἄς πρῶτα μὲν διὰ χρημάτων ὑπερβολῇ
Ποῦν πρᾶσθαι, δεσπότην τε σώματος
Λαβεῖν.

MED.

Which St. Ambrose* well translates: "It is sad, when virgins are with their own money sold to slavery; and that services are in better state than marriages; for they receive wages, but these buy their fetters, and pay dear for their loss of liberty;" and therefore the Romans expressed the man's power over his wife but by a gentle word: "Nec vero mulieribus præfectus reponatur, qui apud Græcos creari solet, sed sit censor qui viros doceat moderari uxoris;" said Cicero; "Let there be no governor of the woman appointed, but a censor of manners, one to teach the men to moderate their wives," that is, fairly to induce them to the measures of their own proportions. It was rarely observed of Philo, Εὐ τὸ μὴ φάναι, ἢ γυνὴ ἦν ἔδωκας ἐμοί, ἀλλὰ, μετ' ἐμοῦ οὐ γὰρ ἐμοί ὡς πτῆμα τὴν αἰσθητὴν ἔδωκας, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὴν ἀήχως ἀνετόν καὶ ἐλευθέρων. "When Adam made that fond excuse for his folly in eating the forbidden fruit, he said, 'The woman thou gavest to be with me, she gave me.' He says not, 'The woman which thou gavest to me,' no such thing; she is none of his goods, none of his possessions, not to be reckoned amongst his servants; God did not give her to him so; but 'The woman thou gavest to be with me,' that is, to be my partner, the companion of my joys and sorrows, thou gavest her for use, not for dominion." The dominion of a man over his wife is no other than as the soul rules the body; for which it takes a mighty care, and uses it with a delicate tenderness, and cares for it in all contingencies, and watches to keep it from all evils, and studies to make for it fair provisions, and very often is led by its inclinations and desires, and does never contradict its appetites, but when they are evil, and then also not without some trouble and sorrow; and its government comes only to this, it furnishes the body with light and understanding, and the body furnishes the soul with hands and feet; the

* Exhor. ad virg.

soul governs, because the body cannot else be happy, but the government is no other than provision; as a nurse governs a child, when she causes him to eat, and to be warm, and dry, and quiet: and yet even the very government itself is divided; for man and wife in the family, are as the sun and moon in the firmament of heaven; he rules by day, and she by night, that is, in the lesser and more proper circles of her affairs, in the conduct of domestic provisions and necessary offices, and shines only by his light, and rules by his authority; and as the moon in opposition to the sun shines brightest, that is, then, when she is in her own circles and separate regions; so is the authority of the wife then most conspicuous when she is separate and in her proper sphere; in "gynæceo," in the nursery and offices of domestic employment: but when she is in conjunction with the sun her brother, that is, in that place and employment in which his care and proper offices are employed, her light is not seen, her authority hath no proper business; but else there is no difference: for they were barbarous people, among whom wives were instead of servants, said Spartianus in Caracalla; and it is a sign of impotency and weakness, to force the camels to kneel for their load, because thou hast not spirit and strength enough to climb; to make the affections and evenness of a wife bend by the flexures of a servant, is a sign the man is not wise enough to govern when another stands by. So many differences as can be in the appellatives of "dominus" and "domina," governor and governess, lord and lady, master and mistress, the same difference there is in the authority of man and woman, and no more; "Si tu Caius, ego Caia," was publicly proclaimed upon the threshold of the young man's house when the bride entered into his hands and power; and the title of "domina" in the sense of the civil law was among the Romans given to wives.

Hi Dominam Ditis thalamo deducere adorti,

said Virgil:* where, though Servius says it was spoken after the manner of the Greeks, who called the wife Δέσποιναν, "lady," or "mistress," yet it was so amongst both the nations.

"Ac domus Dominam voca," says Catullus;†
"Hærebit Dominæ vir comes ipse suæ," so Martial;

and therefore, although there is just measure

* Æneid. 6.

† Epithal. Julæ.

of subjection and obedience due from the wife to the husband (as I shall after explain,) yet nothing of this expressed is in the man's character, or in his duty; he is not commanded to rule, nor instructed how, nor bidden to exact obedience, or to defend his privilege; all his duty is signified by love, "by nourishing and cherishing,"* by being joined with her in all the unions of charity, by "not being bitter to her,"† by "dwelling with her according to knowledge, giving honour to her:"‡ so that it seems to be with husbands, as it is with bishops and priests, to whom much honour is due, but yet so that if they stand upon it, and challenge it, they become less honourable: and as amongst men and women humility is the way to be preferred; so it is in husbands, they shall prevail by cession, by sweetness and counsel, and charity and compliance. So that we cannot discourse of the man's right, without describing the measures of his duty; that therefore follows next.

"Let him love his wife even as himself:"—that is his duty, and the measure of it too; which is so plain, that if he understands how he treats himself, there needs nothing be added concerning his demeanour towards her, save only that we add the particulars, in which Holy Scripture instances this general commandment.

Μὴ πικραίνετε. That is the first. "Be not bitter against her:"‡ and this is the least index and signification of love; a civil man is never bitter against a friend or a stranger, much less to him that enters under his roof, and is secured by the laws of hospitality. But a wife does all that and more; she quits all her interest for his love, she gives him all that she can give, she is as much the same person as another can be the same, who is conjoined by love, and mystery, and religion, and all that is sacred and profane.

Non equidem hoc dubites, amorum fœdere certo Consentire dies, et ab uno sidere duci.—PERS.

They have the same fortune, the same family, the same children, the same religion, the same interest, "the same flesh," "erunt duo in carnem unam;" and therefore this the apostle urges for his *μὴ πικραίνετε*, "no man hateth his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it;" and he certainly is strangely sacrilegious and a violator of the rights of hospitality and sanctuary, who uses her rudely, who is fled for protection, not only to his house, but also to his heart and

bosom. A wise man will not wrangle with any one, much less with his dearest relative; and if it is accounted indecent to embrace in public, it is extremely shameful to brawl in public: for the other is in itself lawful; but this never, though it were assisted with the best circumstances of which it is capable. Marcus Aurelius said, that "a wise man ought often to admonish his wife, to reprove her seldom, but never to lay his hands upon her:"§ "neque verberibus neque maledictis exasperandam uxorem," said the doctors of the Jews; and Homer brings in Jupiter sometimes speaking sharply to Juno, (according to the Greek liberty and empire,) but made a pause at striking her,

*Οὐ μὲν ὀδ' εἰ αὐτὲ κακοῖραφίης ἀλεγειῆς
Πρώτη ἐπαύρηται, καὶ σε πληγῶν ἰμάσσω.*

ILIAD. O.

And the ancients used to sacrifice to Juno *γαμήλιος*, or "the president of marriage," without gall; and St. Basil observes and urges it, by way of upbraiding quarrelling husbands; "Etiam vipera virus ob nuptiarum venerationem evomit," "The viper casts all his poison when he marries his female; "Tu duritiam animi, tu feritatem, tu crudelitatem ob unionis reverentiam non deponis?"‡ He is worse than a viper, who for the reverence of this sacred union will not abstain from such a poisonous bitterness; and how shall he embrace that person whom he hath smitten reproachfully; for those kindnesses are indecent which the fighting-man pays unto his wife. St. Chrysostom preaching earnestly against this barbarous inhumanity of striking the wife, or reviling her with evil language, says, it is as if a king should beat his viceroy and use him like a dog; from whom most of that reverence and majesty must needs depart, which he first put upon him, and the subjects shall pay him less duty, how much his prince hath treated him with less civility; but the loss redounds to himself; and the government of the whole family shall be disordered, if blows be laid upon that shoulder which together with the other ought to bear nothing but the cares and the issues of a prudent government. And it is observable, that no

* *Ah lapis est ferrumque, suam quicunque puellam*

*Verberat: e cœlo deripit ille Deos.
Sit satis e membris tenuem præscindere vestem:*

Sit satis ornatus dissoluisse comæ:

Sit lacrymas movisse satis; quater ille beatus,

Quo tenera irato flere puella potest.

Sed manibus qui sævus erit, scutumque sudemque

Is gerat, et miti sit procul a Venere.—TIBULL.

† *Homil. 7 Hexam.*

* *Ephes. v. 25.* † *Col. iii. 19.* ‡ *Pet. iii. 7.*

man ever did this rudeness for a virtuous end; it is an incompetent instrument, and may proceed from wrath and folly, but can never end in virtue and the unions of a prudent and fair society. "Quod si verberaveris, exasperabis morbum" (saith St. Chrysostom): "asperitas enim mansuetudine, non aliâ asperitate, dissolvitur;" "If you strike, you exasperate the wound," and (like Cato at Utica in his despair) tear the wounds in pieces; and yet he that did so ill to himself whom he loved well, he loved not women tenderly, and yet would never strike; and if the man cannot endure her talking, how can she endure his striking? But this caution contains a duty in it which none prevaricates, but the meanest of the people, fools and bedlams, whose kindness is a curse, whose government is by chance and violence, and their families are herds of talking cattle.

Sic alternos reficit cursus
 Alternos Amor, sic astrigeris
 Bellum discors exulat oris.
 Hæc concordia temperat æquis
 Elementa modis, ut pugnantia
 Vicibus cedant humida siccis,
 Jungantque fidem frigora flammis.

The marital love is infinitely removed from all possibility of such rudenesses: it is a thing pure as light, sacred as a temple, lasting as the world; "Amicitia, quæ desinere potuit, nunquam vera fuit," said one; "That love, that can cease, was never true:" it is *ἀγάπη*, so Moses called it; it is *εἰνῶσις*, so St. Paul; it is *φιλότης*, so Homer; it is *φιλοφροσύνη*, so Plutarch; that is, it contains in it all "sweetness," and all "society," and "felicity," and all "prudence," and all "wisdom." For there is nothing can please a man without love; and if a man be weary of the wise discourses of the apostles, and of the innocency of an even and a private fortune, or hates peace or a fruitful year, he hath reaped thorns and thistles from the choicest flowers of paradise; "for nothing can sweeten felicity itself, but love;"* but when a man dwells in love, then the breasts of his wife are pleasant as the droppings upon the hill of Hermon, her eyes are fair as the light of heaven, she is a fountain sealed, and he can quench his thirst, and ease his cares, and lay his sorrow down upon her lap, and can retire home as to his sanctuary and refectory, and his gardens of sweetness and chaste refreshments. No man can tell

but he that loves his children, how many delicious accents make a man's heart dance in the pretty conversation of those dear pledges; their childishness, their stammering, their little angers, their innocence, their imperfections, their necessities, are so many little emanations of joy and comfort to him that delights in their persons and society; but he that loves not his wife and children, feeds a lioness at home, and broods a nest of sorrows; and blessing itself cannot make him happy; so that all the commandments of God enjoining a man to "love his wife," are nothing but so many necessities and capacities of joy. "She that is loved is safe, and he that loves is joyful." Love is a union of all things excellent; it contains in it proportion and satisfaction, and rest and confidence; and I wish that this were so much proceeded in, that the heathens themselves could not go beyond us in this virtue, and its proper and its appendant happiness. Tiberius Gracchus chose to die for the safety of his wife; and yet methinks for a Christian to do so should be no hard thing; for many servants will die for their masters, and many gentlemen will die for their friend; but the examples are not so many of those that are ready to do it for their dearest relatives, and yet some there have been. Baptista Fregosa tells of a Neapolitan, that gave himself a slave to the Moors that he might follow his wife; and Dominicus Catalusius, the prince of Lesbos, kept company with his lady when she was a leper: and these are greater things than to die.

But the cases in which this can be required are so rare and contingent, that Holy Scripture instances not the duty in this particular; but it contains in it, that the husband should nourish and cherish her, that he should refresh her sorrows and entice her fears into confidence and pretty arts of rest; for even the fig trees that grew in paradise had sharp-pointed leaves, and harshnesses fit to mortify the too-forward lusting after the sweetness of the fruit. But it will concern the prudence of the husband's love to make the cares and evils as simple and easy as he can, by doubling the joys and acts of a careful friendship, by tolerating her infirmities,* (because by so doing, he either cures her, or makes himself better,) by fairly expounding all

* Felices ter et amplius,
 Quos irrupta tenet copula, nec malis
 Divulsos querimonibus.
 Supremâ citius solvet amor die.—HORAT. OD.

* Uxoris vitium tollas opus est, aut feras;
 Qui tollit vitium, uxorem commodiusculam sibi
 præstat;
 Qui fert, sese meliorem facit.—VARRO.

the little traverses of society and communication, "by taking every thing by the right handle," as Plutarch's expression is; for there is nothing but may be misinterpreted, and yet if it be capable of a fair construction, it is the office of love to make it.

Εὖ λέγειν
 Δ', οὐ' ἂν τι λέξη, χρη' δοκεῖν, καὶ μὴ λέγη.
 Κακποιεῖν,
 Ἄν τὸ ξυνόντι πρὸς χάριν μέλλη λέγειν. EURIP.

Love will account that to be well said, which, it may be, was not so intended; and then it may cause it to be so another time.

3. Hither also is to be referred that he secure the interest of her virtue and felicity by a fair example; for a wife to a husband is a line or superficies, it hath dimensions of its own, but no motion or proper affections; but commonly puts on such images of virtues or vices as are presented to her by her husband's idea; and if thou beest vicious, complain not that she is infected that lies in thy bosom; the interest of whose loves ties her to transcribe thy copy, and write after the characters of thy manners. Paris was a man of pleasure, and Helena was an adulteress, and she added covetousness upon her own account. But Ulysses was a prudent man, and a wary counsellor, sober and severe; and he efformed his wife into such imagery as he desired; and she was chaste as the snows upon the mountains, diligent as the fatal sisters, always busy, and always faithful; γλώσσαν μὲν ἀργήν, χεῖρα δ' ἔλχεν ἐργάτην, "she had a lazy tongue, and a busy hand."

4. Above all the instances of love let him preserve towards her an inviolate faith, and an unspotted chastity;* for this is the marriage ring, it ties two hearts by an eternal band; it is like the cherubim's flaming sword, set for the guard of paradise; he that passes into that garden, now that it is immured by Christ and the church, enters into the shades of death. No man must touch the forbidden tree, that in the midst of the garden, which is the tree of knowledge and life. Chastity is the security of love, and preserves all the mysteriousness like the secrets of a temple. Under this lock is deposited security of families, the union of affections, the repairer of accidental breaches.

Καὶ σφ' ἀκριτα νύκτα λύσω
 Εἰς εὐνήν ἀνέσαιμι ὀμβροθῆναι φιλότητι. ILLAD. ξ

* Καὶ ἀνίδιυτοι τηροῦσι τὸν γάμον.

This is a grace that is shut up and secured by all arts of heaven, and the defence of laws, the locks and bars of modesty, by honour and reputation, by fear and shame, by interest and high regards; and that contract that is intended to be for ever, is yet dissolved, and broken by the violation of this; nothing but death can do so much evil to the holy rites of marriage, as unchastity and breach of faith can. The shepherd Cratis falling in love with a she-goat, had his brains beaten out with a buck as he lay asleep; and by the laws of the Romans, a man might kill his daughter or his wife, if he surprised her in the breach of her holy vows, which are as sacred as the threads of life, secret as the privacies of the sanctuary, and holy as the society of angels. "Nullæ sunt inimicitie nisi amoris acerbæ;" and God that commanded us to forgive our enemies, left it in our choice, and hath not commanded us to forgive an adulterous husband or a wife; but the offended party's displeasure may pass into an eternal separation of society and friendship. Now in this grace it is fit that the wisdom and severity of the man should hold forth a pure taper, that his wife may, by seeing the beauties and transparency of that crystal, dress her mind and her body by the light of so pure reflections; it is certain he will expect from the modesty and retirement, from the passive nature and colder temper, from the humility and fear, from the honour and love, of his wife, that she be pure as the eye of heaven: and therefore it is but reason that the wisdom and nobleness, the love and confidence, the strength and severity, of the man, should be as holy and certain in this grace, as he is a severe exactor of it at her hands, who can more easily be tempted by another, and less by herself.

These are the little lines of a man's duty, which, like threads of light from the body of the sun, do clearly describe all the regions of his proper obligations. Now concerning the woman's duty, although it consists in doing whatsoever her husband commands, and so receives measures from the rules of his government, yet there are also some lines of life depicted upon her hands, by which she may read and know how to proportion out her duty to her husband.

1. The first is obedience; which, because it is no where enjoined that the man should exact of her, but often commanded to her to pay, gives demonstration that it is a vo-

luntary cession that is required; such a cession as must be without coercion and violence on his part, but upon fair inducements, and reasonableness in the thing, and out of love and honour on her part. When God commands us to love him, he means we should obey him; "This is love, that ye keep my commandments;" and "if ye love me" (saith our Lord) "keep my commandments:" now as Christ is to the church, so is man to the wife: and therefore obedience is the best instance of her love; for it proclaims her submission, her humility, her opinion of his wisdom, his pre-eminence in the family, the right of his privilege, and the injunction imposed by God upon her sex, that although in sorrow she bring forth children, yet with love and choice she should obey. The man's authority is love, and the woman's love is obedience; and it was not rightly observed of him that said, when the woman fell, "God made her timorous, that she might be ruled," apt and easy to obey; for this obedience is no way founded in fear, but in love and reverence. "Receptæ reverentiæ est, si mulier viro subsit," said the law;* unless also that we will add, that it is an effect of that modesty which like rubies adorns the necks and cheeks of women. "Pudicitia est, pater, eos magnificare, qui nos socias sumperunt sibi,"† said the maiden in the comedy: "it is modesty to advance and highly to honour them, who have honoured us by making us to be the companions" of their dearest excellencies; for the woman, that went before the man in the way of death, is commanded to follow him in the way of love; and that makes the society to be perfect, and the union profitable, and the harmony complete.

Inferior matrona suo sit, Sexte, marito;
Non aliter fuerint femina virque pares.

MART.

For then the soul and body make a perfect man, when the soul commands wisely, or rules lovingly, and cares profitably, and provides plentifully, and conducts charitably that body which is its partner, and yet the inferior. But if the body shall give laws, and, by the violence of the appetite, first abuse the understanding, and then possess the superior portion of the will and choice, the body and soul are not apt company, and the man is a fool, and miserable. If the soul rules not, it

cannot be a companion; either it must govern, or be a slave; never was king deposed and suffered to live in the state of peerage and equal honour, but made a prisoner, or put to death; and those women, that had rather lead the blind than follow prudent guides, rule fools and easy men than obey the powerful and wise, never made a good society in a house: a wife never can become equal but by obeying; but so her power, while it is in minority, makes up the authority of the man integral, and becomes one government, as themselves are one man. "Male and female created he them, and called their name Adam," saith the Holy Scripture;* they are but one: and therefore, the several parts of this one man must stand in the place where God appointed, that the lower parts may do their office in their own station, and promote the common interest of the whole. A ruling woman is intolerable.

—Faciunt graviora coactæ
Imperio sexus. JUVENAL.

But that is not all; for she is miserable too: for,

Τὰ δευτέρωια τὴν γυναῖκα δεῖ λέγειν,
Τὴν δ' ἡγεμονίαν τῶν ὄλων τὸν ἀνδρ' εἶχειν.
STOB.

It is a sad calamity for a woman to be joined to a fool or a weak person; it is like a guard of geese to keep the capitol; or as if a flock of sheep should read grave lectures to their shepherd, and give him orders where he shall conduct them to pasture. "O vere Phrygiæ, neque enim Phryges:" it is a curse that God threatened sinning persons; "Devoratum est robur eorum, facti sunt quasi mulieres. Effæminati dominabuntur eis;"‡ "to be ruled by weaker people;" δούλον γενέσθαι παραφρονούτους δεσπότου,† "to have a fool to one's master," is the fate of miserable and unblessed people: and the wife can be no ways happy, unless she be governed by a prudent lord, whose commands are sober counsels, whose authority is paternal, whose orders are provisions, and whose sentences are charity.

But now concerning the measures and limits of this obedience, we can best take accounts from Scripture: ἐν παντί, saith the apostle, "in all things;"§ "ut Domino," as to the Lord; and that is large enough; "as unto a lord," "ut ancilla domino;"

* C. alia D. se. lut. Matrim.

† Plautus in Stichos.

* Gen. v. 2.

† Arist. Plut.

‡ Isa. iii. 4.

§ Ephes. v. 24.

so St. Jerome understands it, who neither was a friend to the sex, nor to marriage; but his mistake is soon confuted by the text; it is not "ut dominis," be subject to your husbands "as unto lords," but ὡς τῷ Κυρίῳ, that is, "in all religion," in reverence and in love, in duty and zeal, in faith and knowledge; or else ὡς τῷ Κυρίῳ may signify, "wives be subject to your husbands; but yet so, that at the same time ye be subject to the Lord." For that is the measure of ἐν παντί, "in all things;" and it is more plain in the parallel place, ὡς ἀνήκεν ἐν Κυρίῳ, "as it is fit in the Lord:"* religion must be the measure of your obedience and subjection: "intra limites disciplinæ:" so Tertullian expresses it. Πάντα μὲν τῷ ἀνδρὶ πειδομένη, ὡς μηδὲν, ἀκοντος ἐκείνου, πράξαι ποτέ, πλην ὅσα εἰς ἀρετὴν καὶ σοφίαν διαφέρειν νομίζεται: so Clemens Alex.† "In all things let the wife be subject to the husband, so as to do nothing against his will; those only things excepted, in which he is impious or refractory in things pertaining to wisdom and piety."

But in this also there is some peculiar caution. For although in those things which are of the necessary parts of faith and holy life, the woman is only subject to Christ, who only is and can be Lord of consciences, and commands alone where the conscience is instructed and convinced: yet as it is part of the man's office to be a teacher, and a prophet, and a guide, and a master; so also it will relate very much to the demonstration of their affections to obey his counsels, to imitate his virtues, to be directed by his wisdom, to have her persuasion measured by the lines of his excellent religion: οὐχ ἥττον δὲ δεμιὸν ἀκούσαι γαμετῆς λεγούσης, ἀνὴρ οὐ μοι ἐσσι καθηγητῆς καὶ φιλόσοφος καὶ διδάσκαλος τῶν καλλίστων καὶ δευοτάτων. "It were hugely decent," saith Plutarch, "that the wife should acknowledge her husband for her teacher and her guide;" for then when she is what he please to efform her, he hath no cause to complain if she be no better: τὰ δὲ τοιαῦτα μαθήματα πρῶτον ἀφίστηναι τῶν ἀτόπων τὰς γυναῖκας; "his precept and wise counsels can draw her off from vanities;" and, as he said of geometry, that, if she be skilled in that, she will not easily be a gamester or a dancer, may perfectly be said of religion. If she suffers herself to be guided by his counsel, and efformed by his religion; either he is an ill master in his religion, or he may secure in

her and for his advantage an excellent virtue. And although in matters of religion the husband hath no empire and command, yet if there be a place left to persuade, and entreat, and induce by arguments, there is not in a family a greater endearment of affections than the unity of religion: and anciently "it was not permitted to a woman to have a religion by herself:" "Eodem quos maritus, nōsse Deos et colere solos uxor debet," said Plutarch. And the rites which a woman performs severally from her husband, are not pleasing to God; and therefore Pomponia Græcina, because she entertained a stranger religion, was permitted to the judgment of her husband Plantius: and this whole affair is no stranger to Christianity, for the Christian woman was not suffered to marry an unbelieving man; and although this is not to be extended to different opinions within the limits of the common faith: yet thus much advantage is won or lost by it; that the compliance of the wife, and submission of her understanding to the better rule of her husband in matters of religion, will help very much to warrant her, though she should be mispersuaded in a matter less necessary; yet nothing can warrant her in her separate rites and manners of worshipings, but an invincible necessity of conscience, and a curious infallible truth: and if she be deceived alone, she hath no excuse; if with him, she hath much pity, and some degrees of warranty under the protection of humility, and duty, and dear affections; and she will find that is part of her privilege and right to partake of the mysteries and blessings of her husband's religion.

Γυναῖκα γαμετῆν μετὰ τόμοις ἱεροῖς συνελθοῦσαν ἀνδρὶ κοινῶν ἀπάντων εἶναι, χρημάτων τε καὶ ἱερῶν, said Romulus: "A woman by the holy laws hath right to partake of her husband's goods, and her husband's sacrifices, and holy things." Where there is a schism in one bed, there is nursery of temptations, and love is persecuted and in perpetual danger to be destroyed; there dwell jealousies, and divided interests, and differing opinions, and continual disputes,* and we cannot love them so well, whom we believe to be less beloved of God; and it is ill uniting with a person, concerning whom

* ———— Quis deditus autem
Usque adeo est ut non illam, quam laudibus
effert,

Horreat, inque diem septenis oderit horis?—

JUV. Sat. 6.

* Col. iii. 18.

† Stromat. 7.

my persuasion tells me, that he is like to live in hell to eternal ages.

2. The next line of the woman's duty is compliance, which St. Peter calls "the hidden man of the heart, the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit,"* and to it he opposes "the outward and pompous ornament of the body;" concerning which, as there can be no particular measure set down to all persons, but the proportions were to be measured by the customs of wise people, the quality of the woman, and the desires of the man; yet it is to be limited by Christian modesty, and the usages of the more excellent and severe matrons. Menander in the comedy brings in a man turning his wife from his house, because she stained her hair yellow, which was then the beauty.

Νῦν δ' ἔρπ' ἀπ' ἄκων τῶνδε τὴν γυναῖκα γὰρ
τὴν σφῆρον' οὐ δεῖ τὰς τριχὰς ξανθὰς ποιεῖν.

CLERIC.

A wise woman should not paint. A studious gallantry in clothes cannot make a wise man love his wife the better.† *Εἰς τοὺς τραγῳδῶδους χρήσιμ', οὐκ εἰς τὸν βίον*, said the comedy; "Such gaities are fit for tragedies, but not for the uses of life:" "Decor occultus, et tecta venustas," that is the Christian woman's fineness: "the hidden man of the heart," sweetness of manners, humble comportment, fair interpretation of all addresses, ready compliances, high opinion of him and mean of herself.‡

Ἐν κοινῷ λύπης ἠδονῆς τ' ἔχειν μέρος, "To partake secretly, and in her heart, of all his joys and sorrows," to believe him comely and fair,§ though the sun hath drawn a cypress over him; for as marriages are not to be contracted by the hands and eyes, but with reason and the hearts; so are these judgments to be made by the mind, not by the sight: and diamonds cannot make the woman virtuous, nor him to value her who sees her put them off then, when charity and modesty are her brightest ornaments.

* 1 Pet. iii. 4.

† Quid juvat ornato procedere, vitta, capillo,
Teque peregrinis vendere numeribus,
Naturæ decus, mercato perdere cultu,
Nec sinere in propriis membra nitere bonis?
PROPERT. l. 1. el. 1.

‡ Malo Venusiam, quàm te, Cornelia mater
Gracchorum, si cum magnis virtutibus affers
Grande supercilium, et numeras in dote triumphos.
JUVEN. Sat. 6.

§ Πρῶτα μὲν γὰρ τοῦτ' ὑπάρχει· κἄν ἀμωρος ἦ
ποσει. ἤδη δευτέρῃ ἡμέρῃ οἶσι τῇ γυναικὶ κακῆμένῃ
ὡς γὰρ ἐφ' ἄλλοις τὸ κρίνειν ἴσθις ἀλλὰ τοῦς.

Οὐ κόσμος, οὐκ, ὡ πλῆμον, ἀλλ' ἀκοσμία
φαίνουτ' ἂν εἶναι σὺν μαργαρίτης φρενῶν, &c.

And, indeed, those husbands that are pleased with indecent gaities of their wives, are like fishes taken with ointments and intoxicating baits, apt and easy for sport and mockery, but useless for food; and when Circe had turned Ulysses' companions into hogs and monkeys, by pleasures and the enchantments of her bravery and luxury, they were no longer useful to her, she knew not what to do with them; but on wise Ulysses she was continually enamoured. Indeed, the outward ornament is fit to take fools, but they are not worth the taking; but she that hath a wise husband, must entice him to an eternal dearness by the veil of modesty and the grave robes of chastity, the ornament of meekness and the jewels of faith and charity; she must have no fucus but blushings, her brightness must be purity, and she must shine round about with sweetnesses and friendship, and she shall be pleasant while she lives, and desired when she dies. If not,

Κατθανοῦσα δὲ κείσεται,
Οὐδὲ τις μνημοσύνα πέθεν ἴσεται,
Οὐ γὰρ πεδέχεις ῥόδων τῶν ἐκ Πιερίης·

Her grave shall be full of rottenness and dishonour, and her memory shall be worse after she is dead: "after she is dead;" for that will be the end of all merry meetings; and I choose this to be the last advice to both.

3. "Remember the days of darkness, for they are many," the joys of the bridal chambers are quickly passed, and the remaining portion of the state is a dull progress, without variety of joys, but not without the change of sorrows; but that portion that shall enter into the grave, must be eternal. It is fit that I should infuse a bunch of myrrh into the festival goblet, and, after the Egyptian manner, serve up a dead man's bones at a feast; I will only show it, and take it away again; it will make the wine bitter, but wholesome. But those married pairs that live, as remembering that they must part again, and give an account how they treat themselves and each other, shall, at that day of their death, be admitted to glorious espousals; and when they shall live again, be married to their Lord, and partake of his glories, with Abraham and Joseph, St. Peter and St. Paul, and all the married saints.

Ὁμητὰ τὰ τῶν θνητῶν, καὶ πάντα παρέρχεται
ἡμῶν.
Ἦν δὲ μὴ, ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς αὐτὰ παρερχόμεθα.

BRUNCK.

“All those things that now please us shall pass from us, or we from them; but those things that concern the other life, are permanent as the numbers of eternity; and although at the resurrection there shall be no relation of husband and wife, and no marriage shall be celebrated but the marriage of the Lamb; yet then shall be remembered how men and women passed through this state which is a type of that, and from this sacramental union all holy pairs shall pass to the spiritual and eternal, where love shall be their portion, and joys shall crown their heads, and they shall lie in the bosom of Jesus, and in the heart of God to eternal ages. Amen.

SERMON XIX.

APPLES OF SODOM; OR, THE FRUITS OF SIN.

PART. I.

What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.—Romans vi. 21.

THE son of Sirach did prudently advise concerning making judgments of the felicity or infelicity of men; “Judge none blessed before his death; for a man shall be known in his children.”* Some men raise their fortunes from a cottage to the chairs of princes, from a sheepcote to a throne, and dwell in the circles of the sun, and in the lap of prosperity; their wishes and success dwell under the same roof, and Providence brings all events into their design, and ties both ends together with prosperous successes; and even the little conspersions and intertextures of evil accidents in their lives, are but like a feigned note of music, by an artificial discord making the ear covetous, and then pleased with the harmony into which the appetite was enticed by passion, and a pretty restraint; and variety does but adorn prosperity, and make it of a sweeter relish, and of more advantages; and some of these men descend into their graves without a change of fortune.

Eripitur persona, manet res.

Indeed, they cannot longer dwell upon the estate, but that remains unrifed, and descends upon their heir, and all is well till the next generation; but if the evil of his death, and the change of his present prosperity, for an intolerable danger of an uncertain eternity, does not sour his full chalice; yet if his children prove vicious or degenerate, cursed or unprosperous, we account the man miserable, and his grave to be strewed with sorrows and dishonours. The wise and valiant Chabrias grew miserable by the folly of his son Ctesippus; and the reputation of brave Germanicus began to be ashamed, when the base Caligula entered upon his scene of dishonourable crime. Commodus, the wanton and feminine son of wise Antoninus, gave a check to the great name of his father; and when the son of Hortensius Corbio was prostitute, and the heir of Q. Fabius Maximus was disinherited by the sentence of the city prætor, as being unworthy to enter into the fields of his glorious father, and young Scipio, the son of Africanus, was a fool and a prodigal; posterity did weep afresh over the monuments of their brave progenitors, and found that infelicity can pursue a man, and overtake him in his grave.

This is a great calamity when it falls upon innocent persons; and that Moses died upon mount Nebo, in the sight of Canaan, was not so great an evil, as that his sons Eliezer and Gerson were unworthy to succeed him; but that priesthood was devolved to his brother, and the principality to his servant; and to Samuel, that his sons proved corrupt, and were exauthored for their unworthiness, was an allay to his honour and his joys, and such as proclaims to all the world, that the measures of our felicity are not to be taken by the lines of our own person, but of our relations too; and he that is cursed in his children, cannot be reckoned among the fortunate.

This which I have discoursed concerning families in general, is most remarkable in the retinue and family of sin; for it keeps a good house and is full of company and servants, it is served by the possessions of the world, it is courted by the unhappy, flattered by fools, taken into the bosom by the effeminate, made the end of human designs, and feasted all the way of its progress: wars are made for its interest, and men give or venture their lives that their sin may be prosperous; all the outward senses are its handmaids, and the inward

* Ecclus. xi. 28.

senses are of its privy chamber; the understanding is its counsellor, the will its friend, riches are its ministers, nature holds up its train, and art is its emissary to promote its interest and affairs abroad: and, upon this account, all the world is enrolled in its taxing-tables, and are subjects or friends of its kingdom, or are so kind to it as to make too often visits, and to lodge in its borders; because all men stare upon its pleasures, and are enticed to taste of its wanton delicacies. But then if we look what are the children of this splendid family, and see what issue sin produces, *ἔστι γὰρ τέχνα καὶ τῶδε*,—it may help to untie the charm. Sin and concupiscence marry together, and riot and feast it high, but their fruits, the children and production of their filthy union, are ugly and deformed, foolish and ill-natured; and the apostle calls them by their name, “shame” and “death.” These are the fruits of sin, “the apples of Sodom,” fair outsides, but if you touch them, they turn to ashes and a stink; and if you will nurse these children, and give them whatsoever is dear to you, then you may be admitted into the house of feasting and chambers of riot, where sin dwells; but if you will have the mother, you must have the daughters; the tree and the fruits go together; and there is none of you all that ever entered into this house of pleasure, but he left the skirts of his garment in the hands of shame, and had his name rolled in the chambers of death. “What fruit had ye then?” That is the question.

In answer to which question we are to consider, 1. What is the sum total of the pleasure of sin? 2. What fruits and relishes it leaves behind by its natural efficiency? 3. What are its consequents by its demerit, and the infliction of the super-added wrath of God, which it hath deserved? Of the first St. Paul gives no account; but by way of upbraiding asks, “what they had?” that is, nothing that they dare own, nothing that remains: and where is it? show it: what is become of it? Of the second he gives the sum total: all its natural effects are “shame” and its appendages. The third, or the superinduced evils by the just wrath of God, he calls “death,” the worst name in itself, and the greatest of evils that can happen.

1. Let us consider what pleasures there are in sin; most of them are very punishments. I will not reckon or consider concerning

envy, which one in Stobæus* calls *κακίστον καὶ δικαιοτάτον ζῆλον*, “the basest spirit, and yet very just;” because it punishes the delinquent in the very act of sin, doing as Ælian says of the polypus, *εἴτις αὐτῷ γίνηται ἀξήρια, τῶν ἰαντοῦ πλοκάμων παρέτραγε*, “when he wants his prey, he devours his own arms;” and the leanness, and the secret pangs, and the perpetual restlessness of an envious man, feed upon his own heart, and drink down his spirits, unless he can ruin or observe the fall of the fairest fortunes of his neighbour. The fruits of this tree are mingled and sour, and not to be endured in the very eating. Neither will I reckon the horrid affrightments and amazements of murder, nor the uneasiness of impatience, which doubles every evil that it feels, and makes it a sin, and makes it intolerable; nor the secret grievings, and continual troubles of peevishness, which makes a man incapable of receiving good, or delighting in beauties and fair entreaties, in the mercies of God and charities of men.

It were easy to make a catalogue of sins, every one of which is a disease, a trouble in its very constitution and its nature: such are loathing of spiritual things, bitterness of spirit, rage, greediness, confusion of mind, and irresolution, cruelty and despite, slothfulness and distrust, unquietness and anger, effeminacy and niceness, prating and sloth, ignorance and inconstancy, incogitancy and cursing, malignity and fear, forgetfulness and rashness, pusillanimity and despair, rancour and superstition: if a man were to curse his enemy, he could not wish him a greater evil than these: and yet these are several kinds of sin which men choose, and give all their hopes of heaven in exchange for one of these diseases. Is it not a fearful consideration, that a man should rather choose eternally to perish than to say his prayers heartily and affectionately? but so it is with very many men; they are driven to their devotions by custom, and shame, and reputation, and civil compliances; they sigh and look sour when they are called to it, and abide there as a man under the surgeon’s hands, smarting and fretting all the while; or else he passes the time with incogitancy, and hates the employment, and suffers the torment of prayers which he loves not; and all this, although for so doing it is certain he may perish:

* Florileg.

what fruit, what deliciousness, can he fancy in being weary of his prayers? there is no pretence or colour for these things. Can any man imagine a greater evil to the body and soul of a man than madness, and furious eyes, and a distracted look, paleness with passion, and trembling hands and knees, and furiousness, and folly in the heart and head? and yet this is the pleasure of anger, and for this pleasure men choose damnation. But it is a great truth, that there are but very few sins that pretend to pleasure: although a man be weak and soon deceived, and the devil is crafty, and sin is false and impudent, and pretences are too many,—yet most kinds of sin are real and prime troubles to the very body, without all manner of deliciousness, even to the sensual, natural, and carnal part; and a man must put on something of a devil before he can choose such sins, and he must love mischief because it is a sin; for in most instances there is no other reason in the world. Nothing pretends to pleasure but the lust of the lower belly, ambition, and revenge; and although the catalogue of sins is numerous as the production of fishes, yet these three only can be apt to cozen us with a fair outside; and yet upon the survey of what fruits they bring, and what taste they have in the mastication, besides the filthy relish they leave behind, we shall see how miserably they are abused and fooled, that expend any thing upon such purchases.

2. For a man cannot take pleasure in lusts of the flesh, in gluttony, or drunkenness, unless he be helped forward with inconsideration and folly. For we see it evidently that grave and wise persons, men of experience and consideration, are extremely less affected with lust and loves than the hare-brained boy; the young gentleman that thinks nothing in the world greater than to be free from a tutor, he indeed courts his folly, and enters into the possession of lust without abatement; consideration dwells not there: but when a sober man meets with a temptation, and is helped by his natural temper, or invited by his course of life; if he can consider, he hath so many objections and fears, so many difficulties and impediments, such sharp reasonings and sharper jealousies concerning its event, that if he does at all enter into folly, it pleases him so little, that he is forced to do it in despite of himself; and the pleasure is so allayed, that he knows

not whether it be wine or vinegar; his very apprehension and instruments of relish are filled with fear and contradicting principles, and the deliciousness does but “*affricare cutem*,” it went “*but to the skin*;” but the allay went farther; it kept a guard within, and suffered the pleasure to pass no farther. A man must resolve to be a fool, a rash inconsiderate person, or he will feel but little satisfaction in the enjoyment of his sin: indeed, he that stops his nose, may drink down such corrupted waters; and he understood it well who chose rather to be a fool,

Dum mea delectent mala me, vel denique fallant, Quam sapere et ringi.—HOR.

“so that his sins might delight him, or deceive him, than to be wise and without pleasure in the enjoyment.” So that in effect a man must lose his discerning faculties before he discerns the little fantastic joys of his concupiscence; which demonstrates how vain, how empty of pleasure that is, that is beholden to folly and illusion, to a juggling and plain cozenage, before it can be fancied to be pleasant. For it is a strange beauty, that he that hath the best eyes cannot perceive, and none but the blind or blear-eyed people can see; and such is the pleasure of lust, which, by every degree of wisdom that a man hath, is lessened and undervalued.

3. For the pleasures of intemperance, they are nothing but the relics and images of pleasure, after that nature hath been feasted; for so long as she needs, that is, so long as temperance waits, so long pleasure also stands there; but as temperance begins to go away, having done the ministries of nature, every morsel, and every new goblet, is still less delicious, and cannot be endured but as men force nature by violence to stay longer than she would: how have some men rejoiced when they have escaped a cup! and when they cannot escape, they pour it in, and receive it with as much pleasure as the old women have in the Lapland dances; they dance the round, but there is horror and a harshness in the music; and they call it pleasure, because men bid them do so: but there is a devil in the company, and such as is his pleasure, such is theirs: he rejoices in the thriving sin, and the swelling fortune of his darling drunkenness, but his joys are the joys of him that knows and always remembers, that he shall infallibly have the biggest damnation; and then let it be con-

sidered how forced a joy that is, that is at the end of an intemperate feast.

*Nec bene mendaci risus componitur ore,
Nec bene sollicitis ebría verba sonant.*

TIBULLUS.

Certain it is, intemperance takes but nature's leavings; when the belly is full, and nature calls to take away, the pleasure that comes in afterwards is next to loathing: it is like the relish and taste of meats at the end of the third course, or sweetness of honey to him that hath eaten till he can endure to take no more; and in this there is no other difference of these men from them that die upon another cause, than was observed among the Phalangia of old, τὰ μὲν ποιεῖ γελῶντας ἀποθνήσκουσιν, τὰ δὲ κλαίοντας, "some of these serpents make men die laughing, and some to die weeping:" so does the intemperate, and so does his brother that languishes of a consumption; this man dies weeping, and the other dies laughing; but they both die infallibly, and all his pleasure is nothing but the sting of a serpent, "immixto liventia mella veneno," it wounds the heart, and he dies with a tarantula, dancing and singing till he bows his neck, and kisses his bosom with the fatal noddings and declensions of death.

4. In these pretenders to pleasure, (which you see are but few, and they not very prosperous in their pretences,) there is mingled so much trouble to bring them to act an enjoyment, that the appetite is above half tired before it comes; it is necessary a man should be hugely patient that is ambitious, "ambulare per Britannos, Scythicas pati pruinas;" no man buys death and damnation at so dear a rate as he that fights for it, and endures cold and hunger,—"Patiens liminis et solis," "the heat of the sun, and the cold of the threshold;" the dangers of war, and the snares of a crafty enemy; he lies upon the ground with a severity greater than the penances of a hermit, and fasts beyond the austerity of a rare penitent; with this only difference, that the one does it for heaven, and the other for an uncertain honour, and an eternity of flames. But, however, by this time that he has won something, he hath spent some years, and he hath not much time left him to rest in his new purchase, and he hath worn out his body, and lessened his capacity of feeling it; and although it is ten to one he cannot escape all the dangers he must venture at, that he may come near his trifle, yet, when

he is arrived thither, he can neither long enjoy, nor well perceive or taste it; and therefore, there are more sorrows at the gate, than there can dwell comforts in all the rooms of the houses of pride and great designs. And thus it is in revenge, which is pleasant only to a devil, or a man of the same cursed temper. He does a thing which ought to trouble him, and will move him to pity what his own vile hands have acted; but if he does not pity, that is, be troubled with himself, and wish the things undone, he hath those affections by which the devil doth rejoice in destroying souls; which affections a man cannot have, unless he be perfectly miserable, by being contrary to God, to mercy, and to felicity; and, after all, the pleasure is false, fantastic, and violent, it can do him no good, it can do him hurt, it is odds but it will, and on him that takes revenge, revenge shall be taken, and by a real evil he shall dearly pay for the goods that are but airy and fantastical; it is like a rolling stone, which, when a man hath forced up a hill, will return upon him with a greater violence, and break those bones whose sinews gave it motion. The pleasure of revenge is like the pleasure of eating chalk and coals; a foolish disease made the appetite, and it is entertained with an evil reward; it is like the feeding of a cancer or a wolf; the man is restless until it be done, and when it is, every man sees how infinitely he is removed from satisfaction or felicity.

5. These sins, when they are entertained with the greatest fondness from without, it must have an extreme little pleasure, because there is a strong faction, and the better party against them; something that is within contests against the entertainment, and they sit uneasily upon the spirit when the man is vexed, that they are not lawful. The Persian king gave Themistocles a goodly pension, assigning Magnesia, with the revenue of fifty talents for his bread, Lamp-sacum for his wine, and Myos for his meat; but all the while he fed high and drunk deep, he was infinitely afflicted that every thing went cross to his undertaking, and he could not bring his ends about to betray his country; and at last he mingled poison with his wine and drank it off, having first entreated his friends to steal for him a private grave in his own country. Such are the pleasures of the most pompous and flattering sins: their meat and drink are good and pleasant at first, and it is plenteous and criminal; but

its employment is base, it is so against a man's interest, and against what is, and ought to be, dearest to him, that he cannot persuade his better parts to consent, but must fight against them and all their arguments. These things are against a man's conscience, that is, against his reason and his rest: and something within makes his pleasure sit uneasily. But so do violent perfumes make the head ache, and therefore wise persons reject them; and the eye refuses to stare upon the beauties of the sun, because it makes it weep itself blind; and if a luscious dish please my palate, and turns to loathing in the stomach, I will lay aside that evil, and consider the danger and the bigger pain, not that little pleasure. So it is in sin; it pleases the senses, but diseases the spirit, and wounds that: and that it is apt to smart the skin, and is as considerable in the provisions of pleasure and pain respectively; and the pleasures of sin to a contradicting reason, are like the joys of wine to a condemned man,

— Difficile est imitari gaudia falsa; Difficile est tristi fingere mente jocum.—TIBULL.

It will be very hard to delight freely in that which so vexes the more tender and most sensible part; so that, what Pliny said of the poppies growing in the river Caicus. *ἔχει ἀντὶ καρποῦ λίθον*, "it brings a stone instead of a flower or fruit:" so are the pleasures of these pretending sins; the flower at the best is stinking, but there is a stone in the bottom; it is gravel in the teeth, and a man must drink the blood of his own gums when he manducates such unwholesome, such unpleasant fruit.

— Vitiorum gaudia vulnus habent.

They make a wound, and therefore are not very pleasant. *Τὸ γὰρ ζῆν μὴ καλῶς, μέγας πόνος*, "It is a great labour and travail, to live a vicious life.

6. The pleasure in the acts of these few sins that do pretend to it, is a little limited nothing, confined to a single faculty, to one sense, having nothing but the skin for its organ or instrument, an artery, or something not more considerable than a lutestring; and at the best, it is but the satisfaction of an appetite which reason can cure, which time can appease, which every diversion can take off; such as is not perfective of his nature, nor of advantage to his person; it is a desire to no purpose, and as it comes with no just cause, so can be satisfied with

no just measures; it is satisfied before it comes to a vice, and when it is come thither, all the world cannot satisfy it: a little thing will weary it, but nothing can content it. For all these sensual desires are nothing but an impatience of being well and wise, of being in health, and being in our wits; which two things if a man could endure, (and it is but reasonable, a man would think, that we should,) he would never lust to drown his heart in seas of wine, or oppress his belly with loads of undigested meat, or make himself base by the mixtures of a harlot, by breaking the sweetest limits and holy festivities of marriage. "*Malum impatientia est boni*," said Tertullian, it is nothing else; to please the sense is but to do a man's self mischief; and all those lusts tend to some direct dissolution of a man's health or his felicity, his reason or his religion; it is an enemy that a man carries about him: and as the Spirit of God said concerning Babylon, "*Quantum in deliciis fuit, tantum date illi tormentum et luctum*," "Let her have torment and sorrow according to the measure of her delights," is most eminently true in the pleasing of our senses; the lust and desire is a torment, the remembrance and the absence is a torment, and the enjoyment does not satisfy, but disables the instrument, and tires the faculty; and when a man hath but a little of what his sense covets, he is not contented, but impatient for more: and when he hath loads of it, he does not feel it. For he that swallows a full goblet does not taste his wine; and this is the pleasure of the sense; nothing contents it but that which we cannot perceive, and it is always restless, till it be weary; and all the way unpleased till it can feel no pleasure; and that which is the instrument of sense, is the means of its torment; by the faculty by which it tastes, by the same is it afflicted; for so long as it can taste, it is tormented with desire, and when it can desire no longer, it cannot feel pleasure.

7. Sin hath little or no pleasure in its very enjoyment; because its very manner of entry and production is by a curse and a contradiction; it comes into the world like a viper through the sides of its mother, by means unnatural, violent and monstrous. Men love sin only because it is forbidden; "Sin took occasion by the law," saith St. Paul; it could not come in upon its own pretences, but men rather suspect secret pleasure in it because there are guards kept upon it.

Sed quia cæcus inest vitii amor, omne futurum
Despicitur, sudentque brevem præsentia fructum,
Et ruit in vitium damni securâ libido.

Men run into sin with blind affections, and against all reason despise the future, hoping for some little pleasure for the present; and and all this is only because they are forbidden: do not many men sin out of spite? Some out of the spirit of disobedience, some by wildness and indetermination, some by imprudence, and because they are taken in a fault;

— Frontemque à crimine sumunt;

some because they are reproved; many by custom, others by importunity:

Ordo fuit crevisse malis —

It grows upon crab-stocks, and the lust itself is sour and unwholesome: and since it is evident, that very many sins come in wholly upon these accounts, such persons and such sins cannot pretend pleasure; but as naturalists say of pulse, "Cum maledictis et probris serendum præcipiunt, ut lætius proveniat;" "the country-people were used to curse it and rail upon it all the while that it was sowing, that it might thrive the better;" it is true with sins, they grow up with curses, with spite and contradiction, peevishness and indignation, pride and cursed principles; and therefore, pleasure ought not to be the inscription of the box; for that is the least part of its ingredient and constitution.

8. The pleasures in the very enjoying of sin are infinitely trifling and inconsiderable, because they pass away so quickly; if they be in themselves little, they are made less by their volatile and fugitive nature; but if they were great, then their being so transient does not only lessen the delight, but changes it into a torment, and loads the spirit of the sinner with impatience and indignation. It is not a high upbraiding to the watchful adulterer, that after he hath contrived the stages of his sin, and tied many circumstances together with arts and labour, and these join and stand knit and solid only by contingency, and are very often borne away with the impetuous torrent of an inevitable accident, like Xerxes' bridge over the Hellespont; and then he is to begin again, and sets new wheels a-going; and by the arts and the labour, and the watchings, and the importunity, and the violence, and the unwearied study, and indefatigable diligence, of many months, he enters upon possession,

and finds them not of so long abode as one of his cares, which in so vast numbers made so great a portion of his life afflicted. Πρόσκαιρον ἁμαρτίας ἀπόλαυσιν, "the enjoying of sin for a season," St. Paul* calls it; he names no pleasures; our English translation uses the word of *enjoying pleasures*; but if there were any, they were but for that season, that instant, that very transition of the act, which dies in its very birth, and of which we can only say as the minstrel sang of Pacuvius, when he was carried dead from his supper to his bed, Βεβίωκε, βεβίωκε. A man can scarce have time enough to say it is alive, but that it was: "nullo non se die extulit," it died every day, it lived never unto life, but lived and died unto death, being its mother and daughter: the man died before the sin did live; and when it had lived, it consigned him to die eternally.

Add to this, that it so passes away, that nothing at all remains behind it that is pleasant: it is like the path of an arrow in the air; the next morning no man can tell what is become of the pleasures of the last night's sin: they are no where but in God's books, deposited in the conscience, and sealed up against the day of dreadful accounts; but as to the man, they are as if they never had been; and then, let it be considered, what a horrible aggravation it will be to the miseries of damnation, that a man shall for ever perish for that, which if he looks round about he cannot see, nor tell where it is. "He that dies, dies for that which is not;" and in the very little present he finds it an unrewarding interest, to walk seven days together over sharp stones only to see a place from whence he must come back in an hour. If it goes off presently, it is not worth the labour; if it stays long, it grows tedious; so that it cannot be pleasant, if it stays; and if it does not stay, it is not to be valued: "Hæc mala mentis gaudia." It abides too little a while to be felt, or called pleasure; and if it should abide longer, it would be troublesome as pain, and loathed like the tedious speech of an orator pleading against the life of the innocent.

9. Sin hath in its best advantages but a trifling, inconsiderable pleasure: because not only God and reason, conscience and honour, interest and laws, do sour it in the sense and gust of pleasure, but even the devil himself, either being overruled by God, or by a strange

* Heb. xi. 25.

insignificant malice, makes it troublesome and intricate, entangled and involved; and one sin contradicts another, and vexes the man with so great variety of evils, that if in the course of God's service, he should meet with half the difficulty, he would certainly give over the whole employment.

Those that St. James speaks of, who "prayed that they might spend it upon their lusts," were covetous and prodigal, and therefore must endure the torments of one to have the pleasure of another; and which is greater, the pleasure of spending, or the displeasure that it is spent and does not still remain after its consumption, is easy to tell: certain it is, that this lasts much longer. Does not the devil often tempt men to despair, and by that torment puts bars and locks upon them, that they may never return to God? Which what else is it but a plain indication that it is intended the man should feel the images and dreams of pleasure, no longer but till he be without remedy? Pleasure is but like sentries or wooden frames, set under arches, till they be strong by their own weight and consolidation to stand alone; and when by any means the devil hath a man sure, he takes no longer care to cozen him with pleasures, but is pleased that men should begin an early hell, and be tormented before the time. Does not envy punish or destroy flattery; and self-love sometimes torments the drunkard; and intemperance abate the powers of lust, and make the man impotent; and laziness become a hinderance to ambition; and the desires of man wax impatient upon contradicting interests, and by crossing each other's design on all hands lessen the pleasure and leave man tormented?

10. Sin is of so little a relish and gust, so trifling a pleasure, that it is always greater in expectation than it is in the possession. But if men did beforehand see, what the utmost is which sin ministers to please the beastly part of man, it were impossible it should be pursued with so much earnestness and disadvantages. It is necessary it should promise more than it can give; men could not otherwise be cozened. And if it be inquired, why men should sin again, after they had experience of the little and great deception? it is to be confessed, it is a wonder they should; but then we may remember, that men sin again, though their sin did afflict them; they will be drunk again, though they were sick; they will again commit folly, though they be surprised in their shame,

though they have needed an hospital; and therefore, there is something else that moves them, and not the pleasure; for they do it without and against its interests; but either they still proceed, hoping to supply by numbers what they find not in proper measures; or God permits them to proceed as an instrument of punishment; or their understandings and reasonings grow cheaper; or they grow in love with it, and take it upon any terms; or contract new appetites, and are pleased with the baser and the lower reward of sin: but whatsoever can be the cause of it, it is certain, by the experience of all the world, that the fancy is higher, the desires more sharp, and the reflection more brisk, at the door and entrance of the entertainment, than in all the little and shorter periods of its possession: for then it is but limited by the natural measures, and abated by distemper, and loathed by enjoying, and disturbed by partners, and dishonoured by shame and evil accidents; so that as men coming to the river Lucius, *ἔχει μὲν λευκώτατον ἰδάτων καὶ βεῖ διειδήσαστα,* and seeing "waters pure" as the tears of the spring, or the pearls of the morning, expect that in such a fair promising bosom, the inmates should be fair and pleasant; *τίπτει δὲ ἰχθύς μελάνας ἰσχυρῶς,* but find "the fishes black," filthy and unwholesome; so it is in sin; its face is fair and beautiful,

Ἡ ταχέως κενύσσοσα κόραις μαλακώτερον ἵππου, Λύσιδος ἀρκύνων, τερπίνων ἀθρήμα μέγας.

Softer than sleep, or the dreams of wine, tenderer than the curd of milk; "Et Euganea quantumvis mollior agnâ;" but when you come to handle it, it is filthy, rough as the porcupine, black as the shadows of the night, and having promised a fish it gives a scorpion and a stone instead of bread.

11. The fruits of its present possession, the pleasures of its taste, are less pleasant, because no sober person, no man that can discourse, does like it long.

—Breve sit quod turpiter audes.—JUVEN.

But he approves it in the height of passion, and in disguises of a temptation; but at all other times he finds it ugly and unreasonable; and the very remembrances must at all times abate its pleasures, and sour its delicacies. In the most parts of a man's life he wonders at his own folly, and prodigious madness, that it should be ever possible for him to be

deluded by such trifles; and he sighs next morning and knows it over-night; and is it not therefore certain, that he leans upon a thorn, which he knows will smart, and he dreads the event of to-morrow? But so have I known a bold trooper fight in the confusion of a battle, and being warm with heat and rage, received, from the swords of his enemy, wounds open like a grave; but he felt them not, and when, by the streams of blood, he found himself marked for pain, he refused to consider then what he was to feel to-morrow: but when his rage had cooled into the temper of a man, and clammy moisture had checked the fiery emission of spirits, he wonders at his own boldness, and blames his fate, and needs a mighty patience to bear his great calamity. So is the bold and merry sinner, when he is warm with wine and lust, wounded and bleeding with the strokes of hell, he twists with the fatal arm that strikes him, and cares not; but yet it must abate his gaiety, because he remembers that when his wounds are cold and considered, he must roar or perish, repent or do worse, that is, be miserable or undone. The Greeks call this τῶν σάκκων εὐδαιμονίαν, "the felicity of condemned slaves feasted high in sport." Dion Prusias reports, that when the Persians had got the victory, they would pick out the noblest slave, καὶ καθίζουσιν εἰς τὸν θρόνον τοῦ βασιλέως, καὶ τὴν ἐσθῆτα δίδωσιν τὴν αὐτὴν καὶ τρυφῆν, καὶ παλλακαῖς χρῆσθαι, "they make him a king for three days, and clothe him with royal robes, and minister to him all the pleasures he can choose, and all the while he knows he is to die a sacrifice to mirth and folly." But then, let it be remembered, what checks and allays of mirth the poor man starts at, when he remembers the axe and the altar where he must shortly bleed; and by this we may understand what that pleasure is, in the midst of which the man sighs deeply, when he considers what opinion he had of this sin, in the days of counsel and sober thoughts; and what reasons against it he shall feel to-morrow, when he must weep or die. Thus it happens to sinners according to the saying of the prophet, "Qui sacrificant hominem, osculabuntur vitulum," "He that gives a man in sacrifice shall kiss the calf;"* that is, shall be admitted to the seventh chapel of Moloch to kiss the idol: a goodly reward for so great a price, for so great an enquiry.

After all this I do not doubt but these

considerations will meet with some persons that think them to be "protestatio contra factum," and fine pretences against all experience; and that, for all these severe sayings, sin is still so pleasant as to tempt the wisest resolution. Such men are in a very evil condition: and in their case only I come to understand the meaning of those words of Seneca; "Malorum ultimum est mala sua amare, ubi turpia non solum delectant, sed etiam placent:" "It is the worst of evils when men are so in love with sin that they are not only delighted with them, but pleased also;" not only feel the relish with too quick a sense, but also feel none of the objections, nothing of the pungency, the sting, or the lessening circumstances. However, to these men I say this only, that if by experience they feel sin pleasant, it is as certain also by experience, that most sins are in their own nature sharpnesses and diseases; and that very few do pretend to pleasure: that a man cannot feel any deliciousness in them, but when he is helped by folly and inconsideration; that is, a wise man cannot, though a boy or a fool can be pleased with them: that they are but relics and images of pleasure left upon nature's stock, and therefore, much less than the pleasures of natural virtues: that a man must run through much trouble before he brings them to act and enjoyment: that he must take them in despite of himself, against reason and his conscience, the tenderest parts of man and the most sensible of affliction: they are at the best so little, that they are limited to one sense, not spread upon all the faculties like the pleasures of virtue, which make the bones fat by an intellectual rectitude, and the eyes sprightly by a wise proposition, and pain itself to become easy by hope and a present rest within: it is certain (I say) by a great experience, that the pleasures of sin enter by cursings and a contradictory interest, and become pleasant not by their own relish, but by the viciousness of the palate, by spite and peevishness, by being forbidden and unlawful: and that which is its sting is, at some times, the cause of all its sweetness it can have: they are gone sooner than a dream: they are crossed by one another, and their parent is their tormenter; and when sins are tied in a chain, with that chain they dash one another's brains out, or make their lodging restless: it is never liked long; and promises much and performs little; it is great at distance, and little at hand, against the nature of all substantial things; and, after all this, how little pleasure is left, themselves

* Hosea xiii. 2.

have reason with scorn and indignation to resent. So that, if experience can be pretended against experience, there is nothing to be said to it but the words which Phryne desired to be written on the gates of Thebes, *Ἀλέξανδρος κατέσκαλεν, ἀπέστησε δὲ Φρύνη ἡ ἑταῖρα*, "Phryne the harlot built it up, but Alexander dug it down:" the pleasure is supported by little things, by the experience of fools and them that observed nothing, and the relishes tasted by artificial appetites, by art and cost, by violence and preternatural desires, by the advantage of deception and evil habits, by expectation and delays, by dreams and inconsiderations: these are the harlot's hands that build the fairy castle, but the hands of reason and religion, sober counsels and the voice of God, experience of wise men and the sighings and intolerable accents of perishing or returning sinners, dig it down, and sow salt in the foundations, that they may never spring up in the accounts of men that delight not in the portion of fools and forgetfulness. "Neque enim Deus ita viventibus quicquam promisit boni, neque ipsa per se mens humana, talium sibi conscia, quicquam boni sperare audeat:" "To men that live in sin, God hath promised no good, and the conscience itself dares not expect it."*

SERMON XX.

PART II.

WE have already opened this dunghill, covered with snow, which was indeed on the outside white as the spots of leprosy, but it was no better; and if the very colours and instruments of deception, if the fucus and ceruse be so spotted and sullied, what can we suppose to be under the wrinkled skin, what in the corrupted liver, and in the sinks of the body of sin? That we are next to consider: but if we open the body, and see what a confusion of all its parts, what a rebellion and tumult of the humours, what a disorder of the members, what a monstrosity or deformity is all over, we shall be infinitely convinced, that no man can choose a sin, but upon the same ground on which he may choose a fever, or long for madness or the gout. Sin, in its natural efficiency, hath in it so many evils, as must needs affright a man, and scare the confidence of every one that can consider.

When our blessed Saviour shall conduct his church to the mountains of glory, he

shall "present it to God without spot or wrinkle,"* that is, pure and vigorous, entirely freed from the power and the infection of sin. Upon occasion of which expression it hath been spoken, that sin leaves in the soul a stain or spot, permanent upon the spirit, discomposing the order of its beauty, and making it appear to God "in sordibus," "in such filthiness," that he who "is of pure eyes cannot behold." But concerning the nature or proper effects of this spot or stain, they have not been agreed: some call it an obligation or a guilt of punishment; so Scotus. Some fancy it to be an elongation from God, by dissimilitude of conditions; so Peter Lombard. Alexander of Ales says it is a privation of the proper beauty and splendour of the soul, with which God adorned it in the creation and superaddition of grace; and upon this expression they most agree, but seem not to understand what they mean by it; and it signifies no more, but as you, describing sickness, call it a want of health, and folly, a want of wisdom; which is indeed to say, what a thing is not, but not to tell what it is: but that I may not be hindered by this consideration, we may observe, that the spots and stains of sin are metaphorical significations of the disorder and evil consequents of sin; which it leaves partly upon the soul, partly upon the state and condition of man, as meekness is called an ornament, and faith a shield, and salvation a helmet, and sin itself a wrinkle, corruption, rottenness, a burden,† a wound, death, filthiness: so it is a defiling of a man; that is, as the body contracts nastiness and dishonour by impure contacts and adherences, so does the soul receive such a change, as must be taken away before it can enter into the eternal regions, and house of purity. But it is not a distinct thing, not an inherent quality, which can be separated from other evil effects of sin, which I shall now reckon by their proper names; and St. Paul comprises under the scornful appellation of "shame."

1. The first natural fruit of sin is ignorance. Man was first tempted by the promise of knowledge; he fell into darkness by believing the devil holding forth to him a new light. It was not likely good should come of so foul a beginning; that the wo

* Eph. v. 27.

† Κατὰ δ' αἰθάλην.

Κολί δ' οἰκτρίταται κίχρηται, &c. Heeb.

*Plat. de Rep.

man should believe the devil putting on no brighter shape than a snake's skin, she neither being afraid of sin, nor affrighted to hear a beast speak, and he pretending so weakly in the temptation, that he promised only that they should know evil; for they knew good before; and all that was offered to them was the experience of evil: and it was no wonder that the devil promised no more, for sin never could perform any thing but an experience of evil, no other knowledge can come upon that account; but the wonder was, why the woman should sin for no other reward, but for that which she ought to have feared infinitely; for nothing could have continued her happiness, but not to have known evil. Now this knowledge was the introduction of ignorance. For when the understanding suffered itself to be so baffled as to study evil, the will was as foolish to fall in love with it, and they conspired to undo each other. For when the will began to love it, then the understanding was set on work to commend, to advance, to conduct and to approve, to believe it, and to be factious in behalf of the new purchase. I do not believe the understanding part of man received any natural decrement or diminution. For if to the devils their naturals remain entire, it is not likely that the lesser sin of man should suffer a more violent and effective mischief. Neither can it be understood how the reasonable soul, being immortal both in itself and its essential faculties, can lose or be lessened in them, any more than it can die. But it received impediment, by new propositions: it lost and willingly forgot what God had taught, and went away from the fountain of truth, and gave trust to the father of lies, and it must without remedy grow foolish: and so a man came to know evil, just as a man is said to taste of death: for, in proper speaking, as death is not to be felt, because it takes away all sense; so neither can evil be known, because whatsoever is truly cognosible is good and true; and therefore all the knowledge a man gets by sin is to feel evil: he knows it not by discourse, but by sense; not by proposition, but by smart; the devil doing to man as Æsculapius did to Neoclides, *ὅτι διέμενος ὀφθαλμῶν, κατέπλασεν αὐτοῦ τὰ βλέφαρα, ἵνα Ὀδυνῶτο μάλλον* "he gave him a formidable collyrium to torment him more:" the effect of which was, *ὅτι βλέπειν τὸν Πλοῦτον ταχὺ ἰσχύσει, τὸν δὲ Νεοκλείδην μάλλον ἰσχύσει τυφλόν*: (Arist. Pl. 720.) "the

devil himself grew more quicksighted to abuse us," but we became more blind by that opening of our eyes. I shall not need to discourse of the philosophy of this mischief, and by the connexion of what causes ignorance doth follow sin: but it is certain, whether a man would fain be pleased with sin, or be quiet or fearless when he hath sinned, or continue in it, or persuade others to it, he must do it by false propositions, by lyings, and such weak discourses as none can believe but such as are born fools, or such as have made themselves so, or are made so by others. Who in the world is a verier fool, a more ignorant, wretched person, than he that is an atheist? A man may better believe there is no such man as himself, and that he is not in being, than that there is no God: for himself can cease to be, and once was not, and shall be changed from what he is, and in very many periods of his life knows not that he is; and so it is every night with him when he sleeps: but none of these can happen to God; and if he knows it not, he is a fool. Can any thing in this world be more foolish than to think that all this rare fabric of heaven and earth can come by chance, when all the skill of art is not able to make an oyster? To see rare effects, and no cause; an excellent government and no prince; a motion without an immovable; a circle without a centre; a time without eternity; a second without a first: a thing that begins not from itself, and therefore not to perceive there is something from whence it does begin, which must be without beginning; these things are so against philosophy and natural reason, that he must needs be a beast in his understanding that does not assent to them; this is the atheist: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." That is his character: the thing framed says that nothing framed it; the tongue never made itself to speak, and yet talks against him that did; saying, that which is made, is, and that which made it, is not. But this folly is as infinite as hell, as much without light, or bound, as the chaos or the primitive nothing. But in this, the devil never prevailed very far; his schools were always thin at these lectures: some few people have been witty against God, that taught them to speak before they knew to spell a syllable; but either they are monsters in their manners, or mad in their understandings, or ever find themselves confuted by a thunder or a plague, by danger or death.

But the devil hath infinitely prevailed in a thing that is almost as senseless and ignorant as atheism, and that is idolatry; not only making God after man's image, but in the likeness of a calf, of a cat, of a serpent; making men such fools as to worship a quartan ague, fire and water, onions and sheep. This is the skill man learned, and the philosophy that he is taught, by believing the devil. What wisdom can there be in any man, that calls good evil, and evil good; to say fire is cold, and the sun black; that fornication can make a man happy, or drunkenness can make him wise? And this is the state of a sinner, of every one that delights in iniquity; he cannot be pleased with it if he thinks it evil; he cannot endure it without believing this proposition, That there is in drunkenness or lust pleasure enough, good enough, to make him amends for the intolerable pains of damnation. But then, if we consider upon what nonsense-principles the state of an evil life relies, we must in reason be impatient, and with scorn and indignation drive away the fool; such as are—sense is to be preferred before reason, interest before religion, a lust before heaven, moments before eternity, money above God himself; that a man's felicity consists in that which a beast enjoys; that a little in present, uncertain, fallible possession, is better than the certain state of infinite glories hereafter: what child, what fool, can think things more weak and more unreasonable? And yet if men do not go upon these grounds, upon what account do they sin? Sin hath no wiser reasons for itself than these: *μῦθος ἔχει πικρῶν μύθων*: the same argument that a fly hath to enter into a candle, the same argument a fool hath that enters into sin: it looks prettily, but rewards the eye, as burning basins do, with intolerable circles of reflected fire. Such are the principles of a sinner's philosophy. And no wiser are his hopes; all his hopes that he hath are, that he shall have time to repent of that which he chooses greedily; that he whom he every day provokes will save him, whether he will or not; that he can, in an instant, or in a day, make amends for all the evils of forty years; or else, that he shall be saved whether he does or not; that heaven is to be had for a sigh, or a short prayer, and yet hell shall not be consequent to the affections, and labours, and hellish services, of a whole life; he goes on and cares not, he hopes without a promise, and refuses to believe all the

threatenings of God; but believes he shall have a mercy for which he never had a revelation. If this be knowledge or wisdom, then there is no such thing as folly, no such disease as madness.

But then consider, that there are some sins whose very formality is a lie. Superstition could not be in the world, if men did believe God to be good and wise, free and merciful, not a tyrant, not an unreasonable exacter; no man would dare to do in private what he fears to do in public, if he did know that God sees him there, and will bring that work of darkness into light. But he is so foolish as to think, that if he sees nothing, nothing sees him; for if men did perceive God to be present, and yet do wickedly, it is worse with them than I have yet spoke of; and they believe another lie, that to be seen by man will bring more shame, than to be discerned by God; or that the shame of a few men's talk is more intolerable than to be confounded before Christ, and his army of angels, and saints, and all the world. He that excuses a fault by telling a lie, believes it better to be guilty of two faults, than to be thought guilty of one; and every hypocrite thinks it not good to be holy, but to be accounted so is a fine thing; that is, that opinion is better than reality, and that there is in virtue nothing good but the fame of it. And the man that takes revenge, relies upon this foolish proposition; that his evil that he hath already suffered grows less if another suffers the like; that his wound cannot smart, if by my hand he dies that gave it; *ἡξεί το μέλος γοερῶν γοερῶς*, the sad accents and doleful tunes are increased by the number of mourners, but the sorrow is not lessened.

I shall not need to thrust into this account the other evils of mankind that are the events of ignorance, but introduced by sin; such as are, our being moved by what we see strongly, and weakly by what we understand; that men are moved rather by a fable than by a syllogism, by parables than by demonstrations, by examples than by precepts, by seeming things than by real, by shadows than by substances; that men judge of things by their first events, and measure the events by their own short lives, or shorter observations; that they are credulous to believe what they wish, and incredulous of what makes against them, measuring truth or falsehood by measures that cannot fit them, as foolishly as if they should judge of a colour by the dimensions of a body, or feel

music with the hand; they make general conclusions from particular instances, and take account of God's actions by the measures of a man. Men call that justice that is on their side, and all their own causes are right, and they are so always; they are so when they affirm them in their youth, and they are so when they deny them in their old age; and they are confident in all their changes; and their first error, which they now see, does not make them modest in the proposition which they now maintain; for they do not understand that what was, may be so again: "So foolish and ignorant was I, (said David,) and as it were a beast before thee." Ambition is folly, and temerity is ignorance, and confidence never goes without it, and impudence is worse, and zeal or contention is madness, and prating is want of wisdom, and lust destroys it, and makes a man of a weak spirit and a cheap reasoning; and there are in the catalogue of sins very many, which are directly kinds, and parts, and appendages of ignorance; such as are, blindness of mind, affected ignorance, and wilful; neglect of hearing the Word of God, resolved incredulity, forgetfulness of holy things, lying and believing a lie; this is the fruit of sin, this is the knowledge that the devil promised to our first parents as the rewards of disobedience; and although they sinned as weakly and fondly, φρονήματος τόπων στερηθέντες, upon as slight grounds, and trifling a temptation, and as easy a deception, as many of us since, yet the causes of our ignorance are increased by the multiplication of our sins; and if it was so bad in the green tree, it is much worse in the dry; and no man is so very a fool as the sinner, and none are wise but the servants of God.

Μοῖνοι Χαλδαῖοι σοφίαν λόγον, ἢ δ' ἄρ' Ἑβραῖοι,
 Ἀπτογέμεθλον ἀνακτα σεβάζομενοι θεῶν ἀγνώως.

"The wise Chaldees and the wiser Hebrews, which worship God chastely and purely, they only have a right to be called wise;" all that do not so are fools and ignorants, neither knowing what it is to be happy, nor how to purchase it; ignorant of the noblest end, and of the competent means towards it: they neither know God nor themselves, and no ignorance is greater than this, or more pernicious. What man is there in the world that thinks himself covetous or proud? and yet millions there are who, like Harpate, think that the house is dark, but not themselves. Virtue makes our desires tem-

perate and regular, it observes our actions, condemns our faults, mortifies our lusts, watches all our dangers and temptations: but sin makes our desires infinite, and we would have we cannot tell what; we strive that we may forget our faults; we labour that we may neither remember nor consider; we justify our errors, and call them innocent, and that which is our shame we miscall honour; and our whole life hath in it so many weak discourses and trifling propositions, that the whole world of sinners is like the hospital of the "insensati," madness and folly possess the greater part of mankind. What greater madness is there than to spend the price of a whole farm in contention for three sheaves of corn? and yet "tantum pectora cæcæ Noctis habent," this is the wisdom of such as are contentous, and love their own will more than their happiness, their humour more than their peace.

Furor est post omnia perdere naulum.—Juv.

Men lose their reason, and their religion, and themselves at last, for want of understanding; and all the wit and discourses by which sin creeps in, are but φροντίδων βουλεύματα, γλώσσης τε κόμπιοι, "frauds of the tongue, and consultations of care;"* but in the whole circle of sins there is not one wise proposition, by which a man may conduct his affairs, or himself become instructed to felicity. This is the first natural fruit of sin: it makes a man a fool, and this hurt sin does to the understanding, and this is shame enough to that in which men are most apt to glory.

Sin naturally makes a man weak; that is, unapt to do noble things: by which I do not understand a natural disability: for it is equally ready for a man to will good as evil, and as much in the power of his hands to be lifted up in prayer to God as against his brother in a quarrel; and between a virtuous object and his faculties there is a more apt proportion, than between his spirit and a vice; and every act of grace does more please the mind, than an act of sin does delight the sense; and every crime does greater violence to the better part of man, than mortification does to the lower; and oftentimes a duty consists in a negative, as, not to be drunk, not to swear, and it is not to be understood that a man hath naturally no power not to do; if there be a natural disability, it is to action, not to rest or ceasing; and

* Hecub.

therefore in this case, we cannot reasonably nor justly accuse our nature, but we have reason to blame our manners, which have introduced upon us a moral disability, that is, not that the faculty is impotent and disabled, but that the whole man is; for the will in many cases desires to do good, and the understanding is convinced and consents, and the hand can obey, and the passions can be directed, and be instrumental to God's service: but because they are not used to it, the will finds a difficulty to do them so much violence, and the understanding consents to their lower reasonings, and the desires of the lower man do will stronger; and then the whole man cannot do the duty that is expected. There is a law in the members, and he that gave that law is a tyrant, and the subjects of that law are slaves, and oftentimes their ear is bored; and they love their fetters, and desire to continue that bondage for ever; the law is the law of sin, the devil is the tyrant, custom is the sanction or the firmament of the law: and every vicious man is a slave, and chooses the vilest master, and the basest of services, and the most contemptible rewards. "Lex enim peccati est violentia consuetudinis, quâ trahitur et tenetur animus etiam invitus, eo merito quo in eam volens illabatur," said St. Austin; "The law of sin is the violence of custom, which keeps a man's mind against his mind, because he entered willingly," and gave up his own interest; which he ought to have secured for his own felicity, and for his service who gave for it an invaluable price: and indeed in questions of virtue and vice there is no such thing as nature; or it is so inconsiderable, that it hath in it nothing beyond an inclination which may be reverted; and very often not so much: nothing but a perfect indifferency, we may if we will, or we may choose: but custom brings in a new nature, and makes a bias in every faculty. To a vicious man some sins become necessary; temperance makes him sick; severity is death to him, it destroys his cheerfulness and activity, it is as his nature, and the desire dwells for ever with him, and his reasonings are framed for it and his fancy, and in all he is helped by example, by company, by folly, and inconsideration; and all these are a faction and a confederacy against the honour and service of God. And in this, philosophy is at a stand, nothing can give an account of it but experience and sorrowful instances; for it is infinitely unreasonable, that when you have discoursed wisely

against unchastity, and told, that we are separated from it by a circumvallation of laws of God and man, that it dishonours the body, and makes the spirit captive, that it is fought against by arguments sent from all the corners of reason and religion, and the man knows all this, and believes it, and prays against his sin, and hates himself for it, and curses the actions of it; yet oppose against all this but a fable or a merry story, a proverb or a silly saying, the sight of his mistress, or any thing but to lessen any one of the arguments brought against it, and that man shall as certainly and clearly be determined to that sin, as if he had on his side all the reason of the world. *Δευτὴν γὰρ ἦθος καὶ ἐξομοιωσάσαι καὶ βιάσασθαι πρὸς φύσιν,* Custom does as much as nature can do; it does sometimes more, and superinduces a disposition contrary to our natural temper. Eudemus had so used his stomach to so unnatural drinks, that, as himself tells the story, he took in one day two-and-twenty potions in which hellebore was infused, and rose at noon, and supped at night, and felt no change: so are those that are corrupted with evil customs, nothing will purge them; if you discourse wittily, they hear you not; or, if they do, they have twenty ways to answer, and twice twenty to neglect it: if you persuade them to promise to leave their sin, they do but show their folly at the next temptation, and tell that they did not mean it: and if you take them at an advantage when their hearts are softened with a judgment or a fear, with a shame or an indignation, and then put the bars and locks of vows upon them, it is all one; one vow shall hinder but one action, and the appetite shall be doubled by the restraint, and the next opportunity shall make an amends for the first omission: or else the sin shall enter by parts: the vow shall only put the understanding to make a distinction, or to change the circumstance, and under that colour the crime shall be admitted, because the man is resolved to suppose the matter so dressed was not vowed against. But then, when that is done, the understanding shall open that eye that did but wink before, and see that it was the same things, and secretly rejoice that it was so cozened: for now the lock is opened, and the vow was broken against his will, and the man is at liberty again because he did the thing at unawares, οὐ θέλων τε καὶ θέλων, still he is willing to

* Plutarch.

believe the sin was not formal vow-breach, but now he sees he broke it materially, and because the band is broken, the yoke is in pieces; therefore the next action shall go on upon the same stock of a single iniquity, without being affrighted in his conscience at the noise of perjury. I wish we were all so innocent as not to understand the discourse; but it uses to be otherwise,

Nam si discedas, laqueo tenet ambitiosi
Consuetudo mali:—et in ægro corde senescit.
Juv.

“Custom hath waxen old in his deceived heart, and made snares for him that he cannot disentangle himself:” so true is that saying of God by the prophet, “Can an Ethiopian change his skin? then may ye learn to do well, when ye are accustomed to do evil.” But I instance in two things, which, to my sense, seem great aggravations of the slavery and weakness of a customary sinner.

The first is, that men sin against their interest. They know they shall be ruined by it; it will undo their estates, lose their friends, ruin their fortunes, destroy their body, impoverish the spirit, load the conscience, discompose his rest, confound his reason, amaze him in all his faculties, destroy his hopes, and mischief enough besides; and when he considers this, he declares against it; but “cum bona verba erumpant, affectus tamen ad consuetudinem relabuntur,” “the man gives good words, but the evil custom prevails;” and it happens as in the case of the Tiryinthians, who, to free their nation from a great plague, were bidden only to abstain from laughter, while they offered their sacrifice: but they had been so used to a ridiculous effeminacy, and vain course of conversation, that they could not, though the honour and splendour of the nation did depend upon it. God of his mercy keep all Christian people from a custom in sinning! for if they be once fallen thither, nothing can recover them but a miraculous grace.

2. The second aggravation of it is, that custom prevails against experience. Though the man hath already smarted, though he hath been disgraced and undone, though he lost his relations and his friends, he is turned out of service, and disemployed, he begs with a load of his old sins upon his shoulders—yet this will not cure an evil custom: do we not daily see how miserable some men make themselves with drunkenness and folly? Have not we seen them that have been sick with intemperance, deadly

sick, enduring for one drunken meeting more pain than is in all the fasting-days of the whole year? and yet, do they not the very next day go to it again? Indeed, some few are smitten into the beginning of repentance, and they stay a fortnight, or a month, and, it may be, resist two or three invitations; but yet the custom is not gone, Nec tu, cum obstiteris semel, instantique negaris Parere imperio, “Rupi jam vincula,” dicas:

“Think not the chain is off, when thou hast once or twice resisted; or if the chain be broke, part remains on thee, like a cord upon a dog’s neck,”

Nam et lactata canis nodum abripit; attamen illi,
Cum fugit, a collo trahitur pars longa catena.
PERS.

He is not free that draws his chain after him; and he that breaks off from his sins with greatest passion, stands in need of prosperous circumstances, and a strange freedom from temptation, and accidental hardness, and superinduced confidence, and a preternatural severity; “Opus est aliqua fortunæ indulgentia adhuc inter humana luctanti, dum nodum illum exsolvit et omne vinculum mortale,”* for the knot can hardly be untied which a course of evil manners hath bound upon the soul; and every contingency in the world can entangle him, that wears upon his neck the links of a broken chain. “Nam qui ab eo quod amat, quam extemplo suaviis sagittatis percussus est, ilico res foras labitur, liquitur;” if he sees his temptation again he is ἐπιπλώμενος ὑπ’ εὐνοίας, his kindness to it, and conversation with his lust, undoes him, and breaks his purposes, and then he dies again, or falls upon that stone, that with so much pains he removed a little out of his way; and he would lose the spent wealth, or the health, and the reputation, over again, if it were in his power. Philomusus was a wild young fellow in Domitian’s time, and he was hard put to it to make a large pension to maintain his lust and luxury, and he was every month put to beggarly arts to feed his crime. But when his father died and left him all, he disinherited himself; he spent it all, though he knew he was to suffer that trouble always, which vexed his lustful soul in the frequent periods of his violent want.†

Now, this is such a state of slavery, that persons that are sensible ought to complain, δουλείαν δουλέειν πάνν ἰσχυράν that they serve

* Seneca de vitâ beatâ. † Martial.

worse lords than Egyptian task-masters, there is a lord within that rules and rages, "Intus et in jecore ægro pascuntur domini;" sin dwells there, and makes a man a miserable servant; and this is not only a metaphorical expression, under which some spiritual and metaphysical truth is represented, but it is a physical, material truth; and a man endures hardship, he cannot move but at this command; and not his outward actions only, but his will and his understanding too, are kept in fetters and foolish bondage: μέμησο, ὅτι νευροπαστούν ἐστίν ἐκεῖνο, τὸ ἔδον ἐγκραρυμένον ἐκεῖνο ῥητορεία, ἐκεῖνο ζωὴ, ἐκεῖνο ἄνθρωπος, said Marcus Antoninus, "The two parts of a man are rent in sunder, and that that prevails is the life, it is the man, it is the eloquence, persuading every thing to its own interest." And now consider what is the effect of this evil. A man by sin is made a slave, he loses that liberty that is dearer to him than life itself; and, like the dog in the fable, we suffer chains and ropes only for a piece of bread, when the lion thought liberty a sufficient reward and price for hunger, and all the hardships of the wilderness. Do not all the world fight for liberty, and at no terms will lay down arms, till at least they be cozened with the image and colour of it? οὐ θηήσκει ζήλος ἐλευθερίας; and yet for the pleasure of a few minutes we give ourselves into bondage; and all the world does it, more or less.

Φεῦ. οὐκ ἔστι θνητῶν, ὅστις ἔστ' ἐλεύθερος.
Ἡ χρημάτων γὰρ δουλός ἐστιν, ἢ τύχης,
Ἡ πλῆθος αὐτὸν πολεός, ἢ νόμον γραφαί
Ἐργουσι χρῆσθαι μὴ κατὰ γνώμην τρόποις.
EURIP.

Either men are slaves to fortune, or to lust; to covetousness, or tyranny; something or other compels him to usages against his will and reason; and when the laws cannot rule him, money can; "Divitiæ enim apud sapientem virum in servitute sunt, apud stultum in imperio;" for "Money is the wise man's servant, and the fool's master;" but the bondage of a vicious person, is such a bondage as the child hath in the womb, or rather as a sick man in his bed; we are bound fast by our disease, and a consequent weakness; we cannot go forth though the doors be open, and the fetters knocked off, and virtue and reason, like St. Peter's angel, call us, and beat us upon the sides, and offer to go before us, yet we cannot come forth from prison; for we have by our evil customs given hostages to the devil, never to stir from the enemy's quarter; and this

is the greatest bondage that is imaginable, the bondage of conquered, wounded, unre-sisting people;" ἀδίσποτος ἢ ἀμειψή, "virtue only is the truest liberty;" "and if the Son of God make us free, then are we free indeed."

3. Sin does naturally introduce a great baseness upon the spirit, expressed in Scripture, in some cases, by the devil's entering into a man, as it was in the case of Judas, "after he had taken the sop, Satan entered into him;"* and St. Cyprian, speaking of them that after baptism lapsed into foul crimes, affirms, that "spiritu immundo quasi redeunte quatiuntur, ut manifestum sit diabolium in baptismo fide creditis excludi, si fides postmodum defecerit regredi;"† "faith, and the grace of baptism, turn the devil out of possession; but when faith fails, and we loose the bands of religion, then the devil returns;" that is, the man is devolved into such sins, of which there can be no reason given, which no excuse can lessen, which are set off with no pleasure, advanced by no temptations, which deceive by no allurements and flattering pretences; such things which have a proper and direct contrariety to the good spirit, and such as are not restrained by human laws; because they are states of evil rather than evil actions, principles of mischief rather than direct emanations; such as are unthankfulness, impiety, giving a secret blow, fawning hypocrisy, detraction, impudence, forgetfulness of the dead, and forgetting to do that in their absence which we promised to them in presence;

Οὐκοῦν τὸδ' αἰσχρὸν εἰ βλέποντι μὲν φίλον
Χρῶμεσθ', ἐπεὶ δ' ὄλωκε, μὴ χρῶμεσθ' ἔτι.
EURIP.

concerning which sorts of unworthiness, it is certain they argue a most degenerate spirit, and they are the effect, the natural effect, of malice and despair, an unwholesome ill-natured soul, a soul corrupted in its whole constitution. I remember that in the apologues of Phædrus, it is told concerning an ill-natured fellow, that he refused to pay his symbol, which himself and all the company had agreed should be given for every disease that each man had; he denying his itch to be a disease; but the company taking off the refuser's hat for a pledge, found that he had a scald head, and so demanded the money double: which he pertinaciously resisting, they threw him down and then discovered he was broken-

* John xiii. 27.

† Cypr. Ep. 76.

bellied, and justly condemned him to pay three philippics:

Quæ fuerat fabula, pœna fuit.

One disease discovers itself by the hiding of another, and that being opened discovers a third; he that is almost taken in a fault, tells a lie to escape; and to protect that lie, he forswears himself; and that he may not be suspected of perjury, he grows impudent; and that sin may not shame him, he will glory in it, like the slave in the comedy, who, being torn with whips, grinned, and forced an ugly smile that it might not seem to smart. There are some sins which a man that is newly fallen cannot entertain. There is no crime made ready for a young sinner, but that which nature prompts him to. Natural inclination is the first tempter, then compliance, then custom, but this being helped by a consequent folly, dismantles the soul, making it to hate God, to despise religion, to laugh at severity, to deride sober counsels, to flee from repentance, to resolve against it, to delight in sin without abatement of spirit or purposes: for it is an intolerable thing for a man to be tormented in his conscience for every sin he acts; that must not be; he must have his sin and his peace too, or else he can have neither long; and because true peace cannot come, for "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked," therefore they must make a fantastic peace by studied cozening of themselves, by false propositions, by carelessness, by stupidity, by impudence, by sufferance and habit, by conversation and daily acquaintances, by doing some things, as Absalom did when he lay with his father's concubines, to make it impossible for him to repent, or to be forgiven, something to secure him in the possession of hell; "Tute hoc intristi, quod tibi exedendum est," the man must through it now; and this is it that makes men fall into all baseness of spiritual sins, [*Ἀσεβῆς ἐθὼν εἰς βᾶθος κακῶν καταρροεῖ*, "When a man is come to the bottom of his wickedness, he despises all,"] such as malice and despite, rancour and impudence, malicious, studied ignorance, voluntary contempt of all religion, hating of good men and good counsels, and taking every wise man and wise action to be his enemy; οὐδὲν οὕτως ἀναίσχυντον ποιεῖ ὡς πονηρὸν συνειδός. And this is that baseness of sin which Plato so much detested, that he said "he should blush to be guilty of, though he knew God would pardon him, and that men

should never know it, "propter solam peccati turpitudinem," for the very baseness that is in it." A man that is false to God, will also, if an evil temptation overtakes him, betray his friend; and it is notorious in the covetous and ambitious:

Ἀχάριστον ἡμῶν σπέρμ', ὅσοι δημηγόρους
Ζηλοῦτε τιμᾶς μηδὲ γυμνώσκεισθε ἡμῶς,
Οἱ τοῦς φίλους βλαπτότες οὐ φροντίζετε
Ἦν τοῖσι πολλοῖς πρὸς χάριν λέγητέ τι
EURIP.

They are an unthankful generation, and, to please the people, or to serve their interest, will hurt their friends. That man hath so lost himself to all sweetness and excellency of spirit, that is gone thus far in sin, that he looks like a condemned man, or is like the accursed spirits, preserved in chains of darkness and impieties unto the judgment of the great day, ἀνθρῶπος δ' αἰεὶ ὁ μὲν πονηρὸς οὐδὲν ἄλλο πλὴν κακὸς "this man can be nothing but evil;" for these inclinations and evil forwardnesses, this dyscrasy and gangrened disposition, do always suppose a long or a base sin for their parent; and the product of these is a wretchless spirit; that is, an aptness to any unworthiness, and an unwillingness to resist any temptation, a perseverance in baseness, and a consignment to all damnation: Δράσαντι δ' αἰσχρὰ δεῖναι' ἀποτίμια Δαίμων δέδωκεν, "If men do evil things, evil things shall be their reward." If they obey the evil spirit, an evil spirit shall be their portion; and the devil shall enter into them as he entered into Judas, and fill them full of iniquity.

SERMON XXI.

PART III.

4. ALTHOUGH these are shameful effects of sin, and a man need no greater dishonour than to be a fool and a slave, and a base person, all which sin infallibly makes him; yet there are some sins, which are directly shameful in their nature, and proper disreputation; and a very great many sins are the worst and basest in several respects; that is, every of them hath a venomous quality of its own, whereby it is marked and appropriated to a peculiar evil spirit. The devil's sin was the worst, because it came from the greatest malice: Adam's was the worst, because it was of most universal efficacy and dissemination: Judas' sin the worst, because against the most excellent person; and the relapses of the godly are the worst,

by reason they were the most obliged persons. But the ignorance of the law is the greatest of evils, if we consider its danger; but covetousness is worse than it, if we regard its incurable and growing nature; luxury is most alien from spiritual things, and is the worst of all in its temptation and our proneness; but pride grows most venomous by its unreasonableness and importunity, arising even from the good things a man hath; even from graces, and endearments, and from being more in debt to God. Sins of malice, and against the Holy Ghost, oppugn the greatest grace with the greatest spite; but idolatry is perfectly hated by God by a direct enmity. Some sins are therefore most heinous, because to resist them is most easy, and to act them there is the least temptation: such as are, severally, lying and swearing. There is a strange poison in the nature of sins, that, of so many sorts, every one of them should be the worst. Every sin hath an evil spirit, a devil of its own, to manage, to conduct, and to imbitter it: and although all these are God's enemies, and have an appendant shame in their retinue, yet to some sins shame is more appropriate, and a proper ingredient in their constitutions: such as are lying, and lust, and vow-breach, and inconstancy. God sometimes cures the pride of a man's spirit by suffering his evil manners, and filthy inclination, to be determined upon lust; lust makes a man afraid of public eyes, and common voices; it is (as all sins else are, but this especially) a work of darkness; it does debauch the spirit, and make it to decay and fall off from courage and resolution, constancy and severity, the spirit of government and a noble freedom; and those punishments, which the nations of the world have inflicted upon it, are not smart so much as shame: lustful souls are cheap and easy, trifling and despised, in all wise accounts; they are so far from being fit to sit with princes, that they dare not chastise a sinning servant that is private to their secret follies; it is strange to consider what laborious arts of concealment, what excuses and lessenings, what pretences and fig-leaves, men will put before their nakedness and crimes; shame was the first thing that entered upon the sin of Adam: and when the second world began, there was a strange scene of shame acted by Noah and his sons, and it ended in slavery and baseness to all descending generations.

We see the event of this by too sad an

experience. What arguments, what hardness, what preaching, what necessity, can persuade men to confess their sins? They are so ashamed of them, that to be concealed they prefer before their remedy; and yet in penitential confession the shame is going off, it is like Cato's coming out of the theatre, or the philosopher from the tavern; it might have been shame to have entered, but glory to have departed for ever; and yet ever to have relation to sin is so shameful a thing, that a man's spirit is amazed, and his face is confounded, when he is dressed of so shameful a disease. And there are but few men that will endure it, but rather choose to involve it in excuses and denial, in the clouds of lying, and the white linen of hypocrisy; and yet, when they make a veil for their shame, such is the fate of sin, the shame grows the bigger and the thicker; we lie to men, and we excuse it to God; either some parts of lying or many parts of impudence, darkness or forgetfulness, running away or running farther in, these are the covers of our shame, like menstruous rags upon a skin of leprosy: but so sometimes we see a decayed beauty besmeared with a lying fucus, and the chinks filled with ceruse; besides that it makes no real beauty, it spoils the face, and betrays evil manners: it does not hide old age, or the change of years, but it discovers pride or lust; it was not shame to be old, or wearied and worn out with age, but it is a shame to dissemble nature by a wanton visor. So sin retires from blushing into shame; if it be discovered, it is not to be endured, and if we go to hide it, we make it worse. But then if we remember how ambitious we are for fame and reputation, for honour and a fair opinion, for a good name all our days, and when our days are done; and that no ingenious man can enjoy any thing he hath, if he lives in disgrace; and that nothing so breaks a man's spirit as dishonour, and the meanest person alive does not think himself fit to be despised; we are to consider into what an evil condition sin puts us, for which we are not only disgraced and disparaged here, marked with disgraceful punishments, despised by good men, our follies derided, our company avoided, and hooted at by boys, talked of in fairs and markets, pointed at and described by appellatives of scorn, and every body can chide us, and we die unpitied, and lie in our graves eaten up by worms, and a foul dishonour; but after all this, at the day of judgment, we shall be called from our charnel-houses,

where our disgrace could not sleep, and shall, in the face of God, in the presence of angels and devils, before all good men and all the evil, see and feel the shame of all our sins written upon our foreheads : here in this state of misery and folly we make nothing of it ; and though we dread to be discovered to men, yet to God we confess our sins without a trouble or a blush ; but to tell an even story, because we find some forms of confession prescribed in our prayer-books ; and, that it may appear how indifferent and unconcerned we seem to be, we read and say all, and confess the sins we never did, with as much sorrow and regret, as those that we have acted a thousand times. But in that strange day of recompenses, we shall find the devil to upbraid the criminal, Christ to disown them, the angels to drive them from the seat of mercy, and shame to be their smart, the consigning them to damnation ; they shall then find, that they cannot dwell where virtue is rewarded, and where honour and glory have a throne ; there is no veil but what is rent, no excuse to any but to them that are declared as innocent : no circumstances concerning the wicked to be considered, but them that aggravate ; then the disgrace is not confined to the talk of a village, or a province, but is scattered to all the world : not only in one age shall the shame abide, but the men of all generations shall see and wonder at the vastness of that evil that is spread upon the souls of sinners for ever ; *ἀγών μέγας, Πλήρης στεναγμῶν, οὐδὲ θακρύων κειός.* No night shall then hide it ; for in those regions of darkness where the dishonoured man shall dwell for ever, there is nothing visible but the shame ; there is no light enough for that, but darkness is more than light ; and then he shall reap the fruit of all his shame ; all that for which he was scorned, and all that for which he was despised ; all that in which he was a partner ; all that which was public, and that which was private ; all that which fools applauded, and that which himself durst not own ; the secrets of his lust, and the criminal contrivances of his thoughts ; the base and odious circumstances, and the frequency of the action, and the partner of his sin ; all that which troubles his conscience, and all that he willingly forgets,—shall be proclaimed by the trumpet of God, by the voice of an archangel, in the great congregation of spirits and just men.

There is one great circumstance more of the shame of sin, which extremely enlarges

the evil of a sinful state, but that is not consequent to sin by a natural emanation, but is superinduced by the just wrath of God ; and therefore is to be considered in the third part, which is next to be handled.

3. When the Bœotians asked the oracle, by what they should become happy ? the answer was made, *Ἄσεβήσαντας εὐπράξειν.* “ Wicked and irreligious persons are prosperous :” and they taking the devil at his word, threw the inspired Pythian, the ministering witch, into the sea, hoping so to become mighty in peace and war. The effect of which was this, the devil was found a liar, and they fools at first, and at last felt the reward of irreligion. For there are to some crimes such events ; which are not to be expected from the connexion of natural causes, but from secret influences and undiscernible conveyances ; that a man should be made sick for receiving the holy sacrament unworthily, and blind for resisting the words of an apostle, a preacher of the laws of Jesus, and die suddenly for breaking of his vow, and committing sacrilege, and be under the power and scourge of an exterminating angel for climbing his father’s bed,—these are things beyond the world’s philosophy ; but as in nature, so in divinity too, there are sympathies and antipathies, effects which we feel by experience, and are forewarned of by revelation, which no natural reason can judge, nor any providence can prevent, but by living innocently, and complying with the commandments of God. The rod of God, which “ cometh not into the lot of the righteous,” strikes the sinning man with sore strokes of vengeance.

1. The first that I shall note is, that which I called the aggravation of the shame of sin ; and that is, an impossibility of being concealed in most cases of heinous crimes, *Μηδέποτε μηδέν αἰσχρὸν ποιήσας ἔκρυψε λήσειν,* “ Let no man suppose that he shall for ever hide his sin :” a single action may be conveyed away under the covert of an excuse or a privacy, escaping as Ulysses did the search of Polyphemus, and it shall in time be known that it did escape, and shall be discovered that it was private ; that is, that it is so no longer. But no wicked man, that dwelt and delighted in sin, did ever go off from his scene of unworthiness without a filthy character ; the black veil is thrown over him before his death, and by some contingency or other he enters into his cloud, because few sins determine finally in the thoughts ; but if they dwell there, they will also enter into action, and

then the sin discovers itself; or else the injured person will proclaim it, or the jealous man will talk of it before it is done, or curious people will inquire and discover, or the spirit of detraction shall be let loose upon him, and in spite shall declare more than he knows, not more than is true. The ancients, especially the scholars of Epicurus, believed that no man could be secured or quiet in his spirit from being discovered. "Scelus aliqua tutum, nulla securum tulit;" "They are not secure, even when they are safe;" but are afflicted with perpetual jealousies; and every whisper is concerning them, and all new noises are arrests to their spirits; and the day is too light, and the night is too horrid, and both are most opportune for their discovery; and besides the undiscernible connexion of the contingencies of Providence, many secret crimes have been published by dreams, and talkings in their sleep. It is the observation of Lucretius,

Multi de magnis per somnum rebu' loquuntur,
Indicioque sui facti persæpe fuere.

And what their understanding kept a guard upon, their fancy let loose; fear was the bars and locks, but sleep became the key to open, even then when all the senses were shut, and God ruled alone without the choice and discourse of man. And though no man regards the wilder talkings of a distracted man, yet it hath sometimes happened, that a delirium and a fever, fear of death, and the intolerable apprehensions of damnation, have opened the cabinet of sin, and brought to light all that was acted in the curtains of night;

Quippe ubi se multi, per somnia sæpe loquentes,
Aut morbo delirantes, protraxe feruntur,
Et, celata diu, in medium peccata dedisse.

LUCR.

But there are so many ways of discovery, and amongst so many some one does so certainly happen, that they are well summed up by Sophocles, by saying, that "Time hears all, and tells all;"

Πρὸς ταῦτα χρύπτει μηδὲν ὡς ὁ πάνδ' ὄρων
Καὶ πάντ' ἀκούων, πάντ' ἀναπτύσσει χρόνος,

A cloud may be its roof and cover till it passes over, but when it is driven by a fierce wind, or runs fondly after the sun, it lays open a deformity, which like an ulcer had a skin over it, and pain within, and drew to it a heap of sorrows big enough to run over all its enclosures. Many persons have betrayed themselves by their own fears,

and knowing themselves never to be secure enough, have gone to purge themselves of what nobody suspected them; offered an apology when they had no accuser, but one within; which, like a thorn in the flesh, or like "a word in a fool's heart" was uneasy till it came out. "Non amo se nimium purgitanes;" when men are "over-busy in justifying themselves," it is a sign themselves think they need it. Plutarch tells of a young gentleman that destroyed a swallow's nest, pretending to them that reproved him for doing the thing, which in their superstition the Greeks esteemed so ominous, that the little bird accused him for killing his father. And to this purpose it was that Solomon gave counsel: "Curse not the king, no, not in thy thought, nor the rich in thy bedchamber; for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter;"* murder and treason have by such strange ways been revealed, as if God had appointed an angel president of the revelation, and had kept this in secret and sure ministry, to be as an argument to destroy atheism from the face of the earth, by opening the secrets of men with his key of providence. Intercepting of letters, mistaking names, false inscriptions, errors of messengers, faction of the parties, fear in the actors, horror in the action, the majesty of the person, the restlessness of the mind, distracted looks, weariness of the spirit, and all under the conduct of the Divine wisdom, and the Divine vengeance, make the covers of the most secret sin transparent as a net, and visible as the Chian wines in the purest crystal.

For besides that God takes care of the souls and of the lives of men,—

Ἡ δὲ τύχον μὲν ἔργων ἀπὸ χρόνος, ὡς ὁ πάνδ' ὄρων
Παιδὸς ἔργων μύτων, ὅθ' ἤδει κέξαται χρόνος,

driving away evil from their persons, and "watching as a mother to keep guinea and flies from her dear boy sleeping in the cradle;" there are, in the machinations of a mighty mischief, so many motions to be concentrated, so many wheels to move regularly, and the hand that turns them does so tremble, and there is so universal a confusion in the conduct, that unless it passes suddenly into act, it will be prevented by discovery, and if it be acted it enters into such a mighty horror, that the face of a man will

* Eccl. x. 20.

tell what his heart did think, and his hands have done. And, after all, it was seen and observed by him that stood behind the cloud, who shall also bring every work of darkness into light in the day of strange discoveries and fearful recompenses: and in the mean time certain it is, that no man can long put on a person and act a part, but his evil manner will peep through the corners of the white robe, and God will bring a hypocrite to shame even in the eyes of men.

2. A second superinduced consequent of sin brought upon it by the wrath of God, is sin; when God punishes sin with sin he is extremely angry; for then the punishment is not medicinal, but final and exterminating; God in that case takes no care concerning him, though he dies, and dies eternally. I do not here speak of those sins which are naturally consequent to each other, as evil words to evil thoughts, evil actions to evil words, rage to drunkenness, lust to gluttony, pride to ambition; but such which God suffers the man's evil nature to be tempted to by evil opportunities: *Θεῶν ἀναγκαῶν ῥόδε*, "This is the wrath of God," and the man is without remedy. It was a sad calamity, when God punished David's adultery by permitting him to fall to murder,—and Solomon's wanton and inordinate love, with the crime of idolatry,—and Ananias' sacrilege with lying against the Holy Ghost,—and Judas' covetousness with betraying his Lord, and that betraying with despair, and that despair with self-murder.

Ἰ ——— Παρακαλεῖ δ' ἐκείθεν αὐ
 Ἰ Ἄνη τις ἄλλη, διάδοχος κακῶν κακοῦς.

EURIP.

"One evil invites another;" and when God is angry and withdraws his grace, and the Holy Spirit is grieved and departs from his dwelling, the man is left at the mercy of the merciless enemy, and he shall receive him only with variety of mischiefs; like Hercules when he had broken the horn of Achelous, he was almost drowned with the flood that sprang from it; and the evil man, when he hath passed the first scene of his sorrows, shall be enticed or left to fall into another. For it is a certain truth, that he who resists, or that neglects to use, God's grace, shall fall into that evil condition, that when he wants it most he shall have least. It is so with every man; he that hath the greatest want of the grace of God, shall want it more, if this great want proceeded once from his own sin. "Habenti dabitur,"

said our blessed Lord, "To him that hath, shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly; from him that hath not, shall be taken even that which he hath." It is a remarkable saying of David's; "I have thought upon thy name, O Lord, in the night season, and have kept thy law; this I had because I kept thy commandments;"* keeping God's commandments was rewarded with keeping God's commandments. And in this world God hath not a greater reward to give; for so the soul is nourished unto life, so it grows up with the increase of God, so it passes on to a perfect man in Christ, so it is consigned for heaven, and so it enters into glory; for glory is the perfection of grace, and when our love to God is come to its state and perfection, then we are within the circles of a diadem, and then we are within the regions of felicity. And there is the same reason in the contrary instance.

The wicked person falls into sin, and this he had, because he sinned against his Maker. "Tradidit Deus eos in desideria cordis eorum;" and it concerns all to observe it; and if ever we find that a sin succeeds a sin in the same instance, it is because we refuse to repent; but if a sin succeeds a sin in another instance, as, if lust follows pride, or murder drunkenness; it is a sign that God will not give us the grace of repentance: he is angry at us with a destructive fury, he hath dipped his arrows in the venom of the serpent, and whets his sword in the forges of hell; then it is time that a man withdraw his foot, and that he start back from the preparations of an intolerable ruin: for though men in this case grew insensible, and that is the part of the disease, *διὰ τοῦτο μέγα ἐστὶ κακόν, ὅτι οὐδὲν εἶναι δοκεῖ*, saith Chrysostom; "It is the biggest part of the evil that the man feels it not;" yet the very *antiperistasis*, or the contrariety, the very horror and bigness of the danger, may possibly make a man to contend to leap out of the fire; and sometimes God works a miracle, and besides his own rule delights to reform a dissolute person, to force a man from the grave, to draw him against the bent of his evil habits; yet it is so seldom, that we are left to consider, that such persons are in a desperate condition, who cannot be saved unless God is pleased to work a miracle.

* Psal. cxix. 55, 56.

3. Sin brings in its retinue, fearful plagues, and evil angels, messengers of the displeasure of God, concerning which, τῶν τεθνηκότων ἄλλης, "there are enough of dead;" I mean, the experience is so great, and the notion so common, and the examples so frequent, and the instances so sad, that there is scarce any thing new in this particular to be noted; but something is remarkable, and that is this,—that God, even when he forgives the sin, does reserve such ὑπερήματα τῆς θλίψεως, "remains of punishment," and those not only to the less perfect, but to the best persons, that it makes demonstration, that every sinner is in a worse condition than he dreams of. For consider; can it be imagined that any one of us should escape better than David did? We have reason to tremble when we remember what he suffered, even when God had sealed his pardon. Did not God punish Zedekiah with suffering his eyes to be put out in the house of bondage? Was not God so angry with Valentinian, that he gave him into his enemy's hand to be flayed alive? Have not many persons been struck suddenly in the very act of sin, and some been seized upon by the devil and carried away alive? These are fearful contingencies: but God hath been more angry yet; rebellion was punished in Korah and his company, by the gaping of the earth, and the men were buried alive; and Dathan and Abiram were consumed with fire for usurping the priest's office: but God hath struck severely since that time; and for the prostitution of a lady by the Spanish king, the Moors were brought in upon his kingdom, and ruled there for seven hundred years. And have none of us known an excellent and good man to have descended, or rather to have been thrust, into sin, for which he hath repented, which he hath confessed, which he hath rescinded, and which he hath made amends for as he could, and yet God was so severely angry, that this man was suffered to fall in so big a calamity, that he died by the hands of violence, in a manner so seemingly impossible to his condition, that it looked like the biggest sorrow that hath happened to the sons of men? But then, let us consider, how many and how great crimes we have done; and tremble to think, that God hath exacted so fearful pains and mighty punishments for one such sin, which we, it may be, have committed frequently. Our sin de-

serves as bad as theirs: and God is impartial, and we have no privilege, no promise of exemption, no reason to hope it; what then do we think shall become of this affair? Where must we suffer this vengeance? For that it is due, that it is just we suffer it, these sad examples are a perfect demonstration. We have done that for which God thought flaying alive not to be too big a punishment; that for which God hath smitten kings with formidable plagues; that for which governments have been changed, and nations enslaved, and churches destroyed, and the candlestick removed, and famines and pestilences have been sent upon a whole kingdom; and what shall become of us? Why do we vainly hope it shall not be so with us? If it were just for these men to suffer what they did, then we are at least to expect so much; and then, let us consider, into what a fearful condition sin hath put us, upon whom a sentence is read, that we shall be plagued like Zedekiah, or Korah, or Dathan, or the king of Spain, or any other king, who were, for aught we know, infinitely more innocent and more excellent persons than any of us. What will become of us? For God is as just to us as to them; and Christ died for them as well as for us; and they have repented more than we have done; and what mercy can we expect, that they might not hope for, upon at least as good ground as we? God's ways are secret, and his mercies and justice dwell in a great abyss; but we are to measure our expectations by revelation and experience. But then what would become of us, if God should be as angry at our sin as at Zedekiah's, or king David's? Where have we in our body room enough for so many stripes, as our sin ought justly to be punished withal; or what security or probability have we that he will not so punish us?

For I did not represent this sad story, as a matter of possibility only, that we may fear such fearful strokes as we see God lay upon sinners; but we ought to look upon it as a thing that will come some way or other, and, for aught we know, we cannot escape it. So much, and more, is due for the sin; and though Christ hath redeemed our souls, and if we repent we shall not die eternally, yet he hath no where promised we shall not be smitten. It was an odd saying of the devil to a sinner whom he would fain have had to despair; "Me è

cælo ad Barathrum demisit peccatum, et vos ullum in terra locum tutum existimabitis?" "Sin thrust me from heaven to hell, and do you think on earth to have security!"—Men use to presume that they shall go unpunished; but we see what little reason we have to flatter and undo ourselves, *πάσι γὰρ κοινόν τούτο, τὸν μὲν κακὸν κακὸν τι πάσχειν*, "He that hath sinned must look for a judgment," and how great that is, we are to take our measures by those sad instances of vengeance by which God hath chastised the best of men, when they have committed but a single sin, *ὀλέθριον, ὀλέθριον κακόν*, "sin is" damnable and "destructive:" and therefore, as the ass refused the barley which the fatted swine left, perceiving by it he was fatted for the slaughter,

Tuum libenter prorsus appeterem cibum,
Nisi, qui nutritus illo est, jugulatus foret,
PHÆDRUS.

we may learn to avoid these vain pleasures which cut the throat after they are swallowed, and leave us in that condition that we may every day fear, lest that evil happen unto us, which we see fall upon the great examples of God's anger; and our fears cannot, ought not, at all to be taken off, but by an effective, busy, pungent, hasty, and a permanent repentance; and then also but in some proportions, for we cannot be secured from temporal plagues, if we have sinned; no repentance can secure us from all that; nay, God's pardon, or remitting his final anger, and forgiving the pains of hell, does not secure us here; *ἡ νέμεσις παρὰ πόδας βαίνει*; but sin lies at the door ready to enter in, and rifle all our fortunes.

1. But this hath two appendages, which are very considerable: and the first is, that there are some mischiefs which are the proper and appointed scourges of certain sins, and a man need not ask; "Cujus vulturis hoc erit cadaver?" "What vulture," what death, what affliction, "shall destroy this sinner?" The sin hath a punishment of his own, which usually attends it, as giddiness does a drunkard. He that commits sacrilege, is marked for a vertiginous and changeable fortune; "Make them, O my God, like unto a wheel,"* of an inconstant state: and we and our fathers have seen it, in the change of so many families, which have been undone by being made rich: they

took the lands from the church, and the curse went along with it, and the misery and the affliction lasted longer than the sin. Telling lies frequently hath for its punishment to be "given over to believe a lie," and at last, that nobody shall believe it but himself; and then the mischief is full, he becomes a dishonoured and a baffled person. The consequence of lust is properly shame; and witchcraft is still punished with baseness and beggary; and oppression of widows hath a sting; for the tears of the oppressed are, to the oppressor, like the waters of jealousy, making the belly to swell, and the thigh to rot; the oppressor seldom dies in a tolerable condition; but is marked towards his end with some horrible affliction. The sting of oppression is darted as a man goes to his grave. In these, and the like, God keeps a rule of striking, "In quo quis peccat, in eo punitur." The Divine judgment did point at the sin, lest that be concealed by excuses, and protected by affection, and increased by passion, and destroy the man by its abode. For some sins are so agreeable to the spirit of a fool and an abused person, because he hath framed his affections to them and they comply with his unworthy interest, that when God, out of an angry kindness, smites the man and punishes the sin, the man does carefully defend his beloved sin, as the serpent does his head, which he would most tenderly preserve. But therefore God, that knows all our tricks and devices, our stratagems, to be undone, hath therefore apportioned out his punishments by analogies, by proportions, and entail: so that when every sin enters into its proper portion, we may discern why God is angry, and labour to appease him speedily.

2. The second appendage to this consideration is this, that there are some states of sin, which expose a man to all mischief, as it can happen, by taking off from him all his guards and defences; by driving the good spirit from him, by stripping him of the guards of angels. But this is the effect of an habitual sin, a course of an evil life, and it is called in Scripture, "a grieving the good spirit of God." But the guard of angels is, in Scripture, only promised to them that live godly; "The angels of the Lord pitch their tents round about them that fear him, and deliver them," said David.*

*Τῷ δὲ θρόνῳ πύρροντι παρεστάδων πολυμοχοῖ
Ἄγγελον, ὅτι μέρητε βροτῶς ὡς πάντα τελεῖται.*

* Psal. lxxxiii.

* Psal. xxxiii. 4, 7.

And the Hellenists used to call the angels *ἰγγυρόρους*, "watchmen;" which custody is at first designed and appointed for all, when by baptism they give up their names to Christ, and enter into the covenant of religion. And of this the heathen have been taught something by conversation with the Hebrews and Christians; "unicuique nostrum dare pædagogum Deum," said Seneca to Lucilius, "non primarium, sed ex eorum numero, quos Ovidius vocat ex plebe deos:" "There is a guardian God assigned to every one of us, of the number of those which are of the second order;" such are those of whom David speaks, "Before the gods will I sing praise unto thee;" and it was the doctrine of the stoics, that to every one there was assigned a genius, and a Juno: "Quamobrem major cœlitum populus etiam quàm hominum intelligi potest, quum singuli ex semetipsis totidem Deos faciant, Junones geniosque adoptando sibi," said Pliny: "Every one does adopt gods into his family, and get a genius and a Juno of their own." "Junonem meam iratam habeam;" it was the oath of Quartilla in Petronius; and Socrates in Plato is said to "swear by his Juno;" though afterwards, among the Romans, it became the woman's oath, and a note of effeminacy; but the thing they aimed at was this, that God took care of us below, and sent a ministering spirit for our defence; but that this is only upon the accounts of piety, they knew not. But we are taught it by the Spirit of God in Scripture. For, "the angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to the good of them who shall be heirs of salvation;"* and concerning St. Peter, the faithful had an opinion, that it might be "his angel:" agreeing to the doctrine of our blessed Lord, who spake of angels appropriate to his little ones, to infants, to those that belong to him. Now what God said to the sons of Israel, is also true to us Christians; "Behold, I send an angel before thee: beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions."† So that if we provoke the Spirit of the Lord to anger by a course of evil living, either the angel will depart from us, or, if he stays, he will strike us. The best of these is bad enough, and he is highly miserable,

Qui non sit tanto hoc custode securus,
whom an angel cannot defend from mischief,
nor any thing secure him from the

wrath of God. It was the description and character which the Erythrean sibyl gave to God,

Ἄφρατος, κρείττος αἰώνιος, αἰθέρα ναίων,
Τοῖς τ' ἀκάκοις ἀκακῶν προφέρων πολὺ μείζονα
μοσθόν,
Τοῖς δὲ κακοῖς ἀδίκους τε χολῶν καὶ θύμον ἰγέρων.

It is God's appellative to be "a giver of excellent rewards to just and innocent persons: but to assign to evil men fury, wrath, and sorrow, for their portion." If I should launch farther into this dead sea, I should find nothing but horrid shriekings, and the skulls of dead men utterly undone. Fearful it is to consider, that sin does not only drive us into calamity, but it makes us also impatient, and embitters our spirit in the sufferance: it cries loud for vengeance, and so torments men before the time, even with such fearful outcries, and horrid alarms, that their hell begins before the fire is kindled. It hinders our prayers, and consequently makes us hopeless and helpless. It perpetually affrights the conscience, unless by its frequent stripes it brings a callousness and an insensible damnation upon it. It makes us to lose all that which Christ purchased for us, all the blessings of his providence, the comforts of his Spirit, the aids of his grace, the light of his countenance, the hopes of his glory; it makes us enemies to God, and to be hated by him more than he hates a dog: and with a dog shall be his portion to eternal ages; with this only difference, that they shall both be equally excluded from heaven, but the dog shall not, and the sinner shall, descend into hell; and, which is the confirmation of all evil, for a transient sin God shall inflict an eternal death. Well might it be said in the words of God by the prophet, "Ponam Babylonem in possessionem erinacei," "Babylon shall be the possession of a hedgehog:" that is, a sinner's dwelling, encompassed round with thorns and sharp prickles, afflictions and uneasiness all over. So that he that wishes his sin big and prosperous, wishes his bee as big as a bull, and his hedgehog like an elephant; the pleasure of the honey would not cure the mighty sting; and nothing make recompense, or be a good, equal to the evil of an eternal ruin. But of this there is no end. I sum up all with the saying of Publius Mimus; "Tolerabilior est qui mori jubet, quàm qui male vivere," "He is more to be endured that puts a man to death, than he that betrays him into sin:"—for the end of this is "death eternal."

* Heb. i. 14.

† Exod. xxiii. 20, 21.

SERMON XXII.

THE GOOD AND EVIL TONGUE.

PART I.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.
—Ephes. iv. 29.

HE that had an ill memory, did wisely comfort himself by reckoning the advantages he had by his forgetfulness. For by this means he was hugely secured against malice and ambition; for his anger went off with the short notice and observation of the injury; and he saw himself unfit for the businesses of other men, or to make records in his head, and undertake to conduct the intrigues of affairs of a multitude, who was apt to forget the little accounts of his own seldom reading. He also remembered this, that his pleasures in reading books were more frequent, while he remembered but little of yesterday's study, and to-morrow the book is new, and with its novelties gives him fresh entertainment, while the retaining brain lays the book aside, and is full already. Every book is new to an ill memory, and one long book is a library, and its parts return fresh as the morning, which becomes a new day, though by the revolution of the same sun. Besides these, it brought him to tell truth for fear of shame, and in mere necessity made his speech little, and his discouragements short; because the web drawn from his brain was soon spun out, and his fountain grew quickly dry, and left running through forgetfulness. He that is not eloquent and fair-spoken, hath some of these comforts to plead in excuse of his ill fortune or defective nature. For if he can but hold his peace, he shall be sure not to be troublesome to his company, nor marked for lying, nor become tedious with multiplicity of idle talk; he shall be presumed wise, and oftentimes is so; he shall not feel the wounds of contention, nor be put to excuse an ill-taken saying, nor sigh for the folly of an irrecoverable word; if his fault be that he hath not spoken, that can at any time be mended, but if he sinned in speaking, it cannot be unspoken again. Thus he escapes the dishonour of not being believed, and the trouble of being suspected; he shall never fear the sentence of judges, nor the decrees of courts, high reproaches, or the angry words of the proud, the contradiction of the disputing man, or the thirst of talkers. By

these, and many other advantages, he that holds his peace, and he that cannot speak, may please themselves; and he may at least have the rewards and effects of solitariness, if he misses some of the pleasures of society. But by the use of the tongue, God hath distinguished us from beasts, and by the well or ill using it, we are distinguished from one another; and therefore, though silence be innocent as death, harmless as a rose's breath to a distant passenger, yet it is rather the state of death than life; and therefore, when the Egyptians sacrificed to Harpocrates, their God of silence, in the midst of their rites they cried out, *ἡλώσσα δαίμων*, "the tongue is an angel," good or bad, that is as it happens; silence was to them a god, but the tongue is greater: it is the band of human intercourse, and makes men apt to unite in societies and republics; and I remember what one of the ancients said, that we are better in the company of a known dog, than of a man whose speech is not known, "ut externus alieno non sit hominis vice;" "a stranger to a stranger in his language, is not as a man to a man;" for by voices and homilies, by questions and answers, by narratives and invectives, by counsel and reproof, by praises and hymns, by prayers and glorifications, we serve God's glory and the necessities of men; and by the tongue our tables are made to differ from mangers, our cities from deserts, our churches from herds of beasts and flocks of sheep. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," spoken by the tongues of men and angels: and the blessed spirits in heaven cease not from saying night and day their *Τρισάγιον*, "their song of glory," to him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever: and then our employment shall be glorious as our state, when our tongue shall to eternal ages sing hallelujahs to their Maker and Redeemer; and therefore, since nature hath taught us to speak, and God requires it, and our thankfulness obliges us, and our necessities engage us, and charity sometimes calls for it, and innocence is to be defended, and we are to speak in the cause of the oppressed, and open our mouths in the cause of God, and it is always a seasonable prayer, that God would open our lips, that our mouth may do the work of heaven, and declare his praises, and show forth his glory; it concerns us to take care that nature be changed into grace, necessity into choice, that, while we speak the greatness of God, and minister

to the needs of our neighbour, and do the works of life and religion, of society and prudence, we may be fitted to bear a part in the songs of angels, when they shall rejoice at the feast of the marriage-supper of the Lamb. But the tongue is a fountain both of bitter waters and of pleasant; it sends forth blessing and cursing; it praises God, and rails at men; it is sometimes set on fire, and then it puts whole cities in combustion; it is unruly, and no more to be restrained than the breath of a tempest; it is volatile and fugitive: reason should go before it, and when it does not, repentance comes after it; it was intended for an organ of the Divine praises, but the devil often plays upon it, and then it sounds like the screech-owl, or the groans of death; sorrow and shame, folly and repentance, are the notes and formidable accents of that discord. We all are naturally *λογόφιλοι*, "lovers of speech," more or less; and God reproves it not, provided that we be also *φιλόλογοι*, "wise and material, useful and prudent, in our discourses." For since speech is for conversation, let it be also charitable and profitable, let it be without sin, but not without profit and grace to the hearers, and then it is as God would have it; and this is the precept of the text, first telling us what we should avoid, and then telling us what we should pursue; what our discourse ought not to be, and, secondly, what it ought to be. There being no more variety in the structure of the words, I shall, 1. discourse of the vices of the tongue; 2. of its duty and proper employment.

1. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth;" *πᾶς ὁ σαπρὸς λόγος*, corrupt or "filthy" communication; so we read it: and it seems properly to note such communication as ministers to wantonness; such as are the *Fescennines* of Ausonius, the excrement and spume of Martial's verse, and the *Ephesiaca* of Xenophon; indeed, this is such a rudeness as is not to be admitted into civil conversation; and is wittily noted by the apostle, charging that "fornication should not be once named among them, as becometh saints;" not meaning that the vice should not have its name and filthy character, but that nothing of it be named, in which it can be tempting or offensive; nothing tending to it, or teaching of it, should be named; we must not have *πόρνον λόγον*, "fornication in our talk;" that is such a baseness, that it not only grieves

the Divine Spirit, but dishonours all its channels and conveyances: the proper language of the sin is not fit to be used so much as in reproof; and therefore, I have sometimes wondered, how it came to pass, that some of the ancients, men wise and modest, chaste and of sober spirits, have fallen into a fond liberty of declamation against uncleanness, using such words which bring that sin upon the stage of fancy, and offend "*auriculas non calentes*," "sober and chaste ears." For who can, without blushing, read Seneca describing the looking-glass of Hostius, or the severe but looser words of Persius, or the reproofs of St. Jerome himself, that great patron of virginity, and exacter of chastity? yet more than once reprove filthy things with unhandsome language: St. Chrysostom makes an apology for them that do so; *ἐὰν μὲν γὰρ σεμνῶς εἰπῆς, οὐ δυνήσῃ καθικέσθαι τοῦ ἀκούοντος ἐὰν δὲ βουληθῆς καθάψασθαι, σφοδρῶς ἀνάγκη ἔχεις ἀπορρυνῶσαι σαφέστερον τὰ λεγόμενα*, "you cannot profit the hearers unless you discover the filthiness," for the withdrawing the curtain is shame and confutation enough for so great a baseness; and chirurgeons care not how they defile their hand, so they may do profit to the patient. And, indeed, there is a material difference in the design of him that speaks; if he speaks *ἐξ οἰκίου πάθους*, "according to his secret affection," and private folly, it is certainly intolerable: but if he speaks *ἀπὸ κηδεμονίας*, "out of a desire to profit" the hearer, and cure the criminal, though it be in the whole kind of it honest and well meant; yet, that it is imprudent,

(*Irritamentum Veneris languentis, et acris Divitiis urticae*).—Juv.

and not wholly to be excused by the fair meaning, will soon be granted by all who know what danger and infection it leaves upon the fancy, even by those words by which the spirit is instructed. "*Ab hâc scabie teneamus unguës*;" it is not good to come near the leprosy, though to cleanse the leper's skin,

But the word which the apostle uses, *σαπρὸς λόγος*, means more than this. *Σαπρὸν οὐ τὸ μοχθηρὸν φαῖλον, ἀλλὰ τὸ παλαιὸν*, said Eupolis; and so it signifies, "rusty, rotten, and out-worn with age;" *σαπρὸς εἰρήνης*, "rusty peace," so Aristophanes: and, according to this acceptation of the word, we

* Homil. 4. in. ep. Rom.

are forbidden to use all language that is in any sense corrupted, unreasonable, or useless; language proceeding from an old iniquity, evil habits, or unworthy customs, called, in the style of Scripture, "the remains of the old man," and by the Greeks, "doting" or "talking fondly;" τὸ παιδαρίου εἶ, καὶ φρονεῖς ἀρχαῖκᾶ; "the boy talks like an old dotard." 2. Σαπρὸς signifies "wicked, filthy, or reproachful;" σαπρὸν, αἰσχροὺν, ἀκάθαρτον, "any thing that is in its own nature criminal and disgraceful, any language that ministers to mischief." But it is worse than all this: σαπρὸς ὁ ἀφανισμὸς, "it is a deleterious, an extinction of all good;" for ἀφανίζομαι, is φθείρω, λυμῖναι, καταλίω, it is "a destruction, an entire corruption," of all morality; and to this sense is that of Menander, quoted by St. Paul, φθείρουσιν ἕξη χρηστὴν ὁμιλίαν κακαῖ· "Evil words corrupt good manners." And therefore, under this word is comprised all the evil of the tongue, that wicked instrument of the unclean spirit, in the capacity of all the appellatives. 1. Here is forbidden the useless, vain, and trifling conversation, the Βεελζεβοὺλ, "the god of flies," so is the devil's name; he rules by these little things, by trifles and vanity, by idle and useless words, by the intercourses of a vain conversation. 2. The devil is Διάβολος, "an accuser of the brethren, and the calumniating, slandering, and undervaluing, detracting tongue does his work; that is, λόγος αἰσχροὺς, the second that I named; for αἰσχρότης is λοιδορία μίσος, so Hesychius; it is "slander, hatred, and calumny." 3. But the third is Ἀπολλύων, the devil's worst appellative, "the destroyer," the dissolute, wanton, tempting, destroying conversation; and its worst instance of all is flattery, that malicious, cozening devil, that strengthens our friend in sin, and ruins him from whom we have received, and from whom we expect, good. Of these in order: and first, of the trifling, vain, useless, and impertinent conversation, σαπρὸς λόγος, "Let no vain communication proceed out of your mouth."

1. The first part of this inordination is "multiloquium," "talking too much;" concerning which, because there is no rule or just measure for the quantity, and it is as lawful, and sometimes as prudent, to tell a long story as a short, and two as well as one, and sometimes ten as well as two: all such discourses are to take their estimate by the matter and the end, and can only be altered by their circumstances and append-

ages. Much speaking is sometimes necessary, sometimes useful, sometimes pleasant; and when it is none of all these, though it be tedious and imprudent, yet it is not always criminal. Such was the humour of the gentleman Martial speaks of: he was a good man, and full of sweetness and justice and nobleness, but he would read his nonsense-verses to all companies; at the public games and in private feasts, in the baths and on the beds, in public and in private, to sleeping and waking people.

Vis, quantum facias mali, videre?
Vir justus, probus, innocens timentis.

Lib. 3. Ep. 44.

Every one was afraid of him, and though he was good, yet he was not to be endured. The evil of this is very considerable in the accounts of prudence, and the effects and plaisance of conversation: and the ancients described its evil well by a proverbial expression; for when a sudden silence arose, they said that Mercury was entered, meaning, that he being their "loquax numen," their prating god," yet that quitted him not, but all men stood upon their guard, and called for aid and rescue, when they were seized upon by so tedious an impertinence. And, indeed, there are some persons so full of nothings, that, like the strait sea of Pontus, they perpetually empty themselves by their mouth, making every company or single person they fasten on to be their Proprotis; such a one as was Anaximenes, λέξεων ποταμὸς, τοῦ δὲ σταλαγμοῦ· "He was an ocean of words, but a drop of understanding." And if there were no more in this than the matter of prudence, and the proper measures of civil conversation, it would yet highly concern old men,* and young men and women,† to separate from their persons the reproach of their sex and age, that modesty of speech be the ornament of the youthful, and a reserved discourse be the testimony of the old man's prudence. * "Adolescens," from Ἀδολέσσης, said one: "a young man is a talker for want of wit," and an old man for want of memory; for while he remembers the things of his youth, and not how often he hath told them in his old age, he grows in love

* Supellex ejus garrulitas.—Cornæd.

† Muliebri ingenium proluvium.—Accius in Andromedâ. Sola laboranti potuit succurrere lunæ.—JUVEN.

with the trifles of his youthful days, and thinks the company must do so too: but he canonizes his folly, and by striving to bring reputation to his first days, he loses the honour of his last. But this thing is considerable to further issues; for though no man can say, that much speaking is a sin, yet the Scripture says, "In multiloquio peccatum non deerit;" "Sin goes along with it, and is an ingredient in the whole composition." For it is impossible but a long and frequent discourse must be served with many passions, and they are not always innocent; for he that loves to talk much, must "rem corradere," "scrape materials together," to furnish out the scenes and long orations; and some talk themselves into anger, and some furnish out their dialogues with the lives of others; either they detract, or censure, or they flatter themselves, and tell their own stories with friendly circumstances, and pride creeps up the sides of the discourse; and the man entertains his friend with his own panegyric; or the discourse looks one way and rows another, and more minds the design than its own truth; and most commonly will be so ordered, that it shall please the company, (and that truth or honest plainness seldom does,) or there is a bias in it, which the more of weight and transportation it hath, the less it hath of ingenuity. "Non credo auguribus qui aureis rebus divinant;" like soothsayers, men speak fine words to serve ends, and then they are not believed, or at last are found liars, and such discourses are built up to serve the ministries or pleasures of the company, but nothing else. Pride and flattery, malice and spite, self-love and vanity, these usually wait upon much speaking; and the reward of it is, that the persons grow contemptible and troublesome, they engage in quarrels, and are troubled to answer exceptions; some will mistake them, and some will not believe them, and it will be impossible that the mind should be perpetually present to a perpetual talker, but they will forget truth and themselves, and their own relations. And upon this account it is, that the doctors of the primitive church do literally expound those mimatory words of our blessed Saviour; "Verily I say unto you, of every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account at the day of judgment."* And by

"idle words," they understand, such as are not useful to edification and instruction. So St. Basil: "So great is the danger of an idle word, that though a word be in its own kind good, yet, unless it be directed to the edification of faith, he is not free from danger that speaks it:"† to this purpose are the words of St. Gregory; "While the tongue is not restrained from idle words," "ad temeritatem stultæ increpationis efferatur," "it is made wild, or may be brought forth to rashness and folly:" and therein lies the secret of the reproof: "A periculo liber non est, et ad temeritatem efferatur," "the man is not free from danger, and he may grow rash,"‡ and foolish, and run into crimes, whilst he gives his tongue the reins, and lets it wander, and so it may be fit to be reprov'd, though in its nature it were innocent. I deny not, but sometimes they are more severe. St. Gregory calls every word "vain" or "idle," "quod aut rationæ justæ necessitatis, aut intentione piæ utilitatis caret:"§ and St. Jerome calls it "vain," "quod sine utilitate et loquentis dicitur et audientis," "which profits neither the speaker nor the hearer."|| The same is affirmed by St. Chrysostom¶ and Gregory Nyssen upon Ecclesiastes; and the same seems intimated in the word *κενὸν ῥῆμα*, or *ῥῆμα ἀργόν*, as it is in some copies, "every word that is idle, or empty of business." But, for the stating of the case of conscience, I have these things to say:

1. That the words of our blessed Saviour, being spoken to the Jews, were so certainly intended as they best and most commonly understood, and by "vain" they understood "false" or "lying," not "useless" or "imprudent;" and yet so, though our blessed Saviour hath not so severely forbidden every empty, insignificant discourse; and yet he hath forbidden every lie, though it be "in genere bonorum," as St. Basil's expression is; that is, "though it be in the intention charitable, or in the matter innocent."

2. "Of every idle word we shall give account;" but yet so, that sometimes the *κρίμα*, "the judgment," shall fall upon the words, not upon the persons; they be hay and stubble, useless and impertinent, light and easy, the fire shall consume them and himself shall escape with that loss; he shall

* Matt. xii. 36.

* In Reg. brevior

† C. 17. ubi sup.

‡ In Ps. cxviii.

† Lib. 7. Moral.

|| In Matt. xii.

¶ Cap. 1.

then have no honour, no fair return for such discourses, but they shall with loss and prejudice be rejected and cast away.

3. If all unprofitable discourses be reckoned for idle words, and put upon the account, yet even the capacities of profit are so large and numerous, that no man hath cause to complain that his tongue is too much restrained by this severity. For in all the ways in which he can do himself good or his neighbour, he hath his liberty; he is only to secure the words from being directly criminal, and himself from being arrested with a passion, and then he may reckon it lawful, even upon the severest account, to discourse freely, while he can instruct, or while he can please his neighbour;

Aut prodesse volunt, aut delectare—HOR.

while himself gets a fair opinion and a good name, apt to serve honest and fair purposes; he may discourse himself into a friendship, or help to preserve it; he may serve the works of art or nature, of business public or private, the needs of his house, or the uses of mankind; he may increase learning, or confirm his notices, cast in his symbol of experience and observation, till the particulars may become a proverbial sentence and a rule; he may serve the ends of civility and popular addresses, or may instruct his brother or himself, by something which, at that time, shall not be reduced to a precept by way of meditation, but is of itself apt at another time to do it; he may speak the praises of the Lord by discoursing of any of the works of creation, and himself or his brother may afterwards remember it to that purpose; he may counsel or teach, reprove or admonish, call to mind a precept, or disgrace a vice, reprove it by a parable or a story, by way of idea or witty representation; and he that can find talk beyond all this, discourse that cannot become useful in any one of these purposes, may well be called a prating man, and expect to give account of his folly, in the days of recompense.

4. Although, in this latitude, a man's discourses may be free and safe from judgment, yet the man is not, unless himself design it to good and wise purposes; not always actually, but by an habitual and general purpose. Concerning which he may, by these measures, best take his accounts.

1. That he be sure to speak nothing that

may minister to a vice, willingly and by observation.

2. If any thing be of a suspicious and dubious nature, that he decline to publish it.

3. That, by a prudent moral care, he watch over his words, that he do none of this injury and unworthiness.

4. That he offer up to God in his prayers all his words, and then look to it, that he speak nothing unworthy to be offered.

5. That he often interweave discourses of religion, and glorifications of God, instructions to his brother, and ejaculations of his own, something or other not only to sanctify the order of his discourses, but to call him back into retirement and sober thoughts, lest he wander and be carried off too far into the wild regions of impertinence; and this Zeno calls *γλώσσαν εἰς νοῦν ὑποβρέσαι*, "to dip our tongues in understanding." In all other cases the rule is good, *Ἡ λέγει τί σιγήσῃ κρείττων, ἢ συγγῆν ἔχει*, "Either keep silence, or speak something that is better than it;"* *ἢ συγγῆν καίριον ἢ λόγον ὠφέλιμον*, so Isocrates, consonantly enough to this evangelical precept; "a reasonable silence, or a profitable discourse," choose you whether; for whatsoever cometh of more, is sin, or else is folly at hand, and will be sin at distance.

6. This account is not to be taken by little traverses and intercourses of speech, but by greater measures, and more discernible portions, such as are commensurate to valuable portions of time; for however we are pleased to throw away our time, and are weary of many parts of it, yet are impatiently troubled when all is gone; yet we are as sure to account for every considerable portion of our time, as for every sum of money we receive; and in this it was, that St. Bernard gave caution, "Nemo parvi æstimet tempus, quod in verbis consumitur otiosis," "Let no man think it a light matter, that he spend his precious time in idle words;"† let no man be so weary of what flies away too fast, and cannot be recalled, as to use arts and devices to pass the time away in vanity, which might be rarely spent in the interests of eternity. Time is given us to repent in, to appease the Divine anger, to prepare for and hasten to the society of angels, to stir up our slackened wills, and enkindle our cold devotions, to weep for our daily iniquities, and to sigh

*Eurip.

† Serm. de Triplici Custodiâ.

after, and to work for, the restitution of our lost inheritance; and the reward is very inconsiderable, that exchanges all this for the pleasure of a voluble tongue; and indeed this is an evil, that cannot be avoided by any excuse that can be made for words, that are, in any sense, idle,—though, in all senses of their own nature and proper relations, they be innocent. They are a throwing away something of that, which is to be expended for eternity, and put on degrees of folly, according as they are tedious and expensive of time to no good purposes. I shall not after all this need to reckon more of the evil consequents to the vain and great talker; but if these already reckoned were not a heap big enough, I could easily add this great evil; that the talking man makes himself artificially deaf, being like a man in the steeple when the bells ring, you talk to a deaf man, though you speak wisely;

Οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην μὴ στέγοντα πιμπλάναι
Σοφοῖς ἐπαντῶν ἀνδρῶ μὴ σοφῶ λόγουσ.
EURIP.

Good counsel is lost upon him, and he hath served all his ends when he pours out whatsoever he took in; for he therefore loaded his vessel, that he might pour it forth into the sea.

These and many more evils, and the perpetual unavoidable necessity of sinning by much talking, hath given great advantages to silence, and made it to be esteemed an act of discipline and great religion. St. Romualdus, upon the Syrian mountain, severely kept a seven years' silence; and Thomas Cantipratensis tells of a religious person, in a monastery in Brabant, that spake not one word in sixteen years. But they are greater examples which Palladius tells of: Ammona, who lived with three thousand brethren in so great silence, as if he were an anchorite; but Theona was silent for thirty years together; and Johannes, surnamed Silentarius, was silent for forty-seven years. But this morosity and sullenness are so far from being imitable and laudable, that if there were no direct prevarication of any commands expressed or intimated in Scripture, yet it must certainly either draw with it, or be itself, an infinite omission of duty; especially in the external glorifications of God, in the institution or advantages of others, in thanksgiving in public offices, and in all the ef-

fects and emanations of spiritual mercy. This was to make amends for committing many sins by omitting many duties; and, instead of digging out the offending eye, to pluck out both, that they might neither see the scandal nor the duty; for fear of seeing what they should not, to shut their eyes against all light. It was more prudent which was reported of St. Gregory Nazianzen, who made silence an act of discipline, and kept it a whole Lent in his religious retirements, "Cujus facti mei si causam quaris," (said he in his account he gives of it,) "idecirco à sermone prorsus abstinui, ut sermonibus meis moderari discam;" "I then abstained wholly, that all the year after I might be more temperate in my talk." This was in him an act of caution; but how apt it was to minister to his purpose of a moderated speech for the future, is not certain; nor the philosophy of it, and natural efficacy, easy to be apprehended. It was also practised by way of penance, with indignation against the follies of the tongue, and the itch of prating; so to chastise that petulant member, as if there were a great pleasure in prating, which when it grew inordinate, it was to be restrained and punished like other lusts. I remember it was reported of St. Paul the hermit, scholar of St. Anthony, that, having once asked whether Christ or the old prophets were first, he grew so ashamed of his foolish question, that he spake not a word for three years following: and Sulpitius, as St. Jerome reports of him, being deceived by the Pelagians, spoke some fond things, and, repenting of it, held his tongue to his dying day, "ut peccatum quod loquendo contraxerat, tacendo penitus emendaret." Though the pious mind is in such actions highly to be regarded, yet I am no way persuaded of the prudence of such a deadness and Labyrinthian religion;

Murmura cum secum et rabiosa silentia rodunt,

so such importune silence was called and understood to be a degree of stupidity and madness: for so physicians, among the signs of that disease in dogs, place their not barking; and yet, although the excess and unreasonableness of this may be well chastised by such a severe reproof, yet it is certain, in silence there is wisdom, and there may be deep religion. So Areteus, describing the life of a studious man among others, he inserts this, they are ἀχρῶσ, καὶ ἐν

ἰσότητι γαργαίοι, καὶ ὑπ' ἐνόας κωφοί· “without colour, pale and wise when they are young, and, by reason of their knowledge, silent” as mutes, and dumb as the Seriphian frogs. And indeed it is certain, great knowledge, if it be without vanity, is the most severe bridle of the tongue. For so have I heard, that all the noises and prating of the pool, the croaking of frogs and toads, is hushed and appeased upon the instant of bringing upon them the light of a candle or torch. Every beam of reason and ray of knowledge checks the dissolutions of the tongue. But “Ut quisque contemptissimus et maximè ludibrio est, ita solutissimæ linguæ est,” said Seneca; “Every man, as he is a fool and contemptible, so his tongue is hanged loose;” being like a bell, in which there is nothing but tongue and noise.

Silence therefore is the cover of folly, or the effect of wisdom; it is also religious; and the greatest mystic rites of any institution are ever the most solemn and the most silent; the words in use are almost made synonymous: “There was silence made in heaven for a while,” said St. John, who noted it upon occasion of a great solemnity and mysterious worshippings or revelations to be made there. Ἡ μάλα τις θεὸς ἔνδον, “One of the gods is within,” said Telemachus; upon occasion of which his father reproved him talking.

Σίγα, καὶ μετὰ σὸν νόον ἴσχαγε, μηδ' ἐρέεινε·
 Ἀπὲρ τοι δίκη ἰστί θεῶν, αἰ' Ὀλυμπον ἔχουσον.

ODYS. τ.

“Be thou also silent and say little; let thy soul be in thy hand, and under command; for this is the rite of the gods above.” And I remember, that when Aristophanes* describes the religion in the temple of Æsculapius, ἡ πρῶσπολος, εἰπῶν, ἢ τις αἰσθηται λόφον, Σοφῶν: “The priest commanded great silence when the mysteriousness was nigh;” and so among the Romans:

Itē igitur, pœri, linguis animisque faventes,
 Sertaque delubris et farra imponite cultris.

But now, although silence is become religious, and is wise, and reverend, and severe, and safe, and quiet, ἀδύσος, καὶ ἀλυκος, καὶ ἀνώδυνος, as Hippocrates affirms of it, “without thrist, and trouble, and anguish;” yet it must be καίριος, and must be “seasonable,” and just, and not commenced upon chance

or humour, not sullen and ill-natured, not proud and full of fancy, not pertinacious and dead, not mad and uncharitable, “nam sic etiam tacuisse nocet.” He that is silent in a public joy hath no portion in the festivity, or no thankfulness to him that gave the cause of it. And though, of all things in the world, a prating religion, and much talk in holy things, does most profane the mysteriousness of it, and dismantles its regards, and makes cheap its reverence, and takes off fear and awfulness, and makes it loose and garish, like the laughers of drunkenness, yet even in religion there are seasons to speak; and it was sometimes “pain and grief” to David to be silent; but yet, although tedious and dead silence hath not a just measure of praise and wisdom; yet the worst silence of a religious person is more tolerable and innocent, than the usual pratings of a looser or foolish man. “Pone, Domine, custodiam ori meo et ostium circumstantiæ labiis meis,” said David; “Put a guard, O Lord, unto my mouth, and a door unto my lips;” upon which St. Gregory said well, “Non parietem, sed ostium petit, quod viz. aperitur et clauditur;” “He did not ask for a wall, but for a door; a door that might open and shut:” and it were well it were so indeed: “Labia tua sicut vitæ coccinea;” so Christ commends his spouse in the Canticles; “Thy lips are like a scarlet hair-lace,” that is, tied up with modesty from folly and dissolution. For however that few people offend in silence and keeping the door shut too much, yet, in opening it too hastily, and speaking too much and too foolishly, no man is without a load of guiltiness; and some mouths, like the gates of death,

Noctes atque dies patent—

“are open night and day,” and he who is so, cannot be innocent. It is said of Cicero, he never spake a word which himself would fain have recalled, he spake nothing that repented him. St. Austin, in his seventh epistle to Marcellinus, says, it was the saying of a fool and a sot, not of a wise man; and yet I have read the same thing to have been spoken by the famous Abbot Pambo, in the primitive church; and if it could be well said of this man, who was sparing and severe in talk, it is certain it could not be said of the other, who was a talking, bragging person.

* Plutus.

“Cito lutum colligit amnis exundans,” said St. Ambrose; let your language be restrained within its proper channels and measures; for, “if the river swells over the banks, it leaves nothing but dirt and filthiness behind:” and, besides the great evils and mischiefs of a wicked tongue,—the vain tongue, and the trifling conversation, hath some proper evils; 1. “Stultiloquium,” or “speaking like a fool;” 2. “Scurrilitas,” or, “immoderate and absurd jesting:” and, 3. Revealing secrets.

1. Concerning stultiloquy, it is to be observed, that the masters of spiritual life mean not, the talk and useless babble of weak and ignorant persons; because in their proportion they may serve their little mistaken ends of civility and humanity, as seemingly to them, as the strictest and most observed words of the wiser; if it be their best, their folly may be pitied, but not reprov'd; and to them there is no caution to be added, but that it were well if they would put the bridle into the hands of another, who may give them check when themselves cannot; and no wisdom can be required or useful to them, but to suspect themselves and choose to be conducted by another. For so the little birds and laborious bees,—who, having no art and power of contrivance, no distinction of time, or foresight of new necessities, yet being guided by the hand, and counselled by the wisdom, of the Supreme Power, their Lord, and ours,—do things with greater niceness and exactness of art, and regularity of time, and certainty of effect, than the wise counsellor, who, standing at the back of the prince’s chair, guesses imperfectly, and counsels timorously, and thinks by interest, and determines extrinsical events by inward and unconcerning principles; because these have understanding, but it is less than the infinity of accidents and contingencies without; but the other having none, are wholly guided by him, that knows and determines all things: so it is in the imperfect designs and actions and discourses of weaker people; if they can be ruled by an understanding without, when they have none within, they shall receive this advantage, that their own passions shall not transport their minds, and the divisions and weakness of their own sense and notices shall not make them uncertain and indeterminate; and the measures they shall walk by, shall be disinterest, and even, and dispassionate, and full of observation.

But that which is here meant by stultiloquy, or foolish speaking, is the “lubricum verbi,” as St. Ambrose calls it, “the slipping with the tongue:” which prating people often suffer, whose discourses betray the vanity of their spirit, and discover “the hidden man of the heart.” For no prudence is a sufficient guard, or can always stand “in excubiis,” “still watching,” when a man is in perpetual floods of talk: for prudence attends after the manner of an angel’s ministry; it is despatched on messages from God, and drives away enemies, and places guards, and calls upon the man to awake, and bids him send out spies and observers, and then goes about his own ministries above: but an angel does not sit by a man, as a nurse by the baby’s cradle, watching every motion, and the lighting of a fly upon the child’s lip: and so is prudence: it gives rules, and proportions out our measures, and prescribes us cautions, and by general influences, orders our particulars; but he that is given to talk, cannot be secured by all this; the emissions of his tongue are beyond the general figures and lines of rule; and he can no more be wise in every period of a long and running talk, than a lutanist can deliberate and make every motion of his hand by the division of his notes, to be chosen and distinctly voluntary. And hence it comes, that at every corner of the mouth a folly peeps out, or a mischief creeps in: A little pride and a great deal of vanity will soon escape, while the man minds the sequel of his talk, and not that ugliness of humour, which the severe man, that stood by, did observe, and was ashamed of. Do not many men talk themselves into anger, screwing up themselves with dialogues of fancy, till they forget the company and themselves? And some men hate to be contradicted, or interrupted, or to be discovered in their folly; and some men being a little conscious, and not striving to amend by silence, they make it worse by discourse; a long story of themselves,—a tedious praise of another collaterally to do themselves advantage,—a declamation against a sin to undo the person, or oppress the reputation of their neighbour,—unseasonable repetition of that which neither profits nor delights,—trifling contentions about a goat’s beard, or the blood of an oyster,—anger and animosity, spite and rage,—scorn and reproach begun upon questions which concern neither of the litigants,—fierce disputations,—strivings for what is past, and for what

shall never be: these are the events of the loose and unwary tongue; which are like flies and gnats upon the margin of a pool; they do not sting like an asp, or bite deep as a bear; yet they can vex a man into a fever and impatience, and make him incapable of rest and counsel.

2. The second is scurrility, or foolish jesting. This the apostle so joins with the former *μωρολογία*, "foolish speaking, and jestings which are not convenient,"* that some think this to be explicative of the other, and that St. Paul, using the word *ἐντραπελία*, (which all men before his time used in a good sense,) means not that which indeed is witty and innocent, pleasant and apt for institution, but that which fools and parasites call *ἐντραπελία*, but indeed is *μωρολογία*; what they call facetiousness and pleasant wit, is indeed to all wise persons a mere stultiloquy, or talking like a fool; and that kind of jesting is forbidden. And indeed I am induced fully to this understanding of St. Paul's words, by the conjunctive particle *ἢ*, which he uses, *καὶ αἰσχρότης καὶ μωρολογία, ἢ ἐντραπελία*, "and filthiness and foolish talking, or jesting;" just as in the succeeding verse, he joins *ἀκαθαρσία ἢ πλεονεξία*, "uncleanness (so we read it) or covetousness;" one explicates the other; for by "covetousness" is meant any "defraudation;" *πλεονέκτης*, "fraudator," so St. Cyprian renders it: and *πλεονεξτεῖν* St. Jerome derives from *πλέον ἔχειν*, "to take more than a man should;" and therefore, when St. Paul said, "Let no man circumvent his brother in any matter," he expounds it of "adultery;" and in this very place he renders *πλεονεξίαν*, "stuprum," "lust;" and, indeed, it is usual in Scripture, that covetousness,—being so universal, so original a crime, such a prolific sin,—be called by all the names of those sins by which it is either punished, or to which it tempts, or whereby it is nourished; and as here it is called "uncleanness," or "corruption;" so, in another place, it is called "idolatry." But to return; this jesting, which St. Paul reproveth, is a direct *μωρολογία*, or the jesting of mimics and players, that of the fool in the play, which, in those times, and long before, and long after, were of that licentiousness, that they would abuse Socrates or Aristides: and because the rabble were the laughers, they knew how to make them roar aloud with a slovenly and wanton word, when they understood not the salt and ingenuity of a witty and useful

answer or reply; as it is to be seen in the intertextures of Aristophanes' comedies. But in pursuance of this of St. Paul, the fathers of the church have been very severe in the censures of this liberty. St. Ambrose forbids all: "Non solum profusos, sed etiam omnes jocos declinandos arbitror;" "Not only the looser jestings, but even all, are to be avoided:"* nay, "licet interdum joca honesta et suavia sint, tamen ab ecclesie horrent regula," "the church allows them not, though they be otherwise honest and pleasant; for how can we use those things we find not in Holy Scripture?" St. Basil gives reason for this severity: *Jocus facit animam remissam et erga præcepta Dei negligentem;*" and, indeed, that cannot be denied; those persons whose souls are dispersed and ungathered by reason of a wanton humour to intemperate jesting, are apt to be trifling in their religion. St. Jerome is of the same opinion, and adds a commandment of a full authority, if at least the record was right; for he quotes a saying of our blessed Saviour out of the Gospel of the Nazarenes; "Nunquam læti s̄itis, nisi cum fratrem vestrum in charitate videritis;" "Never be merry, but when you see your brother in charity:"† and when you are merry, St. James hath appointed a proper expression of it, and a fair entertainment to the passion; "If any man be merry, let him sing psalms." But St. Bernard, who is also strict in this particular, yet he adds the temper. Though jestings be not fit for a Christian, "Interdum tamen si incidant, ferendæ fortassis, referendæ nunquam: magis interveniendum caute et prudenter nugacitati;" "If they seldom happen, they are to be borne, but never to be returned and made a business of; but we must rather interpose warily and prudently to hinder the growth and progress of the trifle."

But concerning this case of conscience, we are to remember, these holy persons found jesting to be a trade;‡ such were the "ridicularii" among the Romans, and the *γελοιοποιοι* among the Greeks; and this trade, besides its own unworthiness, was mingled with infinite impieties; and in the institution, and in all the circumstances of its practice, was not only against all prudent severity, but against modesty and chastity, and was a license in disparagement of virtue; and the most excellent things and

* Ephes. v. 4.

* Lip. de Offic.

† In ep. ap. Ephes.

‡ Vide S. Chrysost. Homil. 6. in Matth.

persons were by it undervalued; so that in this throng of evil circumstances finding a humour placed, which, without infinite wariness, could never pretend to innocence, it is no wonder they forbade all; and so also did St. Paul upon the same account. And in the same state of reproof to this day, are all that do as they did: such as are professed jesters, people that play the fool for money, whose employment and study is to unclothe themselves of the covers of reason or modesty, that they may be laughed at. And let it be considered, how miserable every sinner is, if he does not deeply and truly repent; and when the man is wet with tears, and covered with sorrow, crying out mightily against his sins, how ugly will it look when this is remembered, the next day, that he plays the fool, and rasies his laughter louder than his prayers and yesterday's groans, for no interest but that he may eat! A penitent and a jester is like a Grecian piece of money, on which were stamped a Helena on one side, and a Hecuba on the other, a rose and a deadly aconite, a Paris and an Æsop,—nothing was more contrary; and upon this account this folly was reprov'd by St. Jerome; "Verum et hæc à sanctis viris penitus propellenda, quibus magis convenit stercus atque lugere;" "Weeping, and penitential sorrow, and the sweet troubles of pity and compassion, become a holy person,"* much better than a scurrilous tongue. But the whole state of this question is briefly this.

1. If jesting be unseasonable, it is also intolerable: *Γέλας άκαιρος εν βροτοις δεσιν χακος.*

2. If it be immoderate, it is criminal, and a little thing here makes the access; it is so in the confines of folly, that, as soon as it is out of doors, it is in the regions of sin.

3. If it be in an ordinary person, it is dangerous; but if in an eminent, a consecrated, a wise, and extraordinary person, it is scandalous. "Inter sæculares nugæ sunt, in ore Sacerdotis blasphemix," so St. Bernard.

4. If the matter be not of an indifferent nature, it becomes sinful by giving countenance to a vice, or making virtue to become ridiculous.

5. If it be not watched that it complies with all that hear, it becomes offensive and injurious.

6. If it be not intended to fair and lawful purposes, it is sour in the using.

7. If it be frequent, it combines and clu-
sers into a formal sin.

8. If it mingles with any sin, it puts on the nature of that new unworthiness, beside the proper ugliness of the thing itself; and, after all these, when can it be lawful or apt for Christian entertainment?

The Ecclesiastical History reports, that many jests passed between St. Anthony, the father of the hermits, and his scholar St. Paul; and St. Hilarion is reported to have been very pleasant, and of facete, sweet, and more lively conversation; and, indeed, plaisance and joy, and a lively spirit, and a pleasant conversation, and the innocent caresses of a charitable humanity, is not forbidden; "Plenum tamen suavitatis et gratiæ sermonem non esse indecorum," St. Ambrose affirmed; and here in my text our conversation is commanded to be such, *ὡς δὲ χάρις*, "that it may minister grace," that is, favour, complaisance, cheerfulness; and be acceptable and pleasant to the hearer: and so must be our conversation; it must be as far from sullenness as it ought to be from lightness, and a cheerful spirit is the best convoy for religion; and though sadness does in some cases become a Christian, as being an index of a pious mind, of compassion, and a wise, proper resentment of things, yet it serves but one end, being useful in the only instance of repentance; and hath done its greatest works, not when it weeps and sighs, but when it hates and grows careful against sin. But cheerfulness and a festival spirit fill the soul full of harmony, it composes music for churches and hearts, it makes and publishes glorifications of God, it produces thankfulness, and serves the end of charity: and when the oil of gladness runs over, it makes bright and tall emissions of light and holy fires, reaching up to a cloud, and making joy round about: and therefore, since it is so innocent, and may be so pious and full of holy advantage, whatsoever can innocently minister to this holy joy, does set forward the work of religion and charity. And, indeed, charity itself, which is the vertical top of all religion, is nothing else but a union of joys, centred in the heart, and reflected from all the angels of our life and intercourse. It is a rejoicing in God, a gladness in our neighbour's good, a pleasure in doing good, a rejoicing with him; and without love we cannot have any joy at all. It is this that makes children to be a pleasure, and friendship to be so noble and divine a thing; and upon this account it is certain, that all that which can innocently make a man cheerful, does also make him charitable; for grief,

* Ubi supra.

and age, and sickness, and weariness, these are peevish and troublesome; but mirth and cheerfulness are content, and civil, and compliant, and communicative, and love to do good, and swell up to felicity only upon the wings of charity. Upon this account, here is pleasure enough for a Christian at present; and if a facetious discourse, and an amicable friendly mirth, can refresh the spirit, and take it off from the vile temptation of peevish, despairing, uncomplying melancholy, it must needs be innocent and commendable. And we may as well be refreshed by a clean and brisk discourse, as by the air of Campanian wines; and our faces and our heads may as well be anointed and look pleasant with wit and friendly intercourse, as with the fat of the balsam tree; and such a conversation no wise man ever did or ought to reprove. But when the jest hath teeth and nails, biting or scratching our brother,—when it is loose and wanton,—when it is unseasonable,—and much, or many,—when it serves ill purposes, or spends better time,—then it is the drunkenness of the soul, and makes the spirit fly away, seeking for a temple where the mirth and the music are solemn and religious.

But, above all the abuses which ever dishonoured the tongue of man, nothing more deserves the whip of an exterminating angel, or the stings of scorpions, than profane jesting: which is a bringing of the Spirit of God to partake of the follies of a man; as if it were not enough for a man to be a fool, but the wisdom of God must be brought into those horrible scenes: he that makes a jest of the words of Scripture, or of holy things, plays with thunder, and kisses the mouth of a cannon just as it belches fire and death; he stakes heaven at spurn-point, and trips cross and pile whether ever he shall see the face of God or not; he laughs at damnation, while he had rather lose God than lose his jest; nay, (which is the horror of all,) he makes a jest of God himself, and the Spirit of the Father and the Son to become ridiculous. Some men use to read Scripture on their knees, and many with their heads uncovered, and all good men with fear and trembling, with reverence and grave attention. "Search the Scriptures, for therein ye hope to have life eternal;" and, "All Scripture is written by inspiration of God, and is fit for instruction, for reproof, for exhortation, for doctrine," not for jesting; but he that makes that use of it, had better part with his eyes

in jest, and give his heart to make a tennis-ball; and, that I may speak the worst thing in the world of it, it is as like the material part of the sin against the Holy Ghost, as jeering of a man is to abusing him; and no man can use it but he that wants wit and manners, as well as he wants religion.

3. The third instance of the vain, trifling conversation and immoderate talking is revealing secrets; which is a dismantling and rending of the robe from the privacies of human intercourse; and it is worse than denying to restore that which was entrusted to our charge; for this not only injures his neighbour's right, but throws it away, and exposes it to his enemy; it is a denying to give a man his own arms, and delivering them to another, by whom he shall suffer mischief. He that entrusts a secret to his friend, goes thither as to a sanctuary, and to violate the rites of that is sacrilege, and profanation of friendship, which is the sister of religion, and the mother of secular blessing; a thing so sacred, that it changes a kingdom into a church, and makes interest to be piety, and justice to become religion. But this mischief grows according to the subject-matter and its effect; and the tongue of a babbler may crush a man's bones, and break his fortune upon her own wheel; and whatever the effect be, yet of itself it is the betraying of a trust, and, by reproach, oftentimes passes on to intolerable calamities, like a criminal to his scaffold through the execrable gates of cities; and, though it is infinitely worse that the secret is laid open out of spite or treachery, yet it is more foolish when it is discovered for no other end but to serve the itch of talking, or to seem to know, or to be accounted worthy of a trust; for so some men open their cabinets, to show only that a treasure is laid up, and that themselves were valued by their friend, when they were thought capable of a secret; but they shall be so no more, for he that by that means goes in pursuit of reputation, loses the substance by snatching at the shadow, and, by desiring to be thought worthy of a secret, proves himself unworthy of friendship or society. D'Avila tells of a French marquis, young and fond, to whom the duke of Guise had conveyed notice of the intended massacre; which when he had whispered into the king's ear, where there was no danger of publication, but only would seem a person worthy of such a trust, he was instantly murdered, lest a vanity like that might unlock so horrid a mystery.

I have nothing more to add concerning this, but that if this vanity happens in the matters of religion, it puts on some new circumstances of deformity: and if he, that ministers to the souls of men, and is appointed to "restore him that is overtaken in a fault, shall publish the secrets of a conscience, he perverts the bands of nature and religion; instead of a father, he turns "an accuser," a Διάβολος, he weakens the hearts of the penitent, and drives the repenting man from his remedy by making it to be intolerable; and so religion becomes a scandal, and his duty is made his disgrace, and Christ's yoke does bow his head unto the ground, and the secrets of the Spirit pass into the flames of the world, and all the sweetness by which the severity of the duty is alleviated and made easy, are embittered and become venomous by the tongue of a talking fool. Valerius Soranus was put to death by the old and braver Romans, "ob meritum profanæ vocis, quod, contra interdictum, Romæ nomen eloqui fuit ausus;" "because by prating he profaned the secret of their religion, and told abroad that name of the city which the Tuscan rites had commanded to be concealed, lest the enemies of the people should call from them their tutelary gods, which they could not do but by telling the proper relation. And in Christianity, all nations have consented to disgrace that priest, who loves the pleasure of a fool's tongue before the charity of souls, and the arts of the Spirit, and the nobleness of the religion; and they have inflicted upon him all the censures of the church, which in the capacity of an ecclesiastical person he can suffer.

These I reckon the proper evils of the vain and trifling tongues; for though the effect passes into further mischief, yet the original is weakness and folly, and all that unworthiness which is not yet arrived at malice. But hither also, upon the same account, some other irregularities of speech are reducible, which, although they are of a mixed nature, yet are properly acted by a vain and loose tongue; and therefore may be considered here not improperly.

1. The first is common swearing, against which St. Chrysostom spends twenty homilies: and by the number and weight of arguments hath left this testimony, that it is a foolish vice, but hard to be cured: infinitely unreasonable, but strangely prevailing; almost as much without remedy, as it is without pleasure; for it enters first by folly, and grows by custom, and dwells with careless-

ness, and is nursed by irreligion, and want of the fear of God; it profanes the most holy things, and mingles dirt with the beams of the sun, follies and trifling talk interweaved and knit together with the sacred name of God; it placeth the most excellent of things in the meanest and basest circumstances, it brings the secrets of heaven into the streets, dead men's bones into the temple; nothing is a greater sacrilege than to prostitute the great name of God to the petulance of an idle tongue, and blend it as an expletive to fill up the emptiness of a weak discourse. The name of God is so sacred, so mighty, that it rends mountains, it opens the bowels of the deepest rocks, it casts out devils, and makes hell to tremble, and fills all the regions of heaven with joy; the name of God is our strength and confidence, the object of our worshippings, and the security of all our hopes; and when God had given himself a name, and immured it with dread and reverence, like the garden of Eden with the swords of cherubim, and none durst speak it but he whose lips were hallowed, and that at holy and solemn times, in a most holy and solemn place; I mean the high priest of the Jews at the solemnities when he entered into the sanctuary,—then he taught all the world the majesty and veneration of his name; and therefore it was that God made restraints upon our conceptions and expressions of him: and, as he was infinitely curious, that, from all appearances he made to them, they should not depict or engrave any image of him; so he took care that even the tongue should be restrained, and not be too free in forming images and representations of his name; and therefore, as God drew their eyes from vanity, by putting his name amongst them, and representing no shape; so even when he had put his name amongst them, he took it off from the tongue, and placed it before the eye; for Jehovah was so written on the priest's mitre, that all might see and read, but none speak it but the priest. But besides all this, there is one great thing concerning the name of God, beyond all that can be spoken or imagined else; and that is, that when God the Father was pleased to pour forth all his glories, and imprint them upon his holy Son, in his exaltation, it was by giving him his holy name, the Tetragrammaton, or Jehovah made articulate; to signify "God manifested in the flesh;" and so he wore the character of God, and became the bright image of his person.

Now all these great things concerning the name of God, are infinite reproofs of common and vain swearing by it; God's name is left us here to pray by, to hope in, to be the instrument and conveyance of our worshippings, to be the witness of truth and the judge of secrets, the end of strife and the avenger of perjury, the discernor of right and the severe exacter of all wrongs; and shall all this be unhallowed by impudent talking of God without sense, or fear, or notices, or reverence, or observation?

One thing more I have to add against this vice of a foolish tongue, and that is, that, as much prating fills the discourse with lying, so this trifling swearing changes every trifling lie into a horrid perjury; and this was noted by St. James: "But above all things swear not at all," *ἵνα μὴ ὑπὸ κρίσει πείσῃτε*, "that ye may not fall into condemnation;"* so we read it, following the Arabian, Syrian, and Latin books, and some Greek copies; and it signifies, that all such swearing, and putting fierce appendages to every word, like great iron bars to a straw basket, or the curtains of a tent, is a direct condemnation of ourselves: for while we by much talking regard truth too little, and yet bind up our trifles with so severe a band, we are condemned by our own words; for men are made to expect what you bound upon them by an oath, and account your trifle to be serious; of which when you fail, you have given sentence against yourself: and this is agreeable to those words of our blessed Saviour, "Of every idle word you shall give account;"†—"for by thy words thou shalt be condemned, and by thy words thou shalt be justified." But there is another reading of these words, which hath great emphasis and power, in this article, "Swear not at all," *ἵνα μὴ εἰς ὑπόκρισιν πείσῃτε*, "that you may not fall into hypocrisy," that is, into the disreputation of a lying, deceiving, cozening person: for he that will put his oath to every common word, makes no great matter of an oath; for in swearing commonly, he must needs sometimes swear without consideration, and therefore without truth; and he that does so, in any company, tells the world he makes no great matter of being perjured.

All these things put together may take off our wonder at St. James' expression, of *πρὸ πάντων*, "above all things swear not;" it is a thing so highly to be regarded, and yet

is so little considered, that it is hard to say whether there be in the world any instance in which men are so careless of their danger, and damnation, as in this.

2. The next appendage of vain and trifling speech is contention, wrangling, and perpetual talk, proceeding from the spirit of contradiction: "Profert enim mores plerumque oratio, et animi secreta detegit. Nec sine causâ Græci prodiderunt, 'Ut vivat, quemque etiam dicere,'" said Quintilian: "For the most part, a man's words betray his manners, and unlock the secrets of the mind: and it was not without cause that the Greeks said, 'As a man lives, so he speaks;'" for so indeed Menander, *ἀνδρὸς χαρακτήρ ἐκ λόγου γνωρίζεται*; and Aristides, *οἷος ὁ τρόπος, τοιοῦτος καὶ ὁ λόγος*: so that it is a sign of a peevish, an angry, and quarrelling disposition, to be disputative, and busy in questions, and impertinent oppositions.

You shall meet with some men, (such were the sceptics and such were the Academics, of old,) who will not endure any man shall be of their opinion, and will not suffer men to speak truth, or to consent to their own propositions, but will put every man to fight for his own possessions, disturbing the rest of truth, and all the dwellings of unity and consent: "clamosum altercatorem," Quintilian calls such a one. This is *περίσσευμα καρδίας*, "an overflowing of the heart," and of the gall; and it makes men troublesome, and intricates all wise discourses, and throws a cloud upon the face of truth; and while men contend for truth, error, dressed in the same habit, slips into her chair, and all the litigants court her for the divine sister of wisdom. "Nimium altercando veritas amittitur:" There is noise but no harmony, fighting, but no victory, talking, but no learning: all are teachers, and are wilful, every man is angry, and without reason, and without charity.

Ἐγχεὸς ἔχων στόμα δοῦρον, ἔπος ξίφος, ἀσπίδα φωνῆς,

"Their mouth is a spear, their language is a two-edged sword, their throat is a shield," as Nonnus' expression is; and the clamours and noises of this folly is that which St. Paul reproves in this chapter; "Let all bitterness and clamour be put away." People that contend earnestly, talk loud; "Clamor equus est iræ; cum prostraveris, equitem dejeceris," saith St. Chrysostom; "Anger rides upon noise as upon a horse; still the noise and the rider is in the dirt;"

* Chap. v. 12.

† Matt. xii.

and, indeed, so to do is an act of fine strength, and the cleanest spiritual force that can be exercised in this instance; and though it be hard, in the midst of a violent motion, instantly to stop, yet by strength and good conduct it may done. But he whose tongue rides upon passion, and is spurred by violence and contention, is like a horse or mule without a bridle, and without understanding, τῶν δὲ κεκραγότων οὐδεὶς σώφρων ἐστὶ: "No person that is clamorous can be wise."

These are the vanities and evil fruits of the easy talker; the instances of a trifling, impertinent conversation; and yet, it is observable, that although the instances in the beginning be only vain, yet in the issue and effects they are troublesome and full of mischief; and, that we may perceive, that even all effusion and multitude of language and vainer talk cannot be innocent, we may observe that there are many good things which are wholly spoiled if they do but touch the tongue; they are spoiled with speaking: such as is the sweetest of all Christian graces, humility—and the noblest actions of humanity, the doing favours and acts of kindness. If you speak of them, you pay yourself, and lose your kindness; humility is by talking changed into pride and hypocrisy, and patience passes into peevishness, and secret trust into perfidiousness, and modesty into dissolution, and judgment into censure; but by silence, and a restrained tongue, all the first mischiefs are avoided, and all these graces preserved.

SERMON XXIV.

PART III.

OF SLANDER AND FLATTERY.

HE that is twice asked a question, and then answers, is to be excused if he answers weakly: but he that speaks before he be asked, had need take care he speak wisely; for if he does not, he hath no excuse; and if he does, yet it loses half its beauty; and therefore, the old man gave good counsel in the comedy to the boy, παι, σιωπα, πόλλ' ἔχει συγῆ καλὰ: * the profits of a restrained modest tongue cannot easily be numbered, any more than the evils of an unbridled and dissolute. But

they were but infant mischiefs, which for the most part we have already observed, as the issues of vain and idle talking: but there are two spirits worse than these: 1. the spirit of detraction; and, 2. the spirit of flattery. The first is Διὰβολή, from whence the devil hath his name; he is "an accuser" of the brethren. But the second is worse; it is Δανατηφῆρος or Δανάσιμος, "damnable" and "deadly;" it is the nurse of vice, and the poison of the soul. These are σακροὶ λόγοι, "sour" and "filthy communications:" the first is rude, but the latter is most mischievous; and both of them to be avoided like death, or the despairing murmurs of the damned.

1. Let no calumny, no slandering, detracting communication proceed out of your mouth; the first sort of this is that which the apostle calls *whispering*, which signifies to abuse our neighbour secretly, by telling a private story of him:

— linguæque refert audita susurra;
OVID.

for here the man plays a sure game, as he supposes, a mischief without a witness,

Φιλολοιδόρου γλώσσης
— βέλεμα κούφα,

as Anacreon calls them; "the light, swift arrows of a calumniating tongue;" they pierce into the heart and bowels of the man speedily. These are those which the Holy Scripture notes by the disgraceful name of "tale-bearers;" "Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among the people;"* for "there are six things which God hates," (saith Solomon,) "yea, the seventh is an abomination unto him;"† it is βδέλυγμα, as bad, and as much hated by God, as an idol, and that is, "a whisperer," or "tale-bearer that soweth contention amongst brethren."‡ This kind of communication was called *συκοφαντία* among the Greeks, and was as much hated as the publicans among the Jews: ποτηρόν, ὡ ἀνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, ποτηρόν συκοφάντης, "It is a vile thing, O ye Athenians, it is a vile thing for man to be a sycophant, or a tale-bearer:" and the dearest friendships in the world cannot be secure, where such whisperers are attended to.

Te fingente nefas, Pyladen odisset Orestes,
Thesæa Pirithoi destituisset amor.
Tu Siculo fratres, et majus nomen Atridas,
Et Lædæ poterat dissociare genus.

MART.

* Menander.

* Levit. xix. 6. † Prov. vi. 17. ‡ Prov. xxvi. 20.

But this crime is a conjugation of evils, and is productive of infinite mischiefs; it undermines peace, and saps the foundation of friendship; it destroys families, and rends in pieces the very heart and vital parts of charity; it makes an evil man, party, and witness, and judge, and executioner of the innocent, who is hurt though he deserved it not;

Et, si non aliquà nocuisses, mortuus esses.

VIRG.

And no man's interest or reputation, no man's peace or safety, can abide, where this nurse of jealousy and parent of contention, like the earwig, creeps in at the ear, and makes a diseased noise and a scandalous murmur.

2. But such tongues as these, where they dare, and where they can safely, love to speak louder, and then it is *detraction*; when men, under the colour of friendship, will certainly wound the reputation of a man, while, by speaking some things of him fairly, he shall without suspicion be believed when he speaks evil of him; such was he that Horace speaks of, "Me Capitolinus victore usus amicoque," &c. "Capitolinus is my friend, and we have long lived together, and obliged each other by mutual endearments, and I am glad he is acquitted by the criminal judges;"

Sed tamen admiror, quo pacto iudicium illud
Fugerit:

"Yet I confess, I wonder how he should escape; but I will say no more, because he is my friend." Κακὸς γὰρ ἔτι τοῖς ἄλλοις εὐρηταί τῶτος διαβολῆς, τὸ μὴ ψέγοντας ἀλλ' ἐπαινοῦντας λαμαίνεσθαι, says Polybius; "This is a new way of accusation, to destroy a man by praises." These men strike obliquely, like a wild swine, or the αἰ ἐν κείροις βοῖς, ἐπὶ τῶν ἄμων ἔχουσι τὰ κέρατα, "like bulls in a yoke, they have horns upon their necks," and do you a mischief when they plough your ground; and, as Joab slew Abner, he took him by the beard and kissed him, and smote him under the fifth rib, that he died; so doth the detracting tongue, like the smooth-tongued lightning, it will break your bones when it kisses the flesh; so Syphax did secretly wound Masinissa, and made Scipio watchful and implacable against Sophonisba, only by commending her beauty and her wit, her constancy and unalterable love to her country, and by telling how much himself was forced to break his faith by the tyranny of her prevailing charms. This is

that which the apostle calls ποηρίαν, "a crafty and deceitful way of hurting," and renders a man's tongue venomous as the tongue of a serpent, that bites even though he be charmed.

3. But the next is more violent, and that is, *railing* or *reviling*; which Aristotle, in his Rhetorics, says, is very often the vice of boys and of rich men, who—out of folly or pride, want of manners, or want of the measures of a man, wisdom, and the just proportions of his brethren—do use those that err before them most scornfully and unworthily; and Tacitus noted it of the Claudian family in Rome, an old and inbred pride and scornfulness made them apt to abuse all that fell under their power and displeasure; "Quorum superbia frustra per obsequium et modestiam effugeres."* No observance, no prudence, no modesty, can escape the reproaches of such insolent and high talkers. A. Gellius tells of a boy that would give every one that he met a box on the ear; and some men will give foul words, having a tongue rough as a cat, and biting like an adder; and all their reproofs are direct scoldings, their common intercourse is open contumely. There have been, in these last ages, examples of judges, who would reproach the condemned and miserable criminal, deriding his calamity, and reviling his person. Nero did so to Thraseas; and the old heathens to the primitive martyrs; "pereuntibus addita ludibria," said Tacitus of them; they crucified them again, by putting them to suffer the shame of their fouler language; they railed at them, when they bowed their heads upon the cross, and groaned forth the saddest accents of approaching death. This is that evil that possessed those, of whom the Psalmist speaks: "Our tongues are our own; we are they that ought to speak; who is Lord over us?" that is, our tongues cannot be restrained; and St. James said something of this, "The tongue is an unruly member, which no man can tame,"† that is, no private person, but a public may; for he that can rule the tongue, is fit also to rule the whole body, that is, the church or congregation; magistrates and the governors of souls, they are by severity to restrain this inordination, which indeed is a foul one;

* Ὡς ἄρα οὐδὲν τι διαβολοῦ γλώττης χείρων ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἕτερον κακόν.

* Levit. vi.; Zech. vii.; Luke iii.

† James iii.

“No evil is worse, or of more open violence to the rest and reputation of men, than a reproachful tongue.” And it were well if we considered this evil, to avoid it in those instances, by which our conversation is daily stained. Are we not often too imperious against our servants? Do we not entertain and feed our own anger with vile and basest language? Do not we chastise a servant’s folly or mistake, his error or his chance, with language fit to be used by none but vile persons, and towards none but dogs? Our blessed Saviour, restraining the hostility and murder of the tongue, threatens hell-fire to them that call their brother “fool;” meaning, that all language, which does really, and by intention, disgrace him in the greater instances, is as directly against the charity of the gospel, as killing a man was against the severity and justice of the law. And although the word itself may be used to reprove the indiscretions and careless follies of an idle person; yet it must be used only in order to his amendment,—by an authorized person,—in the limits of a just reproof,—upon just occasion,—and so as may not do him mischief in the event of things. For so we find that our blessed Saviour called his disciples, ἀνόητους, “foolish;”^{*} and St. James used ἀδρόσκι κενὸν, “vain man,” signifying the same with the forbidden “raca,” κενόν, “vain, useless, or empty;” and St. Paul calls the Galatians “mad, and foolish, and bewitched;” and Christ called Herod “fox;” and St. John called the Pharisees “the generation of vipers;” and all this matter is wholly determined by the manner, and with what mind, it is done; if it be for correction and reproof towards persons that deserve it, and by persons whose authority can warrant a just and severe reproof, and this also be done prudently, safely, and usefully,—it is not contumely; but when men, upon all occasions, revile an offending person, lessening his value, souring his spirit, and his life, despising his infirmities, tragically expressing his lightest misdemeanour, οἱ ἔπι μακρῶν ἀμαρτημάτων ἀνπερβλήτως φησίζομενοι, “being tyrannically declamatory, and intolerably angry for a trifle;”—these are such, who, as Apollonius the philosopher said, will not suffer the offending person to know when his fault is great, and when it is little. For they, who al-

ways put on a supreme anger, or express the less anger with the highest reproaches, can do no more to him that steals, than to him that breaks a crystal; “non plus æquo, non diutius quo,” was a good rule for reprehension of offending servants; but no more anger, no more severe language, than the thing deserves; if you chide too long, your reproof is changed into reproach; if too bitterly, it becomes railing; if too loud, it is immodest; if too public it is like a dog.

Τὸ δ' ἐπιδιώκειν, εἰς τε τὴν ὁδὸν τρέχειν
Ἐπι λοιδορουμένην, κενὸς ἐστ' ἔργον, Ῥόδη.
MENAND.

So the man told his wife in the Greek comedy; “To follow me in the streets with thy clamorous tongue, is to do as dogs do,” not as persons civil or religious.

4. The fourth instance of the calumniating, filthy communication, is that which we properly call *slander*, or the inventing evil things, falsely imputing crimes to our neighbour: “Falsum crimen quasi venenatum telum,” said Cicero; “A false tongue or a foul lie against a man’s reputation, is like a poisoned arrow,” it makes the wound deadly, and every scratch to be incurable. “Promptissima vindicta contumelia,” said one; to reproach and rail, is a revenge that every girl can take. But falsely to accuse, is as spiteful as hell, and deadly as the blood of dragons.

Stoicus occidit Baream, delator amicum.

Juv.

This is the direct murder of the tongue, for “Life and death are in the hand of the tongue,” said the Hebrew proverb; and it was esteemed so vile a thing, that when Jezebel commanded the elders of Israel to suborn false witnesses against Naboth, she gave them instructions to “take two men, the sons of Belial;” none else were fit for the employment.

Quid non audebis, perfida lingua, loqui?

MART.

This was it that broke Ephraim in judgment, and executed the fierce anger of the Lord upon him; God gave him over to be oppressed by a false witness, “quoniam cœpit abire post sordes,” therefore he suffered calumny, and was overthrown in judgment. This was it that humbled Joseph in fetters, and the iron entered into his soul; but it crushed him not so much as the false tongue of his revengeful mistress, “until his cause was known, and the word of the Lord

* Matt. xxiii. 17, 19. Luke xxiv. 25.

tried him." This was it that slew Abimelech, and endangered David; it was a sword "in manu linguæ Doeg," "in the hand of Doeg's tongue." By this, Ziba cut off the legs of Mephibosheth, and made his reputation lame for ever; it thrust Jeremy into the dungeon, and carried Susanna to her stake, and our Lord to his cross; and therefore, against the dangers of a slandering tongue, all laws have so cautiously armed themselves, that, besides the severest prohibitions of God, often recorded in both Testaments, God hath chosen it to be one of his appellatives to the defender of them, a party for those, whose innocence and defenceless state make them most apt to be undone by this evil spirit; I mean pupils, and widows, the poor, and the oppressed.* And in pursuance of this charity, the imperial laws have invented a "juramentum de calumniâ," an oath to be exhibited to the actor or plaintiff, that he believes himself to have a just cause, and that he does not implead his adversary "calumniandi animo," "with false instances," and defensible allegations; and the defendant is to swear, that he thinks himself to use only just defences, and perfect instances of resisting; and both of them obliged themselves, that they would exact no proof but what was necessary to the truth of the cause. And all this defence was nothing but necessary guards. For, "a spear, and a sword, and an arrow, is a man that speaketh false witness against his neighbour." And therefore, the laws of God added yet another bar against this evil, and the false accuser was to suffer the punishment of the objected crime: and, as if this were not sufficient, God hath in several ages wrought miracles, and raised the dead to life, that, by such strange appearances, they might relieve the oppressed innocent, and load the false accusing tongue with shame and horrible confusion. So it happened in the case of Susanna, the spirit of a man was put into the heart of a child to acquit the virtuous woman; and so it was in the case of Gregory, bishop of Agrigentum, falsely accused by Sabinus and Crescentius; God's power cast the devil out of Eudocia, the devil, or spirit of slander, and compelled her to speak the truth. St. Austin, in his book, "De Cura pro Mortuis," tells of a dead father that appeared to his oppressed son, and, in a great matter of law, delivered him from the teeth of false accusation.† So was the church of Monts rescued by the appearance of Aia, the deceased wife

of Hidulphus, their earl, as it appears in Hanovian story; and the Polonian Chronicles tell the like of Stanislaus, bishop of Cracovia, almost oppressed by the anger and calumny of Boleslaus their king; God relieved him by the testimony of St. Peter, their bishop, or a phantasm like him. But whether these records may be credited or not, I contend not; yet, it is very material which Eusebius relates of the three false witnesses accusing Narcissus, bishop of Jerusalem, of an infamous crime, which they did, affirming it under several curses: * the first wishing, that, if he said false, God would destroy him with fire; the second, that he might die of the king's evil; the third, that he might be blind; and so it came to pass; the first, being surprised with fire in his own roof, amazed and intricated, confounded and despairing, paid the price of his slander with the pains of most fearful flames; and the second perished by pieces, and chirurgions, and torment: which when the third saw, he repented of his fault, cried mightily for pardon, but wept so bitterly, that he found at the same time the reward of his calumny and the acceptance of his repentance: κακουργότερον οὐδὲν διαβολῆς ἐστὶ πῶς, said Cleanthes: "Nothing is more operative of spiteful and malicious purposes, than the calumniating tongue." In the temple at Smyrna, there were looking-glasses which represented the best face as crooked, ugly, and deformed; the Greeks called these ἐτερόσχημα κατὰ χροῶν: and so is every false tongue; it lies in the face of heaven, and abuses the ears of justice; it oppresses the innocent, and is secretly revenged of virtue; it defeats all the charity of laws, and arms the supreme power, and makes it strike the innocent; it makes frequent appeals to be made to heaven, and causes an oath, instead of being the end of strife, to be the beginning of mischief; it calls the name and testimony of God to seal an injury; it feeds and nourishes cruel anger, but mocks justice, and makes mercy weep herself into pity, and mourn because she cannot help the innocent.

5. The last instance of this evil I shall now represent, is *cursing*, concerning which I have this only to say: that although the causeless curse shall return upon the tongue that spake it, yet, because very often there is a fault on both sides, when there is reviling or cursing on either, the danger of a cursing tongue is highly to be declined, as the biting of a mad dog, or the tongue of a smitter

* Levit. vi. Zech vii. Luke iii.

† C. 11.

* L. 6. c. 7.

serpent. For, as envy is in the evil eye, so is cursing in the reproachful tongue; it is a kind of venom and witchcraft, an instrument by which God oftentimes punishes anger and uncharitableness; and by which the devil gets power over the bodies and interests of men: for he that works by Thessalic ceremonies, by charms, and nonsense words, by figures and insignificant characterisms, by images and by rags, by circles and imperfect noises, hath more advantage and real title to the opportunities of mischief, by the cursing tongue; and though God is infinitely more ready to do acts of kindness than of punishment, yet God is not so careless a regarder of the violent and passionate wishes of men, but he gives some over to punishment, and chastises the folly of rage, and the madness of the tongue, by suffering it to pass into a further mischief than the harsh sound and horrible accents of the evil language. "By the tongue we bless God and curse men," saith St. James; *λοιδωρία* is *κατάρα*, "reproaching is cursing," and both of them opposed to *εὐλογία*, to "blessing;" and there are many times and seasons in which both of them pass into real effect. These are the particulars of the second.

3. I am now to instance in the third sort of filthy communication, that in which the devil does the most mischief; by which he undoes souls; by which he is worse than *Δαίμονος*, "an accuser:" for though he accuses maliciously, and instances spitefully, and heaps objections diligently, and aggravates bitterly, and with all his power endeavours to represent the separate souls to God as polluted and unfit to come into his presence, yet this malice is ineffective, because the scenes are acted before the wise Judge of men and angels, who cannot be abused; before our Father and our Lord, who knows whereof we be made, and remembereth that we are but dust; before our Saviour, and our elder Brother, who hath felt our infirmities, and knows how to pity, to excuse, and to answer for us: but though his accusation of us cannot hurt them who will not hurt themselves, yet this malice is prevailing when the spirit of *flattery* is set forth upon us. This is the *Ἀπολλύων*, "the destroyer," and is the most contrary thing to charity in the whole world: and St. Paul noted it in his character of charity, *Ἡ ἀγάπη οὐ περπερεύεται*, "Charity vaunteth not itself;" * so we translate it, but certain-

ly, not exactly, for it signifieth "easiness," complying foolishly, and flattering; "charity flattereth not;" *Τί ἐστι τό περπερεύεσθαι; πάνθ' ἢ μὴ διὰ χρείαν, ἀλλὰ διὰ καλλωπισμὸν παραλαμβάνεται*, saith Suidas, out of St. Basil; "It signifies any thing that serves rather for ornament than for use," for pleasure than for profit.

Et eo plectuntur poetæ quàm suo vitio sæpius, Ductibilitate nimia vestrà aut perperitidine;

saith the comedy; "The poets suffer more by your easiness and flattery, than by their own fault."—And this is it which St. Paul says is against charity. For if to call a man "fool and vicious," be so high an injury, we may thence esteem what a great calamity it is to be so; and therefore, he that makes him so, or takes a course he shall not become other, is the vilest enemy to his person and his felicity: and this is the mischief that is done by flattery; it is a design against the wisdom, against the repentance, against the growth and promotion of a man's soul. He that persuades an ugly, deformed man, that he is handsome,—a short man that he is tall,—a bald man that he hath a good head of hair,—makes him to become ridiculous and a fool, but does no other mischief. But he that persuades his friend, that is a goat in his manners, that he is a holy and a chaste person,—or that his looseness is a sign of a quick spirit,—or that it is not dangerous, but easily pardonable,—a trick of youth, a habit that old age will lay aside as a man pares his nails,—this man hath given great advantage to his friend's mischief; he hath made it grow in all the dimensions of the sin, till it grows intolerable, and perhaps unpardonable. And let it be considered; what a fearful destruction and contradiction of friendship or service it is, so to love myself and my little interest, as to prefer it before the soul of him whom I ought to love! By my flattery I lay a snare to get twenty pounds, and rather than lose this contemptible sum of money, I will throw him that shall give it me (as far as I can) into hell, there to roar beyond all the measures of time or patience. Can any hatred be more, or love be less, can any expression of spite be greater, than that it be said, "You will not part with twenty pounds to save your friend's, or your patron's, or your brother's soul?" and so it is with him that invites him to, or confirms him in, his folly, in hopes of getting something from him; he will see him die, and die eternally, and help forward that damnation, so he may get that

* 1 Cor. xiii. 5.

little by it. Every state is set in the midst of danger, as all trees are set in the wind, but the tallest endure the greatest violence of tempest: no man flatters a beggar; if he does a slovenly and a rude crime, it is entertained with ruder language, and the mean man may possibly be affrighted from his fault, while it is made so uneasy to him by the scorn and harsh reproaches of the mighty. But princes and nobles often die with this disease: and when the courtiers of Alexander counterfeited his wry neck, and the servants of the Sicilian tyrant pretended themselves dim-sighted, and on purpose rushed one against another, and overthrew the meat as it was served to his table, only because the prince was short-sighted, they gave them sufficient instances in what state of affairs they stood with them that waited; it was certain they would commend every foolish answer, and pretend subtilty in every absurd question, and make a petition that their base actions might pass into a law, and be made to be the honour and sanctity of all the people: and what proportions or ways can such great personages have towards felicity, when their vice shall be allowed and praised, every action that is but tolerable shall be accounted heroical, and if it be intolerable among the wise, it shall be called virtuous among the flatterers? Carneades said bitterly, but it had in it too many degrees of truth, That princes and great personages never learn to do any thing perfectly well, but to ride the great horse; "quia scilicet ferociens bestia adulari non didicit," "because the proud beast knows not how to flatter," but will as soon throw him off from his back, as he will shake off the son of a porter. But a flatterer is like a neighing horse, that neigheth under every rider, and is pleased with every thing, and commends all that he sees, and tempts to mischief, and cares not, so his friend may but perish pleasantly. And, indeed, that is a calamity that undoes many a soul; we so love our peace, and sit so easily upon our own good opinions, and are so apt to flatter ourselves, and lean upon our own false supports, that we cannot endure to be disturbed or awakened from our pleasing lethargy. For we care not to be safe, but to be secure, not to escape hell, but to live pleasantly; we are not solicitous of the event, but of the way thither, and it is sufficient, if we be persuaded all is well; in the mean time, we are careless whether indeed it be so or not, and therefore we give pensions to fools and

vile persons to abuse us, and cozen us of felicity. But this evil puts on several shapes, which we must discover, that they may not cozen us without our observation. For all men are not capable of an open flattery. And therefore, some will dress their hypocrisy and illusion so, that you may feel the pleasure, and but secretly the compli-ance and tenderness to serve the ends of your folly. "Perit procari, si latet," said Plancus; "If you be not perceived you lose your reward; if you be too open, you lose it worse."

1. Some flatter by giving great names and propounding great examples; and thus the Egyptian villains hung a tumbler's rope upon their prince, and a piper's whistle; because they called their Ptolemy by the name of Apollo, their god of music. This put buskins upon Nero, and made him fiddle in all the great towns of Greece. When their lords were drunkards, they called them Bacchus; when they were wrestlers, they saluted them by the name of Hercules; and some were so vain, as to think themselves commended, when their flatterers told aloud, that they had drunk more than Alexander the conqueror. And indeed nothing more abuses easy fools, that only seek for an excuse for their wickedness, a patron for their vice, a warrant for their sleepy peace,—than to tell stories of great examples remarked for the instances of their temptation. When old Cato commended meretricious mixtures, and, to prevent adulteries, permitted fornication, the youth of the succeeding ages had warrant enough to go "ad olentes fornices," into their chambers of filthy pleasures;

Quidam notus homo cum exiret fornice; Macte Virtute esto, inquit sententia dia Catonis. Hor.

And it would pass the goblets in a freer circle, if a flatterer man shall but say, "Narratur et prisci Catonis Sæpe mero caluisse virtus," "That old Cato would drink hard at sunset." When Varro had noted, that wise and severe Sallust, who, by excellent sententious words, had reproved the follies of lust, was himself taken in adultery; the Roman youth did hug their vice, and thought it grew upon their nature like a man's beard, and that the wisest men would lay their heads upon that threshold; and Seneca tells, that the women of that age despised adultery of one man only; and hated it like marriage, and despised that as want of breeding, and grandeur of spirit: because the braver Soar-

tans did use to breed their children promiscuously, as the herdsmen do cattle from the fairest bulls. And Arrianus tells that the women would defend their baseness by the doctrine of Plato, who maintained the community of women. This sort of flattery is therefore more dangerous, because it makes the temptation ready for mischief, apted and dressed with proper, material, and imitable circumstances. The way of discourse is far about, but evil examples kill quickly.

2. Others flatter by imitation: for when a crime is rare and insolent, singular and out of fashion, it must be a great strength of malice and impudence that must entertain it; but the flattering man doing the vice of his lord takes off the wonder, and the fear of being stared at; and so encourages it by making it popular and common. Plutarch tells of one that divorced himself from his wife, because his friend did so, that the other might be hardened in the mischief; and when Plato saw his scholars stoop in the shoulders, and Aristotle observed his to stammer, they began to be less troubled with those imperfections which they thought common to themselves and others.

3. Some pretend rusticity and downright plainness, and upon the confidence of that, humour their friend's vice, and flatter his ruin. Seneca observed it of some of his time: "Alius quâdam adulatione clam utebatur parce, alius ex aperto palam, rusticitate simulatâ, quasi simplicitas illa ars non sit." They pretend they love not to dissemble, and therefore they cannot hide their thoughts; let their friend take it how he will, they must commend that which is commendable; and so, man, that is willing to die quietly, is content with the honest-heartedness and downright simplicity of him, that with an artificial rudeness dressed the flattery.

4. Some will dispraise themselves, that their friend may think better of himself, or less severely of his fault.

5. Others will reprove their friend for a trifle, but with a purpose to let him understand, that this is all; for the honest man would have told his friend if it had been worse.

6. Some will laugh and make a sport of a vice, and can hear their friend tell the cursed narrative of his adultery, of his drunkenness, of his craft and unjust purchases; and all this shall prove but a merry scene; as if damnation were a thing to be laughed at, and the everlasting ruin of his friend were

a very good jest. But thus the poor sinner shall not be affrighted from his danger, nor chastised by severe language; but the villain that eats his meat, shall take him by the hand, and dance about the pit till he falls in, and dies with shame and folly. Thus the evil spirit puts on shapes enough; none to affright the man, but all to destroy him; and yet it is filthy enough, when it is invested with its own character.

Γαστήρ ὄργον τὸ σῶμα, παντὶ χῆρῶν βλέπων
Ὀφθαλμὸς, ἔργων τοῖς ὀδοῦσι ζῆριον.

"The parasite or flatterer is a beast that is ail belly, looking round with his eyes, watchful, ugly, and deceitful, and creeping on his teeth;" they feed him, and he kills them that reach him bread; for this is the nature of all vipers.

I have this one thing only to insert, and then the caution will be sufficient, viz., that we do not think all praise given to our friend to be flattery, though it be in his presence. For sometimes praise is the best conveyance for a precept, and it may nourish up an infant virtue, and make it grow up towards perfection, and its proper measures and rewards. Friendship does better please our friend than flattery, and though it was made also for virtue, yet it mingles pleasures in the chalice: *Εἰς ὀμματ' εἶνον φωτὸς ἐμβλέψαι γλαυκί.* "It is delicious to behold the face of a friendly and a sweet person:*" and it is not the office of a friend always to be sour, or at any time morose; but free, open, and ingenuous, candid and humane, not denying to please, but ever refusing to abuse or corrupt. For as adulterine metals retain the lustre and colour of gold, but not the value; so flattery, in imitation of friendship, takes the face and outside of it, the delicious part; but the flatterer uses it to the interests of vice, and a friend by it serves virtue; and therefore, Plutarch well compared friendship to medicinal ointments, which however delicious they be, yet they are also useful, and minister to healing: but flattery is sweet and adulterate, pleasant, but without health. He, therefore, that justly commends his friend to promote and encourage his virtue, reconciles virtue with his friend's affection, and makes it pleasant to be good; and he that does so, shall also better be suffered when he reproves, because the needing person shall find that then is the opportunity and

* Eurip.

season of it, since he denied not to please so long as he could also profit. I only add this advice; that since self-love is the serpent's milk that feeds this viper, flattery,—we should do well to choke it with its mother's milk; I mean, learn to love ourselves more, for then we should never endure to be flattered. For he that, because he loves himself, loves to be flattered, does, because he loves himself, love to entertain a man to abuse him, to mock him, and to destroy him finally. But he that loves himself truly, will suffer fire, will endure to be burnt, so he may be purified; put to pain, so he may be restored to health; for “of all saucers,” (said Evenus,) sharpness, severity, and “fire, are the best.”

SERMON XXV.

PART IV.

THE DUTIES OF THE TONGUE.

— But that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.
—Ephes. iv. latter part of ver. 29.

“*LOQUENDI magistros habemus homines, tacendi Deos,*” said one; Men teach us to speak, and God teaches us to hold our tongue.” The first we are taught by the lectures of our schools; the latter, by the mysteries of the temple. But now, in the new institution, we have also a great master of speaking; and though silence is one of the great paths of innocence, yet holy speaking is the instrument of spiritual charity, and is a glorification of God; and therefore, this kind of speaking is a degree of perfection beyond the wisdom and severity of silence. For, although garrulity and foolish inordinate talking are a conjunction of folly and sin, and the prating man, while he desires to get the love of them he converses with, incurs their hatred; while he would be admired, is laughed at; he spends much and gets nothing; he wrongs his friends, and makes sport to his enemies, and injures himself; he is derided when he tells what others know, he is endangered if he tells a secret and what they know not; he is not believed when he tells good news, and when he tells ill news he is odious; and therefore, that silence, which is a cure of all this evil, is an excellent portion of safety and religion:—yet it is with holy speaking and innocent si-

lence as it is with a hermit and a bishop; the first goes to a good school, but the second is proceeded toward greater perfection; and therefore, the practical life of ecclesiastical governors, being found in the way of holiness and zeal, is called “status perfectionis:” a more excellent and perfect condition of life, and far beyond the retirements and inoffensive life of those innocent persons, which do so much less of profit, by how much charity is better than meditation, and going to heaven by religion and charity, by serving God and converting souls, is better than going to heaven by prayers and secret thoughts: so it is with silence and religious communication. That does not offend God, this glorifies him: that prevents sin, this sets forward the interests of religion. And therefore Plutarch said well, “*Qui generosè et regio more instituuntur, primum tacere, deinde loqui discunt:*” “To be taught first to be silent, then to speak well and handsomely, is education fit for a prince;” and that is St. Paul's method here: first we were taught how to restrain our tongues, in the foregoing instances,—and now we are called to employ them in religion.

1. We must speak “that which is good,” *ἀγαθόν τι*, any thing that may serve the ends of our God and of our neighbour, in the measures of religion and usefulness. But it is here as in all other propositions of religion. To us,—who are in the body, and conducted by material phantasms, and understanding nothing but what we feel, or is conveyed to us by the proportions of what we do or have,—God hath given a religion that is fitted to our condition and constitution. And therefore, when we are commanded to love God, by this love Christ understands obedience; when we are commanded to honour God, it is by singing and reciting his praises, and doing things which cause reputation and honour: and even here when we are commanded to speak that which is good, it is instanced in such good things which are really profitable, practically useful; and here the measures of God are especially by the proportions of our neighbour; and therefore, though speaking honourable things of God be an employment that does honour to our tongues and voices, yet we must tune and compose even these notes so as may best profit our neighbour; for so it must be *λόγος ἀγαθός*, “good speech,” such as is *εἰς οἰκοδομήν τῆς χρείας*, “for the edification of necessity:” the phrase is a Hebraism, where the genitive case of a substantive is put for the

adjective; and means that our speech be adapted to necessary edification, or such edification as is needful to every man's particular case; that is, that we so order our communication, that it be apt to instruct the ignorant, to strengthen the weak, to recall the wanderer, to restrain the vicious, to comfort the disconsolate, to speak a word in season to every man's necessity, *ὡς δὲ χάρις*, "that it may minister grace;" something that may please and profit them, according as they shall need; all which I shall reduce to these three heads:

1. To instruct.
2. To comfort.
3. To reprove.

1. Our conversation must be *διδασκαλίας*, "apt to teach." For since all our hopes on our part depend upon our obedience to God, and conformity to our Lord Jesus, by whom our endeavours are sanctified and accepted, and our weaknesses are pardoned, and all our obedience relies upon, and is encouraged and grounded in faith, and faith is founded naturally and primarily in the understanding,—we may observe, that it is not only reasonably to be expected, but experimentally felt, that, in weak and ignorant understandings, there are no sufficient supports for the vigorousness of a holy life; there being nothing, or not enough, to warrant and strengthen great resolutions, to reconcile our affections to difficulties, to make us patient of affronts, to receive deeper mortifications, and ruder usages, unless where an extraordinary grace supplies the want of ordinary notices, as the apostles were enabled to their preaching; but he, therefore, that carries and imports into the understanding of his brother, notices of faith, and incomes of spiritual propositions, and arguments of the Spirit, enables his brother towards the work and practices of a holy life: and though every argument, which the Spirit of God hath made and recorded in Holy Scripture, is of itself inducement great enough to enlure obedience; yet it is not so in the event of things to every man's infirmity and need; but in the treasures of the Spirit, in the heaps and variety of institution, and wise discourses, there will not only be enough to make a man without excuse, but sufficient to do his work, and to cure his evil, and to fortify his weaker parts, and to comply with his necessities: for although God's sufficient grace is present to all that can use it, yet, if here be no more than that, it is a sad consideration to remember, that there are but

few that will be saved, if they be helped but with just so much as can possibly do the work: and this we may well be assured of, if we consider that God is never wanting to any man in what is simply necessary: but then, if we add this also, that of the vast numbers of men, who might possibly be saved, so few really are so, we shall perceive, that that grace which only is sufficient, is not sufficient; sufficient to the *thing*, is not sufficient for the *person*; and therefore, that God does usually give us more, and we need more yet; and unless God "works in us to will and to do," we shall neither "will" nor "do;" though to will be in the power of our hand, yet we will not will: it follows from hence, that all they, who will comply with God's method of graciousness, and the necessities of their brethren, must endeavour, by all means, and in all their own measures and capacities, to lay up treasures of notices and instructions in their brother's soul, that, by some argument or other, they may be met withal, and taken in every corner of their conversation. Add to this, that the duty of a man hath great variety, and the souls of men are infinitely abused, and the persuasions of men are strangely divided, and the interests of men are a violent and preternatural declination from the strictness of virtue, and the resolutions of men are quickly altered, and very hardly to be secured, and the cases of conscience are numerous and intricate, and every state of life hath its proper prejudice, and our notices are abused by our affections, and we shall perceive that men generally need knowledge enough to overpower all their passions, to root out their vicious inclinations, to master their prejudice, to answer objections, to resist temptations, to refresh their weariness, to fix their resolutions, and to determine their doubts; and therefore, to see your brother in a state of ignorance, is to see him unfurnished and unprepared to all good works; a person safe no longer than till a temptation comes, and one that cannot be saved but by an absolute, unlimited predestination, a favour of which he hath no promise, no security, no revelation; and although, to do this, God hath appointed a special order of men, the whole ecclesiastical order, whom he feeds at his own charges, and whom men rob at their own peril, yet this doth not disoblige others: for every master of a family is to instruct, or cause his family to be instructed, and catechised; every governor is to instruct his charge,

every man his brother, not always in person, but ever by all possible and just provisions. For if the people die for want of knowledge, they who are set over them shall also die for want of charity. Here, therefore, we must remember, that it is the duty of us all, in our several measures and proportions, to instruct those that need it, and whose necessity is made ready for our ministration; and let us tremble to think, what will be the sad account which we shall make, when even our families are not taught in the fundamentals of religion; for how can it be possible for those, who could not account concerning the stories of Christ's life and death, the ministries of their redemption, the foundation of all their hopes, the great argument of all their obediences; how can it be expected, that they should ride in triumph over all the evils, which the devil, and the world, and their own follies, daily present to them, in the course of every day's conversation? And it will be an ill return to say, that God will require no more of them than he hath given them; for suppose that be true in your own sense, yet he will require it of thee, because thou gavest them no more; and, however, it is a formidable danger, and a trifling hope, for any man to put all the hopes of his being saved upon the only stock of ignorance; for if his ignorance should never be accounted for, yet it may leave him in that state, in which his evils shall grow great, and his sins may be irreparable.

2. Our conversation must be *παράκλητος*, "apt to comfort" the disconsolate; and than this, men in present can feel no greater charity: for since half the duty of a Christian in this life consists in the exercise of passive graces, and the infinite variety of Providence, and the perpetual adversity of chances, and the dissatisfaction and emptiness that are in things themselves, and the weariness and anguish of our spirit, do call us to the trial and exercise of patience, even in the days of sunshine, and much more in the violent storms that shake our dwellings, and make our hearts tremble; God hath sent some angels into the world, whose office is to refresh the sorrows of the poor, and to lighten the eyes of the disconsolate; he hath made some creatures whose powers are chiefly ordained to comfort; wine, and oil, and society, cordials, and variety; and time itself is checkered with black and white; stay but till to-morrow, and your present sorrow will be weary, and will lie down to

rest. But this is not all. The third person of the holy Trinity is known to us by the name and dignity of the "Holy Ghost, the Comforter," and God glories in the appellation, that he is "the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;" and therefore, to minister in the office, is to become like God, and to imitate the charities of heaven; and God hath fitted mankind for it: he most needs it, and he feels his brother's wants, by his own experience; and God hath given us speech, and the endearments of society, and pleasantness of conversation, and powers of seasonable discourse, arguments to allay the sorrow, by abating our apprehensions and taking out the sting, or telling the periods of comfort, or exciting hope, or urging a precept, and reconciling our affections, and reciting promises, or telling stories of the Divine mercy, or changing it into duty, or making the burden less by comparing it with greater, or by proving it to be less than we deserve, and that it is so intended, and may become the instrument of virtue. And, certain it is, that as nothing can better do it, so there is nothing greater, for which God made our tongues, next to reciting his praises, than to minister comfort to a weary soul. And what greater measure can we have, than that we should bring joy to our brother, who, with his dreary eyes, looks to heaven and round about, and cannot find so much rest as to lay his eyelids close together; than that thy tongue should be tuned with heavenly accents, and make the weary soul to listen for light and ease, and when he perceives that there is such a thing in the world, and in the order of things, as comfort and joy, to begin to break out from the prison of his sorrows, at the door of sighs and tears, and, by little and little, melt into showers and refreshment? This is glory to thy voice, and employment fit for the brightest angel. But so have I seen the sun kiss the frozen earth, which was bound up with the images of death, and the colder breath of the north; and then the waters break from their enclosures, and melt with joy, and run in useful channels; and the flies do rise again from their little graves in walls, and dance a while in the air, to tell that there is joy within, and that the great mother of creatures will open the stock of her new refreshment, become useful to mankind, and sing praises to her Redeemer; so is the heart of a sorrowful man under the discourses of a wise comforter; he breaks from the despairs of the grave, and the fet-

ters and chains of sorrow; he blesses God, and he blesses thee, and he feels his life returning; for to be miserable is death, but nothing is life but to be comforted; and God is pleased with no music from below so much as in the thanksgiving-songs of relieved widows, of supported orphans, of rejoicing, and comforted, and thankful persons. This part of communication does the work of God and of our neighbours, and bears us to heaven in streams of joy made by the overflowings of our brother's comfort. It is a fearful thing to see a man despairing. None knows the sorrow and the intolerable anguish but themselves, and they that are damned; and so are all the loads of a wounded spirit, when the staff of a man's broken fortune bows his head to the ground, and sinks like an osier under the violence of a mighty tempest. But therefore, in proportion to this, I may tell the excellency of the employment, and the duty of that charity, which bears the dying and languishing soul from the fringes of hell, to the seat of the brightest stars, where God's face shines, and reflects comforts, for ever and ever. And though God hath, for this, especially intrusted his ministers and servants of the church, and hath put into their hearts and notices great magazines of promises, and arguments of hope, and arts of the Spirit, yet God does not always send angels on these embassies, but sends a man, "ut sit homo homini Deus," "that every good man in his season may be to his brother in the place of God," to comfort and restore him; and that it may appear, how much it is the duty of us all to minister comfort to our brother, we may remember, that the same words and the same arguments do oftentimes more prevail upon our spirits, when they are applied by the hands of another, than when they dwell in us, and come from our own discoursings. This is indeed *λόγος χρηστός* and *ἀγαθός*, it is, *εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τῆς χρείας*, "to the edification of our needs," and the greatest and most holy charity.

3. Our communication must in its just season be *ἐλεγκτικὸς*, "we must reprove" our sinning brother; "for the wounds of a friend are better than the kisses of an enemy," saith Solomon;* we imitate the office of "the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls," if we go "to seek and save that which was lost;" and it is a fearful thing to see a friend go to hell undisturbed, when the arresting him in

his horrid progress may possibly make him to return; this is a course that will change our vile itch of judging and censuring others into an act of charity; it will alter slander into piety, detraction into counsel, revenge into friendly and most useful offices, that the viper's flesh may become Mithridate, and the devil be defeated in his malicious employment of our language. He is a miserable man, whom none dares tell of his faults so plainly, that he may understand his danger; and he that is incapable and impatient of reproof, can never become a good friend to any man. For, besides that himself would never admonish his friend when he sins (and if he would, why should not himself be glad of the same charity?) he is also "proud, and scorner is his name;" he thinks himself exempt from the condition and failings of men; or, if he does not, he had rather go to hell than be called to his way by an angry sermon, or driven back by the sword of an angel, or endure one blushing, for all his hopes and interests of heaven. It is no shame to be reproofed, but to deserve it; but he that deserves it, and will do so still, shall increase his shame into confusion, and bring upon himself a sorrow bigger than the calamities of war, and plagues, and hospitals, and poverty. He only is truly wise, and will be certainly happy, that so understands himself and hates his sin, that he will not nurse it, but get to himself a reproof on purpose, whose warrant shall be liberty, whose thanks shall be amendment, whose entertainment shall be obedience; for a flattering word is like a bright sunshine to a sore eye, it increases the trouble, and lessens the sight;

Hæc demum sapiet dictio quæ feriet;

"The severe word of the reproofing man is wise and healthful:" but because all times, and all circumstances, and all persons, are not fit for this employment:

—Plurima sunt, quæ

Non audent homines pertusâ dicere lænâ; Juv.

"Some will not endure that a poor man, or an obliged person, should reprove them," and themselves are often so unprofitable servants, that they will rather venture their friend's damnation, than hazard their own interest; therefore, in the performance of this duty of useful communication, the following measurés are fit to be observed.

1. Let not your reproof be public and personal:—if it be public, it must be in general; if it be personal it must be in private; and this is expressly commanded by our blessed

* Prov. xxvii. 6.

Saviour: "If thy brother offends, tell it him between him and thee;" for if it comes afterwards, in case of contumacy, to be declared in public, it passes from fraternal correction to ecclesiastical discipline. When Socrates reproved Plato at a feast, Plato told him, "it had been better he had told him his fault in private; for to speak it publicly is indecency:" Socrates replied; "And so it is for you, publicly to condemn that indecency." For it is the nature of man to be spiteful when he is shamed, and to esteem that the worst of evils, and therefore, to take impudence and perseverance for its cover, when his shame is naked; and for this indiscretion, Aristomenes, the tutor of Ptolemy, who, before the Corinthian ambassadors reproved the king for sleeping at the solemn audience, profited nothing, but enraged the prince, and was himself forced to drink poison. But this wariness is not always necessary. For, 1. A public and an authorized person may do it publicly, and may name the person as himself shall judge expedient.

—secuit Lucilius urbem.—

Te Lupe, te Muti,—et genuinum fregit in illis.
Omne vafer vitium. PERS.

Lucilius was a censor of manners, and by his office he had warrant and authority. 2. There are also some cases in which a public reproof is prudent; and that is, when the crime is great, but not understood to be any at all; for then it is instruction and catechism, and lays aside the affront and trouble of reproof. Thus Ignatius the martyr did reprove Trajan sacrificing at the altar in the sight of all the officers of the army; and the Jews were commanded to reprove the Babylonians for idolatry in the land of their captivity;* and if we see a prince, in the confidence of his pride, and carelessness of spirit, and heat of war, spoil a church, or rob God, it is then fit to tell him the danger of sacrilege, if otherwise he cannot well be taught his danger, and his duty. 3. There are some circumstances of person, in which, by interpretation, duty, or custom, a leave is indulged or presumed, that liberty may be prudently used, publicly to reprove the public vices; so it was in the old days of the Romans; vice had then so little footing and authority, so few friends and advocates, that the prophets and poets used a bolder liberty to disgrace whatsoever was amiss;

—unde illa priorum
Scribendi quodcumque animo flagrante liberet
Simplicitas. JUV.

* Jer. x. 11.

And much of the same liberty is still reserved to pulpits, and to the bishop's office, save only, that although they may reprove publicly, yet they may not often do it personally.

2. Use not to reprove thy brother for every thing, but for great things only;—for this is the office of a tutor, not of a friend; and few men will suffer themselves to abide always under pupilage. When the friend of Philotimus, the physician, came to him to be cured of a sore finger, he told him, "Heus tu, non tibi cum reduviâ est negotium!" he let his finger alone, and told him "that his liver was imposthume:" and he that tells his friend that his countenance is not grave enough in the church, when it may be the man is an atheist, offers him a cure that will do him no good: and to chastise a trifle is not a worthy price of that noblest liberty and ingenuity, which becomes him that is to heal his brother's soul. But when a vice stains his soul, when he is a fool in his manners, when he is proud and impatient of contradiction, when he disgraces himself by talking weakly, and yet believes himself wise, and above the confidence of a sober person, then it concerns a friend to rescue him from folly. So Solon reproved Cræsus, and Socrates Alcibiades, and Cyrus chid Cyaxares, and Plato told to Dion, that of all things in the world he should beware of that folly "by which men please themselves, and despise a better judgment:" "quia ei vitio adsidet solitudo," "because that folly hath in it singularity," and is directly contrary to all capacities of a friendship, or the entertainments of necessary reproof.

3. Use not liberty of reproof in the days of sorrow and affliction; for the calamity itself is enough to chastise the gaieties of sinning persons, and to bring them to repentance; it may be sometimes fit to insinuate the mention of the cause of that sorrow in order to repentance, and a cure: but severe and biting language is then out of season, and it is like putting vinegar to an inflamed and smarting eye, it increases the anguish, and tempts into impatience. In the accidents of a sad person, we must do as nurses to their falling children, snatch them up and still their cryings, and entertain their passion with some delightful avocation: but hide not then, when the sorrowful man needs to be refreshed. When Crates, the cynic, met Demetrius Phalereus in his banishment and trouble, he went to him and spoke to him friendly, and used his philosophy in the ministries of com-

fort, and taught him to bear his trouble nobly, and so wrought upon the criminal and wild Demetrius; and he moved him to repentance, who, if he had been chidden, (as he expected,) would have scorned the manners of the cynic, and hated his presence and institution; and Perseus killed Euchus and Eulæus, for defeating his rashness, when he was newly defeated by the Romans.

4. Avoid all the evil appendages of this liberty:—for since to reprove a sinning brother is, at the best, but an unwelcome and invidious employment, though it may also be understood to be full of charity; yet, therefore, we must not make it to be hateful by adding reproach, scorn, violent expressions, scurrility, derision, or bitter invectives. Jerome invited Epicharmus to supper; and he, knowing that Jerome had unfortunately killed his friend, replied to his invitation, “Atqui nuper cum amicis immolares, non vorasti,” “I think I may come, for when thou didst sacrifice thy friends, thou didst not devour them.” This was a bitter sarcasm, and might with more prudence and charity have been avoided. They that intend charitably and conduct wisely, take occasions and proper seasons of reproof, they do it by way of question and similitude, by narrative and apologues, by commending something in him that is good, and discommending the same fault in other persons, by way that may disgrace that vice, and preserve the reputation of the man. Ammonius, observing that his scholars were nice and curious in their diet, and too effeminate for a philosophical life, caused his freedman to chastise his boy for not dining without vinegar, and all the while looked upon the young gentlemen, and read to them a lecture of severity. Thus our dearest Lord reproved St. Peter; he looked upon him when the sign was given with the crowing of the cock, and so chid him into a shower of penitential tears. Some use to mingle praises with their reprehensions, and to invite their friend’s patience to endure remedy, by ministering some pleasure with their medicine; for as no wise man can well endure to be praised, by him that knows not how to dispraise, and to reprove; so neither will they endure to be reproved by him that knows not how to praise; for reproof from such a man betrays too great a love of himself, and an illiberal spirit: he that will reprove wisely, must efform himself into all images of things which innocently and wisely he can put on; not by changing his manners, his principles,

and the consequences of his discourse, (as Alcibiades was supposed to do,) for it is best to keep the severity of our own principles, and the manner of our own living; for so Plato lived at Syracuse, just as he lived in the Academy; he was the same to Dionysius that he was to Dion: but this I mean, that he who means to win souls, and prevail to his brother’s institution, must, as St. Paul did, effigiate and conform himself to those circumstances of living and discourse, by which he may prevail upon the persuasions by complying with the affections and usages of men.

These are the measures by which we are to communicate our counsels and advices to our erring brethren: to which I add this last advice, that no man should, at that time in which he is reprovèd, give counsel and reproof to his reprover, for that betrays an angry spirit, and makes discord out of piety, and changes charity into wrangling; and it looking like a revenge, makes it appear that himself took the first reproof for an injury.

That which remains now is, that I persuade men to do it, and that I persuade men to suffer it; it is sometimes hard to do it but the cause is only, because it is hard to bear it; for if men were but apprehensive of their danger, and were not desirous to die, there were no more to be said of this affair; they would be as glad to entertain a severe reprover as a careful-physician; of whom because most men are so willing to make use, so thankful for their care, so great valuers of their skill, such lovers of their persons,—no man is put to it to persuade men to be physicians, because there is no need to persuade men to live, or to be in health: if therefore men would as willingly be virtuous as be healthful, as willingly do no evil as suffer none, be as desirous of heaven as of a long life on earth, all the difficulties and temptations against this duty of reprovèd our sinning brother would soon be concealed; but let it be as it will, we must do it in duty and piety to him that needs, and if he be impatient of it, he needs more: “Et per hujusmodi offensas emetiendum est confragosum hoc iter:” it is a troublesome employment, but it is duty and charity; and therefore, when it can, with hope of success, with prudence and piety, be done, no other consideration ought to interpose. And for the other part, those I mean who ought to be reprovèd,—they are to remember, that themselves give pensions to the preacher on purpose to be reprovèd if they shall need it;—that God

hath instituted a holy order of men to that very purpose, that they should be severally told of all that is amiss;—that themselves chide their children and their servants for their good, and that they may amend;—and that they endure thirst to cure their dropsies:—that they suffer burnings to prevent gangrenes;—and endure the cutting of a limb to preserve their lives;—and therefore, that it is a strange witchcraft and a prodigious folly, that, at so easy a mortification as the suffering of a plain friendly reproof, they will not set forward their interest of heaven, and suffer themselves to be set forward in their hopes of heaven:

—dura fatemur
Esse; sed, ut valeas, multa dolenda feras.

And when all remember, that flattery and importune silence suffer the mighty to perish like fools and inconsiderate persons, it ought to awake our spirits, and make us to attend to the admonitions of a friend, with a silence great as midnight, and watchful as a widow's eyes. It was a strange thing, that Valentinian should, in the midst of so many Christian prelates, make a law to establish polygamy, and that no bishop should dare to reprehend him. The effect of it was this, that he had a son by a second wife, the first being alive and not divorced, and he left him heir of a great part of the empire; and what the effect of that was to his soul, God, who is his judge, best knows.

If now at last it be inquired—whether every man is bound to reprove every man, if he sins, and if he converse with him,—I answer, that if it should be so, it were to no purpose, and therefore for it there is no commandment; every man that can, may instruct him that wants it; but every man may not reprove him that is already instructed. That it is an act of charity, for which there are no measures, but the other's necessity, and his own opportunity; but this is also an act of discipline, and must, in many cases, suppose an authority; and in all cases such a liberty as is not fit to be permitted to mean, and ignorant, and inferior persons. I end this with the saying of a wise person, advising to every one concerning the use of the tongue, "Aut lucentur vitam loquendo, aut tacendo abscondant scientiam;" if they speak, let them minister to the good souls; if they speak not let them minister to sobriety; in the first, they serve the end of charity; in the other, of humility.

SERMON XXVI.—WHITSUNDAY.

OF THE SPIRIT OF GRACE.

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.—Rom. viii. 9, 10.

THIS day, in which the church commemorates the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles, was the first beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This was the first day that the religion was professed: now the apostles first opened their commission, and read it to all the people. "The Lord gave his Spirit, (or, the Lord gave his Word,) and great was the company of the preachers." For so I make bold to render that prophecy of David. Christ was "the Word" of God, "Verbum æternum;" but the Spirit was the Word of God, "Verbum patefactum:" Christ was the Word manifested in the flesh; the Spirit was the Word manifested to flesh, and set in dominion over, and in hostility against, the flesh. The gospel and the Spirit are the same thing; not in substance; but "the manifestation of the Spirit is the gospel of Jesus Christ:" and because he was this day manifested, the gospel was this day first preached, and it became a law to us, called "the law of the Spirit of life;"* that is, a law taught us by the Spirit, leading us to life eternal. But the gospel is called "the Spirit;" 1. Because it contains in it such glorious mysteries, which were revealed by the immediate inspirations of the Spirit, not only in the matter itself, but also in the manner and powers to apprehend them. For what power of human understanding could have found out the incarnation of a God; that two natures [a finite, and an infinite] could have been centred into one hypostasis (or person); that a virgin should be a mother; that dead men should live again; that the *κόμης ὀστέων λυθίντων*, "the ashes of dissolved bones" should become bright as the sun, blessed as the angels, swift in motion as thought, clear as the purest noon; that God should so love us, as to be willing to be reconciled to us, and yet that himself must die that he might pardon us; that God's most holy Son should give us his body to eat, and his blood to crown our chalices, and his Spirit to sanctify our souls, to turn our bo-

* Rom. viii. 2.

dies into temperance, our souls into minds, our minds into spirit, our spirit into glory; that he, who can give us all things, who is Lord of men and angels, and King of all the creatures, should pray to God for us without intermission; that he, who reigns over all the world, should, at the day of judgment, "give up the kingdom to God the Father," and yet, after this resignation, himself and we with him should for ever reign the more gloriously; that we should be justified by faith in Christ, and that charity should be a part of faith, and that both should work as acts of duty, and acts of relation; that God should crown the imperfect endeavours of his saints with glory, and that a human act should be rewarded with an eternal inheritance; that the wicked, for the transient pleasure of a few minutes, should be tormented with an absolute eternity of pains; that the waters of baptism, when they are hallowed by the Spirit, shall purge the soul from sin; and that the spirit of man shall be nourished with the consecrated and mysterious elements, and that any such nourishment should bring a man up to heaven: and, after all this, that all Christian people, all that will be saved, must be partakers of the Divine nature, the infinite nature, of God, and must dwell in Christ, and Christ must dwell in them, and they must be in the Spirit, and the Spirit must be for ever in them? These are articles of so mysterious a philosophy, that we could have inferred them from no premises, discoursed them upon the stock of no natural or scientific principles; nothing but God and God's Spirit could have taught them to us: and therefore the gospel is "Spiritus patefactus," "the manifestation of the Spirit," "ad ædificationem,"* (as the apostle calls it) "for edification," and building us up to be a holy temple to the Lord.

2. But when we had been taught all these mysterious articles, we could not, by any human power, have understood them, unless the Spirit of God had given us a new light, and created in us a new capacity, and made us to be a new creature, of another definition. "Animalis homo," *ψυχικός*, that is, as St. Jude expounds the word, *πνεῦμα μὴ ἔχων* "The animal, or the natural man, the man that hath not the Spirit, cannot discern the things of God, for they are spiritually discerned;"† that is, not to be understood but by the light proceeding from the Sun of right-

eousness, and by that eye whose bird is the holy Dove, whose candle is the gospel.

Scio incapacem te sacramenti, impie,
Non posse cœcis mentibus mysterium
Haurire nostrum: nil diurnum nox capit.
PRUDENT.

He that shall discourse Euclid's elements to a swine, or preach (as venerable Bede's story reports of him) to a rock, or talk metaphysics to a boar, will as much prevail upon his assembly, as St. Peter and St. Paul could do upon uncircumcised hearts and ears, upon the indisposed Greek, and prejudicate Jews. An ox will relish the tender flesh of kids with as much gust and appetite, as an unspiritual and unsanctified man will do the discourses of angels or of an apostle, if he should come to preach the secrets of the gospel. And we find it true by a sad experience. How many times doth God speak to us by his servants the prophets, by his Son, by his apostles, by sermons, by spiritual books, by thousands of homilies, and arts of counsel and insinuation; and we sit as unconcerned as the pillars of a church, and hear the sermons as the Athenians did a story, or as we read a gazette! And if ever it come to pass, that we tremble, as Felix did, when we hear a sad story of death, of "righteousness and judgment to come," then we put it off to another time, or we forget it, and think we had nothing to do but to give the good man a hearing; and as Anacharsis said of the Greeks, they used money for nothing but to cast account withal; so our hearers make use of sermons and discourses evangelical, but to fill up void spaces of their time, to help to tell an hour with, or pass it without tediousness. The reason of this is a sad condemnation to such persons; they have not yet entertained the Spirit of God, they are in darkness: they were washed in water, but never baptized with the Spirit; "for these things are spiritually discerned." They would think the preacher rude, if he should say,—they are not Christians, they are not within the covenant of the gospel:—but it is certain that "the Spirit of manifestation" is not yet upon them; and that is the first effect of the Spirit, whereby we can be called sons of God, or relatives of Christ. If we do not apprehend, and greedily suck in, the precepts of this holy discipline, as aptly as merchants do discourse of gain, or farmers of fair harvests, we have nothing but the name of Christians; but we are no more such

* 1 Cor. xii. 7.

† 1 Cor. ii. 14.

really, than mandrakes are men, or sponges are living creatures.

3. The gospel is called "Spirit," because it consists of spiritual promises and spiritual precepts, and makes all men that embrace it truly to be spiritual men; and therefore St. Paul adds an epithet beyond this, calling it "a quickening Spirit,"* that is, it puts life into our spirits, which the law could not. The law bound us to punishment, but did not help us to obedience, because it gave not the promise of eternal life to its disciples. "The Spirit," that is, "the gospel," only does this: and this alone is it which comforts afflicted minds, which puts activeness into wearied spirits, which inflames our cold desires, and does ἀναζωοποιεῖν, blows up sparks into live coals, and coals up to flames, and flames into perpetual burnings. And it is impossible that any man,—who believes and considers the great, the infinite, the unspeakable, the unimaginable, the never-ceasing joys, that are prepared for all the sons and daughters of the gospel,—should not desire them: and, unless he be a fool, he cannot but use means to obtain them, effective, hearty persuasions. For it is not directly in the nature of a man to neglect so great a good; there must be something in his manners, some obliquity in his will, or madness in his intellectuals, or incapacity in his naturals, that must make him sleep such a reward away, or change it for the pleasure of a drunken fever, or the vanity of a mistress, or the rage of a passion, or the unreasonableness of any sin. However, this promise is the life of all our actions, and the Spirit that first taught it is the life of our souls.

But, beyond this, is the reason which is the consummation of all the faithful. The "gospel" is called the "Spirit," because by and in the gospel, God hath given to us not only "the Spirit of manifestation," that is, of instruction and of catechism, of faith and confident assent; but the "Spirit of confirmation, or obsignation" to all them that believe and obey the gospel of Christ: that is, the power of God is come upon our hearts, by which, in an admirable manner, we are made sure of a glorious inheritance; made sure (I say) in the nature of the thing; and our own persuasions also are confirmed with an excellent, a comfortable, a discerning, and a reasonable hope: in the strength of which, and by whose aid,

as we do not doubt of the performance of the promise, so we vigorously pursue all the parts of the condition, and are enabled to work all the work of God, so as not to be affrighted with fear, or seduced by vanity, or oppressed by lust, or drawn off by evil example, or abused by riches, or imprisoned by ambition and secular designs. This the Spirit of God does work in all his servants; and is called, "the Spirit of obsignation, or the confirming Spirit," because it confirms our hope, and assures our title to life eternal; and by means of it, and other its collateral assistances, it also confirms us in our duty, that we may not only profess in word, but live lives according to the gospel. And this is the sense of "the Spirit" mentioned in the text; "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you:" that is, if ye be made partakers of the gospel, or of "the Spirit of manifestation;" if ye be truly entitled to God, and have received the promise of the Father, then are ye not carnal men; ye are "spiritual," ye are "in the Spirit:" if ye have the Spirit in one sense to any purpose, ye have it also in another: if the Spirit be in you, you are in it; if it hath given you hope, it hath also enabled and ascertained your duty. For "the Spirit of manifestation" will but upbraid you in the shame and horrors of a sad eternity, if you have not "the Spirit of obsignation:" if the Holy Ghost be not come upon you to great purposes of holiness, all other pretences are vain,—ye are still in the flesh, which shall never inherit the kingdom of God.

"In the Spirit:" that is, in the power of the Spirit. So the Greeks call him ἐνδεδωκεν, "who is possessed by a spirit," whom God hath filled with a celestial immission; he is said to be in God, when God is in him. And it is this similitude taken from persons encompassed with guards; they are "in custodia," that is "in their power," under their command, moved at their dispose; they rest in their time, and receive laws from their authority, and admit visitors whom they appoint, and must be employed as they shall suffer: so are men who are in the Spirit; that is, they believe as he teaches, they work as he enables, they choose what he calls good, they are friends of his friends, and they hate with his hatred: with this only difference, that persons in custody are forced to do what their keepers please, and nothing is free but their wills; but they that are under the command of the Spirit, do all

* 1 Cor. xv. 45.

things which the Spirit commands, but they do them cheerfully; and their will is now the prisoner, but it is "in liberâ custodiâ," the will is where it ought to be, and where it desires to be, and it cannot easily choose any thing else, because it is extremely in love with this, as the saints and angels in their state of beatific vision cannot choose but love God; and yet the liberty of their choice is not lessened, because the object fills all the capacities of the will and the understanding. Indifferency to an object is the lowest degree of liberty, and supposes unworthiness or defect in the object, or the apprehension: but the will is then the freest and most perfect in its operation, when it entirely pursues a good with so certain determination and clear election, that the contrary evil cannot come into dispute or pretence. Such in our proportions is the liberty of the sons of God; it is a holy and amiable captivity to the Spirit: the will of man is in love with those chains, which draw us to God, and loves the fetters that confine us to the pleasures and religion of the kingdom. And as no man will complain that his temples are restrained, and his head is prisoner, when it is encircled with a crown; so when the Son of God hath made us free, and hath only subjected us to the service and dominion of the Spirit, we are free as princes within the circle of their diadem, and our chains are bracelets, and the law is a law of liberty, and "his service is perfect freedom;" and the more we are his subjects, the more "we shall reign as kings;" and the faster we run, the easier is our burden; and Christ's yoke is like feathers to a bird, not loads, but helps to motion, without them the body falls; and we do not pity birds, when in summer we wish them unfeathered and allow, or bald as eggs, that they might be cooler and lighter. Such is the load and captivity of the soul, when we do the work of God, and are his servants, and under the government of the Spirit. They that strive to be quit of this subjection, love the liberty of outlaws, and the licentiousness of anarchy, and the freedom of sad widows and distressed orphans: for so rebels, and fools, and children, long to be rid of their princes, and their guardians, and their tutors, that they may be accursed without law, and be undone without control, and be ignorant and miserable without a teacher and without discipline. He that is in the Spirit, is under tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the Father, just as all great heirs are;

only, the first seizure the Spirit makes is upon the will. He that loves the yoke of Christ, and the discipline of the gospel, he is in the Spirit, that is, in the Spirit's power.

Upon this foundation the apostle hath built these two propositions. 1. Whosoever hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his: he does not belong to Christ at all: he is not partaker of his Spirit, and therefore shall never be partaker of his glory. 2. Whosoever is in Christ is dead to sin, and lives to the Spirit of Christ: that is, lives a spiritual, a holy, and a sanctified life. These are to be considered distinctly.

1. All that belong to Christ have the Spirit of Christ. Immediately before the ascension, our blessed Saviour bid his disciples "tarry in Jerusalem, till they should receive the promise of the Father." Whosoever stay at Jerusalem, and are in actual communion of the church of God, shall certainly receive this promise. "For it is made to you and to your children," (saith St. Peter,) "and to as many as the Lord our God shall call."—All shall receive the Spirit of Christ, the promise of the Father, because this was the great instrument of distinction between the law and the gospel. In the law, God gave his Spirit, 1. to some; to them, 2. extra-regularly; 3. without solemnity; 4. in small proportions, like the dew upon Gideon's fleece; a little portion was wet sometimes with the dew of heaven, when all the earth besides was dry. And the Jews called it "filiam vocis," "the daughter of a voice," still, and small, and seldom, and that by secret whispers, and sometimes inarticulate, by way of enthusiasm, rather than of instruction; and God spake by the prophets, transmitting the sound as through an organ-pipe, things which themselves oftentimes understood not. But in the gospel, the Spirit is given without measure; first poured forth upon our head Christ Jesus; then descending upon the beard of Aaron, the fathers of the church; and thence falling, like the tears of the balsam of Judea, upon the foot of the plant, upon the lowest of the people. And this is given regularly to all that ask it, to all that can receive it, and by a solemn ceremony, and conveyed by a sacrament: and is now, not the daughter of a voice, but the mother of many voices, of divided tongues, and united hearts; of the tongues of prophets, and the duty of saints; of the sermons of apostles, and the wisdom of governors: it is the parent of boldness and

fortitude to martyrs, the fountain of learning to doctors, an ocean of all things excellent to all who are within the ship and bounds of the catholic church: so that old men and young men, maidens and boys, the scribe and the unlearned, the judge and the advocate, the priest and the people, are full of the Spirit, if they belong to God. Moses' wish is fulfilled, and all the Lord's people are prophets in some sense or other.

In the wisdom of the ancients it was observed, that there are four great cords, which tie the heart of man to inconvenience, and a prison, making it a servant of vanity, and an heir of corruption; 1. pleasure, and, 2. pain; 3. fear, and 4. desire.

Πρὸς τὸ τετραχορδον δ' ὄλον,
τὴν ἡδονὴν, ἐπιθυμίαν, λύπην, φόβον,
ἀσκήσειός γε καὶ πολλῆς μάχης δέου.

These are they that exercise all the wisdom and resolutions of man, and all the powers that God hath given him.

οἱ τοὶ γὰρ, οἱ τοὶ καὶ διὰ σπλάγχνων αἰ
χωροῦσι καὶ κυκώων ἀνδροπίων κέαρ,

said Agathon. These are those evil spirits that possess the heart of man, and mingle with all his actions; so that either men are tempted to, 1. "lust by pleasure," or, 2. to "baser arts by covetousness," or, 3. to "impatience by sorrow," or 4. to dishonourable actions by fear:" and this is the state of man by nature, and under the law, and for ever, till the Spirit of God came, and by four special operations cured these four inconveniences, and restrained or sweetened these unwholesome waters.

1. God gave us his Spirit that we might be insensible of worldly pleasures, having our souls wholly filled with spiritual and heavenly relishes. For when God's Spirit hath entered into us, and possessed us as his temple, or as his dwelling, instantly we begin to taste manna, and to loathe the diet of Egypt; we begin to consider concerning heaven, and to prefer eternity before moments, and to love the pleasures of the soul above the sottish and beastly pleasures of the body. Then we can consider that the pleasures of a drunken meeting cannot make recompense for the pains of a surfeit, and that night's intemperance; much less for the torments of eternity: then we are quick to discern that the itch and scab of lustful appetites is not worth the charges of a chyrurgeon: much less can it pay for the disgrace, the danger, the sickness, the death,

and the hell, of lustful persons. Then we wonder that any man should venture his head to get a crown unjustly; or that, for the hazard of a victory, he should throw away all his hopes of heaven certainly.

A man that hath tasted God's Spirit, can instantly discern the madness that is in rage, the folly and the disease that are in envy, the anguish and tediousness that are in lust, the dishonour that is in breaking our faith and telling a lie; and understands things truly as they are; that is, that charity is the greatest nobleness in the world; that religion hath in it the greatest pleasures; that temperance is the best security of health; that humility is the surest way to honour. And all these relishes are nothing but antepasts of heaven, where the quintessence of all these pleasures shall be swallowed for ever; where the chaste shall follow the Lamb, and the virgins sing there where the mother of God shall reign; and the zealous converters of souls, and labourers in God's vineyard, shall worship eternally; where St. Peter and St. Paul do wear their crowns of righteousness; and the patient persons shall be rewarded with Job, and the meek persons with Christ and Moses, and all with God; the very expectation of which, —proceeding from a hope begotten in us by "the Spirit of manifestation," and bred up and strengthened by "the Spirit of obsequation,"—is so delicious an entertainment of all our reasonable appetites, that a spiritual man can no more be removed or enticed from the love of God and of religion, than the moon from her orb, or a mother from loving the son of her joys and of her sorrows.

This was observed by St. Peter: "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby; if so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious."* When once we have tasted the grace of God, the sweetness of his Spirit then no food but "the food of angels," no cup but "the cup of salvation," the "divine cup," in which we drink salvation to our God, and call upon the name of the Lord with ravishment and thanksgiving. And there is no greater external testimony that we are in the Spirit, and that the Spirit dwells in us, than if we find joy and delight and spiritual pleasure in the greatest mysteries of our religion; if we communicate often, and that with appetite, and a forward

* 1 Pet. ii. 2.

choice, and an unwearied devotion, and a heart truly fixed upon God, and upon the offices of a holy worship. He that loathes good meat, is sick at heart, or near it; and he that despises, or hath not a holy appetite to the food of angels, the wine of elect souls, is fit to succeed the prodigal at his banquet of sin and husks, and to be partaker of the table of devils: but all they who have God's Spirit, love to feast at the supper of the Lamb, and have no appetites but what are of the Spirit, or servants to the Spirit. I have read of a spiritual person who saw heaven but in a dream, but such as made great impression upon him, and was represented with vigorous and pertinacious phantasms, not easily disbanding; and when he awaked he knew not his cell, he remembered not him that slept in the same dorture, nor could tell how night and day were distinguished, nor could discern oil from wine; but called out for his vision again: "Redde mihi campos meos floridos, columnam auream, comitem Hieronymum, assistentes angelos;" "Give me my fields again, my most delicious fields, my pillar of a glorious light, my companion St. Jerome, my assistant angels."—And this lasted till he was told of his duty, and matter of obedience, and the fear of a sin had disencharmed him, and caused him to take care, lest he lose the substance out of greediness to possess the shadow.

And if it were given to any of us to see paradise, or the third heaven, (as it was to St. Paul,) could it be that ever we should love any thing but Christ, or follow any guide but the Spirit, or desire any thing but heaven, or understand any thing to be pleasant but what shall lead thither? Now what a vision can do, that the Spirit doth certainly to them that entertain him. They that have him really, and not in pretence only, are certainly great despisers of the things of the world. The Spirit doth not create or enlarge our appetites of things below: spiritual men are not designed to reign upon earth, but to reign over their lusts and sottish appetites. The Spirit doth not inflame our thirst of wealth, but extinguishes it, and makes us to "esteem all things as loss, and as dung, so that we may gain Christ." No gain then is pleasant but godliness, no ambition but longings after heaven, no revenge but against ourselves for sinning; nothing but God in Christ: "Deus meus, et omnia:" and "date nobis animas, cætera vobis tollite," as the king of

Sodom said to Abraham; "Secure but the souls to us, and take our goods." Indeed, this is a good sign that we have the Spirit.

St. John spake a hard saying, but by the Spirit of manifestation we are all taught to understand it: "Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."* The seed of God is the Spirit, which hath a plastic power to efform us "in similitudinem filiorum Dei," "into the image of the sons of God;" and as long as this remains in us, while the Spirit dwells in us, we cannot sin; that is, it is against our natures, our reformed natures, to sin. And as we say, we cannot endure such a potion, we cannot suffer such a pain; that is, we cannot without great trouble, we cannot without doing violence to our nature; so all spiritual men, all that are born of God, and the seed of God remains in them, "they cannot sin;" cannot *without trouble*, and doing against their natures, and their most passionate inclinations. A man, if you speak naturally, can masticate gums, and he can break his own legs, and he can sip up, by little draughts, mixtures of aloes, and rhubarb, of henbane, or the deadly nightshade; but he cannot do this naturally and willingly, cheerfully, or with delight. Every sin is against a good man's nature: he is ill at ease when he has missed his usual prayers, he is amazed if he have fallen into an error, he is infinitely ashamed of his imprudence; he remembers a sin as he thinks of an enemy, or the horrors of a midnight apparition: for all his capacities, his understanding, and his choosing faculties, are filled up with the opinion and persuasions, with the love and with the desires of God. And this, I say, is the great benefit of the Spirit, which God hath given to us as an antidote against worldly pleasures. And therefore, St. Paul joins them as consequent to each other: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come," &c.† First, we are enlightened in baptism, and by "the Spirit of manifestation," the revelations of the gospel:—then we relish and taste interior excellencies, and receive the Holy Ghost, "the Spirit of con-

* 1 Epist. iii. 9.

† Heb. vi. 4.

firmation," and he gives us a taste of the powers of the world to come; that is, of the great efficacy that is in the article of eternal life, to persuade us to religion and holy living: then we feel that as the belief of that article dwells upon our understanding and is incorporated into our wills and choice, so we grow powerful to resist sin by the strengths of the Spirit, to defy all carnal pleasure, and to suppress and mortify it by the powers of this article: those are "the powers of the world to come."

2. The Spirit of God is given to all who truly belong to Christ, as an antidote against sorrows, against impatience, against the evil accidents of the world, and against the oppression and sinking of our spirits under the cross. There are in Scripture noted two births besides the natural; to which also by analogy we may add a third. The first is, to be born of water and the Spirit. It is ἐν δὴ δὸν, one thing signified by a divided appellation, by two substantives, "water and the Spirit," that is, "Spiritus aqueus," the "Spirit moving upon the waters of baptism." The second is, to be born of "Spirit and fire; for so Christ was promised to "baptize us with the Holy Ghost and with fire;" that is, "cum Spiritu igneo," "with a fiery Spirit," the Spirit as it descended into Pentecost in the shape of fiery tongues. And as the watery Spirit washed away the sins of the church, so the Spirit of fire enkindles charity and the love of God. Τὸ πῦρ καθάρει, τὸ ὕδωρ ἀνιζέει, (says Plutarch,) the Spirit is the same under both the titles, and it enables the church with gifts and graces. And from these there is another operation of the new birth, but the same Spirit, the Spirit of rejoicing, or "spiritus exultans, spiritus lætitiæ." "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost."* There is a certain joy and spiritual rejoicing, that accompanies them in whom the Holy Ghost doth dwell; a joy in the midst of sorrow: a joy given to allay the sorrows of secular troubles, and to alleviate the burden of persecution. This St. Paul notes to this purpose: "And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost."† Worldly afflictions and spiritual joys may very well dwell together; and if God did not supply

us out of his storehouses, the sorrows of this world would be more and unmixed, and the troubles of persecution would be too great for natural confidences. For who shall make him recompense that lost his life in a duel, fought about a draught of wine, or a cheaper woman? What arguments shall invite a man to suffer torments in testimony of a proposition of natural philosophy? And by what instruments shall we comfort a man who is sick and poor, and disgraced and vicious, and lies cursing, and despairs of any thing hereafter? That man's condition proclaims what it is to want the Spirit of God, "the Spirit of comfort." Now this Spirit of comfort is the hope and confidence, the certain expectation of partaking, in the inheritance of Jesus; this is the faith and patience of the saints; this is the refreshment of all wearied travellers, the cordial of all languishing sinners, the support of the scrupulous, the guide of the doubtful, the anchor of timorous and fluctuating souls, the confidence and the staff of the penitent. He that is deprived of his whole estate for a good conscience, by the Spirit he meets this comfort, that he shall find it again with advantage in the day of restitution; and this comfort was so manifest in the first days of Christianity, that it was no unfrequent thing to see holy persons court a martyrdom, with a fondness as great as is our impatience and timorousness in every persecution. Till the Spirit of God comes upon us, we are ἀνοήτοι. "Inopis nos atque pusilli finxerunt animi;" "we have little souls," little faith, and as little patience; we fall at every stumbling-block, and sink under every temptation; and our hearts fail us, and we die for fear of death, and lose our souls to preserve our estates or our persons, till the Spirit of God "fills us with joy in believing;" and the man that is in a great joy, cares not for any trouble that is less than his joy; and God hath taken so great care to secure this to us, that he hath turned it into a precept, "Rejoice evermore;" and, "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice."* But this rejoicing must be only in the hope that is laid up for us, ἐν ἐλπίδι χαίροντες so the apostle, "rejoicing in hope."† For although God sometimes makes a cup of sensible comfort to overflow the spirit of a man, and thereby loves to refresh his sorrows; yet that is

* Rom. xv. 13.

† 1 Thess. 1. 6.

* 1 Thess. v. 16.

† Rom. xii. 12.

from a secret principle not regularly given, not to be waited for, not to be prayed for, and it may fail us if we think upon it; but the hope of life eternal can never fail us, and the joy of that is great enough to make us suffer any thing, or to do any thing.

“——— Ibisus, ibimus,
Ut cunque præcedes, supremum
Carpere iter comites parati.

HOR.

To death, to bands, to poverty, to banishment, to tribunals, any whither in hope of life eternal; as long as this anchor holds, we may suffer a storm, but cannot suffer shipwreck. And I desire you, by the way, to observe how good a God we serve, and how excellent a religion Christ taught, when one of his great precepts is, that we should “rejoice and be exceeding glad;” and God hath given us the spirit of rejoicing, not a sullen melancholy spirit, not the spirit of bondage or of a slave, but the Spirit of his Son, consigning us by a holy conscience to “joys unspeakable and full of glory.” And from hence you may also infer, that those who sink under a persecution, or are impatient in a sad accident, they put out their own fires which the Spirit of the Lord hath kindled, and lose those glories which stand behind the cloud.

SERMON XXVII.

PART II.

3. The Spirit of God is given us as an antidote against evil concupiscences and sinful desires, and is then called “the Spirit of prayer and supplication.” For, ever since the affections of the outward man prevailed upon the ruins the soul, all our desires were sensual, and therefore hurtful; for, ever after, our body grew to be our enemy. In the loosenesses of nature, and amongst the ignorance or imperfection of gentile philosophy, men used to pray with their hands full of rapine, and their mouths full of blood; and their hearts full of malice; and they prayed accordingly, for an opportunity to steal, for a fair body, for a prosperous revenge, for a prevailing malice, or the satisfaction of whatsoever they could be tempted to by any object, by any lust, by any devil, whatsoever.

The Jews were better taught; for God was their teacher, and he gave the Spirit to

them in single rays. But as the “Spirit of oblation” was given to them under a seal, and within a veil, so the “Spirit of manifestation,” or “patefaction,” was like the gem of a vine, or the bud of a rose, plain “indices” and significations of life, and principles of juice and sweetness; but yet scarce out of the doors of their causes: they had the infancy of knowledge, and revelations to them were given as catechism is taught to our children: which they read with the eye of a bird, and speak with the tongue of a bee, and understand with the heart of a child; that is, weakly and imperfectly. And they understand so little, that, 1. they thought God heard them not, unless they spake their prayers, at least efforming their words within their lips; and, 2. their forms of prayer were so few and seldom, that to teach a form of prayer, or to compose a collect, was thought a work fit for a prophet, or the founder of an institution. 3. Add to this, that, as their promises were temporal, so were their hopes; as were their hopes, so were their desires; and, according to their desires, so were their prayers. And although the Psalms of David was their great office, and the treasury of devotion to their nation,—and very worthily; yet it was full of wishes for temporals, invocations of God the avenger, on God the Lord of hosts, on God the enemy of their enemies: and they desired their nation to be prospered, and themselves blessed, and distinguished from all the world by the effects of such desires. This was the state of prayer in their synagogues; save only that it had also this ally; 4. that their addresses to God were crass, material, typical, and full of shadows and imaginary, and patterns of things to come; and so in its very being and constitution was relative and imperfect. But that we may see how great things the Lord has done for us, God hath poured his Spirit into our hearts, “the Spirit of prayer and supplication.”

And now, 1. Christians “pray in their spirit,” with sighs and groans, and know that God, who dwells within them, can as clearly distinguish those secret accents, and read their meaning in the Spirit, as plainly as he knows the voice of his own thunder, or could discern the letter of the law written in the tables of stone by the finger of God.

2. Likewise, “the Spirit helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought.” This is, when God sends an affliction or persecution upon us,

we are indeed extreme apt to lay our hand upon the wound, and never take it off, but when we lift it up in prayer to be delivered from that sadness; and then we pray fervently to be cured of a sickness, to be delivered from a tyrant, to be snatched from the grave, not to perish in the danger. But the Spirit of God hath, from all sad accidents, drawn the veil of error and the cloud of intolerableness, and hath taught us that our happiness cannot consist in freedom or deliverances from persecutions, but in patience, resignation, and noble sufferance; and that we are not then so blessed when God hath turned our scourges into ease and delicacy, as when we convert our very scorpions into the exercise of virtues: so that now the Spirit having helped our infirmities, that is, comforted our weaknesses and afflictions, our sorrow and impatience, by this proposition, that "All things work together for the good of them that fear God," he hath taught us to pray for grace, for patience under the cross, for charity to our persecutors, for rejoicing in tribulations, for perseverance and boldness in the faith, and for whatsoever will bring us safely to heaven.

3. Whereas only a Moses or a Samuel, a David or a Daniel, a John the Baptist or the Messias himself, could describe and indite forms of prayer and thanksgiving to the tune and accent of heaven; now every wise and good man is instructed perfectly in the scriptures,—which are writings of the Spirit,—what things he may, and what things he must, ask for.

4. The Spirit of God hath made our services to be spiritual, intellectual, holy, and effects of choice and religion, the consequence of a spiritual sacrifice, and a holy union with God. The prayer of a Christian is with the effects of the "Spirit of sanctification;" and then we pray with the Spirit, when we pray with holiness, which is the great fruit, the principal gift, of the Spirit. And this is by St. James called "the prayer of faith," and is said to be certain that it shall prevail. Such a praying with the Spirit when our prayers are the voices of our spirits, and our spirits are first taught, then sanctified by God's Spirit, shall never fail of its effect; because then it is that "the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us;" that is, hath enabled us to do it upon his strengths; we speak his sense, we live his life, we breathe his accents, we desire in order to his purposes, and our persons are gracious by his holiness, and are accepted

by his interpellation and intercession in the act and offices of Christ. This is "praying with the Spirit."—To which, by way of explication, I add these two annexes of holy prayer, in respect of which also every good man prays with the Spirit.

5. The Spirit gives us great relish and appetite to our prayers; and this St. Paul calls * "Serving of God in his Spirit," *ὑπερβαρῶς*; that is, with a willing mind: not as Jonas did his errand, but as Christ did die for us; he was straitened till he had accomplished it. And they—that say their prayers out of custom only, or to comply with external circumstances, or collateral advantages, or pray with trouble and unwillingness—give a very great testimony that they have not the Spirit of Christ within them, that Spirit which maketh intercession for the saints: but he that delighteth in his prayers, not by a sensible or fantastic pleasure, but whose choice dwells in his prayers, and whose conversation is with God in holy living, and praying accordingly, that man hath the Spirit of Christ, and therefore belongs to Christ; for by this Spirit it is that Christ prays in heaven for us: and if we do not pray on earth in the same manner according to our measures, we had as good hold our peace; our prayers are an abominable sacrifice, and send up to God no better a perfume, than if we burned "assa fœtida," or the raw flesh of a murdered man upon the altar of incense.

6. The Spirit of Christ and of prayer helps our infirmities, by giving us confidence and importunity. I put them together: for as our faith is, and our trust in God, so is our hope, and so is our prayer; weary or lasting, long or short, not in words, but in works and in desires: for the words of prayer are no part of the Spirit of prayer. Words may be the body of it, but the Spirit of prayer always consists in holiness, that is, in holy desires and holy actions. Words are not properly capable of being holy; all words are in themselves servants of things; and the holiness of a prayer is not at all concerned in the manner of its expression, but in the spirit of it, that is, in the violence of its desires, and the innocence of its ends, and the continuance of its employment. This is the verification of that great prophecy which Christ made, that "in all the world the true worshippers should worship in spirit and in truth;" that is, with a pure

* Rom. i. 9.

mind, with holy desires, for spiritual things, according to the mind of the Spirit, in the imitation of Christ's intercession, with perseverance, with charity or love. That is the Spirit of God, and these are the spiritualities of the gospel, and the formalities of prayers as they are Christian and evangelical.

7. Some men have thought of a seventh way, and explicate our praying in the Spirit by a mere volubility of language; which indeed is a direct undervaluing the Spirit of God and of Christ, "the Spirit of manifestation and intercession:" it is to return to the materiality and imperfection of the law; it is to worship God in outward forms, and to think that God's service consists in shells and rinds, in lips and voices, in shadows and images of things; it is to retire from Christ to Moses, and, at the best, it is a going from real graces to imaginary gifts. And when praying with the Spirit hath in it so many excellencies, and consists of so many parts of holiness and sanctification, and is an act of the inner man; we shall be infinitely mistaken, if we let go this substance, and catch at the shadow, and sit down and rest in the imagination of an improbable, unnecessary, useless gift of speaking, to which the nature of many men, and the art of all learned men, and the very use and confidence of ignorant men, is too abundantly sufficient. Let us not so despise the Spirit of Christ, as to make it no other than the breath of our lungs. For though it might be possible, that at the first, and when forms of prayer were few and seldom, the Spirit of God might dictate the very words to the apostles, and first Christians; yet, it follows not, that therefore he does so still, to all that pretend praying with the Spirit. For if he did not then, at the first, dictate words, (as we know not whether he did or not,) why shall he be supposed to do so now? If he did then, it follows that he does not now: because his doing it then was sufficient for all men since: for so the forms taught by the Spirit were patterns for others to imitate, in all the descending ages of the church. There was once an occasion so great, that the Spirit of God did think it a work fit for him, to teach a man to weave silk, or embroider gold, or work in brass (as it happened to Bezaleel and Ahohiah): but then, every weaver or worker in brass may, by the same reason, pretend that he works by the Spirit, as that he prays by the Spirit, if by prayer he means forming the words. For although in the case of work-

ing, it was certain that the Spirit did teach, —in the case of inditing or forming the words, it is not certain whether he did or not: yet because in both it was extraordinary, (if it was at all,) and ever since in both it is infinitely needless; to pretend the Spirit, in forms of every man's making, (even though they be of contrary religions, and pray one against the other,) it may serve an end of a fantastic and hypochondriacal religion, or a secret ambition, but not the ends of God, or the honour of the Spirit.

The Jews in their declensions to folly and idolatry did worship the stone of imagination, that is, certain smooth images, in which, by art-magic, pictures and little faces were represented, declaring hidden things and stolen goods; and God severely forbade this baseness.* But we also have taken up this folly, and worship the stone of imagination: we beget imperfect phantasms and speculative images in our fancy, and we fall down and worship them; never considering, that the Spirit of God never appears through such spectres. Prayer is one of the noblest exercises of the Christian religion; or rather, it is that duty in which all graces are concentrated. Prayer is charity, it is faith, it is a conformity to God's will, a desiring according to the desires of heaven, an imitation of Christ's intercession, and prayer must suppose all holiness, or else it is nothing: and therefore, all that in which men need God's Spirit, all that is in order to prayer. Baptism is but a prayer, and the holy sacrament of the Lord's supper is but a prayer; a prayer of sacrifice representative, and a prayer of oblation, and a prayer of intercession, and a prayer of thanksgiving. And obedience is a prayer, and begs and procures blessings: and if the Holy Ghost hath sanctified the whole man, then he hath sanctified the prayer of the man, and not till then. And if ever there was, or could be, any other praying with the Spirit, it was such a one as a wicked man might have; and therefore, it cannot be a note of distinction between the good and bad, between the saints and men of the world. But this only, which I have described from the fountains of Scripture, is that which a good man can have, and therefore, this is it in which we ought to rejoice; "that he that glories, may glory in the Lord."

Thus, I have (as I could) described the effluxes of the Holy Spirit upon us in his

* Levit. xxvi. 1.

great channels. But the great effect of them is this: that as, by the arts of the spirit of darkness and our own malice, our souls are turned into flesh, (not in the natural sense, but in the moral and theological,) and "*animalis homo*" is the same with "*carnalis*," that is, his soul is a servant of the passions and desires of the flesh, and is flesh in its operations and ends, in its principles and actions: so, on the other side, by the grace of God, and "the promise of the Father," and the influences of the Holy Ghost, our souls are not only recovered from the state of flesh, and reduced back to the entireness of animal operations, but they are heightened into spirit, and transformed into a new nature. And this is a new article, and now to be considered.

St. Jerome tells of the custom of the empire; when a tyrant was overcome, they used to break the head of his statues, and upon the same-trunk to set the head of the conqueror, and so it passed wholly for the new prince. So it is in the kingdom of grace. As soon as the tyrant sin is overcome, and a new heart is put into us, or that we serve under a new head, instantly we have a new name given us, and we are esteemed a new creation; and not only changed in manners, but we have a new nature within us, even a third part of an essential constitution. This may seem strange; and indeed it is so: and it is one of the great mysteriousnesses of the gospel. Every man naturally consists of soul and body; but every Christian man that belongs to Christ, hath more: for he hath body, and soul, and spirit. My text is plain for it: "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." And by *Spirit* is not meant only the graces of God, and his gifts enabling us to do holy things: there is more belongs to a good man than so. But as when God made man, he made him after his own image, and breathed into him the spirit of life, and he was made "*in animam viventem*," "into a living soul;" then he was made a man: so in the new creation, Christ, "by whom God made the worlds," intends to conform us to his image, and he hath given us "the Spirit of adoption," by which we are made sons of God; and by the spirit of a new life we are made new creatures, capable of a new state, entitled to another manner of duration, enabled to do new and greater actions in order to higher ends; we have new affections, new understandings, new wills: "*vetera transierunt, et ecce om-*

nia nova facta sunt;" "all things are become new." And this is called "the seed of God," when it relates to the principle and cause of this production; but the thing that is produced, is a spirit, and that is as much in nature beyond a soul, as a soul is beyond a body. This great mystery I should not utter but upon the greatest authority in the world, and from an infallible doctor; I mean St. Paul, who from Christ taught the church more secrets than all the whole college besides; "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God that your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."* We are not sanctified wholly, nor preserved in safety, unless, besides our souls and bodies, our spirit also be kept blameless. This distinction is nice, and infinitely above human reason: but "The word of God (saith the same apostle) "is sharper than a two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder the soul and the spirit:"† and that hath taught us to distinguish the principle of a new life from the principle of the old, the celestial from the natural; and thus it is.

The Spirit (as I now discourse of it) is a principle infused into us by God, when we become his children, whereby we live the life of grace, and understand the secrets of the kingdom, and have passions and desires of things beyond and contrary to our natural appetites, enabling us not only to sobriety, which is the duty of the body,—not only to justice, which is the rectitude of the soul,—but to such a sanctity as makes us like to God: for so saith the Spirit of God, "Be ye holy, as I am: be pure, be perfect, as your heavenly Father is pure, as he is perfect:" which because it cannot be a perfection of degrees, it must be "*in similitudine nature*," "in the likeness of that nature," which God hath given us in the new birth, that by it we might resemble his excellency and holiness. And this I conceive to be the meaning of St. Peter, "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness," (that is, to this new life of godliness,) "through the knowledge of him, that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these you might be partakers of the Divine nature:"‡ so we read it; but it is something mistaken: it is not the *της θείας φύσεως*, "the Divine na-

* 1 Thes. v. 23. † Heb. iv. 12. ‡ 2 Epist. i. 3, 4.

ture;" for God's nature is indivisible, and incommunicable; "but it is spoken participative," or "per analogiam," "partakers of a Divine nature," that is, of this new and godlike nature given to every person that serves God, whereby he is sanctified, and made the child of God, and framed into the likeness of Christ. The Greeks generally call this χάρισμα, "a gracious gift," an extraordinary super-addition to nature; not a single gift in order to single purposes, but a universal principle; and it remains upon all good men during their lives, and after their death, and is that "white stone" spoken of in the Revelation, "and in it a new name written, which no man knoweth but he that hath it:"* and by this, God's sheep, at the day of judgment, shall be discerned from goats. If their spirits be presented to God pure and unblameable, this great χάρισμα, this talent, which God hath given to all Christians to improve in the banks of grace and religion, if they bring this to God increased and grown up to the fulness of the measure of Christ, (for it is Christ's Spirit; and as it is in us, it is called "the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,"†) then we shall be acknowledged for sons, and our adoption shall pass into an eternal inheritance in the portion of our elder Brother.

I need not to apply this discourse: the very mystery itself is in the whole world the greatest engagement of our duty that is imaginable, by the way of instrument, and by the way of thankfulness.

Quisquis magna dedit, voluit sibi magna rependi;

"He that gives great things to us, ought to have great acknowledgments:"—and Seneca said concerning wise men, "That he that doth benefits to others, hides those benefits; as a man lays up great treasures in the earth, which he must never see with his eyes, unless a great occasion forces him to dig the graves, and produce that which he buried; but all the while the man was hugely rich, and he had the wealth of a great relation." So it is with God and us: for this huge benefit of the Spirit, which God gives us, is for our good deposited into our souls; not made for forms and ostentation, not to be looked upon, or serve little ends; but growing in the secret of our souls, and swelling up to a treasure, making us in this world rich by title and relation; but it shall be produced in the great necessities

of doomsday. In the mean time, if the fire be quenched, the fire of God's Spirit, God will kindle another in his anger that shall never be quenched: but if we entertain God's spirit with our own purities, and employ it diligently, and serve it willingly, (for God's Spirit is a loving Spirit,) then we shall really be turned into spirits. Iræneus had a proverbial saying, "Perfecti sunt, qui tria sine querelâ Deo exhibent;" "They that present three things right to God, they are perfect;"—that is, a chaste body, a righteous soul, a holy spirit. And the event shall be this, which Maimonides expressed not amiss,—though he did not at all understand the secret of this mystery; the soul of man in this life is "in potentiâ ad esse spiritum," "it is designed to be a spirit," but in the world to come it shall be actually as very a spirit as an angel is. And this state is expressed by the apostle calling it "the earnest of the Spirit:" that is, here it is begun, and given us as an antepast of glory, and a principle of grace; but then we shall have it "in plenitudine."

—regit idem spiritus artus
Orbe alio —

Here and there it is the same; but here we have the earnest, then the riches and the inheritance.

But then, if this be a new principle, and be given us in order to the actions of a holy life, we must take care that we receive not "the Spirit of God in vain," but remember that it is a new life: and as no man can pretend that a person is alive, that doth not always do the works of life; so it is certain no man hath the Spirit of God, but he that lives the life of grace, and doth the works of the Spirit, that is, "in all holiness, and justice, and sobriety."

"Spiritus qui accedit animo, vel Dei est, vel dæmonis," said Tertullian: "Every man hath within him the Spirit of God or the spirit of the devil." The spirit of fornication is an unclean devil, and extremely contrary to the Spirit of God; and so is the spirit of malice or uncharitableness; for the Spirit of God is the spirit of love: for as by purities God's Spirit sanctifies the body, so by love he purifies the soul, and makes the soul grow into a spirit, into a divine nature. But God knows that even in Christian societies, we see the devils walk up and down every day and every hour; the devil of uncleanness, and the devil of drunkenness; the devil of malice, and the devil of rage; the

* Apoc. ii. 17.

† Phil. i. 9.

spirit of filthy speaking, and the spirit of de- traction ; a proud spirit, and the spirit of rebellion ; and yet all called "Christian." It is generally supposed, that unclean spirits walk in the night, and so it used to be ; "for they that are drunk are drunk in the night," said the apostle. But Suidas tells of certain "empusæ" that used to appear at noon, at such times as the Greeks did celebrate the funerals of the dead ; and at this day some of the Russians fear the noon-day devil, which appeareth like a mourning widow to reapers of hay and corn, and uses to break their arms and legs unless they worship her. The prophet David speaketh of both kinds : "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night ;" and, "à ruina et dæmonio meridiano," "from the devil at noon thou shalt be free."* It were happy if we were so : but besides the solemn followers of the works of darkness, in the times and proper seasons of darkness, there are very many who act their scenes of darkness in the face of the sun, in open defiance of God, and all laws, and all modesty. There is in such men the spirit of impudence, as well as of impiety. And yet I might have expressed it higher ; for every habitual sin doth not only put us into the power of the devil, but turns us into his very nature : just as the Holy Ghost transforms us into the image of God.

Here, therefore, I have a greater argument to persuade you to holy living than Moses had to the sons of Israel. "Behold, I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing ;" so said Moses : but I add, that I have, upon the stock of this scripture, set before you the good Spirit and the bad, God and the devil : choose unto whose nature you will be likened, and into whose inheritance you will be adopted, and into whose possession you will enter. If you commit sin, "you are of your father the devil," ye are begot of his principles, and follow his pattern, and shall pass into his portion, when ye are led captive by him at his will ; and remember what a sad thing it is to go into the portion of evil and accursed spirits, the sad and eternal portion of devils. But he that hath the Spirit of God, doth acknowledge God for his Father and his Lord, he despises the world, and hath no violent appetites for secular pleasures, and is dead to the desires of this life, and his hopes are spiritual, and God is his joy, and Christ is his pattern and support, and religion is his em-

ployment, and "godliness is his gain : " and this man understands the things of God, and is ready to die for Christ, and fears nothing but to sin against God ; and his will is filled with love, and it springs out in obedience to God, and in charity to his brother. And of such a man we cannot make judgment by his fortune, or by his acquaintance ; by his circumstances, or by his adherences ; for they are the appendages of a natural man : but "the spiritual is judged of no man ;" that is, the rare excellencies, that make him happy, do not yet make him illustrious, unless we will reckon virtue to be a great fortune, and holiness to be great wisdom, and God to be the best friend, and Christ the best relative, and the Spirit the hugest advantage, and heaven the greatest reward. He that knows how to value these things, may sit down and reckon the felicities of him that hath the Spirit of God.

The purpose of this discourse is this : that since the Spirit of God is a new nature, and a new life put into us, we are thereby taught and enabled to serve God by a constant course of holy living, without the frequent returns and intervening of such actions, which men are pleased to call "sins of infirmity." * Whosoever hath the Spirit of God, lives the life of grace. The Spirit of God rules in him, and is strong according to its age and abode, and allows not of those often sins, which we think unavoidable, because we call them "natural infirmities."

"But if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin ; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." The state of sin is a state of death. The state of man under the law was a state of bondage and infirmity, as St. Paul largely describes him in the seventh chapter to the Romans : but he that hath the Spirit is made alive, and free, and strong, and a conqueror over all the powers and violences of sin. Such a man resists temptations, falls not under the assault of sin, returns not to the sin which he last repented of, acts no more that error which brought him to shame and sorrow : but he that falls under a crime, to which he still hath a strong and vigorous inclination, he that acts his sin, and then curses it, and then is tempted, and then sins again, and then weeps again and calls himself miserable, but still the enchantment hath confined him to that circle ; this man hath not the Spirit : "for where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty ;" there is no such bondage, and a returning folly to the commands of sin

* Psal. xci. 5.

But, because men deceive themselves with calling this bondage a pitiable and excusable infirmity, it will not be useless to consider the state of this question more particularly, lest men, from the state of a pretended infirmity, fall into a real death.

1. No great sin is a sin of infirmity, or excusable upon that stock. But that I may be understood, we must know that every sin is, in some sense or other, a sin of infirmity. When a man is in the state of spiritual sickness or death, he is in a state of infirmity; for he is a wounded man, a prisoner, a slave, a sick man, weak in his judgment, and weak in his reasonings, impotent in his passions, of childish resolutions, great inconstancy, and his purposes untwist as easily as the rude contexture of uncombining cables in the violence of a northern tempest: and he that is thus in infirmity cannot be excused; for it is the aggravation of the state of his sin; he is so infirm that he is in a state unable to do his duty. Such a man is a "servant of sin," a slave of the devil, an heir of corruption, absolutely under command: and every man is so, who resolves for ever to avoid such a sin, and yet for ever falls under it. For what can he be but a servant of sin, who fain would avoid it, but cannot? that is, he hath not the Spirit of God within him; Christ dwells not in his soul; for "where the Son is, there is liberty;" and all that are in the Spirit, are the sons of God, and servants of righteousness, and therefore freed from sin. But then there are also sins of infirmity which are single actions, intervening seldom, in little instances unavoidable, or through a faultless ignorance: such as these are always the allays of the life of the best men; and for these Christ hath paid, and they are never to be accounted to good men, save only to make them more wary and more humble. Now concerning these it is that I say, No great sin is a sin of excusable or unavoidable infirmity: because, whosoever hath received the Spirit of God, hath sufficient knowledge of his duty, and sufficient strengths of grace, and sufficient advertency of mind, to avoid such things as do great and apparent violence to piety and religion. No man can justly say, that it is a sin of infirmity that he was drunk: for there are but three causes of every sin; a fourth is not imaginable. 1. If ignorance cause it, the sin is as full of excuse as the ignorance was innocent. But no Christian can

pretend this to drunkenness, to murder, to rebellion, to uncleanness: for what Christian is so uninstructed but that he knows adultery is a sin? 2. Want of observation is the cause of many indiscreet and foolish actions. Now at this gap many irregularities do enter and escape; because in the whole it is impossible for a man to be of so present a spirit, as to consider and reflect upon every word and every thought. But it is, in this case, in God's laws otherwise than in man's: the great flies cannot pass through without observation, little ones do; and a man cannot be drunk, and never take notice of it; or tempt his neighbour's wife before he be aware: therefore, the less the instance is, the more likely is it to be a sin of infirmity: and yet, if it be never so little, if it be observed, then it ceases to be a sin of infirmity. 3. But, because great crimes cannot pretend to pass undiscernibly, it follows that they must come in at the door of malice, that is, of want of grace, in the absence of the Spirit; they destroy wherever they come, and the man dies if they pass upon him.

It is true, there is flesh and blood in every regenerate man, but they do not both rule: the flesh is left to tempt, but not to prevail. And it were a strange condition, if both the godly and the ungodly were captives to sin, and infallibly should fall into temptation and death, without all difference, save only that the godly sins unwillingly, and the ungodly sins willingly. But if the same things be done by both, and God in both be dishonoured, and their duty prevaricated, the pretended unwillingness is the sign of a greater and a baser slavery, and of a condition less to be endured: for the servitude which is against me, is intolerable: but if I choose the state of a servant, I am free in my mind.

— Libertatis servaveris umbram,
Si, quidquid jubeare, velis. Tot rebus iniquis
Parvum victi: venia est hæc sola pudoris,
Degenerisque metus, nil jam potuisse negari.
LUCAN.

Certain it is, that such a person who fain would, but cannot, choose but commit adultery or drunkenness, is the veriest slave to sin that can be imagined, and not at all freed by the Spirit, and by the liberty of the sons of God; and there is no other difference, but that the mistaken good man feels his slavery, and sees his chains and his fetters; but therefore, it is certain that he is, because he sees himself to be, a slave. No man can

be a servant of sin and a servant of righteousness at the same time; but every man that hath the Spirit of God is a servant of righteousness: and therefore, whosoever find great sins to be unavoidable, are in a state of death and reprobation, as to the present, because they willingly or unwillingly (it matters not much whether of the two) are servants of sin.

2. Sins of infirmity, as they are small in their instance, so they put on their degree of excusableness only according to the weakness or infirmity of the man's understanding. So far as men (without their own fault) understand not their duty, or are possessed with weakness of principles, or are destitute and void of discourse, or discerning powers and acts,—so far, if a sin creeps upon them, it is as natural, and as free from a law, as is the action of a child; but if any thing else be mingled with it, if it proceed from any other principle, it is criminal, and not excused by our infirmity, because it is chosen! and a man's will hath no infirmity, but when it wants the grace of God, or is mastered with passions and sinful appetites: and that infirmity is the state of unregeneration.

3. The violence or strength of a temptation is not sufficient to excuse an action, or to make it accountable upon the stock of a pitiable and innocent infirmity, if it leaves the understanding still able to judge; because a temptation cannot have any proper strengths but from ourselves; and because we have in us a principle of baseness which this temptation meets, and only persuades me to act because I love it. Joseph met with a temptation as violent and as strong as any man; and it is certain there are not many Christians but would fall under it, and call it a sin of infirmity, since they have been taught so to abuse themselves, by sewing fig-leaves before their nakedness; but because Joseph had a strength of God within him, the strength of chastity, therefore it could not at all prevail upon him. Some men cannot by any art of hell be tempted to be drunk; others can no more resist an invitation to such a meeting, than they can refuse to die if a dagger were drunk with their heart-blood, because their evil habits made them weak on that part. And some man that is fortified against revenge, it may be, will certainly fall under a temptation to uncleanness: for every temptation is great

or small according as the man is; and a good word will certainly lead some men to an action of folly, while another will not think ten thousand pounds a considerable argument to make him tell one single lie against his duty or his conscience.

4. No habitual sin, that is, no sin that returns constantly or frequently: that is repented of and committed again, and still repented of, and then again committed; no such sin is excusable with a pretence of infirmity: because that sin is certainly noted, and certainly condemned, and therefore returns, not because of the weakness of nature, but the weakness of grace: the principle of this is an evil spirit, an habitual aversion from God, a dominion and empire of sin. And, as no man, for his inclinations and aptness to the sins of the flesh, is to be called carnal, if he corrects his inclinations, and turns them into virtues: so no man can be called spiritual for his good wishes and apt inclinations to goodness, if these inclinations pass not into acts, and these acts into habits and holy customs, and walkings and conversation with God. But as natural concupiscence corrected becomes the matter of virtue, so these good inclinations and condemnings of our sin, if they be ineffective and end in sinful actions, are the perfect signs of a reprobate and unregenerated state.

The sum is this: an animal man, a man under the law, a carnal man, (for as to this they are all one,) is sold under sin, he is a servant of corruption, he falls frequently into the same sin to which he is tempted, he commends the law, he consents to it that it is good, he does not commend sin, he does some little things against it; but they are weak and imperfect, his lust is stronger, his passions violent and unmortified, his habits vicious, his customs sinful, and he lives in the regions of sin, and dies and enters into its portion. But a spiritual man, a man that is in the state of grace, who is born anew of the Spirit, that is regenerate by the Spirit of Christ, he is led by the Spirit, he lives in the Spirit, he does the works of God cheerfully, habitually, vigorously; and although he sometimes slips, yet it is but seldom, it is in small instances; his life is such, as he cannot pretend to be justified by works and merit, but by mercy and the faith of Jesus Christ; yet he never sins great sins: if he does, he is for that present fallen from God's favour: and

though possibly he may recover, (and the smaller or seldomer the sin is, the sooner may be his restitution,) yet, for the present, (I say,) he is out of God's favour. But he that remains in the grace of God, sins not by any deliberate, consultive, knowing act: he is incident to such a surprise as may consist with the weakness and judgment of a good man; but whatsoever is, or must be considered, if it cannot pass without consideration, it cannot pass without sin, and therefore cannot enter upon him while he remains in that state. For "he that is in Christ, in him the body is dead by reason of sin." And the gospel did not differ from the law, but that the gospel gives grace and strength to, do whatsoever it commands; which the law did not: and the greatness of the promise of eternal life is such an argument to them that consider it, that it must needs be of force sufficient to persuade a man to use all his faculties and all his strength, that he may obtain it. God exacted all upon this stock; God knew this could do every thing: "Nihil non in hoc præsumpsit Deus," said one. This will make a satyr chaste, and Silenus to be sober, and Dives to be charitable, and Simon Magus himself to despise reputation, and Saul to turn from a persecutor to an apostle. For since God hath given us reason to choose, and a promise to exchange for our temperance, and faith, and charity, and justice; for these, (I say,) happiness, exceeding great happiness, that we shall be kings, that we shall reign with God, with Christ, with all the holy angels for ever, in felicity so great, that we have not now capacities to understand it, our heart is not big enough to think it; there cannot in the world be a greater inducement to engage us, a greater argument to oblige us, to do our duty. God hath not in heaven a bigger argument; it is not possible any thing in the world should be bigger; which because the Spirit of God hath revealed to us, if by this strength of his we walk in his ways, and be ingrafted into his stock, and bring forth his fruits, "the fruits of the Spirit,"—then "we are in Christ," and "Christ in us,"—then we walk in the Spirit,—and "the Spirit dwells in us,"—and our portion shall be there, where "Christ by the Spirit maketh intercession for us,"—that is, at the right hand of his Father, for ever and ever. Amen.

SERMON XXVIII.

THE DESCENDING AND ENTAILED CURSE CUT OFF.

PART I.

I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me: And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.—Exod. xx. 5, 6.

It is not necessary that a commonwealth should give pensions to orators; to dissuade men from running into houses infected with the plague, or to entreat them to be out of love with violent torments, or to create in men evil opinions concerning famine or painful deaths: every man hath a sufficient stock of self-love, upon the strength of which he hath entertained principles strong enough to secure himself against voluntary mischiefs, and from running into states of deaths and violence. A man would think that this I have now said were in all cases certainly true; and I would to God it were: for that which is the greatest evil, that which makes all evils, that which turns good into evil, and every natural evil into a greater sorrow, and makes that sorrow lasting and perpetual; that which sharpens the edge of swords, and makes agues to be fevers, and fevers to turn into plagues; that which puts stings into every fly, and uneasiness to every trifling accident, and stings every whip with scorpions,—you know I must needs mean SIN; that evil men suffer patiently, and choose willingly, and run after it greedily, and will not suffer themselves to be divorced from it: and therefore, God hath hired servants to fight against this evil; he hath set angels with fiery swords to drive us from it, he hath employed advocates to plead against it, he hath made laws and decrees against it, he hath despatched prophets to warn us of it, and hath established an order of men, men of his own family, and who are fed at his own charges,—I mean the whole order of the clergy, whose office is like watchmen, to give an alarm at every approach of sin, with as much affrightment as if an enemy were near, or the sea broke in upon the flat country; and all this only to persuade men not to be extremely miserable, for nothing, for vanity, for a trouble, for a disease: for some sins naturally are diseases, and all others are natural nothings,

mere privations or imperfections, contrary to goodness, to felicity, to God himself. And yet God hath hedged sin round about with thorns, and sin of itself too brings thorns; and it abuses a man in all his capacities, and it places poison in all those seats and receptions, where he could possibly entertain happiness: for if sin pretend to please the sense, it doth first abuse it shamefully, and then humours it: it can only feed an imposthume; no natural, reasonable, and perfective appetite: and besides its own essential appendages and properties, things are so ordered, that a fire is kindled round about us, and every thing within us, above, below us, and on every side of us, is an argument against, and an enemy to sin; and, for its single pretence, that it comes to please one of the senses, one of those faculties which are in us, the same they are in a cow, it hath an evil so communicative, that it doth not only work like poison, to the dissolution of soul and body, but it is a sickness like the plague, it infects all our houses, and corrupts the air and the very breath of heaven: for it moves God first to jealousy, and that takes off his friendship and kindness towards us; and then to anger, and that makes him a resolved enemy; and it brings evil, not only upon ourselves, but upon all our relatives, upon ourselves and our children, even the children of our nephews, "*ad natos natorum, et qui nascentur ab illis*,"* to the third and fourth generation. And therefore, if a man should despise the eye or sword of man, if he sins, he is to contest with the jealousy of a provoked God: if he doth not regard himself, let him pity his pretty children: if he be angry, and hates all that he sees, and is not solicitous for his children, yet let him pity the generations which are yet unborn; let him not bring a curse upon his whole family, and suffer his name to rot in curses and dishonours; let not his memory remain polluted with an eternal stain. If all this will not deter a man from sin, there is no instrument left for that man's virtue, no hopes of his felicity, no recovery of his sorrows and sicknesses; but he must sink under the strokes of a jealous God into the dishonour of eternal ages, and the groanings of a never-ceasing sorrow.

"God is a jealous God"—That is the first and great stroke he strikes against sin; he

speaks after the manner of men; and, in so speaking, we know that he is jealous,—is suspicious,—he is inquisitive,—he is implacable. 1. God is pleased to represent himself a person very "suspicious," both in respect of persons and things. For our persons we give him cause enough: for we are sinners from our mother's womb; we make solemn vows, and break them instantly; we cry for pardon, and still renew the sin; we desire God to try us once more, and we provoke him ten times further; we use the means of grace to cure us, and we turn them into vices and opportunities of sin; we curse our sins, and yet long for them extremely; we renounce them publicly, and yet send for them in private, and show them kindness; we leave little offences, but our faith and our charity are not strong enough to master great ones; and sometimes we are shamed out of great ones, but yet entertain little ones; or if we disclaim both yet we love to remember them, and delight in their past actions, and bring them home to us, at least by fiction of imagination, and we love to be betrayed into them; we would fain have things so ordered by chance or power, that it may seem necessary to sin, or that it may become excusable, and dressed fitly for our own circumstances; and for ever we long after the flesh-pots of Egypt, the garlic and the onions: and we do so little esteem manna, the food of angels, we so loathe the bread of heaven, that any temptation will make us return to our fetters and our bondage. And if we do not tempt ourselves, yet we do not resist a temptation; or if we pray against it, we desire not be heard; and if we be assisted, yet we will not work together with those assistances; so that unless we be forced, nothing will be done. We are so willing to perish, and so unwilling to be saved, that we minister to God reason enough to suspect us, and therefore it is no wonder that God is jealous of us. We keep company with harlots and polluted persons; we are kind to all God's enemies, and love that which he hates; how can it be otherwise but that we should be suspected? Let us make our best of it, and see if we can recover the good opinion of God; for as yet we are but as suspected persons. 2. And therefore God is "inquisitive;" he looks for that which he fain would never find; God sets spies upon us; he looks upon us himself through the curtains of a cloud, and

* Virgil.

he sends angels to espy us in all our ways, and permits the devil to winnow us and to accuse us, and erects a tribunal and witnesses in our own consciences, and he cannot want information concerning our smallest irregularities. Sometimes the devil accuses; but he sometimes accuses us falsely, either maliciously or ignorantly, and we stand upright in that particular by innocence; and sometimes by penitence; and all this while our conscience is our friend. Sometimes our conscience does accuse us unto God; and then we stand convicted by our own judgment. Sometimes, if our conscience acquit us, yet we are not thereby justified; for, as Moses accused the Jews, so do Christ and his apostles accuse us, not in their persons, but by their works and by their words, by the thing itself, by confronting the laws of Christ and our practices. Sometimes the angels, who are the observers of all our works, carry up sad tidings to the court of heaven against us. Thus two angels were the informers against Sodom; but yet these were the last; for before that time the cry of their iniquity had sounded loud and sadly in heaven. And all this is the direct and proper effect of his jealousy, which sets spies upon all the actions, and watches the circumstances, and tells the steps, and attends the business, the recreations, the publications, and retirements, of every man, and will not suffer a thought to wander, but he uses means to correct its error, and to reduce it to himself. For he that created us, and daily feeds us, he that entreats us to be happy with an importunity so passionate as if not we, but himself were to receive the favour; he that would part with his only Son from his bosom and the embraces of eternity, and give him over to a shameful and cursed death for us, cannot but be supposed to love us with a great love, and to own us with an entire title, and therefore, that he would fain secure us to himself with an undivided passion. And it cannot but be infinitely reasonable; for to whom else should any of us belong but to God?" Did the world create us? or did lust ever do us any good? Did Satan ever suffer one stripe for our advantage? Does not he study all the ways to ruin us? Do the sun or the stars preserve us alive? or do we get understanding from the angels? Did ever any joint of our body knit, or our heart ever keep one true minute of a pulse, without God? Had we not been either nothing, or worse, that is, infinitely, eternally

miserable, but that God made us capable, and then pursued us with arts and devices of great mercy to force us to be happy? Great reason therefore there is, that God should be jealous lest we take any of our duty from him, who hath so strangely deserved it all, and give it to a creature, or to our enemy, who cannot be capable of any. But, however, it will concern us with much caution to observe our own ways, since "we are made a spectacle to God, to angels, and to men." God hath set so many spies upon us, the blessed angels and the accursed devils, good men and bad men, the eye of heaven, and eye of that eye, God himself,—all watching lest we rob God of his honour, and ourselves of our hopes. For by this prime intention he hath chosen so to get his own glory, as may best consist with our felicity; his great design is to be glorified in our being saved. 3. God's jealousy hath a sadder effect than all this. For all this is for mercy; but if we provoke this jealousy, if he finds us in our spiritual whoredoms, he is implacable, that is, he is angry with us to eternity, unless we return in time; and if we do, it may be, he will not be appeased in all instances; and when he forgives us, he will make some reserves of his wrath; he will punish our persons or our estate, he will chastise us at home or abroad, in our bodies or in our children; for he will visit our sins upon our children from generation to generation; and if they be made miserable for our sins, they are unhappy in such parents; but we bear the curse and the anger of God, even while they bear his rod. "God visits the sins of the fathers upon the children." This is the second great stroke he strikes against sin, and is now to be considered.

That God doth so is certain, because he saith he doth; and that this is just in him so to do, is also as certain therefore, because he doth it. For as his laws are our measures, so his actions and his own will are his own measures. He that hath right over all things and all persons, cannot do wrong to any thing. He that is essentially just, (and there could be no such thing as justice, or justice itself could not be good, if it did not derive from him,) it is impossible for him to be unjust. But since God is pleased to speak after the manner of men, it may well consist with our duty to inquire into those manners of consideration, whereby we may understand the equity of God in this proceeding, and to be instructed also in our own danger if we persevere in sin.

1. No man is made a sinner by the fault of another man without his own consent: for to every one God gives his choice, and sets life and death before every of the sons of Adam; and therefore, this death is not a consequent to any sin but our own. In this sense it is true, that if "the fathers eat sour grapes, the children's teeth shall not be set on edge;" and therefore the sin of Adam, which was derived to all the world, did not bring the world to any other death but temporal, by the intermedial stages of sickness and temporal infelicities. And it is not said that "*sin* passed upon all men," but "*death*;" and that also no otherwise but ἐφ' ὃ πάντες ἤμαρτον, "inasmuch as all men have sinned;" as they have followed the steps of their father, so they are partakers of his death. And therefore, it is very remarkable, that death brought in by sin was nothing superinduced to man; man only was reduced to his own natural condition, from which before Adam's fall he stood exempted by supernatural favour: and therefore, although the taking away that extraordinary grace or privilege was a punishment; yet the suffering the natural death was directly none, but a condition of his creation, natural, and therefore not primarily evil; but, if not good, yet at least indifferent. And the truth and purpose of this observation will extend itself, if we observe, that before any man died, Christ was promised, by whom death was to lose its sting, by whom death did cease to be an evil, and was, or might be, if we do belong to Christ, a state of advantage. So that we, by occasion of Adam's sin, being returned to our natural certainty of dying, do still, even in this very particular, stand between the blessing and the cursing. If we follow Christ, death is our friend; if we imitate the prevarication of Adam, then death becomes an evil; the condition of our nature becomes the punishment of our own sin, not of Adam's. For although his sin brought death in, yet it is only our sin that makes death to be evil. And I desire this to be observed, because it is of great use in vindicating the Divine justice in the matter of this question. The material part of the evil came from our father upon us: but the formality of it, the sting and the curse, is only by ourselves.

2. For the fault of others many may become miserable, even all or any of those whose relation is such to the sinner, that he in any sense may, by such inflictions, be punished, execrable, or oppressed. In-

deed it were strange, if, when a plague were in Ethiopia, the Athenians should be infected; or if the house of Pericles were visited, Thucydides should die for it. For although there are some evils which (as Plutarch saith) are "ansis et propagationibus prædita, incredibili celeritate in longinquum penetrantia," such which can dart evil influence, as porcupines do their quills; yet as at so great distances the knowledge of any confederate events must needs be uncertain, so it is also useless, because we neither can join their causes, nor their circumstances, nor their accidents, into any neighbourhood of conjunction. Relations are seldom noted at such distances; and if they were, it is certain so many accidents will intervene, that will outweigh the efficacy of such relations, that by any so far distant events we cannot be instructed in any duty, nor understand ourselves reprov'd for any fault. But when the relation is nearer, and joined under such a head and common cause, that the influence is perceived, and the parts of it do usually communicate in benefit, notice, or infelicity,—especially if they relate to each other as superior and inferior,—then it is certain the sin is infectious; I mean, not only in example, but also in punishment.

And of this I shall show, 1. In what instances usually it is so. 2. For what reasons it is so, and justly so. 3. In what degree, and in what cases, it is so. 4. What remedies there are for this evil.

1. It is so in kingdoms, in churches, in families, in political, artificial, and even in accidental societies.

When David numbered the people, God was angry with him; but he punished the people for the crime; seventy thousand men died of the plague. And when God gave to David the choice of three plagues, he chose that of the pestilence, in which the meanest of the people, and such which have the least society with the acts and crimes of kings, are most commonly devoured; whilst the powerful and sinning persons, by arts of physic, and flight, by provisions of nature, and accidents, are more commonly secured. But the story of the kings of Israel hath furnished us with an example fitted with all the stranger circumstances in this question. Joshua had sworn to the Gibeonites, who had craftily secured their lives by exchanging it for their liberties: almost five hundred years after, Saul, in zeal to the men of Israel and Judah, slew many of them.

After this Saul dies, and no question was made of it: but, in the days of David, there was a famine in the land three years together; and God, being inquired of, said, it was because of Saul's killing the Gibeonites.* What had the people to do with their king's fault? Or, at least, the people of David with the fault of Saul? That we shall see anon. But see the way that was appointed to expiate the crime and the calamity. David took seven of Saul's sons, and hung them up against the sun; and after that, God was entreated for the land. The story observes one circumstance more; that, for the kindness of Jonathan, David spared Mephibosheth. Now this story doth not only instance in kingdoms, but in families too. The father's fault is punished upon the sons of the family, and the king's fault upon the people of his land; even after the death of the king, after the death of the father. Thus God visited the sin of Ahab partly upon himself, partly upon his sons: "I will not bring the evil in his days, but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house."† Thus did God slay the child of Bathsheba or the sin of his father David: and the whole family of Eli, all his kindred of the earlier lines, were thrust from the priesthood, and a curse made to descend upon his children for many ages, "that all the males should die young, and in the flower of their youth." The boldness and impiety of Cham made his posterity to be accursed, and brought slavery into the world. Because Amalek fought with the sons of Israel at Rephidim, God took up a quarrel against the nation for ever. And, above all examples, is that of the Jews, who put to death the Lord of life, and made their nation to be anathema for ever, until the day of restitution: "His blood be upon us, and upon our children." If we shed innocent blood, we provoke God to wrath, if we oppress the poor, if we "crucify the Lord of life again, and put him to an open shame," the wrath of God will be upon us and upon our children, to make us a cursed family; and we are the sinners, to be the stock and original of the curse; the pedigree of the misery will derive from us.

This last instance went farther than the curse of families and kingdoms. For not only the single families of the Jews were made miserable for their fathers' murdering

the Lord of life, nor also was the nation alone extinguished for the sins of their rulers, but the religion was removed; it ceased to be God's people; the synagogue was rejected, and her veil rent, and her privacies dismantled; and the gentiles were made to be God's people, when the Jews' enclosure was disparted. I need not further to instance this proposition in the case of national churches; though it is a sad calamity that is fallen upon all the seven churches of Asia, to whom the Spirit of God wrote seven epistles by St. John; and almost all the churches of Africa, where Christ was worshipped, and now Mahomet is thrust in substitution, and the people are servants, and the religion is extinguished; or, where it remains, it shines like the moon in an eclipse, or like the least spark of the Pleiades, seen but seldom, and that rather shining like a glow-worm than a taper enkindled with a beam of the Sun of righteousness. I shall add no more instances to verify the truth of this, save only I shall observe to you, that even there is danger in being in evil company, in suspected places, in the civil societies and fellowship of wicked men.

Vetabo, qui Cereris sacrum
Vulgarit arcanae, sub isdem
Sic trabibus, fragilemque mecum
Solvat phaselum. Sæpe Diespiter
Neglectus, incesto addidit integrum.
HOR. Od. 3. 2.

And it happened to the mariners who carried Jonah, to be in danger with a horrid storm, because Jonah was there, who had sinned against the Lord. Many times the sin of one man is punished by the falling of a house or a wall upon him, and then all the family are like to be crushed with the same ruin: so dangerous, so pestilential, so infectious a thing is sin, that it scatters the poison of its breath to all the neighbourhood, and makes that the man ought to be avoided like a person infected with a plague.

Next I am to consider, why this is so, and why it is justly so. To this I answer, 1. Between kings and their people, parents and their children, there is so great a necessity, propriety, and intercourse of nature, dominion, right, and possession,—that they are by God and the laws of nations reckoned as their goods and their blessings. "The honour of a king is in the multitude of his people;—and, Children are a gift that cometh of the Lord,—and, Happy is that man that hath his quiver full of them:—and, I.o, thus shall the man be blessed that

* 2 Sam. xxi. 1.

† 1 Kings xxi. 29.

fearth the Lord; his wife shall like the fruitful vine by the walls of his house, his children like olive-branches round about his table."—Now if children be a blessing, then to take them away in anger is a curse: and if the loss of flocks and herds, the burning of houses, the blasting of fields, be a curse; how much greater is it to lose our children, and to see God slay them before our eyes, in hatred to our persons, and detestation and loathing of our baseness! When Job's messengers told him the sad stories of fire from heaven, the burning his sheep, and that the Sabceans had driven his oxen away, and the Chaldeans had stolen his camels; these were sad arrests to his troubled spirit: but it was reserved as the last blow of that sad execution, that the ruins of a house had crushed his sons and daughters to their graves. Sons and daughters are greater blessings than sheep and oxen: they are not servants of profit, as sheep are, but they secure greater ends of blessing; they preserve your names; they are so many titles of provision and providence; every new child is a new title of God's care of that family: they serve the ends of honour, of commonwealth and kingdoms; they are images of our souls, and images of God, and therefore are great blessings; and, by consequence, they are great riches, though they are not to be sold for money: and surely he that hath a cabinet of invaluable jewels, will think himself rich, though he never sells them. "Does God take care for oxen?" said our blessed Saviour: much more for you: yea, all and every one of your children are of more value than many oxen. When therefore God, for your sins, strikes them with crookedness, with deformity, with foolishness, with impertinent and caitiff spirits, with hasty or sudden deaths; it is a greater curse to you than to lose whole herds of cattle, of which, it is certain, most men would be very sensible. They are our goods; they are our blessings from God; therefore we are stricken when for our sakes they die. Therefore, we may properly be punished by evils happening to our relatives.

2. But as this is a punishment to us, so it is not unjust as to them, though they be innocent. For all the calamities of this life are incident to the most godly persons in the world: and since the King of heaven and earth was made a man of sorrows, it cannot be called unjust or intolerable, that innocent persons should be pressed with

temporal infelicities; only in such cases we must distinguish the misery from the punishment: for that all the world dies is a punishment of Adam's sin; but it is no evil to those single persons that "die in the Lord," for they are blessed in their death. Jonathan was killed the same day with his father the king; and this was a punishment to Saul indeed, but to Jonathan it was a blessing: for since God had appointed the kingdom to his neighbour, it was more honourable for him to die fighting the Lord's battle, than to live and see himself the lasting testimony of God's curse upon his father, who lost the kingdom from his family by his disobedience. That death is a blessing, which ends an honourable and prevents an inglorious life. And our children, it may be, shall be sanctified by a sorrow, and purified by the fire of affliction, and they shall receive the blessing of it; but it is to their fathers a curse, who shall wound their own hearts with sorrow, and cover their heads with a robe of shame, for bringing so great evil upon their house.

3. God hath many ends of providence to serve in this dispensation of his judgments. 1. He expresses the highest indignation against sin, and makes his examples lasting, communicative, and of great effect; it is a little image of hell; and we shall the less wonder that God with the pains of eternity punishes the sins of time, when with our eyes we see him punish a transient action with a lasting judgment. 2. It arrests the spirits of men, and surprises their loosenesses, and restrains their gaiety, when we observe that the judgments of God find us out in all relations, and turn our comforts into sadness, and make our families the scene of sorrows, and we can escape him no where; and by sin are made obnoxious not alone to personal judgments, but are made like the fountains of the Dead sea, springs of the lake of Sodom; instead of refreshing our families with blessings, we leave them brimstone, and drought, and poison, and an evil name, and the wrath of God, and a treasure of wrath, and their fathers' sins for their portion and inheritance. Naturalists say, that when the leading goats in the Greek islands have taken an "eryngus," or sea holly, into their mouths, all the herd will stand still, till the herdsman comes and forces it out, as apprehending the evil that will come to them all, if any of them, especially their principals, taste an unwholesome plant. And, indeed, it is of a general concernment, that the master of a family, or

the prince of a people, from whom, as from a fountain, many issues do derive upon their relatives, should be springs of health, and sanctity, and blessing. It is a great right and propriety that a king hath in his people, or a father in his children, that even their sins can do these a mischief, not only by a direct violence, but by the execution of God's wrath. God hath made strange bands and vessels, or channels of communication between them, when even the anger of God shall be conveyed by the conduits of such relations. That would be considered. It binds them nearer than our new doctrine will endure. But it also binds us to pray for them, and for their holiness, and good government, as earnestly as we would to be delivered from death, or sickness, or poverty, or war, or the wrath of God in any instance.

3. This also will satisfy the fearfulness of such persons, who think the evil properous, and call the proud happy. No man can be called happy till he be dead; nor then neither, if he lived viciously. Look how God handles him in his children, in his family, in his grandchildren: and as it tells that generation which sees the judgment, that God was all the while angry with him; so it supports the spirits of men in the interval, and entertains them with the expectation of a certain hope: for if I do not live to see his sin punished, yet his posterity may find themselves accursed, and feel their father's sins in their own calamity; and the expectation or belief of that may relieve my oppression and ease my sorrows, while I know that God will bear my injury in a lasting record, and when I have forgot it, will bring it forth to judgment. The Athenians were highly pleased when they saw honours done to the posterity of Cimon, a good man and a rare citizen, but murdered for being wise and virtuous: and when at the same time they saw a decree of banishment pass against the children of Lacharis and Aristo, they laid their hands upon their mouths, and with silence did admire the justice of the Power above.

The sum of this is, that in sending evils upon the posterity of evil men, God serves many ends of providence, some of wisdom, some of mercy, some of justice, and contradicts none. For the evil of the innocent son is the father's punishment upon the stock of his sin, and his relation; but the sad accident happens to the son upon the score of nature, and many ends of providence and mercy. To which I add, that if any, even the greatest temporal evil, may fall upon a man; as blind-

ness did upon the blind man, in the gospel, when "neither he nor his parents have sinned;" much more may it do so, when his parents have though he have not. For there is a nearer or more visible commensuration of justice between the parent's sin and the son's sickness, than between the evil of the son and the innocence of the father and son together. The dispensation therefore is righteous and severe.

3. I am now to consider in what degree and in what cases this is usual, or to be expected. It is in the text instanced in the matter of worshipping images. God is so jealous of his honour, that he will not suffer an image of himself to be made, lest the image dishonour the substance; nor any image of a creature to be worshipped, though with a less honour, lest that less swell up into a greater. And he that is thus jealous of his honour, and therefore so instances it, is also very curious of it in all other particulars: and though to punish the sins of fathers upon the children be more solemnly threatened in this sin only, yet we find it inflicted indifferently in any other great sin, as appears in the former precedents.

This one thing I desire to be strictly observed; that it is with much error and great indiligence usually taught in this question, that the wrath of God descends from fathers to children, only in case the children imitate and write after their fathers' copy; supposing these words—"of them that hate me"—to relate to the children. But this is expressly against the words of the text, and the examples of the thing. God afflicts good children of evil parents for their fathers' sins; and the words are plain and determinate, God visits the sins of the fathers "in tertiam et quartam generationem eorum qui oderunt me," "to the third generation of them, of those fathers that hate me," that is, upon the great-grandchildren of such parents. So that if the great-grandfathers be haters of God and lovers of iniquity, it may entail a curse upon so many generations, though the children be haters of their father's hatred, and lovers of God. And this hath been observed even by wise men among the heathens, whose stories tell that Antigonus was punished for the tyranny of his father Demetrius, Phyleus for his father Augeas, pious and wise Nestor for his father Neleus: and it was so in the case of Jonathan, who lost the kingdom and his life upon the stock of his father's sins; and the innocent child of David was slain by the anger of God, not against

the child, who never had deserved it, but the father's adultery. I need not here repeat what I said in vindication of the Divine justice; but I observed this, to represent the danger of a sinning father or mother, when it shall so infect the family with curses, that it shall ruin a wise and innocent son; and that virtue and innocence, which shall by God be accepted as sufficient through the Divine mercy to bring the son to heaven, yet, it may be, shall not be accepted to quit him from feeling the curse of his father's crime in a load of temporal infelicities: and who but a villain would ruin and undo a wise, a virtuous, and his own son? But so it is in all the world. A traitor is condemned to suffer death himself, and his posterity are made beggars and dishonourable; his escutcheon is reversed, his arms of honour are extinguished, the nobleness of his ancestors is forgotten; but his own sin is not, while men, by the characters of infamy, are taught to call that family accursed which had so base a father. Tiresias was esteemed unfortunate, because he could not see his friends and children: the poor man was blind with age. But Athamas and Agave were more miserable, who did see their children, and took them for lions and stags: the parents were miserably frantic. But of all, they deplored the misery of Hercules, who, when he saw his children, took them for enemies, and endeavoured to destroy them. And this is the case of all vicious parents. That "a man's enemies were they of his own house," was accounted a great calamity: but it is worse when we love them tenderly and fondly, and yet do them all the despite we wish to enemies. But so it is, that in many cases we do more mischief to our children, than if we should strangle them when they are newly taken from their mother's knees, or tear them in pieces as Medea did her brother Absyrtus. For to leave them to inherit a curse, to leave them to an entailed calamity, a misery, a disease, the wrath of God for an inheritance, that it may descend upon them, and remark the family like their coat of arms; is to be the parent of evil, the ruin of our family, the causes of mischief to them who ought to be dearer to us than our own eyes. And let us remember this when we are tempted to provoke the jealous God; let us consider, that his anger hath a progeny, and a descending line, and it may break out in the days of our nephews. A Greek woman was accused of adultery, because she brought forth a blackamoor; and could not acquit herself, till she

had proved that she had descended in the fourth degree from an Ethiopian: her great-grandfather was a Moor. And if naturalists say true, that nephews are very often liker to their grandfathers than to their fathers, we see that the semblance of our souls, and the character of the person, is conveyed by secret and undiscernible conveyances. Natural production conveys original sin; and therefore, by the channels of the body, it is not strange that men convey an hereditary sin. And lustful sons are usually born to satyrs; and monsters of intemperance to drunkards: and there are also hereditary diseases; which if in the fathers they were effects of their sin, as it is in many cases, it is notorious that the father's sin is punished, and the punishment conveyed by natural instruments. So that it cannot be a wonder, but it ought to be a huge affrightment from a state of sin; if a man can be capable of so much charity as to love himself in his own person, or in the images of his nature, and heirs of his fortunes, and the supports of his family, in the children that God hath given him. Consider therefore that you do not only act your own tragedies when you sin, but you represent and effect the fortune of your children; you slay them with your own barbarous and inhuman hands. Only be pleased to compare the variety of estates, of your own and your children. If they on earth be miserable many times for their father's sins, how great a state of misery is that in hell which they suffer for their own! And how vile a person is that father or mother, who for a little money, or to please a lust, will be a parricide, and imbrue his hands in the blood of his own children!

SERMON XXIX.

PART II.

4. I AM to consider what remedies there are for sons to cut off this entail of curses; and whether, and by what means, it is possible for sons to prevent the being punished for their fathers' sins. And since this thing is so perplexed and intricate, hath so easy an objection, and so hard an answer, looks so like a cruelty, and so unlike a justice (though it be infinitely just, and very severe and a huge enemy to sin); it cannot be thought but that there are not only ways left to reconcile God's proceeding to the stric

rules of justice, but also the condition of man to the possibilities of God's usual mercies. One said of old, "Ex tartidate si Dii sonites prætereant, et insontes plectant, justitiam suam non sic rectè resarciunt:" "If God be so slow to punish the guilty, that the punishment be deferred till the death of the guilty person; and that God shall be forced to punish the innocent, or to let the sin quite escape unpunished; it will be something hard to join that justice with mercy, or to join that action with justice." Indeed, it will seem strange, but the reason of its justice I have already discoursed: if now we can find how to reconcile this to God's mercy too, or can learn how it may be turned into a mercy, we need to take no other care, but that, for our own particular, we take heed we never tempt God's anger upon our families, and that by competent and apt instruments we endeavour to cancel the decree, if it be gone out against our families; for then we make use of that severity which God intended; and ourselves shall be refreshed in the shades, and by the cooling brooks of the Divine mercy, even then when we see the wrath of God breaking out upon the families round about us.

First; the first means to cut off the entail of wrath and cursings from a family is, for the sons to disavow those signal actions of impiety, in which their fathers were deeply guilty, and by which they stained great parts of their life, or have done something of very great unworthiness and disreputation. "Si quis paterni vitii, nascitur hæres, nascitur et pænæ;" "The heir of his father's wickedness is the heir of his father's curse." And a son comes to inherit a wickedness from his father three ways.

1. By approving, or any ways consenting to his father's sin: as by speaking of it without regret or shame; by pleasing himself in the story; or by having an evil mind, apt to counsel or do the like, if the same circumstances should occur. For a son may contract a sin, not only by derivation and the contagion of example, but by approbation; not only by a corporal, but by a virtual contract; not only by transcribing an evil copy, but by commending it: and a man may have "animum leprosum in cute munda," "a leprous and a polluted mind, even for nothing, even for an empty and ineffective lust." An evil mind may contract the curse of an evil action. And though the son of a covetous father prove a prodigal; yet, if he loves his

father's vice, for ministering to his vanity, he is disposed not only to a judgment for his own prodigality, but also to the curse of his father's avarice.

2. The son may inherit the father's wickedness by imitation and direct practice; and then the curse is like to come to purpose; a curse by accumulation, a treasure of wrath: and then the children, as they arrive to the height of wickedness by a speedy passage, as being thrust forward by an active example, by countenance, by education, by a seldom restraint, by a remiss discipline; so they ascertain a curse to the family, by being a perverse generation, a family set up in opposition against God, by continuing and increasing the provocation.

3. Sons inherit their fathers' crimes by receiving and enjoying the purchases of their rapine, injustice, and oppression, by rising upon the ruin of their fathers' souls, by sitting warm in the furs which their fathers stole, and walking in the grounds which are watered with the tears of oppressed orphans and widows. Now, in all these cases, the rule holds. If the son inherits the sin, he cannot call it unjust if he inherits also his father's punishment. But, to rescind the fatal chain, and break in sunder the line of God's anger, a son is tied in all these cases to disavow his father's crime. But because the cases are several, he must also in several manners do it.

1. Every man is bound not to glory in, or speak honour of, the powerful and unjust actions of his ancestors: but as all the sons of Adam are bound to be ashamed of that original stain, which they derived from the loins of their abused father, they must be humbled in it, they must deplore it as an evil mother, and a troublesome daughter; so must children account it amongst the crosses of their family, and the stains of their honour, that they passed through so impure channels, that in the sense of morality as well as nature they can "say to corruption, Thou art my father, and to rottenness, Thou art my mother." I do not say that sons are bound to publish or declaim against their fathers' crimes, and to speak of their shame in piazzas and before tribunals; that indeed were a sure way to bring their fathers' sins upon their own heads, by their own faults. No: like Shem and Japhet, they must go backward, and cast a veil upon their nakedness and shame, lest they bring the curse of their fathers' angry dishonour upon their

own impious and unrelenting heads. Noah's drunkenness fell upon Ham's head, because he did not hide the openness of his father's follies: he made his father ridiculous; but did not endeavour either to amend the sin, or to wrap the dishonour in a pious covering. He that goes to disavow his father's sin by publishing his shame, hides an ill face with a more ugly visor, and endeavours by torches and fantastic lights to quench the burning of that house which his father set on fire: these fires are to be smothered, and so extinguished. I deny not, but it may become the piety of a child to tell a sad story, to mourn, and represent a real grief for so great a misery, as is a wicked father or mother: but this is to be done with a tenderness as nice as we would dress an eye withal: it must be only with designs of charity, of counsel, of ease, and with much prudence, and a sad spirit. These things being secured, that which in this case remains, is that in all intercourses between God and ourselves we disavow the crime.

Children are bound to pray to God to sanctify, to cure, to forgive their parents: and even, concerning the sins of our forefathers, the church hath taught us in her litanies, to pray that God would be pleased to forgive them, so that neither we, nor they, may sink under the wrath of God for them: "Remember not, Lord, our offences, nor the offences of our forefathers, neither take thou vengeance of our sins:" *ours*, in common and conjunction. And David confessed to God, and humbled himself for the sins of his ancestors and decessors: "Our fathers have done amiss, and dealt wickedly; neither kept they thy great goodness in remembrance, but were disobedient at the sea, even at the Red sea." So did good king Josiah: "Great is the wrath of the Lord, which is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book."* But this is to be done between God and ourselves; or, if in public, then to be done by general accusation; that God only may read our particular sorrows in the single shame of our families, registered in our hearts, and represented to him with humiliation, shame, and a hearty prayer.

2. Those curses, which descend from the fathers to the children by imitation of the crimes of their progenitors, are to be cut off by special and personal repentance and prayer, as being a state directly opposite to

that which procured the curse: and if the sons be pious, or return to an early and severe course of holy living, they are to be remedied as other innocent and pious persons are, who are sufferers under the burdens of their relatives, whom I shall consider by and by. Only observe this; that no public or imaginative disavowings, no ceremonial and pompous rescission of our fathers' crimes, can be sufficient to interrupt the succession of the curse, if the children do secretly practise or approve what they in pretence or ceremony disavow. And this is clearly proved; and it will help to explicate that difficult saying of our blessed Saviour, "Wo unto you, for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers; for they killed them, and ye build their sepulchres:"* that is, the Pharisees were huge hypocrites, and adorned the monuments of the martyr-prophets, and in words disclaimed their fathers' sin, but in deeds and design they approved it; 1. Because they secretly wished all such persons dead; "colebant mortuos, quos nollent supersites." In charity to themselves some men wish their enemies in heaven, and would be at charges for a monument for them, that their malice, and their power, and their bones, might rest in the same grave; and yet that wish and that expense is no testimony of their character, but of their anger. 2. These men were willing that the monuments of those prophets should remain, and be a visible affrightment to all such bold persons and severe reprovers as they were; and therefore they builded their sepulchres to be as beacons and publications of danger to all honest preachers. And this was the account St. Chrysostom gave of the place. 3. To which also the circumstances of the place concur. For they only said, "If they had lived in their fathers' days, they would not have done as they did;"† but it is certain they approved it, because they pursued the same courses; and, therefore, our blessed Saviour calls them γενεάν ἀποκτείνουσαν, not only the children of them that did kill the prophets, but "a killing generation;" the sin also descends upon you, for ye have the same killing mind: and although you honour them that are dead, and cannot shame you; yet you design the same usages against them that are alive, even against the Lord of the prophets, against Christ himself, whom

* 2 Kings xxii. 13.

* Luke xi. 47, 48.

† Matt. xxiii. 30.

ye will kill. And as Dion said of Caracalla. *Ἦσας τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἀχθόμενος, τῆσιν τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς ἀποθνήσκων ἐπιδάττετο*, "The man was troublesome to all good men when they were alive, but did them honour when they were dead;"* and when Herod had killed Aristobulus, yet he made him a most magnificent funeral: so, because the Pharisees were of the same humour, therefore our blessed Saviour bids them "to fill up the measure of their fathers' iniquity;"† for they still continued the malice, only they painted it over with a pretence of piety, and of disavowing their fathers' sin; which if they had done really, their being children of persecutors, much less the "adorning of the prophets' sepulchres" could not have been just cause of a wo from Christ; this being an act of piety, and the other of nature, inevitable and not chosen by them, and therefore not chargeable upon them. He therefore that will to real purposes disavow his father's crimes, must do it heartily, and humbly, and charitably, and throw off all affections to the like actions. For he that finds fault with his father for killing Isaiah or Jeremy, and himself shall kill Aristobulus and John the Baptist; he that is angry because the old prophets were murdered, and shall imprison and beggar and destroy the new ones; he that disavows the persecution in the primitive times and honours the memory of the dead martyrs, and yet every day makes new ones; he that blames the oppression of the country by any of his predecessors, and yet shall continue to oppress his tenants, and all that are within his gripe; that man cannot hope to be eased from the curse of his father's sins: he goes on to imitate them, and, therefore, to fill up their measure, and to heap up a full treasure of wrath.

3. But, concerning the third, there is yet more difficulty. Those sons that inherit their fathers' sins by possessing the price of their fathers' soul, that is, by enjoying the goods gotten by their fathers' rapine, may certainly quit the inheritance of the curse, if they quit the purchase of the sin, that is, if they pay their fathers' debts: his debts of contract and his debts of justice; his debts of intercourse, and his debts of oppression. I do not say that every man is bound to restore all the lands which his ancestors have unjustly snatched: for when by law the possession is established, though the grandfather entered like a thief, yet the grand-

child is "bonæ fidei" possessor, and may enjoy it justly; and the reasons of this are great and necessary; for the avoiding eternal suits, and perpetual diseases of rest and conscience; because there is no estate in the world that could be enjoyed by any man honestly, if posterity were bound to make restitution of all the wrongs done by their progenitors. But although the children of the far-removed lines are not obliged to restitution, yet others are; and some for the same, some for other reasons.

1. Sons are tied to restore what their fathers did usurp, or to make agreement and an acceptable recompense for it, if the case be visible, evident, and notorious, and the oppressed party demands it: because in this case the law hath not settled the possession in the new tenant; or if a judge hath, it is by injury; and there is yet no collateral accidental title transferred by long possession, as it is in other cases: and therefore, if the son continues to oppress the same person whom his father first injured, he may well expect to be the heir of his father's curse, as well as of his cursed purchase.

2. Whether by law and justice, or not, the person be obliged, nay, although by all the solemnities of law the unjust purchase be established, and that in conscience the grandchildren be not obliged to restitution in their own particulars, but may continue to enjoy it without a new sin; yet if we see a curse descending upon the family for the old oppression done in the days of our grandfathers, or if we probably suspect that to be the cause; then, if we make restitution, we also most certainly remove the curse, because we take away the matter upon which the curse is grounded. I do not say, we sin, if we do not restore; but that, if we do not, we may still be punished. The reason of this is clear and visible: for as without our faults, in many cases, we may enjoy those lands which our forefathers got unjustly; so without our faults we may be punished for them. For as they have transmitted the benefit to us, it is but reasonable we should suffer the appendant calamity. If we receive good, we must also venture the evil that comes along with it. "Res transit cum suo onere:" "All lands and possessions pass with their proper burdens." And if any of my ancestors was a tenant, and a servant, and held his lands as a villain to his lord; his posterity also must do so, though accidentally they become noble. The case is

* Reimar.

† Matt xxiii. 32.

the same. If my ancestors entered unjustly, there is a curse and a plague that is due to that oppression and injustice; and that is "the burden of the land," and it descends all along with it. And although I, by the consent of laws, am a just possessor, yet I am obliged to the burden that comes with the land: I am indeed another kind of person than my grandfather; he was a usurper, but I am a just possessor; but, because in respect of the land this was but an accidental change, therefore I still am liable to the burden, and the curse that descends with it. But the way to take off the curse is to quit the title: and yet a man may choose. It may be, to lose the land would be the bigger curse: but, if it be not, the way is certain how you may be rid of it. There was a custom among the Greeks, that the children of them that died of consumptions or drop-sies, all the while their fathers' bodies were burning on their funeral piles, did sit with their feet in cold water, hoping that such a lustration and ceremony would take off the lineal and descending contagion from the children. I know not what cure they found by their superstition: but we may be sure, that if we wash (not our feet, but) our hands of all the unjust purchases which our fathers have transmitted to us, their hydropic thirst of wealth shall not transmit to us a consumption of estate, or any other curse. But this remedy is only in the matter of injury or oppression, not in the case of other sins; because other sins were transient; and, as the guilt did not pass upon the children, so neither did the exterior and permanent effect: and, therefore, in other sins (in case they do derive a curse) it cannot be removed, as in the matter of unjust possession it may be; whose effect (we may so order it) shall no more stick to us, than the guilt of our fathers' personal actions.

The sum is this: as kingdoms use to expiate the faults of others by acts of justice; and as churches use to "remove the accused thing" from sticking to the communities of the faithful, and the sins of Christians from being required of the whole congregation, by excommunicating and censuring the delinquent persons; so the heirs and sons of families are to remove from their house the curse descending from their fathers' loins—1. by acts of disavowing the sins of their ancestors; 2. by praying for pardon; 3. by being humble for them; 4. by renouncing the example; and, 5. quit-

ting the affection of the crimes; 6. by not imitating the actions in kind, or in semblance and similitude; and lastly, 7. by refusing to rejoice in the ungodly purchases, in which their fathers did amiss, and dealt wickedly.

Secondly; but, after all this, many cases do occur, in which we find that innocent sons are punished. The remedies I have already discoursed of, are for such children, who have, in some manner or other, contracted and derived the sin upon themselves: but if we inquire how those sons—who have no intercourse or affinity with their fathers' sins, or whose fathers' sins were so transient that no benefit or effect did pass upon their posterity—may prevent, or take off, the curse that lies upon their family for their fathers' faults; this will have some distinct considerations.

1. The pious children of evil parents are to stand firm upon the confidence of the Divine grace and mercy, and upon that persuasion to begin to work upon a new stock. For it is as certain, that he may derive a blessing upon his posterity, as that his parents could transmit a curse: and if any man by piety shall procure God's favour to his relatives and children, it is certain that he hath done more than to escape the punishment of his father's follies. "If sin doth abound," and evils by sin are derived from his parents; "much more shall grace superabound," and mercy by grace. If he was in danger from the crimes of others, much rather shall he be secured by his own piety. For if God punishes the sins of the fathers to four generations; yet he rewards the piety of fathers to ten, to hundreds, and to thousands. Many of the ancestors of Abraham were persons not noted for religion, but suffered in the public impiety and almost universal idolatry of their ages: and yet all the evils that could thence descend upon the family, were wiped off; and God began to reckon with Abraham upon a new stock of blessings and piety; and he was, under God, the original of so great a blessing, that his family, for fifteen hundred years together, had from him a title to many favours; and whatever evils did chance to them in the descending ages, were but single evils in respect of that treasure of mercies, which the father's piety had obtained to the whole nation. And it is remarkable to observe, how blessings did stick to them for their fathers' sakes, even whether they

would or not. For, first, his grandchild Esau proved a naughty man, and he lost the great blessing which was entailed upon the family; but he got, not a curse, but a less blessing; and yet, because he lost a greater blessing, God excluded him from being reckoned in the elder line: for God, foreseeing the event, so ordered it, that he should first lose his birthright, and then lose the blessing; for it was to be certain, the family must be reckoned for prosperous in the proper line, and yet God blessed Esau into a great nation, and made him the father of many princes. Now the line of blessing being reckoned in Jacob, God blessed his family strangely, and by miracle, for almost five generations. He brought them from Egypt by mighty signs and wonders: and when for sin they all died in their way to Canaan, two only excepted, God so ordered it, that they were all reckoned as single deaths; the nation still descended, like a river, whose waters were drunk up for the beverage of an army, but still it keeps its name and current, and the waters are supplied by showers, and springs, and providence. After this, iniquity still increased, and then God struck deeper, and spread curses upon whole families; he translated the priesthood from line to line, he removed the kingdom from one family to another: and still they sinned worse; and then we read that God smote almost a whole tribe; the tribe of Benjamin was almost extinguished about the matter of the Levite's concubine; but still God remembered his promise, which he made with their forefathers, and that breach was made up. After this we find a greater rupture made, and ten tribes fell into idolatry, and ten tribes were carried captives into Assyria, and never came again: but still God remembered his covenant with Abraham, and left two tribes. But they were restless in their provocation of the God of Abraham; and they also were carried captive: but still God was the God of their fathers, and brought them back, and placed them safe, and they grew again into a kingdom, and should have remained for ever, but that they killed one that was greater than Abraham, even the Messiah; and then they were rooted out, and the old covenant cast off, and God delighted no more to be called "the God of Abraham," but the "Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." As long as God kept that relation, so long for the fathers' sakes they had a title and an inheritance to a blessing: for so saith St.

Paul, "As touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes."

I insist the longer upon this instance, that I may remonstrate how great, and how sure, and how preserving mercies a pious father of a family may derive upon his succeeding generations: and if we do but tread in the footsteps of our father Abraham, we shall inherit as certain blessings. But then, I pray, add these considerations.

2. If a great impiety and a clamorous wickedness hath stained the honour of a family, and discomposed its title to the Divine mercies and protection, it is not an ordinary piety that can restore this family. An ordinary even course of life, full of sweetness and innocence, will secure every single person in his own eternal interest: but that piety, which must be a spring of blessings, and communicative to others, that must plead against the sins of their ancestors, and begin a new bank of mercies for their relatives; that must be a great and excellent, a very religious state of life. A small pension will maintain a single person: but he that hath a numerous family, and many to provide for, needs a greater providence of God, and a bigger provision for their maintenance: and a small revenue will not keep up the dignity of a great house; especially if it be charged with a great debt. And this is the very state of the present question. That piety that must be instrumental to take off the curse imminent upon a family, to bless a numerous posterity, to secure a fair condition to many ages, and to pay the debts of their fathers' sins, must be so large, as that, all necessary expenses and duties for his own soul being first discharged, it may be remarkable in great expressions, it may be exemplary to all the family, it may be of universal efficacy, large in the extension of parts, deep in the intension of degrees: and then, as the root of a tree receives nourishment not only sufficient to preserve its own life, but to transmit a plastic juice to the trunk of the tree, and from thence to the utmost branch and smallest germ that knots in the most distant part; so shall the great and exemplary piety of the father of a family not only preserve to the interest of his own soul the life of grace and hopes of glory, but shall be a quickening spirit, active and communicative of a blessing, not only to the trunk of the tree, to the body and rightly-descending line, but even to the collateral branches, to the most distant relatives, and all that shall claim a kindred shall have a

title to a blessing. And this was the way that was prescribed to the family of Eli, upon whom a sad curse was entailed, that there should not be an old man of the family for ever, and that they should be beggars, and lose the office of priesthood: by the counsel of R. Johanan, the son of Zacheus, all the family betook themselves to a great, a strict, and a severe religion; and God was entreated to revoke his decree, to be reconciled to the family, to restore them to the common condition of men, from whence they stood separate by the displeasure of God against the crime of Eli, and his sons Hophni and Phineas. This course is sure either to take off the judgment, or to change it into a blessing; to take away the rod, or the smart and evil of it; to convert the punishment into a mere natural or human chance, and that chance to the opportunity of a virtue, and that virtue to the occasion of a crown.

3. It is of great use for the securing of families, that every master of a family order his life so, that his piety and virtue be as communicative as is possible; that is, that he secure the religion of his whole family by a severe supervision and animadversion, and by cutting off all those unprofitable and hurtful branches which load the tree, and hinder the growth and stock, and disimprove the fruit, and revert evil juice to the very root itself. Calvisius Sabinus laid out vast sums of money upon his servants to stock his house with learned men; and brought one that could recite all Homer by heart, a second that was ready at Hesiod, —a third, at Pindar,—and for every of the lyrics, one; having this fancy, that all that learning was his own, and whatsoever his servants knew made him so much the more skilful. It was noted in the man for a rich and prodigal folly: but if he had changed his instance, and brought none but virtuous servants into his house, he might better have reckoned his wealth upon their stock, and the piety of his family might have helped to bless him, and to have increased the treasure of the master's virtue. Every man that would either cut off the title of an old curse, or secure a blessing upon a new stock, must make virtue as large in the fountain as he can, that it may the sooner water all his relatives with fruitfulness and blessings. And this was one of the things that God noted in Abraham, and blessed his family for it, and his posterity: "I know that Abraham will teach his sons to fear

me." When a man teaches his family to know and fear God, then he scatters a blessing round about his habitation. And this helps to illustrate the reason of the thing, as well as to prove its certainty. We hear it spoken in our books of religion, that the faith of the parents is imputed to their children to good purposes, and that a good husband sanctifies an ill wife, and "a believing wife an unbelieving husband; and either of them makes the children to be sanctified, "else they were unclean and unholy;" that is, the very designing children to the service of God is a sanctification of them; and therefore St. Jerome calls Christian children "candidatos fidei Christianæ." And if this very designation of them makes them holy, that is, acceptable to God, entitled to the promises, partakers of the covenant, within the condition of sons; much more shall it be effectual to greater blessings, when the parents take care that the children shall be actually pious, full of sobriety, full of religion; then it becomes a holy house, a chosen generation, an elect family; and then there can no evil happen to them, but such which will bring them nearer to God; that is, no cross, but the cross of Christ; no misfortune, but that which shall lead them to felicity; and if any semblance of a curse happens in the generations, it is but like the anathema of a sacrifice; not an accursed, but a devoted thing; for so the sacrifice, upon whose neck the priest's knife doth fall, is so far from being accursed, that it helps to get a blessing to all that join in the oblation. So every misfortune, that shall discompose the ease of a pious and religious family, shall but make them fit to be presented unto God; and the rod of God shall be like the branches of fig-trees, bitter and sharp in themselves, but productive of most delicious fruit. No evil can curse the family whose stock is pious, and whose "branches are holiness to the Lord." If any leaf or any boughs shall fall untimely, God shall gather them up, and place them in his temple; or at the foot of his throne; and that family must needs be blessed, whom infelicity itself cannot make accursed.

4. If a curse be feared to descend upon a family for the fault of their ancestors, pious sons have yet another way to secure themselves, and to withdraw the curse from the family, or themselves from the curse; and that is, by doing some very great and illustrious act of piety, an action, "in gradu he-

roico," as Aristotle calls it, "an heroic action." If there should happen to be one martyr in a family, it would reconcile the whole kindred to God, and make him, who is more inclined to mercy than severity, rather to be pleased with the relatives of the martyr, than to continue to be angry with the nephews of a deceased sinner. I cannot insist long upon this; but you may see it proved by one great instance in the case of Phineas, who killed an unclean prince, and turned the wrath of God from his people. He was zealous for God and for his countrymen, and did an heroic action of zeal: "Wherefore" (saith God) "behold I give unto him my covenant of peace, and he shall have it, and his seed after him; even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel." Thus the sons of Rechab obtained the blessing of an enduring and blessed family, because they were most strict and religious observers of their father's precepts, and kept them after his death, and abstained from wine for ever; and no temptation could invite them to taste it; for they had as great reverence to their father's ashes, as, being children, they had to his rod and to his eyes. Thus a man may turn the wrath of God from his family, and secure a blessing for posterity, by doing some great noble acts of charity; or a remarkable chastity like that of Joseph; or an expensive, an affectionate religion and love to Christ and his servants, as Mary Magdalen did. Such things as these, which are extraordinary egressions and transvolutions beyond the ordinary course of an even piety, God loves to reward with an extraordinary favour; and gives them testimony by an extra-regular blessing.

One thing more I have to add by way of advice; and that is, that all parents and fathers of families, from whose loins a blessing or a curse usually does descend, be very careful, not only generally in all the actions of their lives, (for that I have already pressed,) but particularly in the matter of repentance; that they be curious that they finish it, and do it thoroughly; for there are certain *ὑπερημάρτα μετανοίας*, "leavings of repentance," which make that God's anger is taken from us so imperfectly; and although God, for his sake who died for us, will pardon a returning sinner, and bring him to heaven through tribulation and a fiery trial; yet,—when a man is weary of his sorrow,

and his fastings are a load to him, and his sins are not so perfectly renounced or hated as they ought,—the parts of repentance, which are left unfinished, do sometimes fall upon the heads or upon the fortunes of the children. I do not say this is regular and certain; but sometimes God deals thus; for this thing hath been so, and therefore it may be so again. We see it was done in the case of Ahab; he "humbled himself, and went softly, and lay in sackcloth," and called for pardon, and God took from him a judgment which was falling heavily upon him; but we all know his repentance was imperfect and lame; the same evil fell upon his sons; for so said God: "I will bring the evil upon his house in his son's days." Leave no arrears for thy posterity to pay; but repent with an integral, a holy, and excellent repentance, that God being reconciled to thee thoroughly, for thy sake also he may bless thy seed after thee.

And, after all this, add a continual, a fervent, a hearty, a never-ceasing prayer for thy children, ever remembering, when they beg a blessing, that God hath put much of their fortune into your hands; and a transient formal "God bless thee," will not outweigh the load of a great vice, and the curse which scatters from thee by virtual contact, and by the channels of relation, if thou beest a vicious person: nothing can issue from thy fountain but bitter waters. And, as it were a great impudence for a condemned traitor to beg of his injured prince a province for his son for his sake; so it is an ineffective blessing we give our children, when we beg for them what we have no title to for ourselves; nay, when we can convey to them nothing but a curse. The prayer of a sinner, the unhallowed wish of a vicious parent, is but a poor donative to give to a child who sucked poison from his nurse, and derives cursing from his parents. They are punished with a double torture in the shame and pain of the damned, who, dying enemies to God, have left an inventory of sins and wrath to be divided amongst their children. But they that can truly give a blessing to their children, are such as live a blessed life, and pray holy prayers, and perform an integral repentance, and do separate from the sins of their progenitors, and do illustrious actions, and begin the blessing of their family upon a new stock. For as from the eyes of some persons there shoots forth an evil influence, and some have an evil eye, and are infectious, some look

healthfully as a friendly planet, and innocent as flowers: and as some fancies convey private effects to confederate and allied bodies; and between the very vital spirits of friends and relatives there is a cognation, and they refresh each other like social plants; and a good man is a* friend to every good man; and (they say) that a usurer knows a usurer, and one rich man another, there being by the very manners of men contracted a similitude of nature, and a communication of effects: so in parents and their children there is so great a society of nature and of manners, of blessing and cursing, that an evil parent cannot perish in a single death; and holy parents never eat their meal of blessing alone, but they make the room shine like the fire of a holy sacrifice; and a father's or a mother's piety makes all the house festival and full of joy from generation to generation. Amen.

SERMON XXX.

THE INVALIDITY OF A LATE OR DEATH-BED REPENTANCE.

PART I.

Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and, while ye look for light, (or, lest while ye look for light,) he shall turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness.
—Jeremiah xiii. 16.

God is the eternal fountain of honour and the spring of glory; in him it dwells essentially, from him it derives originally; and when an action is glorious, or a man is honourable, it is because the action is pleasing to God, in the relation of obedience or imitation, and because the man is honoured by God, and by God's vicegerent: and therefore, God cannot be dishonoured, because all honour comes from himself; he cannot but be glorified, because to be himself is to be infinitely glorious. And yet he is pleased to say, that our sins dishonour him, and our obedience does glorify him. But as the sun, the great eye of the world, prying into the recesses of rocks and the hollownesses of valleys, receives species or visible forms from these objects, but he be-

holds them only by that light which proceeds from himself: so does God, who is the light of that eye; he receives reflexes and returns from us, and these he calls "glorifications" of himself, but they are such which are made so by his own gracious acceptation. For God cannot be glorified by any thing but by himself, and by his own instruments, which he makes as mirrors to reflect his own excellency; that by seeing the glory of such emanations, he may rejoice in his own works, because they are images of his infinity. Thus when he made the beauteous frame of heaven and earth, he rejoiced in it, and glorified himself; because it was the glass in which he beheld his wisdom and almighty power. And when God destroyed the old world, in that also he glorified himself; for in those waters he saw the image of his justice,—they were the looking-glass for that attribute; and God is said "to laugh at" and rejoice in the destruction of a sinner, because he is pleased with the economy of his own laws, and the excellent proportions he hath made of his judgments consequent to our sins. But, above all, God rejoiced in his holy Son; for he was the image of the Divinity, "the character and express image of his person;" in him he beheld his own essence, his wisdom, his power, his justice, and his person; and he was that excellent instrument designed from eternal ages to represent, as in a double mirror, not only the glories of God to himself, but also to all the world; and he glorified God by the instrument of obedience, in which God beheld his own dominion and the sanctity of his laws clearly represented; and he saw his justice glorified, when it was fully satisfied by the passion of his Son: and so he hath transmitted to us a great manner of the divine glorification, being become to us the author and example of giving glory to God after the manner of men, that is, by well-doing and patient suffering, by obeying his laws and submitting to his power, by imitating his holiness and confessing his goodness, by remaining innocent or becoming penitent; for this also is called in the text "giving glory to the Lord our God."

For he that hath dishonoured God by sins, that is, hath denied, by a moral instrument of duty and subordination, to confess the glories of his power, and the goodness of his laws, and hath dishonoured and despised his mercy, which God intended as an instrument of our piety, hath no better way

* Διαμένει οὖν ἡ πούτων θεία ἕως ἂν ἀναθῶ ἑστί' ἢ δ' ἀπετη μένμων.—ARIST.

to glorify God, than by returning to his duty, to advance the honour of the Divine attributes, in which he is pleased to communicate himself, and to have intercourse with man. He that repents, confesses his own error, and the righteousness of God's laws,—and by judging himself confesses that he deserves punishment,—and therefore, that God is righteous if he punishes him: and, by returning, confesses God to be the fountain of felicity, and the foundation of true, solid, and permanent joys, saying in the sense and passion of the disciples, "Whither shall we go? for thou hast the words of eternal life:" and, by humbling himself, exalts God, by making the proportions of distance more immense and vast. And as repentance does contain in it all the parts of holy life, which can be performed by a returning sinner (all the acts and habits of virtue being but parts, or instances, or effects of repentance); so all the actions of a holy life do constitute the mass and body of all those instruments, whereby God is pleased to glorify himself. For if God is glorified in the sun and moon, in the rare fabric of the honeycombs, in the discipline of bees, in the economy of pismires, in the little houses of birds, in the curiosity of an eye, God being pleased to delight in those little images and reflexes of himself from those pretty mirrors, which, like a crevice in the wall, through a narrow perspective, transmit the species of a vast excellency: much rather shall God be pleased to behold himself in the glasses of our obedience, in the emissions of our will and understanding; these being rational and apt instruments to express him, far better than the natural, as being nearer communications of himself.

But I shall no longer discourse of the philosophy of this expression: certain it is, that in the style of Scripture, repentance is the great "glorification of God;" and the prophet, by calling the people to "give God glory," calls upon them "to repent," and so expresses both the duty and the event of it; the event being "glory to God on high, peace on earth, and good-will towards men" by the sole instrument of repentance. And this was it which Joshua said to Achan, "Give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him:"* that one act of re-

pentance is one act of glorifying God. And this David acknowledged; "Against thee only have I sinned: 'ut tu justificeris,' that thou mightest be justified or cleared:"† that is, that God may have the honour of being righteous, and we the shame of receding from so excellent a perfection; or, as St. Paul quotes and explicates the place, "Let God be true and every man a liar; as it is written, that thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged."‡ But to clear the sense of this expression of the prophet, observe the words of St. John; "And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, who hath power over those plagues: and they repented not to give him glory."‡

So that having strength and reason from these so many authorities, I may be free to read the words of my text thus: "Repent of all your sins, before God cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains." And then we have here the duty of repentance, and the time of its performance. It must be *μετάνοια εὐκαιρος*, "a seasonable and timely repentance," a repentance which must begin before our darkness begin, a repentance in the day-time: "ut dum dies est, operemini," "that ye may work while it is to-day:" lest, if we "stumble upon the dark mountains," that is, fall into the ruins of old age, which makes a broad way narrow, and a plain way to be a craggy mountain; or if we stumble and fall into our last sickness, instead of health God send us to our grave,—and instead of light and salvation, which we then confidently look for, he make our state to be outer darkness, that is, misery irremediable, misery eternal.

This exhortation of the prophet was always full of caution and prudence; but now it is highly necessary; since men, who are so clamorously called to repentance, that they cannot avoid the necessity of it, yet, that they may reconcile an evil life with the hopes of heaven, have crowded this duty into so little room, that it is almost strangled and extinct; and they have lopped off so many members, that they have reduced the whole body of it to the dimensions of a little finger, sacrificing their childhood to vanity, their youth to lust and to intemperance, their manhood to ambi-

* Joshua vii. 19.

* Psal. li. 4. † Rom. iii. 4. ‡ Rev. xvi. 9.

tion and rage, pride and revenge, secular desires, and unholy actions; and yet still further, giving their old age to covetousness and oppression, to the world and the devil: and, after all this, what remains for God and for religion? Oh, for that they will do well enough: upon their death-bed they will think a few godly thoughts, they will send for a priest to minister comfort to them, they will pray and ask God forgiveness, and receive the holy sacrament, and leave their goods behind them, disposing them to their friends and relatives, and some dole and issues of the alms-basket to the poor; and if after all this they die quietly, and like a lamb, and be canonized by a bribed flatterer in a funeral sermon, they make no doubt but they are children of the kingdom, and perceive not their folly, till, without hope of remedy, they roar in their expectations of a certain but a horrid eternity of pains. Certainly nothing hath made more ample harvests for the devil, than the deferring of repentance upon vain confidences, and lessening it in the extension of parts as well as intention of degrees, while we imagine that a few tears and scatterings of devotion, are enough to expiate the baseness of a fifty or threescore years' impiety. This I shall endeavour to cure, by showing what it is to repent, and that repentance implies in it the duty of a life, or of many and great, of long and lasting parts of it; and then, by direct arguments, showing that repentance put off to our death-bed, is invalid and ineffectual, sick, languid, and impotent, like our dying bodies and disabled faculties.

1. First, therefore, repentance implies a deep sorrow, as the beginning and introduction of this duty: not a superficial sigh or tear, not a calling ourselves sinners and miserable persons: this is far from that "godly sorrow that worketh repentance;" and yet I wish there were none in the world, or none amongst us, who cannot remember that ever they have done this little towards the abolition of their multitudes of sins: but yet, if it were not a hearty, pungent sorrow, a sorrow that shall break the heart in pieces, a sorrow that shall so irreconcile us to sin, as to make us rather choose to die than to sin, it is not so much as the beginning of repentance. But in Holy Scripture, when the people are called to repentance, and sorrow (which is ever the prologue to it) marches sadly, and first opens the scene, it is ever expressed to

be great, clamorous, and sad: it is called "a weeping sorely" in the next verse after my text; "a weeping with the bitterness of heart;" "a turning to the Lord with weeping, fasting, and mourning;" "a weeping day and night;" the "sorrow of heart;" the "breaking of the spirit;" the "mourning like a dove," and "chattering like a swallow."† And if we observe the threnes and sad accents of the prophet Jeremy, when he wept for the sins of his nation; the heart-breakings of David, when he mourned for his adultery and murder; and the bitter tears of St. Peter, when he washed off the guilt and baseness of his fall, and the denying his master; we shall be sufficiently instructed in this "præliudium" or "introduction" to repentance; and that it is not every breath of a sigh, or moisture of a tender eye, not every crying "Lord have mercy upon me," that is such a sorrow, as begins our restitution to the state of grace and Divine favour; but such a sorrow, that really condemns ourselves, and by an active effectual sentence, declares us worthy of stripes and death, of sorrow and eternal pains, and willingly endures the first to prevent the second; and weeps, and mourns, and fasts, to obtain of God but to admit us to a possibility of restitution. And although all sorrow for sins hath not the same expression, nor the same degree of pungency and sensitive trouble, which differs according to the temper of the body, custom, the sex, and accidental tenderness;‡ yet it is not a godly sorrow, unless it really produce these effects: that is, 1. that it makes us really to hate, and 2. actually to decline sin; and 3. produce in us a fear of God's anger, a sense of the guilt of his displeasure; and 4. then such consequent trouble as can consist with such apprehension of the Divine displeasure: which, if it express not in tears and hearty complaints, must be expressed in watchings and strivings against sin; in confessing the goodness and justice of God threatening or punishing us; in patiently bearing the rod of God: in confession of our sins; in accusation of ourselves; in perpetual begging of pardon, and mean and base opinions of ourselves; and in all the natural productions from these, according to our temper and constitution: it must be a sorrow of the reasonable faculty, the greatest in its kind: and if it be less in kind, or not productive of these

* Ezek. xxvii. 31.

† Joel ii. 13.

‡ See Rule of H. Living, D. of Repentance, p. 496.

effects, it is not a godly sorrow, nor the "exordium" of repentance.

But I desire that it be observed that sorrow for sins is not repentance; not that duty which gives glory to God, so as to obtain of him that he will glorify us. Repentance is a great volume of duty; and godly sorrow is but the frontispiece or title-page; it is the harbinger or first introduction to it: or, if you will consider it in the words of St. Paul, "Godly sorrow worketh repentance:"* sorrow is the parent, and repentance is the product. And, therefore, it is a high piece of ignorance to suppose, that a crying out and roaring for our sins upon our death-bed can reconcile us to God: our crying to God must be so early and so lasting, as to be able to teem and produce such a daughter, which must live long, and grow from an embryo to an infant, from infancy to childhood, from thence to the fulness of the stature of Christ; and then it is a holy and a happy sorrow. But if it be a sorrow only of a death-bed, it is a fruitless shower; or like the rain of Sodom, not the beginning of repentance, but the kindling of a flame, the commencement of an eternal sorrow. For Ahab had a great sorrow, but it wrought nothing upon his spirit; it did not reconcile his affections to his duty, and his duty to God. Judas had so great a sorrow for betraying the innocent blood of his Lord, that it was intolerable to his spirit, and he "burst in the middle." And if mere sorrow be repentance, then hell is full of penitents; for "there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth, for evermore."

Let us, therefore, beg of God, as Caleb's daughter did of her father; "Dedisti mihi terram aridam, da etiam et irriguam," "Thou hast given me a dry land, give me also a land of waters, a dwelling-place in tears, rivers of tears:" Ut, quoniam non sumus digni oculos orando ad cælum levare, at simus digni oculos plorando cæcare," as St. Austin's expression is; "That because we are not worthy to lift up our eyes to heaven in prayer, yet we may be worthy to weep our eyes blind for sin."—The meaning is, that we beg sorrow of God, such a sorrow as may be sufficient to quench the flames of lust, and surmount the hills of our pride, and may extinguish our thirst of covetousness; that is, a sorrow that shall be an effective principle of arming all our faculties against sin, and heartily

setting upon the work of grace, and the persevering labours of a holy life. I shall only add one word to this: that our sorrow for sin is not to be estimated by our tears and our sensible expressions, but by our active hatred and dereliction of sin; and is many times unperceived in outward demonstration. It is reported of the mother of Peter Lombard, Gratian, and Comestor, that she having had three sons begotten in unhallowed embraces, upon her death-bed did omit the recitation of those crimes to her confessor; adding this for apology, that her three sons proved persons so eminent in the church, that their excellence was abundant recompense for her demerit; and therefore, she could not grieve because God had glorified himself so much by three instruments so excellent; and that although her sin had abounded, yet God's grace did superabound. Her confessor replied, "At dole saltem, quod dolere non possis," "Grieve that thou canst not grieve." And so must we always fear, that our trouble for sin is not great enough, that our sorrow is too remiss, that our affections are indifferent: but we can only be sure that our sorrow is a godly sorrow, when it worketh repentance: that is, when it makes us hate and leave all our sin, and take up the cross of patience and penance; that is, confess our sin, accuse ourselves, condemn the action by hearty sentence: and then, if it hath no other emanation but fasting and prayer for its pardon, and hearty industry towards its abolition, our sorrow is not reproveable.

2. For sorrow alone will not do it: there must follow a total dereliction of our sin; and this is the first part of repentance. Concerning which I consider, that it is a sad mistake amongst many that do some things towards repentance, that they mistake the first addresses and instruments of this part of repentance for the whole duty itself. Confession of sins is in order to the dereliction of them: but then confession must not be like the unlading of a ship to take in new stowage; or the vomits of intemperance, which ease the stomach that they may continue the merry meeting. But such a confession is too frequent, in which men either comply with custom, or seek to ease a present load or gripe of conscience, or are willing to dress up their souls against a festival, or hope for pardon upon so easy terms: these are but retirings back to leap the farther into mischief; or but approaches to God with the lips. No confession can be of any

* 2 Cor. vii. 10.

use, but as it is an instrument of shame to the person, of humiliation to the man, and dereliction of the sin; and receives its recompense but as it adds to these purposes: all other is like "the bleating of the calves and the lowing of the oxen," which Saul reserved after the spoil of Agag; they proclaim the sin, but do nothing towards its cure; they serve God's end to make us justly to be condemned out of our own mouths, but nothing at all towards our absolution. Nay, if we proceed further to the greatest expressions of humiliation; (parts of which, I reckon fasting, praying for pardon, judging and condemning of ourselves by instances of a present indignation against a crime;) yet unless this proceed so far as to a total deletion of the sin, to the extirpation of every vicious habit, God is not glorified by our repentance, nor we secured in our eternal interest. Our sin must be brought to judgment, and, like Antinous in Homer, laid in the midst, as the sacrifice and the cause of all the mischief.

Ἄλλ' ὁ μὲν ἦδη κεῖται, ὃς αἰτίος ἔσται πάντως.

This is the murderer, this is the "Achan," this is "he that troubles Israel:" let the sin be confessed and carried with the pomps and solemnities of sorrow to its funeral, and so let the murderer be slain. But if after all the forms of confession and sorrow, fasting and humiliation, and pretence of doing the will of God, we "spare Agag and the fattest of the cattle," our delicious sins,—and still leave an unlawful king and a tyrant sin to reign in our mortal bodies, we may pretend what we will towards repentance, but we are no better penitents than Ahab; no nearer to the obtaining of our hopes than Esau was to his birthright, "for whose repentance there was no place left, though he sought it carefully with tears."

3. Well, let us suppose our penitent advanced thus far, as that he decrees against all sin, and in his hearty purposes resolves to decline it, as in a severe sentence he hath condemned it as his betrayer and his murderer; yet we must be curious (for now only the repentance properly begins) that it be not only like the springings of the thorny or high-way ground, soon up and soon down: for some men, when a sadness or an unhandsome accident surprises them, then they resolve against their sin; but like the goats in Aristotle, they give their milk no longer than they are stung; as soon as the

thorns are removed, these men return to their first hardness, and resolve then to act their first temptation. Others there are who never resolve against a sin, but either when they have no temptation to it, or when their appetites are newly satisfied with it; like those who immediately after a full dinner resolve to fast at supper, and they keep it till their appetite returns, and then their resolution unties like the cords of vanity, or the gossamer against the violence of the northern wind. Thus a lustful person fills all the capacity of his lust; and when he is wearied, and the sin goes off with unquietness and regret, and the appetite falls down like a horse-leech, when it is ready to burst with putrefaction, and an unwholesome plethora, then he resolves to be a good man, and could almost vow to be a hermit; and hates his lust, as Amnon hated his sister Tamar, just when he had newly acted his unworthy rape: but the next spring-tide that comes, every wave of the temptation makes an inroad upon the resolution, and gets ground, and prevails against it, more than his resolution prevailed against his sin. How many drunken persons, how many swearers, resolve daily and hourly against their sins, and yet act them not once the less for all their infinite heap of shamefully-repeating purposes! That resolution that begins upon just grounds of sorrow and severe judgment, upon fear and love, that is inquisitive into all the means and instruments of the cure, that prays perpetually against a sin, that watches continually against a surprise, and never sinks into it by deliberation; that fights earnestly, and carries on the war prudently, and prevails, by a never-ceasing diligence, against the temptation; that only is a pious and well-begun repentance. They that have their fits of a quartan, well and ill for ever, and think themselves in perfect health when the ague is retired till its period returns, are dangerously mistaken. Those intervals of imperfect and fallacious resolution are nothing but states of death: and if a man should depart this world in one of those godly fits, as he thinks them, he is no nearer to obtain his blessed hope, than a man in the stone-colic is to health when his pain is eased for the present, his disease still remaining, and threatening an unwelcome return. That resolution only is the beginning of a holy repentance, which goes forth into act, and whose acts enlarge into habits, and whose

habits are productive of the fruits of a holy life.

From hence we are to take our estimate, whence our resolutions of piety must commence. He that resolves not to live well, till the time comes that he must die, is ridiculous in his great design, as he is impertinent in his intermedial purposes, and vain in his hope. Can a dying man to any real effect resolve to be chaste? For virtue must be an act of election, and chastity is the contesting against a proud and an imperious lust, active flesh, and insinuating temptation. And what doth he resolve against, who can no more be tempted to the sin of unchastity, than he can return back again to his youth and vigour? And it is considerable, that since all the purposes of a holy life which a dying man can make, cannot be reduced to act; by what law, or reason, or covenant, or revelation, are we taught to distinguish the resolution of a dying man from the purposes of a living and vigorous person? Suppose a man in his youth and health, moved by consideration of the irregularity and deformity of sin, the danger of its productions, the wrath and displeasure of Almighty God, should resolve to leave the puddles of impurity, and walk in the paths of righteousness; can this resolution alone put him into the state of grace? Is he admitted to pardon and the favour of God, before he hath in some measure performed actually, what he so reasonably hath resolved? By no means. For resolution and purpose is, in its own nature and constitution, an imperfect act, and therefore can signify nothing without its performance and consummation. It is as a faculty is to the act, as spring is to the harvest, as seed-time is to the autumn, as eggs are to birds, or as a relative is to its correspondent; nothing without it. And can it be imagined, that a resolution in our health and life shall be ineffectual without performance? and shall a resolution barely such, do any good upon our death-bed? Can such purposes prevail against a long impiety rather than against a young and a newly-begun state of sin? Will God at an easier rate pardon the sins of fifty or sixty years, than the sins of our youth only, or the iniquity of five years, or ten? If a holy life be not necessary to be lived, why shall it be necessary to resolve to live it? But if a holy life be necessary, then it cannot be sufficient merely to resolve it, unless this resolution go forth in an actual and real service. Vain therefore is the hope

of those persons, who either go on in their sins before their last sickness, never thinking to return into the ways of God, from whence they have wandered all their life, never renewing their resolutions and vows of holy living; or if they have, yet their purposes are for ever blasted with the next violent temptation. More prudent was the prayer of David; "Oh spare me a little, that I may recover my strength, before I go hence and be no more seen." And something like it was the saying of the emperor Charles the Fifth; "Inter vitæ negotia et mortis diem oportet spatium intercedere." Whenever our holy purposes are renewed, unless God gives us time to act them, to mortify and subdue our lusts, to conquer and subdue the whole kingdom of sin, to rise from our grave, and be clothed with nerves and flesh and a new skin, to overcome our deadly sicknesses, and by little and little to return to health and strength; unless we have grace and time to do all this, our sins will lie down with us in our graves. For when a man hath contracted a long habit of sin, and it hath been growing upon him ten or twenty, forty or fifty years, whose acts he hath daily or hourly repeated, and they are grown to a second nature to him,—and have so prevailed upon the ruins of his spirit, that the man is taken captive by the devil at his will, he is fast bound, as a slave tugging at the oar; that he is grown in love with his fetters, and longs to be doing the work of sin:—is it likely that after all this progress and growth in sin (in the ways of which he runs fast without any impediment); is it, I say, likely, that a few days or weeks of sickness can recover him? The special hinderances of that state I shall afterward consider. But, can a man supposed so prompt to piety and holy living, a man, I mean, that hath lived wickedly a long time together, can he be of so ready and active a virtue upon the sudden, as to recover, in a month or a week, what he hath been undoing in twenty or thirty years? Is it so easy to build, that a weak and infirm person, bound hand and foot, shall be able to build more in three days than was a-building above forty years. Christ did it in a figurative sense; but in this, it is not in the power of any man so suddenly to be recovered from so long a sickness. Necessary therefore is that all these instruments of our conversion,—confession of sins,—praying for their pardon,—and resolution to lead a new life,—should begin "before our feet

stumble upon the dark mountains;" lest we leave the work only resolved upon to be begun, which it is necessary we should in many degrees finish, if ever we mean to escape the eternal darkness. "For that we should actually abolish the whole body of sin and death,—that we should crucify the old man with his lusts,—that we should lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us,—that we should cast away the works of darkness, that we should awake from sleep, and arise from death,—that we should redeem the time,—that we should cleanse our hands and purify our hearts,—that we should have escaped the corruption (all the corruption) that is in the whole world through lust,—that nothing of the old heaven should remain in us,—but that we be wholly a new lump, thoroughly transformed and changed in the image of our mind;"—these are the perpetual precepts of the Spirit, and the certain duty of man; and that to have all these in purpose only, is merely to no purpose, without the actual eradication of every vicious habit; and the certain abolition of every criminal adherence, is clearly and dogmatically decreed every where in the Scripture. "For" (they are the words of St. Paul) "they that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts:"* the work is actually done, and sin is dead or wounded mortally, before they can in any sense belong to Christ, to be a portion of his inheritance: and, "He that is in Christ, is a new creature."† For "in Christ Jesus nothing can avail but a new creature;"‡ nothing but a "keeping of the commandments of God."§ Not all our tears, though we should weep like David and his men at Ziklag, "till they could weep no more," or the women of "Ramah," or like "the weeping in the valley of Hinnom," could suffice, if we retain the affection to any one sin, or have any unrepented of, or unmortified. It is true, that "a contrite and a broken heart God will not despise;" no, he will not. For if it be a hearty and permanent sorrow, it is an excellent beginning of repentance; and God will to a timely sorrow give the grace of repentance; he will not give pardon to sorrow alone; but that which ought to be the proper effect of sorrow, that God shall give. He shall then open the gates of mercy, and admit you to a possibility of restitution:

so that you may be within the covenant of repentance, which if you actually perform, you may expect God's promise. And in this sense confession will obtain our pardon, and humiliation will be accepted, and our holy purposes and pious resolutions shall be accounted for; that is, these being the first steps and addresses to that part of repentance which consists in the abolition of sins, shall be accepted so far as to procure so much of the pardon, to do so much of the work of restitution, that God will admit the returning man to a further degree of emendation, to a nearer possibility of working out his salvation. But then, if this sorrow, and confession, and these strong purposes, begin then when our life is declined towards the west, and is now ready to set in darkness and a dismal night; because of themselves they could not procure an admission to repentance, not at all to pardon and plenary absolution, by showing that on our death-bed these are too late and ineffectual, they call upon us to begin betimes, when these imperfect acts may be consummate and perfect, in the actual performing those parts of holy life, to which they were ordained in the nature of the thing and the purposes of God.

4. Lastly, suppose all this be done, and that by a long course of strictness and severity, mortification and circumspection, we have overcome all our vicious and baser habits, contracted and grown upon us like the ulcers and evils of a long surfeit, and that we are clean and swept; suppose that he hath wept and fasted, prayed and vowed to excellent purposes; yet all this is but the one half of repentance: (so infinitely mistaken is the world, to think any thing to be enough to make up repentance:) but to renew us, and restore us to the favour of God, there is required far more than what hath been yet accounted for. See it in the second of St. Peter, chap. i. verse 4, 5. "Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust: and besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, to temperance patience, and so on, to godliness, to brotherly kindness, and to charity: these things must be in you and abound." This is the sum total of repentance: we must not only have overcome sin, but we must after great diligence have acquired the habits of all those Christian graces, which are necessary in the transaction of our affairs, in all relations to God and our neighbour, and

* Gal. v. 21.

† Gal. vi. 15.

‡ Gal. v. 6.

§ 1 Cor. vii. 19.

our own persons. It is not enough to say, "Lord, I thank thee, I am no extortioner, no adulterer, not as this publican;" all the reward of such a penitent is, that when he hath escaped the corruption of the world, he hath also escaped those heavy judgments which threatened his ruin.

"Nec furtum feci, nec fugi," si mihi dicat
 Servus: "Habes pretium; loris non ureris," aio;
 "Non hominem occidi:"—Non pasces in cruce
 corvos. HOR.

"If a servant have not robbed his master, nor offered to fly from his bondage, he shall escape the 'furca,' his flesh shall not be exposed to birds or fishes;" but this is but the reward of innocent slaves. It may be, we have escaped the rod of the exterminating angel, when our sins are crucified; but we shall never "enter into the joy of the Lord," unless after we have "put off the old man with his affections and lusts," we also "put on the new man in righteousness and holiness of life."* And this we are taught in most plain doctrine by St. Paul: "Let us lay aside the weight that doth so easily beset us;" that is the one half: and then it follows, "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us." These are the "fruits meet for repentance," spoken of by St. John Baptist; that is, when we renew our first undertaking in baptism, and return to our courses of innocence.

Parcus Deorum cultor et infrequens,
 Insanientis dum sapientie
 Consultus erro, nunc retrorsum
 Vela dare, atque iterare cursus
 Cogor relictos. HOR.

The sense of which words is well given us by St. John; "Remember whence thou art fallen; repent, and do thy first works."† For all our hopes of heaven rely upon that covenant which God made with us in baptism; which is, "That being redeemed from our vain conversation, we should serve him in holiness and righteousness all our days." Now when any of us hath prevaricated our part of the covenant, we must return to that state, and redeem the inter-medial time spent in sin, by our doubled industry in the ways of grace: we must be reduced to our first estate, and make some proportionable returns of duty for our sad omissions, and great violations of our baptismal vow. For God having made no

covenant with us but that which is consigned in baptism; in the same proportion in which we retain or return to that, in the same we are to expect the pardon of our sins, and all the other promises evangelical; but no otherwise, unless we can show a new gospel, or be baptized again by God's appointment. He, therefore, that by a long habit, by a state and continued course of sin, hath gone so far from his baptismal purity, as that he hath nothing of the Christian left upon him but his name; that man hath much to do to make his garments clean, to purify his soul, to take off all the stains of sin, that his spirit may be presented pure to the eyes of God, who beholds no impurity. It is not an easy thing to cure a long-contracted habit of sin. Let any intemperate person but try in his own instance of drunkenness; or the swearer, in the sweetening his unwholesome language: but then so to command his tongue that he never swear, but that his speech be prudent, pious, and apt to edify the hearer, or in some sense to glorify God; or to become temperate, to have got a habit of sobriety, or chastity, or humility, is the work of a life. And if we do but consider that he that lives well from his younger years, or takes up at the end of his youthful heats, and enters into the courses of a sober life early, diligently, and vigorously, shall find himself, after the studies and labours of twenty or thirty years' piety, but a very imperfect person, many degrees of pride left unrooted up, many inroads of intemperance or beginnings of excess, much indevotion and backwardness in religion, many temptations to contest against, and some infirmities which he shall never say he hath mastered; we shall find the work of a holy life is not to be deferred till our days are almost done, till our strengths are decayed, our spirits are weak, and our lust strong, our habits confirmed, and our longings after sin many and impotent: for what is very hard to be done, and is always done imperfectly, when there is length of time, and a less work to do, and more abilities to do it withal; when the time is short, and almost expired, and the work made difficult and vast, and the strengths weaker, and the faculties are disabled, will seem little less than absolutely impossible. I shall end this general consideration with the question of the apostle: "If the righteous scarcely be saved," if it be so difficult to overcome our sins, and obtain virtuous habits; difficult I say, to a righteous, a sober, and well-living

* Heb. xii. 1.

† Rev. ii. 5.

person,—“where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?” what shall become of him, who by his evil life, hath not only removed himself from the affections, but even from the possibilities of virtue?—He that hath lived in sin, will die in sorrow.

SERMON XXXI.

PART II.

BUT I shall pursue this great and necessary truth, First, by showing what parts and ingredients of repentance are assigned, when it is described in Holy Scripture: Secondly, by showing the necessities, the absolute necessities, of a holy life, and what it means in Scripture to “live holily:” Thirdly, by considering what directions or intimations we have concerning the last time of beginning to repent; and what is the longest period that any man may venture with safety. And in the prosecution of these particulars, we shall remove the objections, those aprons of fig-leaves, which men use for their shelter to palliate their sin, and to hide themselves from that from which no rocks or mountains shall protect them, though they fall upon them; that is, the wrath of God.

First, That repentance is not only an abolition and extinction of the body of sin, a bringing it to the altar, and slaying it before God and all the people; but that we must also χρυσὸν κέρασι περιχέμεν, “mingle gold and rich presents,” the oblation of good works and holy habits with the sacrifice, I have already proved: but now if we will see repentance in its stature and integrity of constitution described, we shall find it to be the one-half of all that which God requires of Christians. Faith and repentance are the whole duty of a Christian. Faith is a sacrifice of the understanding to God; repentance sacrifices the whole will: that gives the knowing; this gives us all the desiring faculties: that makes us disciples; this makes us servants of the holy Jesus. Nothing else was preached by the apostles, nothing was enjoined as the duty of man, nothing else did build up the body of Christian religion. So that as faith contains all that knowledge which is necessary to salvation; so repentance comprehends in it all the whole practice and working duty of a returning Christian. And this was the sum

total of all that St. Paul preached to the gentiles, when, in his farewell-sermon to the bishops and priests of Ephesus, he professed that he “kept back nothing that was profitable” to them; * and yet it was all nothing but this, “repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.” So that whosoever believes in Jesus Christ and repents towards God, must make his accounts according to this standard, that is, to believe all that Christ taught him, and to do all that Christ commanded. And this is remarked in St. Paul’s catechism, † where he gives a more particular catalogue of fundamentals: he reckons nothing but sacraments and faith; of which he enumerates two principal articles, “resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.” Whatsoever is practical, all the whole duty of man, the practice of all obedience, is called “repentance from dead works:” which, if we observe the singularity of the phrase, does not mean “sorrow;” for sorrow from dead works, is not sense; but it must mean “mutationem status,” a conversion from dead works, which (as in all motions) supposes two terms; from dead works to living works; from “the death of sin” to “the life of righteousness.”

I will add but two places more, out of each Testament one; in which, I suppose, you may see every lineament of this great duty described, that you may no longer mistake a grasshopper for an eagle; sorrow and holy purposes, for the entire duty of repentance. In Ezekiel xviii. 21, you shall find it thus described: “But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.” Or, as it is more fully described in Ezekiel xxxiii. 14, “When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die: if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he hath robbed, walk in the statutes of life without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die.” Here only is the condition of pardon; to leave all your sins, to keep all God’s statutes, to walk in them, to abide, to proceed, and make progress in them; and this, without the interruption by a deadly sin,—“without committing iniquity,”—to make restitution of all the wrongs he hath done, all the unjust money

* Acts xx. 21.

† Heb. vi. 1.

he hath taken, all the oppressions he hath committed, all that must be satisfied for, and repaid according to our ability: we must make satisfaction for all injury to our neighbour's fame, all wrongs done to his soul; he must be restored to that condition of good things thou didst in any sense remove him from; when this is done according to thy utmost power, then thou hast repented truly, then thou hast a title to the promise: "Thou shalt surely live, thou shalt not die," for thy old sins thou hast formerly committed. Only be pleased to observe this one thing; that this place of Ezekiel is it which is so often mistakeh for that common saying, "At what time soever a sinner repents him of his sins from the bottom of his heart, I will put all his wickedness out of my remembrance, saith the Lord." For although "at what time soever a sinner does repent," as repentance is now explained, God will forgive him,—and that repentance, as it is now stated, cannot be done "at what time soever," not upon a man's death-bed; yet there are no such words in the whole Bible, nor any nearer to the sense of them, than the words I have now read to you out of the prophet Ezekiel. Let that, therefore, no more deceive you, or be made a colour to countenance a persevering sinner, or a death-bed penitent.

Neither is the duty of repentance to be bought at an easier rate in the New Testament. You may see it described in 2 Cor. vii. 10, 11. "Godly sorrow worketh repentance." Well! but what is that repentance which is so wrought? This it is: "Behold his self-same thing that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge!" These are the fruits of that sorrow that is effectual; these are the parts of repentance: "clearing ourselves" of all that is past, and great "carefulness" for the future; "anger" at ourselves for our old sins, and "fear" lest we commit the like gain; "vehement desires" of pleasing God, and "zeal" of holy actions, and "a revenge" upon ourselves for our sins, called for St. Paul, in another place, "a judging ourselves, lest we be judged of the Lord."* And in pursuance of this truth, the primitive church did not admit a sinning person to the

public communions with the faithful, till, besides their sorrow, they had spent some years in an *ἀγαθοεργία*, in "doing good works," and holy living; and especially in such actions which did contradict that wicked inclination, which led them into those sins, whereof they were now admitted to repent. And therefore, we find that they stood in the station of penitents seven years, thirteen years, and sometimes till their death, before they could be reconciled to the peace of God and his holy church.

— Scelerum si bene pœnitet,
Eradenda cupidinis
Pravi sunt elementa; et teneræ nimis
Mentes asperioribus
Formandæ studiis. HOR. l. 3. od. 24.

Repentance is the institution of a philosophical and severe life, an utter extirpation of all unreasonableness and impiety, and an address to, and a final passing through, all the parts of holy living.

Now consider, whether this be imaginable or possible to be done upon our death-bed, when a man is frightened into an involuntary, a sudden, and unchosen piety. Ὁ μετανοῶν οὐ φοβῶ τῶν ἑαυτῶν τῆν τοῦ κακοῦ πράξιν αἰρήσεται, saith Hierocles.* He that never repents till a violent fear be upon him, till he apprehend himself to be in the jaws of death, ready to give up his unready and unprepared accounts, till he sees the Judge sitting in all the addresses of dreadfulfulness and majesty, just now, as he believes, ready to pronounce that fearful and intolerable sentence of, "Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire;" this man does nothing for the love of God, nothing for the love of virtue: it is just as a condemned man repents that he was a traitor; but repented not till he was arrested, and sure to die: such a repentance as this may still consist with as great an affection to sin as ever he had; † and, it is no thanks to him, if, when the knife is at his throat, then he gives good words and flatters. But, suppose this man in his health, and in the midst of all his lust, it is evident that there are some circumstances of action, in which the man would have refused to commit his most pleasing sin. Would not the son of Tarquin have refused to ravish Lucretia, if Junius Brutus had been by him? Would the impurest

* ἢ δὲ μετάνοια αὐτῆ φιλοσοφίας ἀρχὴ γίνεται, καὶ τῶν ἀνομιῶν ἐργῶν τε καὶ λύγαν φύγη, καὶ τῆς ἀρετῆς ἀμύλητου ζωῆς ἢ πρώτῃ παρασκευῇ.—HIEROCLES.

† See Life of Jesus, Disc. of Repentance, part 2.

* 1 Cor. xi. 31.

person in the world act his lust in the market-place? or drink off an intemperate goblet, if a dagger were placed at his throat? In these circumstances their fear would make them declare against the present acting their impurities. But does this cure the intemperance of their affections? Let the impure person retire to his closet, and Junius Brutus be engaged in a far-distant war, and the dagger be taken from the drunkard's throat, and the fear of shame, or death, or judgment, be taken from them all; and they shall no more resist their temptation, than they could before remove their fear: and you may as well judge the other persons holy, and haters of their sin, as the man upon his death-bed to be penitent; and rather they than he, by how much this man's fear, the fear of death, and of the infinite pains of hell, the fear of a provoked God, and an angry eternal Judge, are far greater than the apprehensions of a public shame, or an abused husband, or the poniard of an angry person. These men then sin not, because they dare not; they are frightened from the act, but not from the affection; which is not to be cured but by discourse, and reasonable acts, and human considerations; of which that man is not naturally capable, who is possessed with the greatest fear, the fear of death and damnation. If there had been time to cure his sin, and to live the life of grace, I deny not but God might have begun his conversion with so great a fear, that he should never have wiped off its impression:* but if the man dies then, dies when he only declaims against and curses his sin, as being the author of his present fear and apprehended calamity; it is very far from reconciling him to God or hopes of pardon, because it proceeds from a violent, † unnatural, and an intolerable cause; no act of choice, or virtue, but of sorrow, a deserved sorrow, and a miserable, unchosen, unavoidable fear;

— moriensque recepit
Quas nollet victurus aquas.—

He curses sin upon his death-bed, and makes a panegyric of virtue, which in his life-time, he accounted folly, and trouble, and needless vexation.

Quæ mens est hodie, cur eadem non puero fuit,
Vel cur his animis incolumes non redeunt genæ?
HOR. l. 4. od. 10.

* Cogimur à suetis animum euspendere rebus;
Atque ut vivamus, vivere desinimus.

CORNEL. GAL.

† Nec ad rem pertinet ubi inciperet, quod placuerat ut fieret.

I shall end this first consideration with a plain exhortation; that, since repentance is a duty of so great and giant-like bulk, let no man crowd it up into so narrow room, as that it be strangled in its birth for want of time and air to breathe in: let it not be put off to that time when a man hath scarce time enough to reckon all those particular duties, which make up the integrity of its constitution. Will any man hunt the wild boar in his garden, or bait a bull in his closet? Will a woman wrap her child in her handkerchief, or a father send his son to school when he is fifty years old? These are indecencies of providence, and the instrument contradicts the end: and this is our case. There is no room for repentance, no time to act all its essential parts; and a child, who hath a great way to go before he be wise, may defer his studies, and hope to become learned in his old age, and upon his death-bed; as well as a vicious person may think to recover from all his ignorances and prejudicate opinions, from all his false principles and evil customs, from his wicked inclinations and ungodly habits, from his fondness of vice and detestations of virtue, from his promptness to sin and unwillingness to grace, from his spiritual deadness and strong sensuality, upon his death-bed, (I say,) when he hath no natural strength, and as little spiritual; when he is criminal and impotent, hardened in his vice and soft in his fears, full of passion and empty of wisdom; when he is sick, and amazed, and timorous, and confounded, and impatient, and extremely miserable.

And now when any of you is tempted to commit a sin, remember that sin will ruin you, unless you repent of it. But this, you say, is no news, and so far from affrighting you from sin, that (God knows) it makes men sin the rather. For, therefore, they venture to act the present temptation, because they know, if they repent, God will forgive them; and therefore, they resolve upon both, to sin now, and repent hereafter.

Against this folly I shall not oppose the consideration of their danger, and that they neither know how long they shall live, nor whether they shall die or not in this very act of sin; though this consideration is very material, and if they should die in it, or before it is washed off, they perish: but I consider these things. 1. That he that resolves to sin upon a resolution to repent, by every act of sin makes himself more incapable of repenting by growing more in love

with sin, by remembering its pleasures, by serving it once more, and losing one degree more of the liberty of our spirit. And if you resolve to sin now, because it is pleasant, how do you know that your appetite will alter? Will it not appear pleasant to you next week, and the next week after that, and so for ever? And still you sin, and still you will repent; that is, you will repent when the sin can please you no longer; for so long as it can please you, so long you are tempted not to repent, as well as now to act the sin: and the longer you lie in it, the more you will love it. So that it is in effect to say, I love my sin now, but I will hereafter hate it; only I will act it a while longer, and grow more in love with it, and then I will repent; that is, then I will be sure to hate it, when I shall most love it.

2. To repent, signifies to be sorrowful, to be ashamed, and to wish it had never been done. And then see the folly of this temptation; I would not sin, but that I hope to repent of it: that is, I would not do this thing, but that I hope to be sorrowful for doing it, and I hope to come to shame for it, heartily to be ashamed of my doings, and I hope to be in that condition, that I would give all the world I had never done it; that is, I hope to feel and apprehend an evil infinitely greater than the pleasures of my sin. And are these arguments fit to move a man to sin? What can affright a man from it, if these invite him to it? It is as if a man should invite one to be a partner of his treason, by telling him, If you will join with me, you shall have all these effects by it; you shall be hanged, drawn, and quartered, and your blood shall be corrupted, and your estate forfeited, and you shall have many other reasons to wish you had never done it. He that should use this rhetoric, in earnest, might well be accounted a madman; this is to scare a man, not to allure him: and so is the other when we understand it truly.

3. For I consider, he that repents, wishes he had never done that sin. Now I ask, does he wish so upon reason, or without reason? Surely, if he may, when he hath satisfied his lust, ask God pardon, and be admitted upon as easy terms for the time to come, as if he had not done the sin, he hath no reason to be sorrowful, or wish he had not done it. For though he hath done it, and pleased himself by "enjoying the pleasure of sin for that season," yet all is well again; and let him only be careful now, and there is no hurt done, his pardon is certain. How can

any man, that understands the reason of his actions and passions, wish that he had never done that sin in which then he had pleasure, and now he feels no worse inconvenience. But he that truly repents, wishes and would give all the world he had never done it; surely then his present condition in respect of his past sin hath some very great evil in it, why else should he be so much troubled? True, and this it is. He that hath committed sins after baptism, is fallen out of the favour of God, is tied to hard duty for the time to come, to cry vehemently unto God, to call night and day for pardon, to be in great fear and tremblings of heart, lest God should never forgive him, lest God will never take off his sentence of eternal pains; and in this fear, and in some degrees of it, he will remain all the days of his life; and if he hopes to be quit of that, yet he knows not how many degrees of God's anger still hang over his head; how many sad miseries shall afflict, and burn and purify him in this world, with a sharpness so poignant as to divide the marrow from the bones; and for these reasons, as a considering man that knows what it is to repent, wishes with his soul he had never sinned, and, therefore, grieves in proportion to his former crimes, and present misery, and future danger.

And now suppose that you can repent when you will, that is, that you can grieve when you will;—though no man can do it, no man can grieve when he please, though he could shed tears when he list, he cannot grieve without a real or apprehended felicity; but suppose it;—and that he can fear when he please, and that he can love when he please, or what he please; that is, suppose a man be able to say to his palate, Though I love sweetmeats, yet to-morrow will I hate and loathe them, and believe them bitter and distasteful things; and suppose, I say, all these impossibilities; yet since repentance does suppose a man to be in a state of such real misery, that he hath reason to curse the day in which he sinned, is this a fit argument to invite a man that is in his wits to sin? to sin in hope of repentance? as if danger of falling into hell, and fear of the Divine anger, and many degrees of the Divine judgments, and a lasting sorrow, and a perpetual labour, and a never-ceasing trembling, and a troubled conscience, and a sorrowful spirit, were fit things to be desired or hoped for.

The sum is this: he that commits sins shall perish eternally, if he never does re-

pent, and yet untimely, he is not the better; and if he does not repent with an entire, a perfect, and complete repentance, he is not the better. But if he does, yet repentance is a duty full of fears, and sorrow, and labour; a vexation to the spirit; an afflictive, penal, or punitive duty; a duty which suffers for sin, and labours for grace, which abides and suffers little images of hell in the way to heaven: and though it be the only way to felicity, yet it is beset with thorns and daggers of sufferance, and with rocks and mountains of duty. Let no man therefore dare to sin upon the hopes of repentance: for he is a fool and a hypocrite, that now chooses and approves what he knows hereafter he must condemn.

2. The second general consideration is, the necessity, the absolute necessity, of holy living. God hath made a covenant with us, that we must give up ourselves, "bodies" and souls, not a dying, but "a living" and healthful "sacrifice."⁸ He hath forgiven all our old sins, and we have bargained to quit them, from the time that we first come to Christ, and give our names to him, and to keep all his commandments. We have taken the sacramental oath, like that of the old Roman militia, *πειθαρχήσῃν, καὶ τοῖσιν τὸ προσταττόμενον ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρχόντων κατὰ δύναμιν*, we must "believe," and "obey," and "do all that is commanded us," and keep our station, and fight against the flesh, the world, and the devil, not to throw away our military girdle; and we are to do what is bidden us, or to die for it, even all that is bidden us, "according to our power." For, pretend not that God's commandments are impossible. It is dishonourable to think God enjoins us to do more than he enables us to do; and it is a contradiction to say we cannot do all that we can; and "through Christ which strengthens me, I can do all things," saith St. Paul. However, we can do to the utmost of our strength, and beyond that we cannot take thought; impossibilities enter not into deliberation; but, according to our abilities and natural powers, assisted by God's grace, so God hath covenanted with us to live a holy life. "For in Christ Jesus, nothing availeth but a new creature, nothing but faith working by charity, nothing but keeping the commandments of God." They are all the words of St. Paul before quoted; to which he adds, "and as

many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy." This is the covenant, "they are the Israel of God;" upon those "peace and mercy" shall abide. If they become a new creature, wholly "transformed in the image of their mind;" if they have faith, and this faith be an operative working faith, a faith that produces a holy life, "a faith that works by charity;" if they "keep the commandments of God," then they are within the covenant of mercy, but not else: for "in Christ Jesus nothing else availeth." To the same purpose are those words, (Heb. xii. 14.) "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." "Peace with all men" implies both justice and charity, without which it is impossible to preserve peace; "holiness" implies all our duty towards God, universal diligence; and this must be "followed," that is, pursued with diligence, in a lasting course of life and exercise: and without this we shall never see the face of God. I need urge no more authorities to this purpose; these two are as certain and convincing as two thousand: and since thus much is actually required, and is the condition of the covenant; it is certain that sorrow for not having done what is commanded to be done, and a purpose to do what is necessary to be actually performed, will not acquit us before the righteous judgment of God. "For the grace of God hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live godly, justly, and soberly, in this present world." For upon these terms alone we must "look for the blessed hope, and glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ."⁹ I shall no longer insist upon this particular, but only pound it to your consideration. To what purpose are all those commandments in Scripture, of every page almost in it, of living holily, and according to the commandments of God,—of adorning the gospel of God,—of walking as in the day,—of walking in light,—of pure and undefiled religion,—of being holy as God is holy,—of being humble and meek, as Christ is humble,—of putting on the Lord Jesus,—of living a spiritual life,—but that it is the purpose of God, and the intention and design of Christ dying for us, and the covenant made with man, that we should expect

⁸ Rom. xii. 1.

⁹ Tit. ii. 11, 12.

heaven upon no other terms in the world, but of a holy life, in the faith and obedience of the Lord Jesus?

Now if a vicious person, when he comes to the latter end of his days, one that hath lived a wicked, ungodly life, can, for any thing he can do upon his death-bed, be said to live a holy life; then his hopes are not desperate: but he that hopes upon this only, for which God hath made him no promise, I must say of him as Galen said of consumptive persons, Ἡ πλέον ἰπικίζουσιν, ταύτη μάλλον κακῶς ἔχουσι, "The more they hope, the worse they are:" and the relying upon such hopes is an approach to the grave and a sad eternity.

Peleus et Priami transit, vel Nestoris ætas,
Et fuerat serum jam tibi desinere.
Eja age, rumpe moras; quò te spectabimus usque ?
Dum, quid sis dubitas, jam potes esse nihil.
MART. I. 2. ep. 24.

And now it will be a vain question to ask, whether or not God can save a dying man that repents after a vicious life. For it is true God can do it if he please, and he "can raise children to Abraham out of the stones," and he can make ten thousand worlds, if he sees good; and he can do what he list, and he can save an ill-living man though he never repent at all, so much as upon his death-bed: all this he can do. But God's power is no ingredient into this question: we are never the better that God can do it, unless he also will: and whether he will or not, we are to learn from himself, and what he hath declared to be his will in Holy Scripture. Nay, since God hath said, that "without actual holiness no man shall see God," God by his own will hath restrained his power; and though absolutely he can do all things, yet he cannot do against his own word. And, indeed, the rewards of heaven are so great and glorious, and Christ's "burden is so light, his yoke is so easy," that it is a shameless impudence to expect so great glories at a less rate than so little a service, at a lower rate than a holy life. It cost the eternal Son of God his life's blood to obtain heaven for us upon that condition: and who then shall die again for us, to get heaven for us upon easier conditions? What would you do, if God should command you to kill your eldest son, or to work in the mines for a thousand years together, or to fast all thy life-time with bread and water? were not heaven a great bargain even after all this? And when God requires nothing of us but o live soberly, justly, and godly,—which

very things of themselves to men are a very great felicity, and necessary to his present well-being,—shall we think this to be a load, and an insufferable burden? and that heaven is so little a purchase at that price, that God in mere justice will take a death-bed sigh or groan, and a few unprofitable tears and promises, in exchange for all our duty? Strange it should be so; but stranger, that any man should rely upon such a vanity, when from God's word he hath nothing to warrant such a confidence. But these men do like the tyrant Dionysius, who stole from Apollo his golden cloak, and gave him a cloak of Arcadian homespun, saying, that this was lighter in summer and warmer in winter. These men sacrilegiously rob God of the service of all their golden days, and serve him in their hoary head, in their furs and grave-clothes, and pretend that this late service is more agreeable to the Divine mercy on one side, and human infirmity on the other, and so dispute themselves into an irrecoverable condition; having no other ground to rely upon a death-bed or late-begun repentance, but because they resolve to enjoy the pleasures of sin: and for heaven, they will put that to the venture of an after-game. These men sow in the flesh, and would reap in the Spirit; live to the devil, and die to God: and therefore, it is but just in God that their hopes should be desperate, and their craft be folly, and their condition be the unexpected, unfear'd inheritance of an eternal sorrow.

3. Lastly; our last inquiry is into the time, the last or latest time of beginning our repentance. Must a man repent a year or two, or seven years, or ten, or twenty, before his death? or what is the last period, after which all repentance will be untimely and ineffectual? To this captious question I have many things to oppose. 1. We have entered into covenant with God, to serve him from the day of our baptism to the day of our death. He hath "sworn this oath to us, that he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered from fear of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life."* Now although God will not

* Luke i. 73, 74.
v 2

voluntary profession to our grave; and according as we by sins retire from our first undertaking, so our condition is insecure: there is no other covenant made with us, no new beginnings of another period; but if we be returned, and sin be cancelled, and grace be actually obtained, then we are in the first condition of pardon: but because it is uncertain when a man can have mastered his vices, and obtained the graces, therefore no man can tell any set time when he must begin. 2. Scripture, describing the duty of repenting sinners, names no other time but "to-day:" "to-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." 3. The duty of a Christian is described in Scripture to be such as requires length of time, and a continual industry. "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us:"* and "consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." So great a preparation is not for the agony and contention of an hour, or a day, or a week, but for the whole life of a Christian, or for great parts of its abode. 4. There is a certain period and time set for our repentance, and beyond that all our industry is ineffectual. There is a "day of visitation, our own day;" and there is "a day of visitation," that is "God's day." This appeared in the case of Jerusalem: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, if thou hadst known the time of thy visitation, at least in this thy day." Well, they neglected it; and then there was a time of God's visitation, which was "his day," called in Scripture "the day of the Lord;" and because they had neglected their own day, they fell into inevitable ruin: no repentance could have prevented their final ruin. And this which was true in a nation, is also clearly affirmed true in the case of single persons. "Look diligently, lest any fail of the grace of God; lest there be any person among you as Esau, who sold his birthright, and afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place for his repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."† Esau had time enough to repent his bargain as long as he lived; he wept sorely for his folly, and carefulness sat heavy upon his soul; and yet he was not heard, nor his repentance accepted; for his time was past. And "take heed," said the apostle, lest it

come to pass to any of you to be in the same case. Now if ever there be a time, in which repentance is too late, it must be the time of our death-bed, and the last time of our life. And after a man is fallen into the displeasure of Almighty God, the longer he lies in his sin without repentance and emendation, the greater is his danger, and the more of his allowed time is spent; and no man can antecedently, or beforehand, be sure that the time of his repentance is not past; and those who neglect the call of God, and refuse to hear him call in the day of grace, "God will laugh at them when their calamity comes: they shall call and the Lord shall not hear them." And this was the case of the five foolish virgins, when the arrest of death surprised them: they discovered their want of oil, they were troubled at it; they begged oil, they were refused; they did something towards the procuring of the oil of grace, for they went out to buy oil: and, after all this stir, the Bridegroom came before they had finished their journey, and they were shut out from the communion of the Bridegroom's joys.

Therefore, concerning the time of beginning to repent, no man is certain but he that hath done his work. "Mortem venientem nemo hilaris excipit, nisi qui se ad eam diu composuerat," said Seneca.* "He only dies cheerfully, who stood waiting for death in a ready dress of a long preceding preparation." He that repents to-day, repents late enough that he did not begin yesterday: but he that puts it off till to-morrow, is vain and miserable.

—hodie jam vivere, Postume, serum est; Ille sapit, quisquis, Postume, vixit heri.

MART. l. 5. ep. 59.

Well; but what will you have a man do that hath lived wickedly, and is now cast upon his death-bed? shall this man despair, and neglect all the actions of piety, and the instruments of restitution in his sickness? No, God forbid. Let him do what he can then: it is certain it will be little enough; for all those short gleams of piety and flashes of lightning will help towards alleviating some degrees of misery; and if the man recover, they are good beginnings of a renewed piety: and Ahab's tears and humiliation, though it went no farther, had a proportion of reward, though nothing to the portions of eternity. So that he that says, it is every

* Heb. xii. 1. 3.

† Heb. xii. 15, &c.

* Epist. 30.

day necessary to repent, cannot be supposed to discourage the piety of any day: a death-bed piety, when things are come to that sad condition, may have many good purposes: therefore, even then neglect nothing that can be done.—Well; but shall such persons despair of salvation? To them I shall only return this: that they are to consider the conditions, which, on one side, God requires of us; and, on the other side, whether they have done accordingly. Let them consider upon what terms God hath promised salvation, and whether they have made themselves capable, by performing their part of the obligation. If they have not, I must tell them, that, not to hope where God hath made no promise, is not the sin of despair, but the misery of despair. A man hath no ground to hope, that ever he shall be made an angel, and yet that not hoping is not to be called despair: and no man can hope for heaven without repentance; and for such a man to despair, is not the sin, but the misery. If such persons have a promise of heaven, let them show it, and hope it, and enjoy it: if they have no promise, they must thank themselves, for bringing themselves into a condition without the covenant, without a promise, hopeless and miserable.

But will not trusting in the merits of Jesus Christ save such a man? For that, we must be tried by the word of God, in which there is no contract at all made with a dying person, that lived in name a Christian, in practice a heathen: and we shall dishonour the sufferings and redemption of our blessed Saviour, if we think them to be an umbrella to shelter our impious and ungodly living. But that no such person may, after a wicked life, repose himself on his death bed upon Christ's merits, observe but these two places of Scripture: "Our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us"*—what to do? that we might live as we list, and hope to be saved by his merits? no:—but "that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak and exhort," saith St. Paul.—But, more plainly yet in St. Peter; "Christ bare our sins in his own body on the tree,"—to what end? "that we, being dead unto sin, should live unto righteousness."† Since therefore our living a holy life is the end of Christ's dying that sad and holy death for us, he that trusts on

it to evil purposes, and to excuse his vicious life, does, as much as in him lies, make void the very purpose and design of Christ's passion, and dishonours the blood of the everlasting covenant; which covenant was confirmed by the blood of Christ; but, as it brought peace from God so it requires a holy life from us.*

But why may not we be saved, as well as the thief upon the cross? even because our case is nothing alike. When Christ dies once more for us, we may look for such another instance; not till then. But this thief did but then come to Christ, he knew him not before; and his case was, as if a Turk, or heathen, should be converted to Christianity, and be baptized, and enter newly into the covenant upon his death-bed: then God pardons all his sins. And so God does to Christians when they are baptized, or first give up their names to Christ by a voluntary confirmation of their baptismal vow: but when they have once entered into the covenant, they must perform what they promise, and do what they are obliged. The thief had made no contract with God in Jesus Christ, and therefore failed of none; only the defaultances of the state of ignorance Christ paid for at the thief's admission: but we, that have made a covenant with God in baptism, and failed of it all our days, and then return at "night, when we cannot work," have nothing to plead for ourselves; because we have made all that to be useless to us, which God, with so much mercy and miraculous wisdom, gave us to secure our interest and hopes of heaven.

And therefore, let no Christian man, who hath covenanted with God to give him the service of his life, think that God will be answered with the sighs and prayers of a dying man: for all that great obligation, which lies upon us, cannot be transacted in an instant, when we have loaded our souls with sin, and made them empty of virtue; we cannot so soon grow up to "a perfect man in Christ Jesus:" οὐδὲν τῶν μεγάλων ἄφρω γίνεται.† You cannot have an apple or a cherry, but you must stay its proper periods, and let it blossom and knot, and grow and ripen; "and in due season we shall reap, if we faint not," saith the apostle: far much less may we expect that the fruits of repentance, and the issues and degrees of holiness,

* Titus ii. 14.

† 1 Pet. ii. 24

* See Life of Jesus, Disc. of Repentance, part 2.

† Arrian. Epictet. l. 1. c. 15

shall be gathered in a few days or hours. *Γνώμη δ' ανθρώπου καρπὸν θέλεισ' ὄτω δι' ὀλίγου καὶ ἐικόδιως κτήσασθαι.* You must not expect such fruits in a little time, nor with little labour.

Suffer not therefore yourselves to be deceived by false principles and vain confidences: for no man can in a moment root out the long-contracted habits of vice, nor upon his death-bed make use of all that variety of preventing, accompanying, and preserving grace, which God gave to man in mercy, because man would need it all, because without it he could not be saved; nor, upon his death-bed, can he exercise the duty of mortification, nor cure his drunkenness then, nor his lust, by any act of Christian discipline, nor run with patience, nor "resist unto blood," nor "endure with long-sufferance;" but he can pray, and groan, and call to God, and resolve to live well when he is dying. But this is but just as the nobles of Xerxes, when in a storm they were to lighten the ship, to preserve their king's life; they did *προσκυνήοντας ἐπιπηδᾶν εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν*, they did their obeisance, and leaped into the sea: so, I fear, do these men pray, and mourn, and worship, and so leap overboard into an ocean of eternal and intolerable calamity: from which God deliver us, and all faithful people.

Hunc volo laudari qui sine morte potest.
MART. ep. 1. 1.

Vivere quòd proprio pauper, nec inutilis annis,
Da veniam; properat vivere nemo satis.
Differat hoc, patrios optat qui vincere census,
Atrique immodicus arctat imaginibus.
MART. 1. 2. ep. 90.

SERMON XXXII.

THE DECEITFULNESS OF THE HEART.

PART I.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?—Jeremiah xvii. 9.

FOLLY and subtilty divide the greatest part of mankind; and there is no other difference but this; that some are crafty enough to deceive, others foolish enough to be cozened and abused: and yet the scales also turn; for they that are the most crafty to cozen others, are the veriest fools, and

most of all abused themselves. They rob their neighbour of his money, and lose their own innocency; they disturb his rest, and vex their own conscience; they throw him into prison, and themselves into hell; they make poverty to be their brother's portion, and damnation to be their own. Man entered into the world first alone; but as soon as he met with one companion, he met with three to cozen him: the serpent, and Eve, and himself, all joined,—first to make him a fool, and to deceive him, and then to make him miserable. But he first cozened himself, "giving up himself to believe a lie;" and, being desirous to listen to the whispers of a tempting spirit, he sinned before he fell; that is, he had within him a false understanding and a depraved will: and these were the parents of his disobedience, and this was the parent of his infelicity, and a great occasion of ours. And then it was that he entered, for himself and his posterity, into the condition of an ignorant, credulous, easy, wilful, passionate, and impotent person; apt to be abused, and so loving to have it so, that if nobody else will abuse him, he will be sure to abuse himself; by ignorance and evil principles being open to an enemy, and by wilfulness and sensuality doing to himself the most unpardonable injuries in the whole world. So that the condition of man, in the rudenesses and first lines of its visage, seems very miserable, deformed, and accursed.

For a man is helpless and vain; of a condition so exposed to calamity, that a raisin is able to kill him; any trooper out of the Egyptian army, a fly can do it, when it goes on God's errand; the most contemptible accident can destroy him, the smallest chance affright him, every future contingency, when but considered as possible, can amaze him; and he is encompassed with potent and malicious enemies, subtle and implacable: what shall this poor helpless thing do? Trust in God? him he hath offended, and he fears him as an enemy; and, God knows, if we look only on ourselves, and on our own demerits, we have too much reason so to do. Shall he rely upon princes? God help poor kings; they rely upon their subjects, they fight with their swords, levy forces with their money, consult with their counsels, hear with their ears, and are strong only in their union, and many times they use all these things against them; but, however, they can do nothing without them

while they live, and yet if ever they can die, they are not to be trusted to. Now kings and princes die so sadly and notoriously, that it was used for a proverb in Holy Scripture, "Ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes." Whom then shall we trust in? In our friend? Poor man! he may help thee in one thing, and need thee in ten: he may pull thee out of the ditch, and his foot may slip and fall into it himself: he gives thee counsel to choose a wife, and himself is to seek how prudently to choose his religion: he counsels thee to abstain from a duel, and yet slays his own soul with drinking: like a person void of all understanding, he is willing enough to preserve thy interest, and is very careless of his own: for he does highly despise to betray or be false to thee, and in the mean time is not his own friend, and is false to God; and then his friendship may be useful to thee in some circumstances of fortune, but no security to thy condition. But what then? shall we rely upon our patron, like the Roman clients, who waited hourly upon their persons, and daily upon their baskets, and nightly upon their lusts, and married their friendships, and contracted also their hatred and quarrels? this is a confidence will deceive us. For they may lay us by, justly or unjustly; they may grow weary of doing benefits, or their fortunes may change; or they may be charitable in their gifts, and burdensome in their offices; able to feed you, but unable to counsel you; or your need may be longer than their kindnesses, or such in which they can give you no assistance: and, indeed, generally it is so, in all the instances of men. We have a friend that is wise; but I need not his counsel, but his meat: or my patron is bountiful in his argesses; but I am troubled with a sad spirit; and money and presents do me no more ease than perfumes do to a broken urn. We seek life of a physician that dies, and go to him for health, who cannot cure his own breath or gout; and so become vain in our imaginations, abused in our hopes, restless in our passions, impatient in our calamity, unsupported in our need, exposed to enemies, wandering and wild, without counsel, and without remedy. At last, after he infatuating and deceiving all our confidences without, we have nothing left us but to return home, and dwell within ourselves: or we have a sufficient stock of self-love, that we may be confident of our own affections, we may trust ourselves surely; for

what we want in skill we shall make up in diligence, and our industry shall supply the want of other circumstances: and no man understands my own case so well as I do myself, and no man will judge so faithfully as I shall do for myself; for I am most concerned not to abuse myself; and if I do, I shall be the loser, and therefore may best rely upon myself. Alas! and God help us! we shall find it to be no such matter: for we neither love ourselves well, nor understand our own case; we are partial in our own questions, deceived in our sentences, careless of our interests, and the most false, perfidious creatures to ourselves in the whole world: even the "heart of a man," a man's own heart, "is deceitful above all things," and desperately wicked; who can know it?" and who can choose but know it?

And there is no greater argument of the deceitfulness of our hearts than this, that no man can know it at all; it cozens us in the very number of its cozenage. But yet we can reduce it all to two heads. We say, concerning a false man, Trust him not, for he will deceive you; and we say concerning a weak and broken staff, Lean not upon it, for that will also deceive you. The man deceives because he is false, and the staff because it is weak; and the heart because it is both. So that it is "deceitful above all things;" that is, failing and disabled to support us in many things, but in other things, where it can, it is false and "desperately wicked." The first sort of deceitfulness is its calamity, and the second is its iniquity; and that is the worst calamity of the two.

1. The heart is deceitful in its strength; and when we have the growth of a man, we have the weaknesses of a child: nay, more yet, and it is a sad consideration, the more we are in age, the weaker in our courage. It appears in the heats and forwardnesses of new converts, which are like to the great emissions of lightning, or like huge fires, which flame and burn without measure, even all that they can; till from flames they descend to still fires, from thence to smoke, from smoke to embers, and from thence to ashes; cold and pale, like ghosts, or the fantastic images of death. And the primitive church were zealous in their religion up to the degree of cherubims, and would run as greedily to the sword of the hangman, to die for the cause of God, as we do now to the greatest joy and entertainment of a Christian spirit,—even to the receiving of the holy sacrament. A man would think it reason-

able, that the first infancy of Christianity should, according to the nature of first beginnings, have been remiss, gentle, and inactive; and that, according as the object or evidence of faith grew, which in every age hath a great degree of argument super-added to its confirmation, so should the habit also and the grace; the longer it lasts, and the more objections it runs through, it still should show a brighter and more certain light to discover the divinity of its principle; and that after the more examples, and new accidents and strangenesses of providence, and daily experience, and the multitude of miracles, still the Christian should grow more certain in his faith, more refreshed in his hope, and warm in his charity; the very nature of these graces increasing and swelling upon the very nourishment of experience, and the multiplication of their own acts. And yet, because the heart of man is false, it suffers the fires of the altar to go out, and the flames lessen by the multitude of fuel. But, indeed, it is because we put on strange fire, and put out the fire upon our hearths by letting in a glaring sunbeam, the fire of lust, or the heats of an angry spirit, to quench the fire of God, and suppress the sweet cloud of incense. The heart of man hath not strength enough to think one good thought of itself; it cannot command its own attentions to a prayer of ten lines long, but, before its end, it shall wander after something that is to no purpose; and no wonder, then, that it grows weary of a holy religion, which consists of so many parts as make the business of a whole life. And there is no greater argument in the world of our spiritual weakness, and the falseness of our hearts in the matters of religion than the backwardness which most men have always, and all men have sometimes, to say their prayers; so weary of their length, so glad when they are done, so witty to excuse and frustrate an opportunity: and yet there is no manner of trouble in the duty, no weariness of bones, no violent labours; nothing but begging a blessing, and receiving it; nothing but doing ourselves the greatest honour of speaking to the greatest person, and greatest King of the world: and, that we should be unwilling to do this, so unable to continue in it, so backward to return to it, so without gust and relish in the doing it, can have no visible reason in the nature of the thing, but something within us, a strange sickness in the heart, a spiritual nauseating or loathing of manna, something

that hath no name; but we are sure it comes from a weak, a faint, and false heart.

And yet this weak heart is strong in passions, violent in desires, irresistible in its appetites, impatient in its lust, furious in anger: here are strengths enough, one should think. But so have I seen a man in a fever, sick and distempered, unable to walk, less able to speak sense, or to do an act of counsel; and yet, when his fever had boiled up to a delirium, he was strong enough to beat his nursekeeper and his doctor too, and to resist the loving violence of all his friends, who would fain bind him down to reason and his bed: and yet we still say, he is weak, and sick to death. *Θέλω γὰρ εἶναι τόνους ἐν σώματι, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐργάζονται, ὡς ἀβλοῦντι.* For these strengths of madness are not health, but furiousness and disease. *Οὐκ εἰσὶ τόνου, ἀλλὰ ἀτονα ἕτερον τρόπον,* "It is weakness another way."* And so are the strengths of a man's heart: they are fetters and manacles; strong, but they are the cordage of imprisonment; so strong, that the heart is not able to stir. And yet it cannot but be a huge sadness, that the heart shall pursue a temporal interest with wit and diligence, and an unwearied industry; and shall not have strength enough, in a matter that concerns its eternal interest, to answer one objection, to resist one assault, to defeat one art of the devil; but shall certainly and infallibly fall, whenever it is tempted to a pleasure.

This, if it be examined, will prove to be a deceit, indeed a pretence, rather than true upon a just cause: that is, it is not a natural, but a moral and a vicious, weakness: and we may try it in one or two familiar instances. One of the great strengths, shall I call it? or weaknesses of the heart is,—that it is strong, violent and passionate in its lusts, and weak and deceitful to resist any. Tell the tempted person, that if he act his lust, he dishonours his body, makes himself a servant to folly, and one flesh with a harlot; he "defiles the temple of God, and he that defiles a temple "will God destroy: tell him, that the angels, who love to be present in the nastiness and filth of prison: that they may comfort and assist chaste souls and holy persons there abiding, y they are impatient to behold or come near the filthiness of a lustful person: tell him that this sin is so ugly, that the devils, who are spirits, yet they delight to counterfeit it!

* Arrian.

acting of this crime, and descend unto the daughters or sons of men, that they may rather lose their natures, than not to help to set a lust forward: tell them these and ten thousand things more; you move them no more, than if you should read one of Tully's orations to a mule: for the truth is, they have no power to resist it, much less to master it; their heart fails them when they meet their mistress; and they are driven like a fool to the stocks, or a bull to the slaughter-house. And yet their heart deceives them; not because it cannot resist the temptation, but because it will not go about it: for it is certain the heart can, if it list. For let a boy enter into your chamber of pleasure, and discover your folly, either your lust disbands, or your shame hides it; you will not, you dare not, do it before a stranger-boy: and yet, that you dare do it before the eyes of the all-seeing God, is impudence and folly, and a great conviction of the vanity of your pretence and the falseness of your heart. If thou beest a man given to thy appetite, and thou lovest a pleasant morsel as thy life, do not declaim against the precepts of temperance as impossible: try this once; abstain from that draught, or that dish. I cannot. No? Give this man a great blow on the face, or tempt him with twenty pounds, and he shall fast from morning till night, and then feast himself with your money, and plain wholesome meat. And if your chastity and temperance be so easy, that a man may be brought to either of them with so ready and easy instruments; let us not suffer our heart to deceive us by the weakness of its pretences, and the strength of its desires; for we do more for a boy than for God, and for twenty pounds than heaven itself.

But thus it is in every thing else: take a heretic, a rebel, a person that hath an ill use to manage; what he wants in the strength of his reason, he shall make it up with diligence: and a person that hath right on his side, is cold, indiligent, lazy, and inactive, trusting that the goodness of his use will do it alone. But, so wrong pretences, while evil persons are zealous in a bad matter, and others are remiss in a good; and the same person shall be very industrious always, when he hath least reason to be. That is the first particular, the heart deceitful in the managing of its natural strengths; it is naturally and physically strong, but morally weak and impotent.

2. The heart of man is deceitful in making

judgment concerning its own acts. It does not know when it is pleased or displeased; it is peevish and trifling; it would, and it would not; and it is in many cases impossible to know whether a man's heart desires such a thing or not. St. Ambrose hath an odd saying, "*Facilius inveneris innocentem, quam qui pœnitentiam dignè egerit;*" "It is easier to find a man that lived innocently, than one that hath truly repented him," with a grief and care great according to the merit of his sins. Now suppose a man that hath spent his younger years in vanity and folly, and is by the grace of God apprehensive of it, and thinks of returning to sober counsels; this man will find his heart so false, so subtle and fugitive, so secret and undiscernible, that it will be very hard to discern whether he repents or not. For if he considers that he hates sin, and therefore repents; alas! he so hates it, that he dares not, if he be wise, tempt himself with an opportunity to act it: for in the midst of that which he calls hatred, he hath so much love left for it, that if the sin comes again and speaks him fair, he is lost again, he kisses the fire, and dies in its embraces. And why else should it be necessary for us to pray, that "we be not led into temptation," but because we hate the sin, and yet love it too well; we curse it, and yet follow it; we are angry at ourselves, and yet cannot be without it; we know it undoes us, but we think it pleasant. And when we are to execute the fierce anger of the Lord upon our sins, yet we are kind-hearted, and spare the Agag, the reigning sin, the splendid temptation; we have some kindnesses left towards it.

These are but ill signs. How then shall I know, by some infallible token, that I am a true penitent? What and if I weep for my sins? will you not then give me leave to conclude my heart right with God, and at enmity with sin? It may be so. But there are some friends that weep at parting; and is not thy weeping a sorrow of affection? It is a sad thing to part with our long companion. Or, it may be thou weepst, because thou wouldst have a sign to cozen thyself withal: for some men are more desirous to have a sign, than the thing signified: they would do something to show their repentance, that themselves may believe themselves to be penitents, having no reason from within to believe so. And I have seen some persons weep heartily for the loss of sixpence, or for the breaking of a glass, or at some trifling accident; and they that do

so, cannot pretend to have their tears valued at a bigger rate than they will confess their passion to be, when they weep; they are vexed for the dirtying of their linen, or some such trifle, for which the least passion is too big an expense. So that a man cannot tell his own heart by his tears, or the truth of his repentance by those short gusts of sorrow. How then? Shall we suppose a man to pray against his sin? So did St. Austin; when, in his youth, he was tempted to lust and uncleanness, he prayed against it, and secretly desired that God would not hear him; for here the heart is cunning to deceive itself. For, no man did ever heartily pray against his sin in the midst of a temptation to it, if he did in any sense or degree listen to the temptation: for to pray against a sin, is to have desires contrary to it, and that cannot consist with any love or any kindness to it. We pray against it, and yet do it; and then pray again, and do it again: and we desire it, and yet pray against the desires; and that is almost a contradiction. Now, because no man can be supposed to will against his own will, or choose against his own desires; it is plain, that we cannot know whether we mean what we say when we pray against sin, but by the event: if we never act it, never entertain it, always resist it, ever fight against it, and finally do prevail; then, at length, we may judge our own heart to have meant honestly in that one particular.

Nay, our heart is so deceitful in this matter of repentance, that the masters of spiritual life are fain to invent suppletory arts and stratagems to secure the duty. And we are advised to mourn, because we do not mourn, to be sorrowful, because we are not sorrowful. Now if we be sorrowful in the first stage, how happens it that we know it not? Is our heart so secret to ourselves? But if we be not sorrowful in the first period, how shall we be so, or know it in the second period? For we may as well doubt concerning the sincerity of the second, or reflex act of sorrow, as of the first and direct action. And, therefore, we may also as well be sorrowful the third time, for want of the just measure or hearty meaning of the second sorrow, as be sorrowful the second time, for want of true sorrow at the first; and so on to infinite. And we shall never be secure in this artifice, if we be not certain of our natural and hearty passion in our direct and first apprehensions.

Thus many persons think themselves in a good estate, and make no question of their

salvation, being confident only because they are confident; and they are so, because they are bidden to be so; and yet they are not confident at all, but extremely timorous and fearful. How many persons are there in the world, that say they are sure of their salvation, and yet they dare not die? And, if any man pretends that he is now sure he shall be saved and that he cannot fall away from grace; there is no better way to confute him, than by advising him to send for the surgeon, and bleed to death. For what would hinder him; not the sin; for it cannot take him from God's favour: not the change of his condition; for he says, he is sure to go to a better: why does he not then say, *κίρρα*, like the Roman gallants when they "decreed" to die. The reason is plainly this, they say they are confident, and yet are extremely timorous; they profess to believe that doctrine, and yet dare not trust it; nay, they think they believe, but they do not: so false is a man's heart, so deceived in its own acts, so great a stranger to its own sentence and opinions.

3. The heart is deceitful in its own resolutions and purposes: for many times men make their resolution only in their understanding, not in their will; they resolve it fitting to be done, not decree that they will do it; and instead of beginning to be reconciled to God by the renewed and hearty purposes of holy living, they are advanced so far only as to be convinced, and apt to be condemned by their own sentence.

But suppose our resolutions advanced farther, and that our will and choices also are determined; see how our hearts deceive us.

1. We resolve against those sins that please us not, or where temptation is not present, and think, by an over-acted zeal against some sins, to give an indulgence for some others. There are some persons who will be drunk; the company, or the discourse, or the pleasure of madness, or an easy nature and a thirsty soul, something is amiss, that cannot be helped: but they will make amends, and the next day pray twice as much. Or, it may be, they must satisfy a beastly lust; but they will not be drunk for all the world; and hope, by their temperance, to commute for their want of chastity. But they attend not the craft of their secret enemy, their heart: for it is not love of the virtue; if it were, they would love virtue in all instances;* for chastity is as much a vir-

* *Virtutem unam si amiseris, (etsi amitti no*

tue as temperance, and God hates lust as much as he hates drunkenness. But this sin is against my health, or, it may be, it is against my lust; it makes me impotent, and yet impatient; full of desire, and empty of strength. Or else I do an act of prayer, lest my conscience become unquiet, while it is not satisfied, or cozened with some intervals of religion: I shall think myself a damned wretch if I do nothing for my soul; but if I do, I shall call the one sin that remains, nothing but my infirmity; and therefore it is my excuse: and my prayer is not my religion, but my peace, and my pretence, and my fallacy.

2. We resolve against our sin, that is, we will not act it in those circumstances as formerly. I will not be drunk in the streets; but I may sleep till I be recovered, and then come forth sober; or, if I be overtaken, it shall be in civil and genteel company. Or it may be not so much; I will leave my intemperance and my lust too, but I will remember it with pleasure; I will revolve the past action in my mind, and entertain my fancy with a morose delectation in it, and, by a fiction of imagination, will represent it present, and so be satisfied with a little effeminacy or fantastic pleasure. Beloved, suffer not your hearts so to cozen you; as if any man can be faithful in much, that is faithless in a little. He certainly is very much in love with sin, and parts with it very unwillingly, that keeps its picture, and wears its favour, and delights in the fancy of it, even with the same desire as a most passionate widow parts with her dearest husband, even when she can no longer enjoy him: but certainly her staring all day upon his picture, and weeping over his robe, and wringing her hands over his children, are no great signs that she hated him. And just so do most men hate, and accordingly part with, their sins.

3. We resolve against it when the opportunity is slipped, and lay it aside as long as the temptation please, even till it come again, and no longer. How many men are there in the world, that against every communion renew their vows of holy living? men that for twenty, for thirty years together, have been perpetually resolving against what they daily act; and sure enough they did believe themselves. And yet if a man had daily promised us a courtesy, and failed us but ten times, when it was in his power to have

done it,—we should think we had reason never to believe him more. And can we then reasonably believe the resolutions of our hearts, which they have falsified so many hundred times? We resolve against a religious time, because then it is the custom of men, and the guise of the religion: or we resolve when we are in a great danger; and then we promise any thing, possible or impossible, likely or unlikely, all is one to us; we only care to remove the present pressure; and when that is over, and our fear is gone, and no love remaining, our condition being returned to our first securities, our resolutions also revert to their first indifferences: or else we cannot look a temptation in the face, and we resolve against it, hoping never to be troubled with its arguments and importunity. Epictetus tells us of a gentleman returning from banishment, who, in his journey towards home, called at his house, told a sad story of an imprudent life, the greatest part of which being now spent, he was resolved, for the future, to live philosophically, and entertain no business, to be candidate for no employment, not to go to the court, nor to salute Cæsar with ambitious attendances, but to study, and worship the gods, and die willingly, when nature or necessity called him. It may be, this man believed himself, but Epictetus did not. And he had reason: for ἀπήντησαν αὐτῷ παρὰ Καίσαρος πικακίδες, “letters from Cæsar met him” at the doors, and invited him to court; and he forgot all his promises, which were warm upon his lips; and grew pompous, secular, and ambitious, and gave the gods thanks for his preferment. Thus many men leave the world, when their fortune hath left them; and they are severe and philosophical, and retired for ever, if for ever it be impossible to return: but let a prosperous sunshine warm and refresh their sadnesses, and make it but possible to break their purposes, and there needs no more temptation; their own false heart is enough; they are like “Ephraim in the day of battle, starting aside like a broken bow.”

4. The heart is false, deceiving and deceived, in its intentions and designs. A man hears the precepts of God enjoining us to give alms of all we possess; he readily obeys with much cheerfulness and alacrity, and his charity, like a fair-spreading tree, looks beautifully: but there is a canker at the heart; the man blows a trumpet to call the poor together, and hopes the neighbourhood will take notice of his bounty. Nay,

potest Virtus.) see si unam confessus fueris te non habere nullam te esse habiturum an nescis?
—CICERO.

he gives alms privately, and charges no man to speak of it, and yet hopes, by some accident or other, to be praised both for his charity and humility. And if, by chance, the fame of his alms come abroad, it is but his duty to "let his light so shine before men," that God may be "glorified," and some of our neighbours be relieved, and others edified. But then, to distinguish the intention of our heart in this instance, and to seek God's glory in a particular, which will also conduce much to our reputation, and to have no filthy adherence to stick to the heart, no reflection upon ourselves, or no complacency and delight in popular noises, — is the nicety of abstraction, and requires an angel to do it. Some men are so kind-hearted, so true to their friend, that they will watch his very dying groans, and receive his last breath, and close his eyes. And if this be done with honest intention, it is well: but there are some that do so, and yet are vultures and harpies; they watch for the carcass, and prey upon a legacy. A man with a true story may be malicious to his enemy, and by doing himself right may also do him wrong: and so false is the heart of man, so clancular and contradictory are its actions and intentions, that some men pursue virtue with great earnestness, and yet cannot with patience look upon it in another: it is beauty in themselves, and deformity in the other. Is it not plain, that not the virtue, but its reputation, is the thing that is pursued? And yet, if you tell the man so, he thinks he hath reason to complain of your malice or detraction. Who is able to distinguish his fear of God from fear of punishment, when from fear of punishment we are brought to fear God? And yet the difference must be distinguishable in new converts and old disciples; and our fear of punishment must so often change its circumstances, that it must be at least a fear to offend out of pure love, and must have no formality left to distinguish it from charity. It is easy to distinguish these things in precepts, and to make the separation in the schools; the head can do it easily, and the tongue can do it: but when the heart comes to separate alms from charity, God's glory from human praise, fear from fear, and sincerity from hypocrisy; it does so intricate the questions, and confound the ends, and blind and entangle circumstances, that a man hath reason to doubt that his very best actions are sullied with some unhandsome ex-

crenency, something to make them very often to be criminal, but always to be imperfect.

Here, a man would think, were enough to abate our confidence, and the spirit of pride, and to make a man eternally to stand upon his guard, and to keep a strict watch upon his own heart, as upon his greatest enemy from without. "Custodi, libera me de meipso, Deus;" it was St. Austin's prayer; "Lord, keep me, Lord, deliver me from myself." If God will keep a man that he be not "felo de se," that "he lay no violent hands upon himself," it is certain nothing else can do him mischief. *Ovte Zeis, ovte moipa, ovte Epanis*, as Agamemnon said; "Neither Jupiter, nor destinies, nor the furies," but it is a man's self, that does him the mischief. The devil can but tempt, and offer a dagger at the heart; unless our hands thrust it home, the devil can do nothing, but what may turn to our advantage. And in this sense we are to understand the two seeming contradictories in Scripture: "Pray that ye enter not into temptation," said our blessed Saviour; and, "Count it all joy when ye enter into divers temptations," said one of Christ's disciples. The case is easy. When God suffers us to be tempted, he means it but as a trial of our faith, as the exercise of our virtues, as the opportunity of reward; and in such cases we have reason to count it all joy; since the "trial of our faith worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience causeth hope, and hope maketh not ashamed:" but yet, for all this, "pray against temptations:" for when we get them into our hands, we use them as blind men do their clubs, neither distinguish person nor part; they strike the face of their friends as soon as the back of the enemy; our hearts betray us to the enemy, we fall in love with our mischief, we contrive how to let the lust in, and leave a port open on purpose, and use arts to forget our duty, and give advantages to the devil. He that uses a temptation thus, hath reason to pray against it; and yet our hearts do all this and a thousand times more; so that we may engrave upon our hearts the epitaph, which was digged into Thyestes' grave-stone;

*Nolite, hospites, ad me adire; illico isthic;
Ne contagio mea bonis umbrave obsit:
Meo tanta vis sceleris in corpore hæret.*

CICERO.

There is so much falseness and iniquity in man's heart, that it defiles all the mem-

bers: it makes the eyes lustful, and the tongue slanderous; it fills the head with mischief, and the feet with blood, and the hands with injury, and the present condition of man with folly, and makes his future state apt to inherit eternal misery. But this is but the beginning of those throes and damnable impieties which proceed out of the heart of man, and defile the whole constitution. I have yet told but the *weaknesses* of the heart; I shall the next time tell you the *iniquities*, those inherent devils which pollute and defile it to the ground, and make it "desperately wicked," that is, wicked beyond all expression.

SERMON XXXIII.

PART II.

Ἀρχὴ φιλοσοφίας συναίσθησις τῆς αὐτοῦ ἀδυναμίας καὶ ἀδυναμίας, περὶ τὰ ἀναγκαῖα, "It is the beginning of wisdom to know a man's own weaknesses and failings, in things of greatest necessity:"* and we have here so many objects to furnish out this knowledge, that we find it with the longest and latest, before it be obtained. A man does not begin to know himself till he be old, and then he is well stricken in death. A man's heart at first being like a plain table; unspotted, indeed, but then there is nothing legible in it; as soon as ever we ripen towards the imperfect uses of our reason, we write upon this table such crooked characters, such imperfect configurations, so many fooleries, and stain it with so many blots and vicious inspersions, that there is nothing worth the reading in our hearts for a great while; and when education and ripeness, reason and experience, Christian philosophy and the grace of God, have made fair impressions, and written the law in our hearts with the finger of God's Holy Spirit, we blot out this hand-writing of God's ordinances, or mingle it with false principles and interlinings of our own; we disorder the method of God, or deface the truth of God; either we make the rule uneven, we bribe or abuse our guide, that we may wander with an excuse; or if nothing else will do it, we turn head and profess to go against the laws of God. Our hearts are blind, our hearts are hardened; for these are two great arguments of the wick-

edness of our hearts; they do not see, or they will not see, the ways of God; or, if they do, they make use of their seeing that they may avoid them.

1. Our hearts are blind, wilfully blind. I need not instance in the ignorance and involuntary nescience of men; though if we speak of the necessary parts of religion, no man is ignorant of them without his own fault; such ignorance is always a direct sin, or the direct punishment of a sin; a sin is either in its bosom, or in its retinue. But the ignorance that I now intend, is a voluntary, chosen, delightful ignorance, taken in open design, even for no other end, but that we may perish quietly and infallibly. God hath opened all the windows of heaven, and sent the Sun of righteousness with glorious apparition, and hath discovered the abysses of his own wisdom, made the second person in the Trinity to be the doctor and preacher of his sentences and secrets, and the third person to be his amanuensis or scribe, and our hearts to be the book in which the doctrine is written, and miracles and prophecies to be its arguments, and all the world to be the verification of it; and those leaves contain within their folds all that excellent morality, which right reason picked up after the shipwreck of nature, and all those wise sayings which singly made so many men famous for preaching some one of them; all them Christ gathered, and added some more out of the immediate book of revelation. So that now the wisdom of God hath made every man's heart to be the true veticina, in which he hath imprinted his own lineaments so perfectly, that we may dress ourselves like God, and have the air and features of Christ our elder Brother; that we may be pure as God is, perfect as our Father, meek and humble as the Son, and may have the Holy Ghost within us, in gifts and graces, in wisdom and holiness. This hath God done for us; and see what we do for him. We stand in our own light, and quench God's: we love darkness more than light, and entertain ourselves accordingly. For how many of us are there, that understand nothing of the ways of God; that know no more of the laws of Jesus Christ than is remaining upon them since they learned the children's catechism! But, amongst a thousand, how many can explicate and unfold for his own practice the ten commandments, and how many sorts of sins are there forbidden? which therefore

*Epict. Arrian.

pass into action, and never pass under the scrutines of repentance, because they know not that they are sins. Are there not very many, who know not the particular duties of "meekness," and never consider concerning "long-suffering?" and if you talk to them of growth in grace, or the Spirit of oblation, or the melancholic lectures of the cross, and imitation of and conformity to Christ's sufferings, or adherences to God, or rejoicing in him, or not quenching the Spirit; you are too deep-learned for them. And yet these are duties set down plainly for our practice, necessary to be acted in order to our salvation. We brag of light, and reformation, and fullness of the Spirit: in the mean time we understand not many parts of our duty. We inquire into something that may make us talk, or be talked of, or that we may trouble a church, or disturb the peace of minds; but in things that concern holy living, and that wisdom of God whereby we are wise unto salvation, never was any age of Christendom more ignorant than we. For, if we did not wink hard, we must needs see, that obedience to supreme powers, denying of ourselves, humility, peacefulness, and charity, are written in such capital text letters, that it is impossible to be ignorant of them. And if the heart of man had not rare arts to abuse the understanding, it were not to be imagined that any man should bring the thirteenth chapter to the Romans, to prove the lawfulness of taking up arms against our rulers; but so we may abuse ourselves at noon, and go to bed, if we please to call it midnight. And there have been a sort of witty men, that maintained that snow was hot. I wonder not at the problem; but that a man should believe his paradox, and should let eternity go away with the fallacy, and rather loose heaven than leave his foolish argument; is a sign that wilfulness and the deceiving heart is the sophister, and the great ingredient into our deception.

But, that I may be more particular; the heart of man uses devices that it may be ignorant.

1. We are impatient of honest and severe reproof; and order the circumstances of our persons and addresses, that we shall never come to the true knowledge of our condition. Who will endure to hear his curate tell him, that he is covetous, or that he is proud? λέγει, ὡ δεινῆς ὑβρεως. It is calumny and reviling, if he speak it to his head, and relates to his person: and yet if he speak only in

general, every man neglects what is not recommended to his particular. But yet, if our physician tells us, You look well, sir, but a fever lurks in your spirits; *Ασίζησον σήμερον ἕδιον πίε*, "Drink juleps, and abstain from flesh;"—no man thinks it shame or calumny to be told so: but when we are told that our liver is inflamed with lust or anger, that our heart is vexed with envy, that our eyes roll with wantonness; and though we think all is well, yet we are sick, sick unto death, and near to a sad and fatal sentence; we shall think that man that tells us so is impudent or uncharitable; and yet he hath done him no more injury than a deformed man receives daily from his looking-glass, which if he shall dash against the wall, because it shows him his face just as it is, his face is not so ugly as his manners. And our heart is so impatient of seeing its own stains, that, like the elephant, it tramples in the pure streams, and first troubles them, then stoops and drinks, when he can least see his huge deformity.

2. In order to this, we heap up teachers of our own, and they guide us, not whither, but which way, they please: for we are curious to go our own way, and careless of our hospital or inn at night. A fair way, and a merry company, and a pleasant, easy guide, will entice us into the enemy's quarters; and such guides we cannot want: "Improbati occasio numquam defuit;" "If we have a mind to be wicked, we shall want no prompters;" and false teachers, at first creeping in unawares, have now so filled the pavement of the church, that you can scarce set your foot on the ground but you tread upon a snake. Cicero (l. 7. ad Atticum) undertakes to bargain with them that kept the Sibyl's books, that for a sum of money they should expound to him what he please; and to be sure, "ut quidvis potius quam regem proferrent;" "They shall declare against the government of kings, and say, that the gods will endure any thing rather than monarchy in their beloved republic." And the same mischief God complains of to be among the Jews: "The prophets prophesy lies, and my people love to have it so: and what will the end of these things be?"—even the same that Cicero complained of, "Ad opinionem imperatorum fictas esse religiones;"* men shall have what religion they please, and God shall be entitled to all the quarrels

* De Divinitat. l. 2.

of covetous and ambitious persons; καὶ Πυθῶν φιλῶσκειν, as Demosthenes wittily complained of the oracle; an answer shall be drawn out of Scripture to {countenance the design, and God made the rebel against his own ordinances. And then we are zealous of the Lord God of hosts, and will live and die in that quarrel. But is it not a strange cozenage, that our hearts shall be the main wheel in the engine, and shall set all the rest on working? The heart shall first put his own candle out, then put out the eye of reason, then remove the landmark and dig down the causeways, and then either hire a blind guide, or make him so: and all these arts to get ignorance that they may secure impiety. At first, man lost his innocence only in hope to get a little knowledge: and ever since then, lest knowledge should discover his error, and make him recur to innocence, we are content to part with that now, and to know nothing that may discover or discountenance our sins, or discompose our secular designs. And as God made great revelations, and furnished out a wise religion, and sent his Spirit to give the gift of faith to his church, that, upon the foundation of faith he might build a holy life: now our hearts love to retire into blindness, and sneak under covert of false principles, and run to a cheap religion, and an inactive discipline, and make a faith of our own, that we may build upon it ease, and ambition, and a tall fortune, and the pleasures of revenge, and do what we have a mind to; scarce once in seven years denying a strong and an unruly appetite upon the interest of a just conscience and holy religion. This is such a desperate method of impiety, so certain arts and apt instruments for the devil, that it does his work entirely, and produces an infallible damnation.

3. But the heart of man hath yet another stratagem to secure its iniquity by the means of ignorance; and that is, incogitancy or inconsideration. For there is wrought upon the spirits of many men great impression by education, by a modest and temperate nature, by human laws, and the customs and severities of sober persons, and the fears of religion, and the awfulness of a reverend man, and the several arguments and endearments of virtue: and it is not in the nature of some men to do an act in despite of reason, and religion, and arguments, and reverence, and modesty, and fear; but men are forced from their sin by the vio-

lence of the grace of God, when they hear it speak. But so a Roman gentleman kept off a whole band of soldiers who were sent to murder him, and his eloquence was stronger than their anger and design: but suddenly a rude trooper rushed upon him, who neither had nor would hear him speak; and he thrust his spear into that throat, whose music had charmed all his fellows into peace and gentleness. So do we. The grace of God is armour and defence enough, against the most violent incursion of the spirits and the works of darkness; but then we must hear its excellent charms, and consider its reasons, and remember its precepts, and dwell with its discourses. But this the heart of man loves not. If I be tempted to uncleanness, or to an act of oppression, instantly the grace of God represents to me, that the pleasure of the sin is transient and vain, unsatisfying and empty; that I shall die, and then I shall wish too late that I had never done it. It tells me, that I displease God who made me, who feeds me, who blesses me, who fain would save me. It represents to me all the joys of heaven, and the horrors and amazements of a sad eternity; and if I will {stay and hear them, ten thousand excellent things besides, fit to be twisted about my understanding for ever. But here the heart of man shuffles all these discourses into disorder, and will not be put to the trouble of answering the objections; but, by a mere wildness of purpose, and rudeness of resolution, ventures "super totam materiam," at all, and does the thing, not because it thinks it fit to do so, but because it will not consider whether it be or not; it is enough, that it pleases a pleasant appetite. And if such incogitancy comes to be habitual, as it is in very many men,—first by resisting the motions of the Holy Spirit, then by quenching him,—we shall find the consequence to be, first an indifferency,—then a dulness,—then a lethargy,—then a direct hating the ways of God;—and it commonly ends in a wretchedness of spirit, to be manifested on our death-bed; when the man shall pass hence, not like the shadow, but like the dog, that departeth without sense, or interest, or apprehension, or real concernment, in the considerations of eternity: and it is but just, when we will not hear our King speak and plead, not to save himself, but us, to speak for our peace, and innocency, and salvation, to prevent our ruin, and our intolerable calamity. Certainly, we are much in love

with the wages of death, when we cannot endure to hear God call us back, and "stop our ears against the voice of the charmer, charm he ever so wisely."

Nay, further yet, we suffer the arguments of religion to have so little impression upon our spirits, that they operate but like the discourses of childhood, or the problems of uncertain philosophy. A man talks of religion but as of a dream, and from thence he awakens into the business of the world, and acts them deliberately, with perfect action and full resolution, and contrives, and considers, and lives in them: but when he falls asleep again, or is taken from the scene of his own employment and choice, then he dreams again, and religion makes such impressions as is the conversation of a dreamer, and he acts accordingly. Theocritus tells of a fisherman, that dreamed he had taken *ὄψιν ἰχθυίαν χρύσειον*, "a fish of gold;" upon which being overjoyed, he made a vow, that he would never fish more: but when he waked, he soon declared his vow to be null, because he found his golden fish was escaped away through the holes of his eyes, when he first opened them. Just so we do in the purposes of religion; sometimes, in a good mood, we seem to see heaven opened, and all the streets of the heavenly Jerusalem paved with gold and precious stones, and we are ravished with spiritual apprehensions, and resolve never to return to the low affections of the world, and the impure adherences of sin: but when this flash of lightning is gone, and we converse again with the inclinations and habitual desires of our false hearts, those other desires and fine considerations disband, and the resolutions taken in that pious fit, melt into indifference and cold customs. He was prettily and fantastically troubled, who, having used to put his trust in dreams, one night dreamed that all dreams were vain: for he considered, if so, then this was vain, and then dreams might be true for all this: but if they might be true, then this dream might be so upon equal reason: and then dreams were vain, because this dream, which told him so, was true; and so round again. In the same circle runs the heart of man: all his cogitations are vain, and yet he makes especial use of this, that that thought which thinks so, that is vain; and if that be vain, then his other thoughts, which are vainly declared so, may be real, and relied upon. And so do we: those religious thoughts which are sent into

us to condemn and disrepute the thoughts of sin and vanity, are esteemed the only dreams: and so all those instruments which the grace of God hath invented for the destruction of impiety, are rendered ineffectual, either by our direct opposing them, or (which happens most commonly) by our want of considering them.

The effect of all is this, that we are ignorant of the things of God. We make religion to be the work of a few hours in the whole year; we are without fancy or affection to the severities of holy living; we reduce religion to the believing of a few articles, and doing nothing that is considerable; we pray seldom, and then but very coldly and indifferently; we communicate not so often as the sun salutes both the tropics; we profess Christ, but dare not die for him; we are factious for a religion, and will not live according to its precepts; we call ourselves Christians, and love to be ignorant of many of the laws of Christ, lest our knowledge should force us into shame, or into the troubles of a holy life. All the mischiefs that you can suppose to happen to a furious inconsiderate person, running after the wildfires of the night, over rivers, and rocks, and precipices, without sun or star, or angel or man, to guide him; all that, and ten thousand times worse, may you suppose to be the certain lot of him, who gives himself up to the conduct of a passionate, blind heart, whom no fire can warm, and no sun can enlighten; who hates light, and loves to dwell in the regions of darkness. That is the first general mischief of the heart, it is possessed with blindness, wilful and voluntary.

2. But the heart is hard too. Not only folly, but mischief also, is bound up in the heart of man. If God strives to soften it with sorrow and sad accidents, it is like an ox, it grows callous and hard. Such a heart was Pharaoh's. When God makes the clouds to gather round about us, we wrap our heads in the clouds, and, like the malcontents in Galba's time, "*tristitiam simulamus, contumaciæ propiores*," "we seem sad and troubled, but it is doggedness and murmur."—Or else, if our fears be pregnant, and the heart yielding, it sinks low into pusillanimity and superstition; and our hearts are so childish, so timorous, or so impatient, in a sadness, that God is weary of striking us, and we are glad of it. And yet, when the sun shines upon us, our hearts are hardened with that too: and God seems

to be at a loss, as if he knew not what to do to us. War undoes us, and makes us violent; peace undoes us, and makes us wanton; prosperity makes us proud; adversity renders us impatient; plenty dissolves us, and makes us tyrants; want makes us greedy, liars, and rapacious.

Πῶς ὄν τις ἂν σώσει τοιαύτην πόλιν,
Ἥ μήτε χλαῖνα, μήτε σούρα ἐνυφέρει;

ARISTOPH. Βασίλ. Act 5. Sc. 4.

“No fortune can save that city, to whom neither peace nor war can do advantage.” And what is there left for God to mollify our hearts, whose temper is like both to wax and dirt; whom fire hardens, and cold hardens: and contradictory accidents produce no change, save that the heart grows worse and more obdurate for every change of Providence? But here also I must descend to particulars.

1. The heart of man is strangely proud. If men commend us, we think we have reason to distinguish ourselves from others, since the voice of discerning men hath already made the separation. If men do not commend us, we think they are stupid, and understand us not; or envious, and hold their tongues in spite. If we are praised by many, then “*Vox populi, vox Dei*,” “Fame is the voice of God.” If we be praised but by few, then “*Satis unus, satis nullus*,” we cry, “These are wise, and one wise man is worth a whole herd of the people.” But if we be praised by none at all, we resolve to be even with all the world, and speak well of nobody, and think well only of ourselves. And then we have such beggarly arts, such tricks, to cheat for praise. We inquire after our faults and failings, only to be told we have none, but did excellently; and then we are pleased: we rail upon our actions, only to be chidden for so doing; and then he is our friend who chides us into a good opinion of ourselves, which however all the world cannot make us part with. Nay, humility itself makes us proud; so false, so base, is the heart of man. For humility is so noble a virtue, that even pride itself puts on its upper garment: and we do like those who cannot endure to look upon an ugly or a deformed person, and yet will give a great price for a picture extremely like him. Humility is despised in substance, but courted and admired in effigy. And Æsop’s picture was sold for two talents, when himself was made a slave at the price of two philippics. And because humility

makes a man to be honoured, therefore we imitate all its garbs and postures, its civilities and silence, its modesties and condescensions. And, to prove that we are extremely proud, in the midst of all this pageantry, we should be extremely angry at any man that should say we are proud; and that is a sure sign we are so. And in the midst of all our arts to seem humble, we use devices to bring ourselves into talk; we thrust ourselves into company, we listen at doors, and, like the greatbeards in Rome that pretended philosophy and strict life, ὀβελίσκον καταπίοντες περιπατοῦμεν, “we walk by the obelisk,”* and meditate in piazzas, that they that meet us may talk of us, and they that follow may cry out, Ὁ μεγάλου φιλοσόφου! Behold! there goes an excellent man! He is very prudent, or very learned, or a charitable person, or a good housekeeper, or at least very humble.

2. The heart of man is deeply in love with wickedness, and with nothing else; against not only the laws of God, but against his own reason, its own interest, and its own securities? For is it imaginable, that a man, who knows the laws of God, the rewards of virtue, the cursed and horrid effects of sin; that knows, and considers, and deeply sighs at, the thought of the intolerable pains of hell; that knows the joys of heaven to be unspeakable, and that concerning them there is no temptation, but that they are too big for man to hope for, and yet he certainly believes, that a holy life shall infallibly attain thither: is it, I say, imaginable, that this man should, for a transient action, forfeit all this hope, and certainly and knowingly incur all that calamity? Yea, but the sin is pleasant, and the man is clothed with flesh and blood, and their appetites are material, and importunate, and present; and the discourses of religion are concerning things spiritual, separate and apt for spirits, angels, and souls departed. To take off this also, we will suppose the man to consider, and really to believe, that the pleasure of the sin is sudden, vain, empty, and transient; that it leaves bitterness upon the tongue, before it is descended into the bowels; that there it is poison, and “makes the belly to swell, and the thigh to rot;” that he remembers, and actually considers, that as soon as the moment of sin is past, he shall have an intolerable conscience, and does, at the instant,

* Arrian.

compare moments with eternity, and with horror remembers, that the very next minute he is as miserable a man as is in the world: yet that this man should sin? Nay, suppose the sin to have no pleasure at all, such as is the sin of swearing; nay, suppose it really to have pain in it, such as is the sin of envy, which never can have pleasure in its actions, but much torment and consumption of the very heart: what should make this man sin so for nothing, so against himself, so against all reason, and religion, and interest, without pleasure, for no reward? Here the heart betrays itself to be "desperately wicked." What man can give a reasonable account of such a man, who, to prosecute his revenge, will do himself an injury, that he may do a less to him that troubles him. Such a man hath given me ill language: *Οὐτε τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀλγεί, οὐτε τὸν ὀφθαλμὸν, οὐτε τὸν ἰσχίον, οὐτε τὸν ἄγρον ἀπαλλύει,* "My head aches not for his language, nor hath he broken my thigh, nor carried away my land:" but this man must be requited; well, suppose that. But then let it be proportionably: you are not undone, let not him be so.—Oh, yes; for else my revenge triumphs not;—well, if you do, yet remember, he will defend himself, or the law will right him; at least, do not do wrong to yourself by doing him wrong: this were but prudence and self-interest. And yet we see, that the heart of some men hath betrayed them to such furiousness of appetite, as to make them willing to die, that their enemy may be buried in the same ruins. Jovius Pontanus tells of an Italian slave, I think, who, being enraged against his lord, watched his absence from home, and the employment and inadvertency of his fellow-servants: he locked the doors, and secured himself for awhile, and ravished his lady; then took her three sons up to the battlements of the house, and at the return of his lord, threw one down to him upon the pavement, and then a second, to rend the heart of their sad father, seeing them weltering in their blood and brains. The lord begged for his third, and now his only son, promising pardon and liberty if he would spare his life. The slave seemed to cut a little, and, on condition his lord would cut off his own nose, he would spare his son. The sad father did so, being willing to suffer any thing rather than the loss of that child. But as soon as he saw his lord all bloody with his wound, he threw the third son and himself down together upon the pavement. The story is

sad enough, and needs no lustre and advantages of sorrow to represent it: but if a man sets himself down, and considers sadly, he cannot easily tell, upon what sufficient inducement, or what principle, the slave should so certainly, so horridly, so presently, and then so eternally, ruin himself. What could he propound to himself as a recompense to his own so immediate tragedy? There is not in the pleasure of the revenge, nor in the nature of the thing, any thing to tempt him; we must confess our ignorance, and say, that "The heart of man is desperately wicked;" and that is the truth in general, but we cannot fathom it by particular comprehension.

For when the heart of man is bound up by the grace of God, and tied in golden bands, and watched by angels, tended by those nursekeepers of the soul, it is not easy for a man to wander; and the evil of his heart is but like the ferity and wildness of lions' whelps: but when once we have broken the hedge, and got into the strengths of youth, and the licentiousness of an un-governed age, it is wonderful to observe, what a great inundation of mischief, in a very short time, will overflow all the banks of reason and religion. Vice first is pleasing,—then it grows easy,—then delightful,—then frequent,—then habitual,—then confirmed;—then the man is impenitent,—then he is obstinate,—then he resolves never to repent,—and then he is damned.—And by that time he is come half-way in this progress, he confutes the philosophy of the old moralists: for they, not knowing the villainess of man's heart, nor considering its desperate, amazing impiety, knew no other degree of wickedness but this, that men preferred sense before reason, and their understandings were abused in the choice of a temporal before an intellectual and eternal good: but they always concluded, that the will of man must of necessity follow the last dictate of the understanding, declaring an object to be good, in one sense or other. Happy men they were that were so innocent, that knew no pure and perfect malice, and lived in an age in which it was not easy to confute them. But, besides that now the wells of a deeper iniquity are discovered, we see, by too sad experience, that there are some sins proceeding from the heart of man, which have nothing but simple and unmingled malice: actions of mere spite, doing evil because it is evil, sinning without sensual pleasures, sinning with sensual pain,

with hazard of our lives, with actual torment, and sudden deaths, and certain and present damnation; sins against the Holy Ghost, open hostilities, and professed enmities, against God and all virtue. I can go no further, because there is not in the world, or in the nature of things, a greater evil. And that is the nature and folly of the devil; he tempts men to ruin, and hates God, and only hurts himself and those he tempts, and does himself no pleasure, and some say he increases his own accidental torment.

Although I can say nothing greater, yet I had many more things to say, if the time would have permitted me to represent the falseness and baseness of the heart. 1. We are false ourselves, and dare not trust God. 2. We love to be deceived, and are angry if we be told so. 3. We love to seem virtuous, and yet hate to be so. 4. We are melancholic and impatient, and we know not why. 5. We are troubled at little things, and are careless of greater. 6. We are overjoyed at a petty accident, and despise great and eternal pleasures. 7. We believe things, not for their reasons and proper arguments, but as they serve our turns, be they true or false. 8. We long extremely for things that are forbidden us; and what we despise when it is permitted us, we snatch at greedily when it is taken from us. 9. We love ourselves more than we love God; and yet we eat poisons daily, and feed upon toads and vipers, and nourish our deadly enemies in our bosom, and will not be brought to quit them; but brag of our shame, and are ashamed of nothing but virtue, which is most honourable. 10. We fear to die, and yet use all the means we can to make death terrible and dangerous. 11. We are busy in the faults of others, and negligent of our own. 12. We live the life of spies, striving to know others, and to be unknown ourselves. 13. We worship and flatter some men and some things, because we fear them, not because we love them. 14. We are ambitious of greatness, and covetous of wealth, and all that we get by it is, that we are more beautifully tempted; and a troop of clients run to us as to a pool, which first they trouble, and then draw dry. 15. We make ourselves unsafe by commit-

ting wickedness, and then we add more wickedness, to make us safe and beyond punishment. 16. We are more servile for one courtesy that we hope for, than for twenty that we have received. 17. We entertain slanderers, and, without choice, spread their calumnies, and we hug flatterers, and know they abuse us. And if I should gather the abuses, and impieties, and deceptions of the heart, as Chryssippus did the oracular lies of Apollo into a table, I fear they would seem remediless, and beyond the cure of watchfulness and religion. Indeed, they are great and many; but the grace of God is greater; and "if iniquity abounds," then "doth grace superabound;" and that is our comfort and our medicine, which we must thus use.

1. Let us watch our heart at every turn.

2. Deny it all its desires that do not directly, or by consequence, end in godliness: at no hand be indulgent to its fondnesses and peevish appetites.

3. Let us suspect it as an enemy.

4. Trust not to it in any thing.

5. But beg the grace of God with perpetual and importunate prayer, that he would be pleased to bring good out of these evils; and that he would throw the salutary wood of the cross, the merits of Christ's death and passion, into these salt waters, and make them healthful and pleasant.

And in order to the managing these advices, and acting the purposes of this prayer, let us strictly follow a rule, and choose a prudent and faithful guide, who may attend our motions, and watch our counsels, and direct our steps, and "prepare the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight," apt, and imitable. For without great watchfulness, and earnest devotion, and a prudent guide, we shall find that true in a spiritual sense, which Plutarch affirmed of a man's body in the natural: that of dead bulls arise bees; from the carcasses of horses, hornets are produced: but the body of man brings forth serpents. Our hearts, wallowing in their own natural and acquired corruptions, will produce nothing but issues of hell, and images of the old serpent the devil, for whom is provided the everlasting burning.

SERMON XXXIV.

THE FAITH AND PATIENCE OF THE SAINTS;
OR, THE RIGHTEOUS CAUSE OPPRESSED.

PART I.

For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?—1 Peter iv. 17, 18.

So long as the world lived by sense, and discourses of natural reason, as they were abated with human infirmities, and not at all heightened by the Spirit and divine revelations; so long men took their accounts of good and bad by their being prosperous or unfortunate: and amongst the basest and most ignorant of men, that only was accounted honest which was profitable; and he only wise, that was rich; and those men beloved of God, who received from him all that might satisfy their lust, their ambition, or their revenge.

— Fatis accede, Deisque,
Et cole felices, miseros fuge: sidera terra
Ut distant, ut flamma mari, sic utile recto.

LUCAN.

But because God sent wise men into the world, and they were treated rudely by the world, and exercised with evil accidents, and this seemed so great a discouragement to virtue, that even these wise men were more troubled to reconcile virtue and misery, than to reconcile their affections to the suffering; God was pleased to enlighten their reason with a little beam of faith, or else heightened their reason by wiser principles than those of vulgar understandings, and taught them in the clear glass of faith, or the dim perspective of philosophy, to look beyond the cloud, and there to spy that there stood glories behind their curtain, to which they could not come but by passing through the cloud, and being wet with the dew of heaven and the waters of affliction. And according as the world grew more enlightened by faith, so it grew more dark with mourning and sorrows. God sometimes sent a light of fire, and a pillar of a cloud, and the brightness of an angel, and the lustre of a star, and the sacrament of a rainbow, to guide his people through their portion of sorrows, and to lead them through troubles to rest: but as the Sun of righteousness approached towards the chambers of the east, and sent the harbingers of light peeping

through the curtains of the night, and leading on the day of faith and brightest revelation; so God sent degrees of trouble upon wise and good men, that now, in the same degree in the which the world lives by faith, and not by sense, in the same degree they might be able to live in virtue even while she lived in trouble, and not reject so great a beauty, because she goes in mourning, and hath a black cloud of Cyprus drawn before her face. Literally thus: God first entertained their services, and allured and prompted on the infirmities of the infant-world by temporal prosperity; but by degrees changed his method; and as men grew stronger in the knowledge of God, and the expectations of heaven, so they grew weaker in their fortunes, more afflicted in their bodies, more abated in their expectations, more subject to their enemies, and were to endure the contradiction of sinners, and the immission of the sharpnesses of Providence and divine economy.

First, Adam was placed in a garden of health and pleasure, from which when he fell, he was only tied to enter into the covenant of natural sorrows, which he and all his posterity till the flood ran through: but in all that period they had the whole wealth of the earth before them: they needed not fight for empires, or places for their cattle to graze in; they lived long, and felt no want, no slavery, no tyranny, no war; and the evils that happened, were single, personal, and natural; and no violences were then done, but they were like those things which the law calls "rare contingencies;" for which as the law can now take no care and make no provisions, so then there was no law, but men lived free, and rich, and long, and they exercised no virtues but natural, and knew no felicity but natural: and so long their prosperity was just as was their virtue, because it was a natural instrument towards all that which they knew of happiness. But this public easiness and quiet, the world turned into sin; and unless God did compel men to do themselves good, they would undo themselves: and then God broke in upon them with a flood, and destroyed that generation, that he might begin the government of the world upon a new stock, and bind virtue upon men's spirits by new bands, endeared to them by new hopes and fears.

Then God made new laws, and gave to princes the power of the sword, and men might be punished to death in certain cases, and man's life was shortened, and slavery

was brought into the world and the state of servants: and then war began, and evils multiplied upon the face of the earth; in which it is naturally certain that they that were most violent and injurious, prevailed upon the weaker and more innocent; and every tyranny that began from Nimrod to this day, and every usurper, was a peculiar argument to show that God began to teach the world virtue by suffering; and that therefore he suffered tyrannies and usurpations to be in the world, and to be prosperous, and the rights of men to be snatched away from their owners, that the world might be established in potent and settled governments, and the sufferers be taught all the passive virtues of the soul. For so God brings good out of evil, turning tyranny into the benefits of government, and violence into virtue, and sufferings into rewards. And this was the second change of the world: personal miseries were brought in upon Adam and his posterity, as a punishment of sin in the first period; and in the second, public evils were brought in by tyrants and usurpers, and God suffered them as the first elements of virtue, men being just newly put to school to infant sufferings. But all this was not much.

Christ's line was not yet drawn forth; it began not to appear in what family the King of sufferings should descend, till Abraham's time; and therefore, till then there were no greater sufferings than what I have now reckoned. But when Abraham's family was chosen from among the many nations, and began to belong to God by a special right, and he was designed to be the father of the Messiah; then God found out a new way to try him, even with a sound affliction, commanding him to offer his beloved Isaac: but this was accepted, and being intended by Abraham, was not intended by God: for this was a type of Christ, and therefore was also but a type of sufferings. And excepting the sufferings of the old periods, and the sufferings of nature and accident, we see no change made for a long time after; but God having established a law in Abraham's family, did build it upon promises of health, and peace, and victory, and plenty, and riches; and so long as they did not prevaricate the law of their God, so long they were prosperous: but God kept a remnant of Canaanites in the land, like a rod held over them, to vex or to chastise them into obedience, in which while they persevered nothing could hurt them; and that saying of David needs no other sense but the letter of its own expres-

sion, "I have been young, and now am old; and yet I never saw the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread." The godly generally were prosperous, and a good cause seldom had an ill end, and a good man never died an ill death,—till the law had spent a great part of its time, and it descended towards its declension and period. But, that the great Prince of sufferings might not appear upon his stage of tragedies without some forerunners of sorrow, God was pleased to choose out some good men, and honour them, by making them to become little images of suffering. Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Zechariah, were martyrs of the law; but these were single deaths: Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, were thrown into a burning furnace, and Daniel into a den of lions, and Susanna was accused for adultery; but these were but little arrests of the prosperity of the godly. As the time drew nearer that Christ should be manifest, so the sufferings grew bigger and more numerous: and Antiochus raised up a sharp persecution in the time of the Maccabees, in which many passed through the Red Sea of blood into the bosom of Abraham; and then Christ came. And that was the third period in which the changed method of God's providence was perfected: for Christ was to do his great work by sufferings, and by sufferings was to enter into blessedness; and by his passion he was made Prince of the catholic Church; and as our Head was, so must the members be. God made the same covenant with us that he did with his most holy Son, and Christ obtained no better conditions for us than for himself; that was not to be looked for; "The servant must not be above his master; it is well if he be as his master: if the world persecuted him, they will also persecute us;" and "from the days of John the Baptist, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force;" not "the violent doers," but "the sufferers of violence;" for though the old law was established in the promises of temporal prosperity; yet the gospel is founded in temporal adversity; it is directly a covenant of sufferings and sorrows; for now "the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God." That is the sense and design of the text; and I intend it as a direct antinomy to the common persuasions of tyrannous, carnal, and vicious men, who reckon nothing good but what is prosperous: for though that proposition had many de-

gresses of truth in the beginning of the law, yet the case is now altered, God hath established its contradictory; and now every good man must look for persecution, and every good cause must expect to thrive by the sufferings and patience of holy persons: and, as men do well, and suffer evil, so they are dear to God; and whom he loves most he afflicts most, and does this with a design of the greatest mercy in the world.

1. Then, the state of the gospel is a state of sufferings, not of temporal prosperities. This was foretold by the prophets; "A fountain shall go out of the house of the Lord, 'et irrigabit torrentem spinarum,' (so it is in the Vulgar Latin,) and it shall water the torrent of thorns;"* that is, the state or time of the gospel, which, like a torrent, shall carry all the world before it, and, like a torrent, shall be fullest in ill weather; and by its banks shall grow nothing but thorns and briars, sharp afflictions, temporal infelicities, and persecution. This sense of the words is more fully explained in the book of the prophet Isaiah. "Upon the ground of my people shall thorns and briars come up; how much more in all the houses of the city of rejoicing!"† Which prophecy is the same in the style of the prophets, that my text is in the style of the apostles. The house of God shall be watered with the dew of heaven, and there shall spring up briars in it: "Judgment must begin there;" but how much more "in the house of the city of rejoicing!" how much more amongst "them that are at ease in Sion," that serve their desires, that satisfy their appetites, that are given over to their own hearts' lust, that so serve themselves, that they never serve God, that "dwell in the city of rejoicing!" They are like Dives, whose portion was in this life, "who went in fine linen, and fared deliciously every day:" they, indeed, trample upon their briars and thorns, and suffer them not to grow in their houses; but the roots are in the ground, and they are reserved for fuel of wrath in the day of everlasting burning. Thus, you see, it was prophesied, now see how it was performed; Christ was the Captain of our sufferings, and he began.

He entered into the world with all the circumstances of poverty. He had a star to illustrate his birth; but a stable for his bedchamber, and a manger for his cradle. The angels sang hymns when he was born:

but he was cold and cried, uneasy and unprovided. He lived long in the trade of a carpenter; he, by whom God made the world, had, in his first years, the business of a mean and ignoble trade. He did good wherever he went; and almost wherever he went was abused. He deserved heaven for his obedience, but found a cross in his way thither: and if ever any man had reason to expect fair usages from God, and to be dandled in the lap of ease, softness, and a prosperous fortune, he it was only that could deserve that, or any thing that can be good. But, after he had chosen to live a life of virtue, of poverty, and labour, he entered into a state of death; whose shame and trouble were great enough to pay for the sins of the whole world. And I shall choose to express this mystery in the words of Scripture. He died not by a single or a sudden death, but he was the "Lamb slain from the beginning of the world:" for he was massacred in Abel, saith St. Paulinus; he was tossed upon the waves of the sea in the person of Noah; it was he that went out of his country, when Abraham was called from Charran, and wandered from his native soil; he was offered up in Isaac, persecuted in Jacob, betrayed in Joseph, blinded in Samson, affronted in Moses, sawed in Isaiah, cast into the dungeon with Jeremiah: for all these were types of Christ suffering. And then his passion continued even after his resurrection. For it is he that suffers in all his members; it is he that "endures the contradiction of all sinners;" it is he that is "the Lord of life, and is crucified again, and put to open shame," in all the sufferings of his servants, and sins of rebels, and defiances of apostates and renegadoes, and violence of tyrants, and injustice of usurpers, and the persecutions of his church. It is he that is stoned in St. Stephen, flayed in the person of St. Bartholomew: he was roasted upon St. Laurence's gridiron, exposed to lions in St. Ignatius, burnt in St. Polycarp, frozen in the lake where stood forty martyrs of Cappadocia. "Unigenitus enim Dei ad peragendum mortis suæ sacramentum consummavit omne genus humanarum passionum," said St. Hilary; "the sacrament of Christ's death is not to be accomplished but by suffering all the sorrows of humanity."

All that Christ came for, was, or was mingled with, sufferings: for all those little

* Joel iii. 10.

† Isa. xxxii. 13.

joys which God sent, either to recreate his person, or to illustrate his office, were abated, or attended with afflictions; God being more careful to establish in him the covenant of sufferings, than to refresh his sorrows. Presently after the angels had finished their hallelujahs, he was forced to fly to save his life; and the air became full of shrieks of the desolate mothers of Bethlehem for their dying babes. God had no sooner made him illustrious with a voice from heaven, and the descent of the Holy Ghost upon him in the waters of baptism, but he was delivered over to be tempted and assaulted by the devil in the wilderness. His transfiguration was a bright ray of glory; but then also he entered into a cloud, and was told a sad story what he was to suffer at Jerusalem. And upon Palm Sunday, when he rode triumphantly into Jerusalem, and was adorned with the acclamations of a King and a God, he wet the palms with his tears, sweeter than the drops of manna, or the little pearls of heaven, that descended upon mount Hermon; weeping, in the midst of his triumph, over obstinate, perishing, and malicious Jerusalem. For this Jesus was like the rainbow, which God set in the clouds as a sacrament to confirm a promise, and establish a grace; he was half made of the glories of the light, and half of the moisture of a cloud; in his best days he was but half triumph and half sorrow: he was sent to tell of his Father's mercies, and that God intended to spare us; but appeared not but in the company or in the retinue of a shower, and of foul weather. But I need not tell that Jesus, beloved of God, was a suffering person; that which concerns this question most, is, that he made for us a covenant of sufferings: his doctrines were such as expressly and by consequent enjoin and support sufferings, and a state of affliction; his very promises were sufferings; his beatitudes were sufferings; his rewards, and his arguments to invite men to follow him, were only taken from sufferings in his life, and the reward of sufferings hereafter.

For if we sum up the commandments of Christ, we shall find humility,—mortification,—self-denial,—repentance,—renouncing the world,—mourning,—taking up the cross,—dying for him,—patience and poverty,—stand in the chiefest rank of Christian receipts, and in the direct order to heaven: He that will be my disciple, must deny

himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." We must follow him that was crowned with thorns and sorrows, him that was drenched in Cedron, nailed upon the cross, that deserved all good, and suffered all evil: that is the sum of Christian religion, as it distinguishes from all the religions of the world. To which we may add the express precept recorded by St. James: "Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy into weeping."* You see the commandments; will you also see the promises? These they are, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; in me ye shall have peace:—Through many tribulations ye shall enter into heaven:—He that loseth father and mother, wives and children, houses and lands, for my name's sake and the gospel, shall receive a hundred-fold in this life, with persecution;" that is part of his reward: and, "He chastiseth every son that he receiveth;—if ye be exempt from sufferings, ye are bastards, and not sons." These are some of Christ's promises: will you see some of Christ's blessings that he gives his church? "Blessed are the poor: blessed are the hungry and thirsty: blessed are they that mourn: blessed are the humble: blessed are the persecuted."† Of the eight beatitudes, five of them have temporal misery and meanness, or an afflicted condition, for their subject. Will you at last see some of the rewards which Christ hath propounded to his servants, to invite them to follow him? "When I am lifted up, I will draw all men after me:" when Christ is "lifted up, as Moses lift up the serpent in the wilderness," that is, lifted upon the cross, then "he will draw us after him."—"To you it is given for Christ," saith St. Paul, when he went to sweeten and to flatter the Philippians: ‡ well, what is given to them? some great favours surely: true; "It is not only given that you believe in Christ,"—though that be a great matter,—"but also that you suffer for him," that is the highest of your honour. And therefore St. James, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye enter into divers temptations:"§ and St. Peter; "Communicating with the sufferings of Christ, rejoice."|| And St. James again; "We count them blessed that have suffered:"¶ and St. Paul, when he gives his blessing to the Thessalonians,

* James iv. 9. † Matt. v. ‡ Phil. i. 29. § James i. 2. || 1 Pet. iv. 13. ¶ 1 Cor. xiv. 13.

useth this form of prayer; "Our Lord direct your hearts in the charity of God, and in the patience and sufferings of Christ."* So that if we will serve the King of sufferings, whose crown was of thorns, whose sceptre was a reed of scorn, whose imperial robe was a scarlet of mockery, whose throne was the cross; we must serve him X in sufferings, in poverty of spirit, in humility and mortification; and for our reward we shall have persecution, and all its blessed consequences. "Atque hoc est esse Christianum."

Since this was done in the green tree, what might we expect should be done in the dry? Let us, in the next place, consider how God hath treated his saints and servants in the descending ages of the gospel: that if the best of God's servants were followers of Jesus in this covenant of sufferings, we may not think it strange concerning the fiery trial, as if some new thing had happened to us.† For as the gospel X was founded in sufferings, we shall also see it grow in persecutions; and as Christ's blood did cement the corner-stones, and the first foundations; so the blood and sweat, the groans and sighings, the afflictions and mortifications, of saints and martyrs, did make the superstructures, and must at last finish the building.

If we begin with the apostles, who were to persuade the world to become Christian, and to use proper arguments of invitations, we shall find that they never offered an argument of temporal prosperity; they never X promised empires and thrones on earth, nor riches, nor temporal power; and it would have been soon confuted, if they who were whipt and imprisoned, bound and scattered, persecuted and tormented, should have promised sunshine days to others, which they could not to themselves. Of all the apostles there was not one that died a natural death but only St. John;‡ and did he escape? Yes: but he was put into a cauldron of scalding lead and oil before the Port Latin in Rome, and escaped death by a miracle, though no miracle was wrought to make him escape the torture. And, besides this, he lived long in banishment, and that was worse than St. Peter's chains. "Sanctus Petrus in vinculis, et Johannes ante Portam," were both days of martyrdom, and church festival. And after a long and la-

borious life, and the affliction of being detained from his crown, and his sorrows for the death of his fellow-disciples, he died full of days and sufferings. And when St. Paul was taken into the apostolate, his commissions were signed in these words; "I will show unto him how great things he must suffer for my name:"* And his whole life was a continual suffering. "Quotidie morior" was his motto, "I die daily;" and his lesson that he daily learned was, to "know Christ Jesus, and him crucified;" and all his joy was "to rejoice in the cross of Christ;" and the changes of his life were nothing but the changes of his sufferings, and the variety of his labours. For though Christ hath finished his own sufferings for expiation of the world; yet there are *ὑστερήματα ἐμψέων*, "portions that are behind of the sufferings" of Christ, which must be filled up by his body, the church; and happy are they that put in the greatest symbol; for "in the same measure you are partakers of the sufferings of Christ, in the same shall ye be also of the consolation." And therefore, concerning St. Paul, as it was also concerning Christ, there is nothing, or but very little, in Scripture, relating to his person and chances of his private life, but his labours and persecutions; as if the Holy Ghost did think nothing fit to stand upon record for Christ but sufferings.

And now began to work the greatest glory of the Divine providence: here was the case of Christianity at stake. The world was rich and prosperous, learned and full of wise men: the gospel was preached with poverty and persecution, in simplicity of discourse, and in demonstration of the Spirit; God was on one side, and the devil on the other; they each of them dressed up their city; Babylon upon earth, Jerusalem from above. The devil's city was full of pleasure, triumphs, victories, and cruelty; good news, and great wealth; conquest over kings, and making nations tributary: they "bound kings in chains, and the nobles with links of iron;" and the inheritance of the earth was theirs: the Romans were lords over the greatest part of the world; and God permitted to the devil the firmament and increase, the wars and the success of that people, giving to him an entire power of disposing the great changes of the world, so as might best increase their greatness and

* 2 Thes. iii. 5. Heb. ii. 10. † 1 Pet. iv. 12.

‡ Tertul. S. Hieron.

* Acts ix. 16.

power: and he therefore did it, because all the power of the Roman greatness was a professed enemy to Christianity. And on the other side, God was to build up Jerusalem, and the kingdom of the gospel; and he chose to build it of hewn stone, cut and broken: the apostles he chose for preachers, and they had no learning; women and mean people were the first disciples, and they had no power; the devil was to lose his kingdom, he wanted no malice: and therefore he stirred up, and, as well as he could, he made active all the power of Rome, and all the learning of the Greeks, and all the malice of barbarous people, and all the prejudice and the obstinacy of the Jews, against this doctrine and institution, which preached, and promised, and brought, persecution along with it. On the one side, there was "scandalum crucis;" on the other, "patientia sanctorum:" and what was the event? They that had overcome the world, could not strangle Christianity. But so have I seen the sun with a little ray of distant light challenge all the power of darkness, and, without violence and noise, climbing up the hill, hath made night so to retire, that its memory was lost in the joys and spritfulness of the morning; and Christianity without violence or armies, without resistance and self-preservation, without strength, or human eloquence, without challenging of privileges or fighting against tyranny, without alteration of government and scandal of princes, with its humility and meekness, with toleration and patience, with obedience and charity, with praying and dying, did insensibly turn the world into Christian, and persecution into victory.

For Christ, who began, and lived, and died in sorrows, perceiving his own sufferings to succeed so well, and that "for suffering death, he was crowned with immortality," resolved to take all his disciples and servants to the fellowship of the same suffering, that they might have a participation of his glory; knowing, God had opened no gate of heaven but "the narrow gate," to which the cross was the key. And since Christ now being our high priest in heaven, intercedes for us by representing his passion, and the dolours of the cross, that even in glory he might still preserve the mercies of his past sufferings, for which the Father did so delight in him; he also designs to present us to God dressed in the same robe, and treated in the same manner, and honoured with "the marks of the Lord Jesus;" "He hath

predestinated us to be conformable to the image of his Son." And if under a head crowned with thorns, we bring to God members circled with roses, and softness, and delicacy, triumphant members in the militant Church, God will reject us, he will not know us who are so unlike our elder Brother: for we are members of the lamb, not of the lion; and of Christ's suffering part, not of the triumphant part: and for three hundred years together the Church lived upon blood, and was nourished with blood, the blood of her own children. Thirty-three bishops of Rome in immediate succession were put to violent and unnatural deaths; and so were all the Churches of the east and west built; the cause of Christ and of religion was advanced by the sword, but it was the sword of the persecutors, not of resisters or warriors: they were "all baptized into the death of Christ;" their very profession and institution is to live like him, and, when he requires it, to die for him; that is the very formality, the life and essence, of Christianity. This, I say, lasted for three hundred years, that the prayers, and the backs, and the necks of Christians fought against the rods and axes of the persecutors, and prevailed, till the country, and the cities, and the court itself, was filled with Christians. And by this time the army of martyrs was vast and numerous, and the number of sufferers blunted the hangman's sword. For Christ first triumphed over the princes and powers of the world, before he would admit them to serve them; he first felt their malice, before he would make use of their defence; to show, that it was not his necessity that required it, but his grace that admitted kings and queens to be nurses of the Church.

And now the Church was at ease, and she that sucked the blood of the martyrs so long, began now to suck the milk of queens. Indeed it was a great mercy in appearance, and was so intended, but it proved not so. But then the Holy Ghost, in pursuance of the design of Christ, who meant by suffering to perfect his Church, as himself was by the same instrument,—was pleased, now that persecution did cease, to inspire the Church with the spirit of mortification and austerity; and then they made colleges of sufferers, persons, who, to secure their inheritance in the world to come, did cut off all their portion in this, excepting so much of it as was necessary to their present being; and by instruments of humility, by patience

under, and a voluntary undertaking of, the cross, the burden of the Lord,—by self-denial, by fastings and sackcloth, and penitentiations in prayer, they chose then to exercise the active part of the religion, mingling it as much as they could with the suffering.

And indeed it is so glorious a thing to be like Christ, to be dressed like the prince of the Catholic Church, who was “a man of sufferings,” and to whom a prosperous and unafflicted person is very unlike, that in all ages the servants of God have “put on the armour of righteousness, on the right hand and on the left:” that is, in the sufferings of persecution, or the labours of mortification; in patience under the rod of God, or by election of our own; by toleration, or self-denial; by actual martyrdom, or by aptness or disposition towards it; by dying for Christ, or suffering for him; by being willing to part with all when he calls for it, and by parting with what we can for the relief of his poor members. For, know this, there is no state in the Church so serene, no days so prosperous, in which God does not give to his servants the powers and opportunities of suffering for him; not only they that die for Christ, but they that live according to his laws, shall find some lives to part with, and many ways to suffer for Christ. To kill and crucify the old man and all his lusts, to mortify a beloved sin, to fight against temptations, to do violence to our bodies, to live chastely, to suffer affronts patiently, to forgive injuries and debts, to renounce all prejudice and interest in religion, and to choose our side for truth’s sake, (not because it is prosperous, but because it pleases God,) to be charitable beyond our power, to reprove our betters with modesty and openness, to displease men rather than God, to be at enmity with the world, that you may preserve friendship with God, to deny the opportunity and troublesome kindness of a drinking friend, to own truth in despite of danger or scorn, to despise shame, to refuse worldly pleasures when they tempt your soul beyond duty or safety, to take pains in the cause of religion, the “labour of love,” and the crossing of your anger, peevishness, and morosity: these are the daily sufferings of a Christian; and, if we perform them well, will have the same reward, and an equal smart, and greater labour, than the plain suffering the hangman’s sword. This I have discoursed, to represent unto you, that you cannot be exempted from the similitude of Christ’s sufferings: that God will

shut no age nor no man from his portion of the cross; that we cannot fail of the result of this predestination, nor without our own fault be excluded from the covenant of sufferings. “Judgment must begin at God’s house, and enters first upon the sons and heirs of the kingdom; and if it be not by the direct persecution of tyrants, it will be by the direct persecution of the devil, or infirmities of our own flesh. But because this was but the secondary meaning of the text, I return to make use of all the former discourse.

Let no Christian man make any judgment concerning his condition or his cause, by the external event of things. For although in the law of Moses, God made with his people a covenant of temporal prosperity, and “his saints did bind the kings of the Amorites, and the Philistines, in chains, and their nobles with links of iron, and then, that was the honour which all his saints had:” yet, in Christ Jesus, he made a covenant of sufferings. Most of the graces of Christianity are suffering graces, and God hath predestinated us to sufferings, and we are baptized into suffering, and our very communions are symbols of our duty, by being the sacrament of Christ’s death and passion; and Christ foretold to us tribulation, and promised only that he would be with us in tribulation, that he would give us his Spirit to assist us at tribunals, and his grace to despise the world, and to contemn riches, and boldness to confess every article of the Christian faith, in the face of armies and armed tyrants. And he also promised that “all things should work together for the best to his servants,” that is, he would “out of the eater bring meat, and out of the strong issue sweetness,” and crowns and sceptres should spring from crosses, and that the cross itself should stand upon the globes and sceptres of princes; but he never promised to his servants, that they should pursue kings and destroy armies, that they should reign over nations, and promote the cause of Jesus Christ, by breaking his commandment. “The shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit, the armour of righteousness, and the weapons of spiritual warfare;” these are they by which Christianity swelled from a small company, and a less reputation, to possess the chairs of doctors, and the thrones of princes, and the hearts of all men. But men, in all ages, will be tampering with shadows and toys. The apostles at no hand could endure to hear that Christ’s

"kingdom was not of this world," and that their Master should die a sad and shameful death; though that way he was to receive his crown, and "enter into glory." And after Christ's time, when his disciples had taken up the cross, and were marching the King's highway of sorrows, there were a very great many, even the generality of Christians, for two or three ages together, who fell a dreaming, that Christ should come and reign upon earth again for a thousand years, and then the saints should reign in all abundance of temporal power and fortunes: but these men were content to stay for it till after the resurrection; in the mean time, took up their cross, and followed after their Lord, the King of sufferings. But now-a-days, we find a generation of men who have changed the covenant of sufferings into victories and triumphs, riches and prosperous chances, and reckon their Christianity by their good fortunes; as if Christ had promised to his servants no heaven hereafter, no Spirit in the mean time to refresh their sorrows; as if he had enjoined them no passive graces; but as if to be a Christian and to be a Turk were the same thing. Mahomet entered and possessed by the sword: Christ came by the cross, entered by humility; and his saints "possess their souls by patience."

God was fain to multiply miracles to make Christ capable of being a "man of sorrows:" and shall we think he will work miracles to make us delicate? He promised us a glorious portion hereafter, to which if all the sufferings of the world were put together, they are not worthy to be compared: and shall we, with Dives, choose our portion of "good things in this life?" If Christ suffered so many things only that he might give us glory, shall it be strange that we shall suffer who are to receive his glory? It is in vain to think we shall obtain glories at an easier rate, than to drink of the brook in the way in which Christ was drenched. When the devil appeared to St. Martin, in a bright splendid shape, and said he was Christ; he answered, "Christus non nisi in ruce apparet suis, in hac vita." And when St. Ignatius was newly tied in a chain to be led to his martyrdom, he cried out, "Nunc incipio esse Christianus." And it was observed by Minutius Felix, and was indeed a great and excellent truth, "Omnes viri fortes, quos gentiles prædicabant in exemplum, ærumnis suis inclyti floruerunt;"

The gentiles in their whole religion never

propounded any man imitable, unless the man were poor or persecuted." Brutus stood for his country's liberty, but lost his army and his life; Socrates was put to death for speaking a religious truth; Cato chose to be on the right side, but happened to fall upon the oppressed and the injured; he died together with his party.

Victrix causa Deis placuit, sed victa Catoni.
LUCAN.

And if God thus dealt with the best of heathens, to whom he had made no clear revelation of immortal recompenses; how little is the faith, and how much less is the patience of Christians, if they shall think much to suffer sorrow, since they so clearly see with the eye of faith the great things which are laid up for them that are "faithful unto the death?" Faith is useless, if now in the midst of so great pretended lights we shall not dare to trust God, unless we have all in hand that we desire; and suffer nothing, for all we can hope for. They that live by sense have no use of faith: yet our Lord Jesus, concerning whose passion the gospel speaks much, but little of his glorifications; whose shame was public, whose pains were notorious, but his joys and transfigurations were secret, and kept private; he who would not suffer his holy mother, whom in great degrees he exempted from sin,—to be exempted from many and great sorrows, certainly intends to admit none to his resurrection but by the doors of his grave, none to glory but by way of the cross. "If we be planted into the likeness of his death, we shall be also of his resurrection;" else on no terms. Christ took away sin from us, but he left us our share of sufferings; and the cross, which was first printed upon us in the waters of baptism, must for ever be borne by us in penance, in mortification, in self-denial, and in martyrdom, and toleration, according as God shall require of us by the changes of the world and the condition of the church.

For Christ considers nothing but souls, he values not their estates or bodies, supplying our want by his providence; and we are secured that our bodies may be killed, but cannot perish, so long as we preserve our duty and our consciences. Christ, our Captain, hangs naked upon the cross: our fellow-soldiers are cast into prison, torn with lions, rent in sunder with trees returning from their violent bendings, broken upon wheels, roasted upon gridirons, and

have had the honour not only to have a good cause, but also to suffer for it; and by faith, not by armies,—by patience, not by fighting, have overcome the world. “Et sit anima mea cum Christianis;” “I pray God my soul may be among the Christians.” And yet the Turks have prevailed upon a great part of the Christian world, and have them slaves and tributaries, and do them all spite, and are hugely prosperous; but when the Christians are so, they are tempted and put in danger, and never have their duty and their interest so well secured, as when they lose all for Christ, and are adorned with wounds or poverty, change or scorn, affronts or revilings, which are the obelisks and triumphs of a holy cause. Evil men and evil causes had need have good fortune and great success to support their persons and their pretences; for nothing but innocence and Christianity can flourish in a persecution. I sum up this first discourse in a word: in all the Scripture, and in all the authentic stories of the church, we find it often that the devil appeared in the shape of an “angel of light,” but was never suffered so much as to counterfeit a persecuted sufferer. Say no more, therefore, as the murmuring Israelites said, “If the Lord be with us, why have these evils apprehended us?” for if to be afflicted be a sign that God hath forsaken a man, and refuses to own his religion or his question, then he that oppresses the widow, and murders the innocent, and puts the fatherless to death, and follows providence by doing all the evils that he can, that is, all that God suffers him,—he, I say, is the only saint and servant of God; and upon the same ground the wolf and the fox may boast, when they scatter and devour a flock of lambs and harmless sheep.

SERMON XXXV.

PART II.

2. It follows now that we inquire concerning the reasons of the Divine Providence in this administration of affairs, so far as he hath been pleased to draw aside the curtain, and to unfold the leaves of his counsels and predestination. And for such an inquiry we have the precedent of the prophet Jeremy: “Righteous art thou, O Lord, when

I plead with thee; yet let us talk to thee of thy judgments. Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously? thou hast planted them, yea they have taken root: they grow, yea they bring forth fruit.”* Concerning which in general the prophet Malachi gives this account after the same complaint made: “And now we call the proud happy; and they that work wickedness are set up: yea they that tempt God are even delivered. They that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord and thought upon his name. And they shall be mine (saith the Lord of hosts) in that day when I bind up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.”† In this interval, which is a valley of tears, it is no wonder if they rejoice who shall weep for ever; and “they that sow in tears” shall have no cause to complain, when God gathers all the mourners into his kingdom, “they shall reap with joy.”

For innocence and joy were appointed to dwell together for ever. And joy went not first; but when innocence went away, sorrow and sickness dispossessed joy of its habitation; and now this world must be always a scene of sorrows, and no joy can grow here but that which is imaginary and fantastic. There is no worldly joy, no joy proper for this world, but that which wicked persons fancy to themselves in the hopes and designs of iniquity. He that covets his neighbour’s wife or land, dreams of fine things, and thinks it a fair condition to be rich and cursed, to be a beast and die, or to lie wallowing in filthiness: but those holy souls who are not in love with the leprosy and the itch for the pleasure of scratching, they know no pleasure can grow from the thorns which Adam planted in the hedges of paradise: and that sorrow, which was brought in by sin, must not go away till it hath returned us into the first condition of innocence: the same instant that quits us from sin and the failings of mortality, the same instant wipes all tears from our eyes; but that is not in this world. In the mean time, God afflicts the godly, that he might mani-

* Jer. xii. 1, 2.

† Mal. iii. 14, &c.

fest many of his attributes, and his servants exercise many of their virtues.

*Nec fortuna probat causas, sequiturque merentes,
Sed vaga per cunctos nullo discrimine fertur:
Scilicet est aliud, quod nos cogatque regatque,
Majus, et in proprias ducat mortalia leges.*

For, without the sufferings of saints, God should lose the glories, 1. Of bringing good out of evil: 2. Of being with us in tribulation: 3. Of sustaining our infirmities: 4. Of triumphing over the malice of his enemies. 5. Without the suffering of the saints, where were the exaltation of the cross, the conformity of the members to Christ their head, the coronets of martyrs? 6. Where were the trial of our faith? 7. Or the exercise of long suffering? 8. Where were the opportunities to give God the greatest love? which cannot be but by dying and suffering for him. 9. How should that which the world calls folly, prove the greatest wisdom? 10. And God be glorified by events contrary to the probability and expectation of their causes? 11. By the suffering of saints, Christian religion is proved to be most excellent; whilst the iniquity and cruelty of the adversaries proves the "Illecebra sectæ," as Tertullian's phrase is; it invites men to consider the secret excellencies of that religion, for which and in which men are so willing to die: for that religion must needs be worth looking into, which so many wise and excellent men do so much value above their lives and fortunes. 12. That a man's nature is passible, is its best advantage; for by it we are all redeemed: by the passiveness and sufferings of our Lord and Brother we were all rescued from the portion of devils; and by our sufferings we have a capacity of serving God beyond that of angels; who indeed can sing God's praise with a sweeter note, and obey him with a more unabated will, and execute his commands with a swifter wing and a greater power; but they cannot die for God, they can lose no lands for him; and he that did so for all us, and commanded us to do so for him, is ascended far above all angels, and is heir of a greater glory. 13. "Do this, and live," was the covenant of the law; but in the gospel it is, "Suffer this, and live:"—"He that forsaketh house and land, friends and life, for my sake, is my disciple." 14. By the sufferings of saints God chastises their follies and levities, and suffers not their errors to climb up into heresies, nor their infirmities into crimes.

——— παθῶν δέ τι νήπιος ἔργον.

"Affliction makes a fool leave his folly."— If David numbers the people of Judea, God punishes him sharply and loudly: but if Augustus Cæsar numbers all the world, he is let alone and prospers.

Ille crucem pretium sceleris tulit, hic diadema.
Juv.

And in giving physic, we always call that just and fitting that is useful and profitable: no man complains of his physician's iniquity, if he burns one part to cure all the body; if the belly be punished to chastise the floods of humour, and the evils of a surfeit. Punishments can no other way turn into a mercy, but when they are designed for a medicine; and God is then very careful of thy soul, when he will suppress every of its evils, when it first discomposes the order of things and spirits. And what hurt is it to thee, if a persecution draws thee from the vanities of a former prosperity, and forces thee into the sobrieties of a holy life? What loss is it? what misery? Is not the least sin a greater evil than the greatest of sufferings? God smiteth some at the beginning of their sin; others, not till a long while after it is done. The first cannot say that God is slack in punishing, and have no need to complain that the wicked are prosperous, for they find that God is apt enough to strike: and therefore, that he strikes them, and strikes not the other, is not defect of justice, but because there is not mercy in store for them that sin, and suffer not. 15. For if God strikes the godly that they may repent, it is no wonder that God is so good to his servants; but then we must not call that a misery, which God intends to make an instrument of saving them. And if God forbears to strike the wicked out of anger, and because he hath decreed death and hell against them, we have no reason to envy that they ride in a gilded chariot to the gallows: but if God forbear the wicked, that by his long sufferance they may be invited to repentance, then we may cease to wonder at the dispensation, and argue comforts to the afflicted saints, thus: for if God be so gracious to the wicked, how much more is he to the godly? And if sparing the wicked be a mercy; then, smiting the godly, being the expression of his greater kindness, affliction is of itself the more eligible condition. If God hath some degrees of kindness for the persecutors, so much as to invite them by kindness; how much greater is his love to them that are persecuted!

And therefore, his intercourse with them is also a greater favour; and, indeed, it is the surer way of securing the duty: fair means may do it, but severity will fix and secure it. Fair means are more apt to be abused than harsh physic; that may be turned into wantonness, but none but the impudent and grown sinners despise all God's judgments; and therefore, God chooses this way to deal with his erring servants, that they may obtain an infallible and a great salvation. And yet if God spares not his children, how much less the reprobates! and therefore, as sparing the latter commonly is a sad curse, so the smiting the former is a very great mercy. 16. For by this economy God gives us a great argument to prove the resurrection, since to his saints and servants he assigns sorrow for their present portion. Sorrow cannot be the reward of virtue; it may be its instrument and handmaid, but not its reward; and therefore, it may be intermedial to some great purposes, but they must look for their portion in the other life: "For if in this life only we had hope, then we were of all men the most miserable:" it is St. Paul's argument to prove a beatifical resurrection. And we therefore may learn to estimate the state of the afflicted godly to be a mercy, great in proportion to the greatness of that reward, which these afflictions come to secure and to prove.

Nunc et damna juvant; sunt ipsa pericula tanti:
Stantia non poterant tecta probare deos.

MARTIAL.

It is a great matter, and infinite blessing, to escape the pains of hell; and therefore, that condition is also very blessed which God sends us, to create and to confirm our hopes of that excellent mercy. 17. The sufferings of the saints are the sum of Christian philosophy: they are sent to wean us from the vanities and affections of this world, and to create in us strong desires of heaven; while God causes us to be here treated rudely, that we may long to be in our country, where God shall be our portion, and angels our companions, and Christ our perpetual feast, and never-ceasing joy shall be our conditions and entertainment. "O death, how bitter art thou to a man that is at ease and rest in his possessions!"* But he that is uneasy in his body, and unquiet in his possessions, vexed in his person, discomposed in his designs, who finds no pleasure, no rest here, will be glad to fix his heart where only he shall

have what he can desire, and what can make him happy. As long as the waters of persecutions are upon the earth, so long we dwell in the ark: but where the land is dry, the dove itself will be tempted to a wandering course of life, and never to return to the house of her safety. What shall I say more? 18. Christ nourisheth his church by sufferings. 19. He hath given a single blessing to all other graces; but to them that are "persecuted," he hath promised a double one: * it being a double favour, first to be innocent like Christ, and then to be afflicted like him. 20. Without this, the miracles of patience, which God hath given to fortify the spirits of the saints, would signify nothing. "Nemo enim tolerare tanta velit sine causa, nec potuit sine Deo: "As no man would bear evils without a cause, so no man could bear so much without the supporting hand of God;" and we need not the Holy Ghost to so great purposes, if our lot were not sorrow and persecution. And therefore, without this condition of suffering, the Spirit of God shall lose that glorious attribute of the Holy Ghost, "the Comforter." 21. Is there any thing more yet? Yes. They that have suffered or forsaken any lands for Christ, "shall sit upon the thrones, and judge the twelve tribes of Israel;" so said Christ to his disciples. Nay, "the saints shall judge angels," saith St. Paul: well therefore might St. Paul say, "I rejoice exceedingly in tribulation." It must be some great thing that must make an afflicted man to rejoice exceedingly; and so it was. For since patience is necessary that we receive the promise, and tribulation does work this; "for a short time it worketh the consummation of our hope; even an exceeding weight of glory;" we have no reason to "think it strange concerning the fiery trial, as if it were a strange thing." It can be no hurt. The church is like Moses' bush, when it is all on fire, it is not at all consumed, but made full of miracle, full of splendour, full of God: and unless we can find something that God cannot turn into joy, we have reason not only to be patient, but rejoice, when we are persecuted in a righteous cause: for love is the soul of Christianity, and suffering is the soul of love. To be innocent, and to be persecuted, are the body and soul of Christianity. "I, John, your brother, and partaker in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus," said St. John: † those were the titles and ornaments of his profes-

* Ecclus. iv. 11.

* Matt. v. 12.

† Rev. i. 9.

sion: that is, "I, John, your fellow Christian:" that is the plain song of the former descendant. He, therefore, that is troubled when he is afflicted in his outward man, that his inward man may grow strong, like the birds upon the ruins of the shell, and wonders that a good man should be a beggar, and a sinner be rich with oppression; that Lazarus should die at the gate of Dives, hungry and sick, unpitied and unrelieved; may as well wonder that carrion-crows should feed themselves fat upon a fair horse, far better than themselves; or that his own excellent body should be devoured by worms and the most contemptible creatures, though it lies there to be converted into glory. That man knows nothing of nature, or Providence, or Christianity, or the rewards of virtue, or the nature of its constitution, or the infirmities of man, or the mercies of God, or the arts and prudence of his loving-kindness, or the rewards of heaven, or the glorification of Christ's exalted humanity, or the precepts of the gospel, who is offended at the sufferings of God's dearest servants, or declines the honour and the mercy of sufferings in the cause of righteousness, for the securing of a virtue, for the imitation of Christ, and for the love of God, or the glories of immortality. It cannot, it ought not, it never will be otherwise; the world may as well cease to be measured by time, as good men to suffer affliction. I end this point with the words of St. Paul; "Let as many as are perfect be thus minded: and if any man be otherwise minded, God also will reveal this unto you;"* *this*, of the covenant of sufferings, concerning which the old prophets and holy men of the temple had many thoughts of heart: but in the full sufferings of the gospel there hath been a full revelation of the excellency of the sufferings. I have now given you an account of some of those reasons, why God hath so disposed that at this time, that is, under the period of the gospel, "Judgment must begin at the house of God:" and they are either *τιμωρίας*, or *δοκιμασίας*, or *μαρτύριον*, or imitation of Christ's *λύτρον*, "chastisements," or "trials," or "martyrdom," or "a conformity to the sufferings of the holy Jesus."

But now besides all the premises, we have another account to make concerning the prosperity of the wicked: "For if judgment first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" that is the question of the apostle, and is the great instrument

of comfort to persons ill-treated in the actions of the world. The first ages of the church lived upon promises and prophecies; and because some of them are already fulfilled for ever, and others are of a continual and a successive nature, and are verified by the actions of every day, therefore we and all the following ages live upon promises and experience. And although the servants of God have suffered many calamities from the tyranny and prevalency of evil men their enemies, yet still it is preserved as one of the fundamental truths of Christianity, that all the fair fortunes of the wicked are not enough to make them happy, nor the persecutions of the godly able to make a good man miserable, nor yet their sadnesses arguments of God's displeasure against them. For when a godly man is afflicted and dies, it is his work and his business; and if the wicked prevail, that is, if they persecute the godly, it is but that which was to be expected from them: for who are fit to be hangmen and executioners of public wrath, but evil and ungodly persons? And can it be a wonder, that they whose cause wants reason, should betake themselves to the sword? that what he cannot persuade, he may wrest? Only we must not judge of the things of God by the measures of men. *Τὰ ἀνθρώπινα*, "the things of men" have this world for their stage and their reward; but the "things of God" relate to the world to come: and for our own particulars we are to be guided by rule, and by the end of all; not by events intermedial, which are varied by a thousand irregular causes. For if all the evil men in the world were unprosperous,—as most certain they are,—and if all good persons were temporally blessed,—as most certainly they are not; yet this would not move us to become virtuous. "If an angel should come from heaven, or one rise from the dead" and preach repentance, or justice, and temperance, all this would be ineffectual to those, to whom the plain doctrines of God delivered in the law and the prophets will not suffice.

For why should God work a sign to make us to believe that we ought to do justice, if we already believe he hath commanded it? No man can need a miracle for the confirmation of that which he already believes to be the command of God: and when God hath expressly bidden us to "obey every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, the king as supreme, and his deputies as sent by him;" it is a strange infidelity to think that a rebellion against the ordinance of God can be sanctified

* Phil. iii. 15.

by the success and prevalency of them that destroy the authority, and the person, and the law, and the religion. The sin cannot grow to its height, if it be crushed at the beginning; unless it prosper in its progress, a man cannot easily fill up the measure of his iniquity: but then that sin swells to its fullness by prosperity, and grows too big to be suppressed without a miracle; it is so far from excusing or lessening the sin, that nothing doth so nurse the sin as it. It is not virtue, because it is prosperous; but if it had not been prosperous, the sin could never be so great.

Facere omnia sævè
Non impune licet, nisi dum facis.—LUCAN.

A little crime is sure to smart; but when the sinner is grown rich, and prosperous, and powerful, he gets impunity.

Jusque datum sceleri.—LUCAN.

But that is not innocence: and if prosperity were the voice of God to approve an action, then no man were vicious but he that is punished; and nothing were rebellion but that which can be easily suppressed; and no man were a pirate but he that robs with a little vessel; and no man could be a tyrant but he that is no prince; and no man an unjust invader of his neighbour's rights but he that is beaten and overthrown. Then the crime grows big and loud, then it calls to Heaven for vengeance, when it hath been long a growing, when it hath thrived under the devil's managing; when God hath long suffered it, and with patience, in vain expecting the repentance of a sinner. "He that treasures up wrath, against the day of wrath," that man hath been a prosperous, that is, an unpunished, and a thriving sinner: but then it is the sin that thrives, not the man: and that is the mistake upon this whole question; for the sin cannot thrive, unless the man goes on without apparent punishment and restraint. And all that the man gets by it is, that by a continual course of sin he is prepared for an intolerable ruin. The Spirit of God bids us look upon the end of these men; not the way they walk, or the instruments of that pompous death. When Epaminondas was asked which of the three was happiest, himself, Chabrias, or Iphicrates, he bid the man stay till they were all dead; for till then that question could not be answered. He that had seen the Vandals besiege the city of Hippo, and had known the barbarousness of that unchristened people, and had observed that St. Austin with all his

prayers and vows could not obtain peace in his own days, not so much as a reprieve for the persecution, and then had observed St. Austin die with grief that very night, would have perceived his calamity more visible than the reward of his piety and holy religion. When Lewis, surnamed Pius, went his voyage to Palestine upon a holy end, and for the glory of God, to fight against the Saracens and Turks and Mamelukes, the world did promise to themselves that a good cause should thrive in the hands of so holy a man; but the event was far otherwise: his brother Robert was killed, and his army destroyed, and himself taken prisoner, and the money which by his mother was sent for his redemption was cast away in a storm, and he was exchanged for the last town the Christians had in Egypt, and brought home the cross of Christ upon his shoulder in a real pressure and participation of his Master's sufferings. When Charles the Fifth went to Algiers to suppress pirates and unchristened villains, the cause was more confident than the event was prosperous: and when he was almost ruined in a prodigious storm, he told the minutes of the clock, expecting that at midnight, when religious persons rose to matins, he should be eased by the benefit of their prayers; but the providence of God trod upon those waters, and left no footsteps for discovery; his navy was beat in pieces, and his design ended in dishonour, and his life almost lost by the bargain. Was ever cause more baffled than the Christian cause by the Turks in all Asia and Africa, and some parts of Europe, if to be persecuted and afflicted be reckoned a calamity? What prince was ever more unfortunate than Henry the Sixth of England? and yet that age saw none more pious and devout. And the title of the house of Lancaster was advanced against the right of York for three descents. But then what was the end of these things? The persecuted men were made saints, and their memories were preserved in honour, and their souls shall reign for ever. And some good men were engaged in a wrong cause, and the good cause was sometimes managed by evil men; till that the suppressed cause was lifted up by God in the hands of a young and prosperous prince, and at last both interests were satisfied in the conjunction of two roses, which was brought to issue by a wonderful chain of causes managed by the Divine Providence. And there is no age, no history, no state, no

great change in the world, but hath ministered an example of an afflicted truth, and a prevailing sin; for I will never more call that sinner prosperous, who, after he hath been permitted to finish his business, shall die and perish miserably; for at the same rate we may envy the happiness of a poor fisherman, who, while his nets were drying, slept upon the rock, and dreamed that he was made a king; on a sudden starts up, and leaping for joy, falls down from the rock, and in the place of his imaginary felicities, loses his little portion of pleasure and innocent solaces he had from the sound sleep and little cares of his humble cottage.

And what is the prosperity of the wicked? To dwell in fine houses, or to command armies, or to be able to oppress their brethren, or to have much wealth to look on, or many servants to feed, or much business to despatch, and great cares to master; these things are of themselves neither good nor bad. But consider, would any man amongst us, looking and considering beforehand, kill his lawful king, to be heir of all that which I have named? Would any of you choose to have God angry with you upon these terms? Would any of you be a perjured man for it all? A wise man or a good would not choose it. Would any of you die an atheist, that you might live in plenty and power? I believe you tremble to think of it. It cannot therefore be a happiness to thrive upon the stock of a great sin. For if any man should contract with an impure spirit, to give his soul up at a certain day, it may be twenty years hence, upon the condition he might, for twenty years, have his vain desires; should we not think that person infinitely miserable? Every prosperous, thriving sinner is in the same condition: within these twenty years he shall be thrown into the portion of devils, but shall never come out thence in twenty millions of years. His wealth must needs sit uneasy upon him, that remembers that within a short space he shall be extremely miserable; and if he does not remember it, he does but secure it the more. And that God defers the punishment, and suffers evil men to thrive in the opportunities of their sin, it may and does serve many ends of providence and mercy, but serves no end that any evil men can reasonably wish or propound to themselves eligible.

Bias said well to a vicious person, "Non metuo ne non sis daturus pœnas, sed metuo

ne id non sim visurus;" "He was sure the man should be punished, he was not sure he should live to see it." And though the Messenians that were betrayed and slain by Aristocrates, in the battle of Cyprus, were not made alive again; yet the justice of God was admired, and treason infinitely disgraced, when, twenty years after, the treason was discovered, and the traitor punished with a horrid death. Lyciscus gave up the Orchomenians to their enemies, having first wished his feet, which he then dipped in water, might rot off, if he were not true to them; and yet his feet did not rot till those men were destroyed, and of a long time after; and yet at last they did. "Slay them not, O Lord, lest my people forget it," saith David. If punishment were instantly and totally inflicted, it would be but a sudden and single document; but a slow and lingering judgment, and a wrath breaking out in the next age, is like a universal proposition, teaching our posterity that God was angry all the while, that he had a long indignation in his breast, that he would not forget to take vengeance. And it is a demonstration, that even the prosperous sins of the present age will find the same period in the Divine revenge, when men see a judgment upon the nephews for the sins of their grandfathers, though in other instances, and for sins acted in the days of their ancestors.

We know that when, in Henry the Eighth or Edward the Sixth's days, some great men pulled down churches and built palaces, and robbed religion of its just encouragements and advantages; the men that did it were sacrilegious; and we find also, that God hath been punishing that great sin ever since; and hath displayed to so many generations of men, to three or four descents of children, that those men could not be esteemed happy in their great fortunes, against whom God was so angry, that he would show his displeasure for a hundred years together. When Herod had killed the babes of Bethlehem, it was seven years before God called him to an account; but he that looks upon the end of that man, would rather choose the fate of the oppressed babes, than of the prevailing and triumphant tyrant. It was forty years before God punished the Jews, for their execrable murder committed upon the person of their King, the holy Jesus; and it was so long, that when it did happen, many men attributed it to their killing of St. James, their bishop, and seemed to forget the

greater crime. But "Non eventu rerum, sed fide verborum stamus;" "We are to stand to the truth of God's word, not to the event of things:"—because God hath given us a rule, but hath left the judgment to himself; and we die so quickly, (and God measures all things by his standard of eternity, and "one thousand years to God is as but one day,") that we are not competent persons to measure the times of God's account, and the returns of judgment. We are dead before the arrow comes; but the man escapes not, unless his soul can die, or that God cannot punish him. "Ducunt in bonis dies suos, et in momento descendunt ad infernum," that is their fate: "They spend their days in plenty, and in a moment descend into hell."* In the mean time they drink, and forget their sorrow; but they are condemned: they have drunk their hemlock; but the poison does not work yet: the bait is in their mouths, and they are sportive; but the hook hath struck their nostrils, and they shall never escape the ruin. And let no man call the man fortunate, because his execution is deferred for a few days, when the very deferring shall increase and ascertain the condemnation.

But if we should look under the skirt of the prosperous and prevailing tyrant, we should find, even in the days of his joys, such allays and abatements of his pleasure, as may serve to represent him presently miserable, besides his final infelicities. For I have seen a young and healthful person warm and ruddy under a poor and thin garment, when at the same time an old rich person hath been cold and paralytic under a load of sables and the skins of foxes. It is the body that makes the clothes warm, not the clothes the body: and the spirit of a man makes felicity and content, not any spoils of a rich fortune wrapped about a sickly and an uneasy soul. Apollodorus was a traitor and a tyrant, and the world wondered to see a bad man have so good a fortune; but knew not that he nourished scorpions in his breast, and that his liver and his heart were eaten up with spectres and images of death; his thoughts were full of interruptions, his dreams of illusions; his fancy was abused with real troubles and fantastic images, imagining that he saw the Scythians flaying him alive, his daughters like pillars of fire dancing round about

a cauldron, in which himself was boiling, and that his heart accused itself to be the cause of all these evils. And although all tyrants have not imaginative and fantastic consciences, yet all tyrants shall die and come to judgment; and such a man is not to be feared, not at all to be envied. And, in the mean time, can he be said to escape who hath an unquiet conscience, who is already designed for hell, he whom God hates, and the people curse, and who hath an evil name, and against whom all good men pray, and many desire to fight, and all wish him destroyed, and some contrive to do it? Is this man a blessed man? Is that man prosperous who hath stolen a rich robe, and is in fear to have his throat cut for it, and is fain to defend it with greatest difficulty and the greatest danger? Does not he drink more sweetly that takes his beverage in an earthen vessel, than he that looks and searches into his golden chalices for fear of poison, and looks pale at every sudden noise, and sleeps in armour, and trusts nobody, and does not trust God for his safety, but does greater wickedness only to escape awhile unpunished for his former crimes? "Auro bibitur venenum." No man goes about to poison a poor man's pitcher, nor lays plots to forage his little garden made for the hospital of two bee-hives, and the feasting of a few Pythagorean herb-eaters.

—οὐκ ἴσασιν ὄσφρα κλίον ἦσαν πάντος,
Οἶδ' ὄσον ἐν μάλαχῃ τε καὶ ἀσφοδέωρ μίγ' ὄνειαρ.
HESIOD. Ergy.

They that admire the happiness of a prosperous, prevailing tyrant, know not the felicities that dwell in innocent hearts, and poor cottagers, and small fortunes.

A Christian, so long as he preserves his integrity to God and to religion, is bold in all accidents, he dares die, and he dares be poor; but if the persecutor dies, he is undone. Riches are beholden to our fancies for their value; and yet the more we value the riches, the less good they are, and by an over-valuing affection they become our danger and our sin: but, on the other side, death and persecution lose all the ill that they can have, if we do not set an edge upon them by our fears and by our vices. From ourselves riches take their wealth, and death sharpens his arrows at our forges, and we may set their prices as we please; and if we judge by the Spirit of God, we must account them happy that suffer; and, therefore, that the prevailing oppressor, tyrant,

* Job. xxi. 13.

or persecutor, is infinitely miserable. Only let God choose by what instruments he will govern the world, by what instances himself would be served, by what ways he will chastise the failings, and exercise the duties, and reward the virtues, of his servants. God sometimes punishes one sin with another; pride with adultery, drunkenness with murder, carelessness with irreligion, idleness with vanity, penury with oppression, irreligion with blasphemy, and that with atheism: and therefore it is no wonder if he punishes a sinner by a sinner. And if David made use of villains and profligate persons to frame an army; and Timoleon destroyed the Carthaginians by the help of soldiers, who themselves were sacrilegious; and physicians use poison to expel poisons; and all commonwealths take the basest of men to be their instruments of justice and executions: we shall have no further cause to wonder, if God raises up the Assyrian to punish the Israelites, and the Egyptians to destroy the Assyrians, and the Æthiopians to scourge the Egyptians; and at last his own hand shall separate the good from the bad in the day of separation, in the day when he makes up his jewels.

Ποῦ ποτε κερανοὶ Διός,
Ποῦ φαέθων ἄλιος,
Εἰ ταῦτ' ἐφορώντες
Κρύπτουσιν ἔγχλοιοι;

SOPH. Elect.

God hath many ends of providence to serve by the hands of violent and vicious men. By them he not only checks the beginning errors and approaching sins of his predestinate; but by them he changes governments, and alters kingdoms, and is terrible among the sons of men. For since it is one of his glories to convert evil into good, and that good into his own glory, and by little and little to open and to turn the leaves and various folds of providence: it becomes us only to dwell in duty, and to be silent in our thoughts, and wary in our discourses of God; and let him choose the time when he will prune his vine, and when he will burn his thorns: how long he will smite his servants, and when he will destroy his enemies. In the days of the primitive persecutions, what prayers, how many sighings, how deep groans, how many bottles of tears, did God gather into his repository, all praying for ease and deliverances, for halcyon days and fine sunshine, “for nursing fathers and

nursing mothers,” for public assemblies and open and solemn sacraments: and it was three hundred years before God would hear their prayers: and all that while the persecuted people were in a cloud, but they were safe, and knew it not; and God “kept for them the best wine until the last:” they ventured for a crown, and fought valiantly; they were “faithful to the death, and they received a crown of life;” and they are honoured by God, by angels, and by men. Whereas in all the prosperous ages of the church, we hear no stories of such multitudes of saints, no record of them, no honour to their memorial, no accident extraordinary; scarce any made illustrious with a miracle, which in the days of suffering were frequent and popular. And after all our fears of sequestration and poverty, of death or banishment, our prayers against the persecution and troubles under it, we may please to remember, that twenty years hence (it may be sooner, it will not be much longer) all our cares and our troubles shall be dead; and then it shall be inquired how we did bear our sorrows, and who inflicted them, and in what cause: and then he shall be happy that keeps company with the persecuted; and the “persecutors shall be shut out amongst dogs and unbelievers.”

He that shrinks from the yoke of Christ, from the burden of the Lord, upon his death-bed will have cause to remember, that by that time all his persecutions would have been past, and that then there would remain nothing for him but rest, and crowns, and sceptres. When Lysimachus, impatient and overcome with thirst, gave up his kingdom to the Getæ, being a captive, and having drunk a lusty draught of wine, and his thirst now gone, he fetched a deep sigh, and said, “Miserable man that I am, who for so little pleasure, the pleasure of one draught, lost so great a kingdom!” Such will be their case, who, being impatient of suffering, change their persecution into wealth and an easy fortune: they shall find themselves miserable in the separations of eternity, losing the glories of heaven for so little a pleasure, “*il-liberalis et ingratiæ voluptatis causa*,” as Plutarch calls it, “for illiberal and ungrateful pleasure;” in which when a man hath entered, he loses the rights and privileges and honours of a good man, and gets nothing that is profitable and useful to holy purposes, or necessary to any; but is already in a state so hateful and miserable, that he

needs neither God nor man to be a revenger, having already under his splendid robe of miseries enough to punish and betray this hypocrisy of his condition; being troubled with the memory of what is past, distrustful of the present, suspicious of the future, vicious in their lives, and full of pageantry and outsides, but in their death, miserable with calamities, real, eternal, and insupportable. And if it could be otherwise, virtue itself would be reproached with the calamity.

Εἰ γὰρ ὁ μὲν θανὼν
Γὰ τε καὶ οὐδὲν ὦν
Κρίσεται τάλας
Οἱ δὲ μὴ παύειν
Δώσουσ' ἀντεφόρους δίκας,
Ἐρῆσ' ἂν αἰδῶς ἀπάντων
τ' εὐδία βία θνητῶν.

SOPH. Elect.

I end with the advice of St. Paul; "In nothing be terrified of your adversaries; which to them is an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God."

SERMON XXXVI.

PART III.

BUT now, that the persecuted may at least be pitied, and assisted in that of which they are capable, I shall propound some rules by which they may learn to gather grapes from their thorns, and figs from their thistles; crowns from the cross, glory from dishonour. As long as they belong to God, it is necessary that they suffer persecution or sorrow; no rules can teach them to avoid that: but the evil of the suffering and the danger must be declined, and we must use some such spiritual arts as are apt to turn them into health and medicine. For it were a hard thing, first to be scourged, and then to be crucified; to suffer here, and to perish hereafter; through the fiery trial and purging fire of afflictions to pass into hell that is intolerable, and to be prevented with the following cautions: lest a man suffer like a fool and a malefactor, or inherit damnation for the reward of his imprudent suffering.

I. They that suffer any thing for Christ, and are ready to die for him, let them do nothing against him. For certainly they think too highly of martyrdom, who believe

it able to excuse all the evils of a wicked life. A man may "give his body to be burned, and yet have no charity:" and he that dies without charity, dies without God; "for God is love." And when those who fought in the days of the Maccabees for the defence of true religion, and were killed in those holy wars, yet, being dead, were found having about their necks *ἐρωμαρα*, or "pendants consecrated" to idols of the Jamnenses; it much allayed the hope, which, by their dying in so good a cause, was entertained concerning their beatifical resurrection. He that overcomes his fear of death, does well; but if he hath not also overcome his lust, or his anger, his baptism of blood will not wash him clean. Many things make a man willing to die in a good cause; public reputation, hope of reward, gallantry of spirit, a confident resolution, and a masculine courage; or a man may be vexed into a stubborn and unrelenting suffering: but nothing can make a man live well but the grace and the love of God. But those persons are infinitely condemned by their last act, who profess their religion to be worth dying for, and yet are so unworthy as not to live according to its institution. It were a rare felicity, if every good cause could be managed by good men only; but we have found that evil men have spoiled a good cause, but never that a good cause made those evil men good and holy. If the governor of Samaria had crucified Simon Magus for receiving Christian baptism, he had no more died a martyr than he lived a saint. For dying is not enough, and dying in a good cause is not enough; but then only we receive a crown of martyrdom, when our death is the seal of our life, and our life is a continual testimony of our duty, and both give testimony of the excellencies of religion, and glorify the grace of God. If a man be gold, the fire purges him; but it burns him if he be, like stubble, cheap, light, and useless: for martyrdom is the consummation of love. But then it must be supposed, that this grace must have had its beginning, and its several stages and periods, and must have passed through labour to zeal, through all the regions of duty to the perfections of sufferings. And therefore, it is a sad thing to observe, how some empty souls will please themselves with being of such a religion, or such a cause; and though they dishonour their religion, or weigh down the cause with the prejudice of sin, believe all is swallowed up by one honourable name,

or the appellative of one virtue. If God had forbid nothing but heresy and treason, then to have been a loyal man, or of a good belief, had been enough: but he that forbade rebellion, forbids also swearing and covetousness, rapine and oppression, lying and cruelty. And it is a sad thing to see a man not only to spend his time, and his wealth, and his money, and his friends, upon his lust, but to spend his sufferings too, to let the canker-worm of a deadly sin devour his martyrdom. He therefore that suffers in a good cause, let him be sure to walk worthy of that honour to which God hath called him; let him first deny his sins, and then "deny himself," and then he may "take up his cross and follow Christ;" ever remembering, that no man pleases God in his death who hath walked perversely in his life.

2. He that suffers in a cause of God, must be indifferent what the instance be, so that he may serve God. I say, he must be indifferent in the cause, so it be a cause of God; and indifferent in the suffering, so it be of God's appointment. For some men have a natural aversion to some vices or virtues, and a natural affection to others. One man will die for his friend, and another will die for his money; some men hate to be a rebel, and will die for their prince; but tempt them to suffer for the cause of the church, in which they were baptized, and in whose communion they look for heaven, and then they are tempted, and fall away. Or if God hath chosen the cause for them, and they have accepted it, yet themselves will choose the suffering. Right or wrong, some men will not endure a prison; and some that can, yet choose the heaviest part of the burden, the pollution and stain of a sin, rather than lose their money; and some had rather die twice than lose their estate once. In this our rule is easy. Let us choose God, and let God choose all the rest for us; it being indifferent to us, whether by poverty or shame, by a lingering or a sudden death, by the hands of a tyrant-prince, or the despised hands of a base usurper or a rebel, we receive the crown, and do honour to God and to religion.

3. Whoever suffer in a cause of God, from the hands of cruel and unreasonable men, let them not be too forward to prognostigate evil and death to their enemies; but let them solace themselves in the assurance of the Divine justice, by general consideration, and, in particular, pray for them that are our persecutors. Nebuchadnezzar

was the rod in the hand of God against the Tyrians, and because he destroyed that city, God rewarded him with the spoil of Egypt: and it is not always certain that God will be angry with every man by whose hand affliction comes upon us. And sometimes two armies have met, and fought, and the wisest man amongst them could not say, that either of the princes had prevaricated either the laws of God or of nations; and yet, it may be, some superstitious, easy, and half-witted people of either side wonder that their enemies live so long. And there are very many cases of war, concerning which God hath declared nothing: and although in such cases, he that yields and quits his title, rather than his charity, and the care of so many lives, is the wisest and the best man; yet, if neither of them will do so, let us not decree judgments from heaven, in cases where we have no word from heaven, and thunder from our tribunals, where no voice of God hath declared the sentence. But in such cases, where there is an evident tyranny or injustice, let us do like the good Samaritan, who dressed the wounded man, but never pursued the thief; let us do charity to the afflicted, and bear the cross with nobleness, and "look up to Jesus, who endured the cross, and despised the shame:" but let us not take upon us the office of God, who will judge the nations righteously, and when he hath delivered up our bodies, will rescue our souls from the hands of unrighteous judges. I remember, in the story that Plutarch tells, concerning the soul of Thespisus, that it met with a prophetic genius, who told him many things that should happen afterwards in the world; and the strangest of all was this: That there should be a king, "qui bonus cum sit, tyrannide vitam finiet;" "an excellent prince and a good man, should be put to death by a rebel and usurping power:"—and yet, that prophetic soul could not tell, that those rebels should, within three years, die miserable and accursed deaths. And in that great prophecy, recorded by St. Paul, "That in the last days perilous times should come, and men should be traitors and selfish, having forms of godliness, and creeping into houses;"* yet he could not tell us when these men should come to final shame and ruin: only by a general signification, he gave this sign of comfort to God's persecuted servants: "but they shall proceed no farther, for their

* 2 Tim. iii. 1, &c.

folly shall be manifest unto all men ;” * that is, at long running, they shall shame themselves, and, “ for the elect’s sake, those days of evil shall be shortened.” But you and I may be dead first : and therefore, only remember, that they that, with a credulous heart and a loose tongue, are too decretory and enunciative of speedy judgments to their enemies, turn their religion into revenge, and therefore do believe it will be so ; because they vehemently desire it should be so, which all wise and good men ought to suspect, as less agreeing with that charity, which overcomes all the sins and all the evils of the world, and sits down and rests in glory.

4. Do not trouble yourself by thinking how much you are afflicted, but consider how much you make of it : for reflex acts upon the suffering itself can lead to nothing but to pride, or to impatience, to temptation, or to apostasy. He that measures the grains and scruples of his persecution, will soon sit down and call for ease, or for a reward ; will think the time long, or his burden great ; will be apt to complain of his condition, or set a greater value upon his person. Look not back upon him that strikes thee, but upward to God that supports thee, and forward to the crown that is set before thee : and then consider, if the loss of thy estate hath taught thee to despise the world, whether thy poor fortune hath made thee poor in spirit ; and if thy uneasy prison sets thy soul at liberty, and knocks off the fetters of a worse captivity. For then the rod of sufferings turns into crowns and sceptres, when every suffering is a precept, and every change of condition produces a holy resolution, and the state of sorrows makes the resolution actual and habitual, permanent and persevering. For as the silkworm eateth itself out of a seed to become a little worm ; and there feeding on the leaves of mulberries, it grows till its coat be off, and then works itself into a house of silk ; then casting its pearly seeds for the young to breed, it leaveth its silk for man, and dieth all white and winged in the shape of a flying creature : so is the progress of souls. When they are regenerate by baptism, and have cast off their first stains and the skin of worldly vanities, by feeding on the leaves of Scriptures, and the fruits of the vine, and the joys of the sacrament, they encircle themselves in the rich garments of holy and

virtuous habits ; then, by leaving their blood, which is the church’s seed, to raise up a new generation to God, they leave a blessed memory, and fair example, and are themselves turned into angels, whose felicity is to do the will of God, as their employment was in this world to suffer. “ Fiat voluntas tua ” is our daily prayer, and that is of a passive signification ; “ Thy will be done ” upon us : and if from thence also we translate it into an active sense, and by suffering evils increase in our aptnesses to do well, we have done the work of Christians, and shall receive the reward of martyrs.

5. Let our suffering be entertained by a direct election, not by collateral aids and fantastic assistances. It is a good refreshment to a weak spirit to suffer in good company : and so Phocion encouraged a timorous Greek, condemned to die ; and he bid him be confident, because that he was to die with Phocion : and when forty martyrs in Cappadocia suffered, and that a soldier, standing by, came and supplied the place of the one apostate, who fell from his crown, being overcome with pain, it added warmth to the frozen confessors, and turned them into consummate martyrs. But if martyrdom were but a fantastic thing, or relied upon vain accidents and irregular chances, it were then necessary to be assisted by images of things, and any thing less than the proper instruments of religion : but since it is the greatest action of the religion, and relies upon the most excellent promises, and its formality is to be an action of love, and nothing is more firmly chosen (by an after-election at least) than an act of love ; to support martyrdom, or the duty of sufferings, by false arches and exterior circumstances, is to build a tower upon the beams of the sun, or to set up a wooden ladder to climb up to heaven ; the soul cannot attain so huge and unimaginable felicities by chance and instruments of fancy. And let no man hope to glorify God and go to heaven by a life of sufferings, unless he first begin in the love of God, and from thence derive his choice, his patience, and confidence, in the causes of virtue and religion, like beams, and warmth, and influence, from the body of the sun. Some there are that fall under the burden, when they are pressed hard, because they use not the proper instruments in fortifying the will in patience and resignation, but endeavour to lighten the burden in imagination ; and when these temporary supporters fail, the building that

* 2 Tim. iii. 9.

relies upon them, rushes into coldness, recidivation, and lukewarmness: and, among all instances, that of the main question of the text is of greatest power to abuse imprudent and less severe persons.

Nullos esse Deos, inane cælum,
Affirmat Cælius; probatque,
Quòd se videt, dum negat hæc, beatum.
MARTIAL.

When men choose a good cause upon confidence that an ill one cannot thrive, that is, not for the love of virtue or duty to God, but for profit and secular interests, they are easily lost, when they see the wickedness of the enemy to swell up by impunity and success to a greater evil: for they have not learned to distinguish a great growing sin from a thriving and prosperous fortune.

Ulla si juris tibi pejerati
Pœna, Barine, nocuisset unquam;
Dente si nigro fieres, vel uno
Turpior ungui;
Crederem——— HOR.

They that believe and choose because of idle fears and unreasonable fancies, or by mistaking the accounts of a man for the measures of God, or dare not commit treason for fear of being blasted; may come to be tempted when they see a sinner thrive, and are scandalized all the way if they die before him; or they may come to receive some accidental hardnesses; and every thing in the world may spoil such persons, and blast their resolutions. Take in all the aids you can, and, if the fancy of the standers-by, or the hearing of a cock crow, can add any collateral aids to thy weakness, refuse it not: but let thy state of sufferings begin with choice, and be confirmed with knowledge, and rely upon love, and the aids of God, and the expectations of heaven, and the present sense of duty; and then the action will be as glorious in the event, as it is prudent in the enterprise, and religious in the prosecution.

6. Lastly, when God hath brought thee into Christ's school, and entered thee into a state of sufferings, remember the advantages of that state: consider, how unsavoury the things of the world appear to thee, when thou art under the arrest of death; remember, with what comforts the Spirit of God assists thy spirit: set down in thy heart all those intercourses, which happen between God and thy own soul, the sweetnesses of religion, the vanity of sin's appearances, thy newly-entertained resolutions, thy longings

after heaven, and all the things of God. And if God finishes thy persecutions with death, proceed in them: if he restores thee to the light of the world, and a temporal refreshment, change but the scene of sufferings in an active life, and converse with God upon the same principles, on which, in thy state of sufferings, thou didst build all the parts of duty. If God restores thee to thy estate, be not less in love with heaven, nor more in love with the world; let thy spirit be now as humble as before it was broken: and, to whatsoever degree of sobriety or austerities thy suffering condition did enforce thee, if it may be turned into virtue, when God restores thee, (because then it was necessary thou shouldst entertain it by an after-choice,) do it now also by a pre-election; that thou mayest say with David, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, for thereby I have learned thy commandments." And Paphnutius did not do his soul more advantage, when he lost his right eye, and suffered his left knee to be cut off for Christianity and the cause of God, than that, in the days of Constantine and the church's peace, he lived not in the toleration, but in the active piety of a martyr's condition; not now a confessor of the faith only, but of the charity of a Christian. We may every one live to have need of these rules; and I do not at all think it safe to pray against it, but to be armed for it: and to whatsoever degree of sufferings God shall call us, we see what advantages God intends for us, and what advantages we ourselves may make of it. I now proceed to make use of all the former discourse, by removing it a little farther even into its utmost spiritual sense: which the apostle does in the last words of the text; "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the wicked and the sinner appear?"

These words are taken out of the Proverbs,* according to the translation of the LXX. "If the righteous scarcely be safe." Where the word *μόλις* implies that he is safe; but by "intermedial difficulties;" and *σώζεσθαι*, he is safe in the midst of his persecutions; they may disturb his rest, and discompose his fancy, but they are like the fiery chariot to Elias; he is encircled with fire, and rare circumstances and strange usages, but is carried up to heaven in a robe of flames. And so was Noah safe when the flood came; and was the great type and instance too of the verification of this pro-

* Chap. xi. 31.

position; he was δ δίκαιος and δικαιοσύνης κήρυξ, he was put into a strange condition, perpetually wandering, shut up in a prison of wood, living upon faith, having never had the experience of being safe in floods. And so have I often seen young and unskilful persons sitting in a little boat, when every little wave sporting about the sides of the vessel, and every motion and dancing of the barge, seemed a danger, and made them cling fast upon their fellows; and yet all the while they were as safe as if they sat under a tree, while a gentle wind shook the leaves into a refreshment and a cooling shade: and the unskilful, inexperienced Christian shrieks out, whenever his vessel shakes, thinking it always a danger, that the watery pavement is not stable and resident, like a rock; and yet all his danger is in himself, none at all from without: for he is indeed moving upon the waters, but fastened to a rock; faith is his foundation, and hope is his anchor, and death is his harbour, and Christ is his pilot, and heaven is his country; and all the evils of poverty or affronts, of tribunals and evil judges, of fears and sadder apprehensions, are but like the loud wind blowing from the right point, they make a noise, and drive faster to the harbour; and if we do not leave the ship, and leap into the sea; quit the interests of religion, and run to the securities of the world; cut our cables, and dissolve our hopes; grow impatient, and hug a wave, and die in its embraces; we are as safe at sea, safer in the storm which God sends us, than in a calm when we are befriended with the world.

2. But μάλις may also signify “rarò;” “If the righteous is *seldom* safe:” which implies that sometimes he is, even in a temporal sense. God sometimes sends halcyon days to his church, and when he promised “kings and queens to be their nurses,” he intended it for a blessing; and yet this blessing does oftentimes so ill succeed, that it is the greater blessing of the two, not to give us that blessing too freely. But μάλις, this is “*scarcely*” done; and yet sometimes it is, and God sometimes refreshes languishing piety with such arguments as comply with our infirmities: and though it be a shame to us to need such allevatives and infant-gauds, such which the heathen world and the first rudiments of the Israelites did need; God, who pities us, and will be wanting in nothing to us, as he corroborates our willing spirits with proper entertainments, so also he supports our weak flesh, and not only cheers an

afflicted soul with beams of light, and antepasts and earnest of glory, but is kind also to our man of flesh and weakness; and to this purpose he sends thunderbolts from heaven upon evil men, dividing their tongues, infatuating their counsels, cursing their posterity, and ruining their families.

—ἀλλοτε δ' αὐτε

Ἡ τῶν γε στρατῶν εὐρὴν ἀπώλεσεν, ἢ ὄγε τεύχος,
Ἡ νίας ἐν πόντῳ Κρονίδης ἀποτινύται αὐτῶν.

HESIOD. Ergy.

“Sometimes God destroys their armies, or their strongholds, sometimes breaks their ships.” But this happens either for the weakness of some of his servants, and their too great aptness to be offended at a prosperous iniquity, or when he will not suffer the evil to grow too great, or for some end of his providence; and yet, if this should be very often, or last long, God knows the danger, and we should feel the inconvenience. Of all the types of Christ, only Joshua and Solomon were noted to be generally prosperous: and yet the fortune of the first was to be in perpetual war and danger; but the other was as himself could wish it, rich, and peaceful, and powerful, and healthful, and learned, and beloved, and strong, and amorous, and voluptuous, and so he fell; and though his fall was, yet his recovery was not, upon record.

And yet the worst of evils that happen to the godly, is better, temporally better, than the greatest external felicity of the wicked: that in all senses the question may be considerable and argumentative, “If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly appear?” If it be hard with good men, with the evil it shall be far worse. But see the difference. The godly man is timorous, and yet safe; tossed by the seas, and yet safe at anchor; impaired by evil accidents, and righted by divine comforts; made sad with a black cloud, and refreshed with a more gentle influence; abused by the world, and yet an heir of heaven; hated by men, and beloved by God; loses one house, and gets a hundred; he quits a convenient lodging-room, and purchases a glorious country: is forsaken by his friends, but never by a good conscience; he fares hardly, and sleeps sweetly; he flies from his enemies, but hath no distracting fears; he is full of thought, but of no amazement; it is his business to be troubled, and his portion to be comforted; he hath nothing to afflict him, but the loss of that which might be his danger, but can never be his good: and in

the recompense of this he hath God for his Father, Christ for his Captain, the Holy Ghost for his supporter; so that he shall have all the good which God can give him, and of all that good he hath the holy Trinity for an earnest and a gage for his maintenance at the present, and his portion to all eternity. But, though Paul and Silas sang psalms in prison, and under the hangman's whips, and in an earthquake; yet neither the jailer nor the persecuting magistrates could do so. For the prosperity of the wicked is like a winter's sun, or the joy of a condemned drunkard: it is a forgetfulness of his present danger and his future sorrows, nothing but imaginary arts of inadvertency; he sits in the gates of the city, and judges others, and is condemned himself; he is honoured by the passers-by, and is thought happy, but he sighs deeply; "he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them:" he commands an army, and is himself a slave to his passions; he sleeps because he needs it, and starts from his uneasy pillows which his thoughtful head hath discomposed; when he is waking, he dreams of greatness; when he sleeps, he dreams of spectres and illusions: he spoils a poor man of his lamb, and himself of his innocence and peace: and in every unjust purchase, himself is the greatest loser.

Ὅς δὲ πεν αὐτὸς ἔληται, ἀναδείξει πιθήσας,
Καὶ τε σμικρὸν ἔόν, τὸ ἔταχυσεν φίλον ἦτορ.
HESIOD. Erg.

For, just upon his oppression or injustice, he is turned a devil, and God's enemy, a wolf to his brother, a greedy admirer of the baits of fishes, and the bread of dogs; he is unsafe by reason of his sin: for he hath against him the displeasure of God, the justice of the laws, the shame of the sin, the revenge of the injured person; and God and men, the laws of nations and private societies, stand upon their defence against this man: he is unsafe in his rest, amazed in his danger, troubled in his labours, weary in his change, esteemed a base man, disgraced and scorned, feared and hated, flattered and derided, watched and suspected, and, it may be, dies in the middle of his purchase, and at the end is a fool, and leaves a curse to his posterity.

Τοῦ δὲ τ' ἀμαυροτέρῃ γενεῇ μετόπισθε λείπεται.
HESIOD, Erg.

'He leaves a generation of blacker children behind him;' so the poet describes the cursedness of their posterity: and their memory

sits down to eternal ages in dishonour. And by this time let them cast up their accounts, and see if, of all their violent purchases, they carry any thing with them to the grave but sin, and a guilty conscience, and a polluted soul; the anger of God, and the shame of men. And what help shall all those persons give to thee in thy flames, who divided and scattered that estate, for which thou diedst for ever?

Audire est operæ pretium, procedere rectè
Qui mœchis non vultis, ut omni parte labore;
Utque illis multo corrupta dolore voluptas,
Atque hæc rara cadat dura inter sæpe pericla.
HOR.

And let but a sober answer tell me, if any thing in the world be more distant either from goodness or happiness, than to scatter the plague of an accursed soul upon our dearest children; to make a universal curse; to be the fountain of mischief; to be such a person whom our children and nephews shall hate, and despise, and curse, when they groan under the burden of that plague, which their fathers' sins brought upon the family. If there were no other account to be given, it were highly enough to verify the intent of my text; "If the righteous scarcely be saved," or escape God's angry stroke, the wicked must needs be infinitely more miserable.

Νῦν δ' ἐγὼ μὲν αὐτὸς ἐν ἀνθρώποισι δίκαιος
ἔην, μὲν ἔμὸς υἱὸς, ἐπεὶ κακὸν ἀνδρα δίκαιον
ἔμμενα——
HES. Erg.

"Neither I nor my son" (said the oldest of the Greek poets) "would be virtuous, if to be a just person were all one as to be miserable." No, not only in the end of affairs, and at sunset, but all the day long, the godly man is happy, and the ungodly and the sinner are very miserable.

Pellitur a populo victus Cato; tristior ille est
Qui vicit, faciesque pudet rapuisse Catoni:
Namque hoc dedecus est populi, morumque ruina.
Non homo pulsus erat; sed in uno victa potestas
Romanumque decus——

And there needs no other argument to be added but this one great testimony; that though the godly are afflicted and persecuted, yet even they are blessed, and the persecutors are the most unsafe. They are essentially happy whom affliction cannot make miserable, but turns unto their advantages:

(Quis curam negat esse te Deorum,
Propter quem fuit innocens ruina?) MART.

And that is the state of the godly. And they are most intolerably accursed, who have no portions in the blessings of eternity, and yet cannot have comfort in the present purchases

of their sin, to whom even their sunshine brings a drought, and their fairest is their foulest weather: and that is the portion of the sinner and the ungodly. The godly are not made unhappy by their sorrows; and the wicked are such, whom prosperity itself cannot make fortunate.

3. And yet after all this, it is but *μόλις σώζεται*, not *μόλις σωθήσεται*, he “escapes but hardly” here: it will be well enough with him hereafter. Isaac digged three wells. The first was called “Contention;” for he drank the waters of strife, and digged the well with his sword. The second well was not altogether so hard a purchase, he got it with some trouble; but that being over, he had some room, and his fortune swelled, and he called his well “Enlargement.” But his third he called “Abundance;” and then he dipped his foot in oil, and drank freely as out of a river. Every good man first “sows in tears; he first drinks of the bottle of his own tears, sorrow and trouble, labour and disquiet, strivings and temptations: but if they pass through a torrent, and virtue becomes easy and habitual, they find their hearts enlarged and made sprightly by the visitations of God, and refreshment of his Spirit; and then their hearts are enlarged, they know how to gather the down and softnesses from the sharpest thistles.

*Τῆς δ' ἀρετῆς ἰδρῶτα θεοὶ προπαράδιδεν ἔδωκαν
μακρὸς δὲ καὶ ὀρθίος ὁμοῦ ἐπ' αὐτῆν,
καὶ τρηχὺς τὸ πρῶτον*

At first we cannot serve God but by passions and doing violence to all our wilder inclinations, and suffering the violence of tyrants and unjust persons.

*Ἐπὴν δ' εἰς ἄκρον ἵκηται,
Ῥηιδίη δ' ἠπεινὰ πίνει, χαλεπή περ εἶσα.*
HES. EGY.

The second days of virtue are pleasant and easy in the midst of all the appendant labours. But when the Christian's last pit is digged, when he is descended to his grave, and hath finished his state of sorrows and suffering; then God opens the river of abundance, the rivers of life and never-ceasing felicities. And this is that which God promised to his people: “I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.”* So much as moments are exceeded by eternity, and the sighing of a man by the joys of an angel, and a salutary frown by the light of God's

countenance, a few groans by the infinite and eternal hallelujahs; so much are the sorrows of the godly to be undervalued in respect of what is deposited for them in the treasures of eternity. Their sorrows can die, but so cannot their joys. And if the blessed martyrs and confessors were asked concerning their past sufferings and their present rest, and the joys of their certain expectation, you should hear them glory in nothing but in the mercies of God, and “in the cross of the Lord Jesus.” Every chain is a ray of light, and every prison is a palace, and every loss is the purchase of a kingdom, and every affront in the cause of God is an eternal honour, and every day of sorrow is a thousand years of comfort, multiplied with a never-ceasing numeration; days without night, joys without sorrow, sanctity without sin, charity without stain, possession without fear, society without envying, communication of joys without lessening: and they shall dwell in a blessed country, where an enemy never entered, and from whence a friend never went away. Well might David say, “*Funes ceciderunt mihi in præclaris,*” “The cords” of my tent, my ropes, and the sorrow of my pilgrimage, “fell to me in a good ground, and I have a goodly heritage.”—And when persecution hews a man down from a high fortune to an even one, or from thence to the face of the earth, or from thence to the grave; a good man is but preparing for a crown, and the tyrant does but first knock off the fetters of the soul, the manacles of passion and desire, sensual loves and lower appetites: and if God suffers him to finish the persecution, then he can but dismantle the soul's prison, and let the soul forth to fly to the mountains of rest: and all the intermedial evils are but like the Persian punishments; the executioner tore off their hairs, and rent their silken mantles, and discomposed their curious dressings, and lightly touched their skin; yet the offender cried out with most bitter exclamations, while his fault was expiated with a ceremony and without blood. So does God to his servants, he rends their upper garments, and strips them of their unnecessary wealth, and ties them to physic and salutary discipline; and they cry out under usages, which have nothing but the outward sense and opinion of evil, not the real substance. But if we would take the measures of images, we must not take the height of the base, but the proportion of the members; nor yet measure the estates of men by their big-look-

* Isa. liv. 8.

ing supporter, or the circumstance of an exterior advantage, but by its proper commensuration in itself, as it stands in its order to eternity: and then the godly man that suffers sorrow and persecution, ought to be relieved by us, but needs not be pitied in the sum of affairs. But since the two estates of the world are measured by time and by eternity, and divided by joy and sorrow, and no man shall have his portion of joys in both durations; and the state of those men is insupportably miserable, who are fatted for slaughter, and are crowned like beasts for sacrifice; who are feared and fear, who cannot enjoy their purchases but by communications with others, and themselves have the least share, but themselves are alone in the misery and the saddest dangers, and they possess the whole portion of sorrows; to whom their prosperity gives but occasions to evil counsels, and strength to do mischief, or to nourish a serpent, or oppress a neighbour, or to nurse a lust, to increase folly, and treasure up calamity. And did ever any man see, or story tell, that any tyrant-prince kissed his rods and axes, his sword of justice, and his imperial ensigns of power? they shine like a taper, to all things but itself. But we read of many martyrs who kissed their chains, and hugged their stakes, and saluted their hangman with great endearments; and yet, abating the incursions of their seldom sins, these are their greatest evils; and such they are, with which a wise and a good man may be in love. And till the sinners and ungodly men can be so with their deep groans and broken sleeps, with the wrath of God and their portions of eternity; till they can rejoice in death and long for a resurrection, and with delight and a greedy hope can think of the day of judgment; we must conclude that their glass gems and finest pageantry, their splendid outsides and great powers of evil, cannot make amends for that estate of misery, which is their portion with a certainty as great as is the truth of God, and all the articles of the Christian creed. Miserable men are they, who cannot be blessed unless there be no day of judgment; who must perish, unless the word of God should fail. If that be all their hopes, then we may with a sad spirit and a soul of pity inquire into the question of the text, "Where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Even there where God's face shall never shine, where there shall be fire and no light, where there shall be no angels, but what are many thousand

years turned into devils, where no good man shall ever dwell, and from whence the evil and the accursed shall never be dismissed. "O my God, let my soul never come into their counsels, nor lie down in their sorrows."

SERMON XXXVII.

THE MERCY OF THE DIVINE JUDGMENTS;
OR, GOD'S METHOD IN CURING SINNERS.

PART I.

Despise thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?
—Rom. ii. 4.

FROM the beginning of time till now, all effluxes which have come from God have been nothing but emanations of his goodness, clothed in variety of circumstances. He made man with no other design than that man should be happy, and by receiving derivations from his fountain of mercy, might reflect glory to him. And therefore, God making man for his own glory, made also a paradise for man's use; and did him good, to invite him to do himself a greater; for God gave forth demonstrations of his power by instances of mercy, and he who might have made ten thousand worlds of wonder and prodigy, and created man with faculties able only to stare upon, and admire, those miracles of mightiness, did choose to instance his power in the effusions of mercy, that, at the same instant, he might represent himself desirable and adorable in all the capacities of amiability: viz. as excellent in himself, and profitable to us. For as the sun sends forth a benign and gentle influence on the seed of plants, that it may invite forth the active and plastic power from its recess and secrecy, that by rising into the tallness and dimensions of a tree, it may still receive a greater and more refreshing influence from its foster-father, the prince of all the bodies of light; and in all these emanations, the sun itself receives no advantage, but the honour of doing benefits; so doth the Almighty Father of all the creatures; he at first sends forth his blessings upon us, that we, by using them aright, should make ourselves capable of greater; while giving glory to God, and doing homage to him, are nothing for his advantage, but only for ours; our duties towards him being like vapours ascending from the earth,

not at all to refresh the region of the clouds, but to return back in a fruitful and refreshing shower; and God created us, not that we can increase his felicity, but that he might have a subject receptive of felicity from him. Thus he causes us to be born, that we may be capable of his blessings; he causes us to be baptized, that we may have a title to the glorious promises evangelical; he gives us his Son, that we may be rescued from hell. And when we constrain him to use harsh courses towards us, it is also in mercy; he smites to cure a disease; he sends us sickness, to procure our health. And as if God were all mercy, he is merciful in his first design, in all his instruments, in the way, and in the end of the journey; and does not only show the riches of his goodness to them that do well, but to all men that they may do well; he is good, to make us good; he does us benefits, to make us happy. And if we, by despising such gracious rays of light and heat, stop their progress, and interrupt their design, the loss is not God's, but ours; we shall be the miserable and accursed people. This is the sense and paraphrase of my text: "Despisest thou the riches of his goodness," &c.? "Thou dost not know," that is, thou considerest not, that it is for further benefit that God does thee this: the "goodness of God" is not a design to serve his own ends upon thee, but thine upon him: "the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance."

Here then is God's method of curing mankind, *χρηστότης ἀνοχή, μακροθυμία*. First, "goodness," or inviting us to him by sugared words, by the placid arguments of temporal favour, and the propositions of excellent promises. Secondly, *ἀνοχή*, at the same time. Although God is provoked every day, yet he does *ἀνέχειν*, he "tolerates" our stubbornness, he forbears to punish; and when he does begin to strike, takes his hand off, and gives us truce and respite. For so *ἀνοχή* signifies "laxamentum," and "inducias" too. Thirdly, *μακροθυμία*, still "a long putting off" and deferring his final destroying anger, by using all means to force us to repentance; and this especially by the way of judgments; these being the last reserves of the Divine mercy, and however we esteem it, is the greatest instance of the Divine long-suffering that is in the world. After these instruments, we may consider the end, the strand upon which these land us, the purpose of this variety, of these labours and admirable

arts, with which God so studies and contrives the happiness and salvation of man: it is only that man may be brought by these means unto repentance, and by repentance may be brought to eternal life. This is "the treasure of the Divine goodness," the great and admirable efflux of the eternal beneficence, the *πλοῦτος χρηστότητος*, "the riches of his goodness," which whosoever despises, despises himself and the great interest of his own felicity; he shall die in his impentence, and perish in his folly.

1. The first great instrument that God chooses to bring us to him, is *χρηστότος*, "profit," or benefit; and this must needs be first, for those instruments whereby we have a being, are so great mercies, that besides that they are such which give us the capacities of all other mercies, they are the advances of us in the greatest instances of promotion in the world. For from nothing to something is an infinite space; and a man must have a measure of infinite passed upon him, before he can perceive himself to be either happy or miserable: he is not able to give God thanks for one blessing, until he hath received many. But then God intends we should enter upon his service at the beginning of our days, because even then he is beforehand with us, and hath already given us great instances of his goodness. What a prodigy of favour is it to us, that he hath passed by so many forms of his creatures, and hath not set us down in the rank of any of them, till we come to be "paulo minores angelis," "a little lower than the angels!" and yet from the meanness of them God can perfect his own praise. The deeps and the snows, the hail and the rain, the birds of the air and the fishes of the sea, they can and do glorify God, and give him praise in their capacity; and yet he gave them no reason, no immortal spirit, or capacity of eternal blessedness; but he hath distinguished us from them by the absolute issues of his predestination, and hath given us a lasting and eternal spirit, excellent organs of perception, and wonderful instruments of expression, that we may join in concert with the morning-star, and bear a part in the chorus with the angels of light, to sing hallelujah to the great Father of men and angels.

But was it not a huge chain of mercies, that we were not strangled in the regions of our own natural impurities, but were sustained by the breath of God from perishing in the womb, where God formed us "in

secreto terræ," told our bones, and kept the order of nature, and the miracles of creation; and we lived upon that which, in the next minute after we were born, would strangle us if it were not removed? but then God took care of us, and his hand of providence clothed us and fed us. But why do I reckon the mercies of production, which in every minute of our being are alike continued, and are miracles in all senses, but that they are common and usual? I only desire you to remember, that God made all the works of his hands to serve him. And, indeed, this mercy of creating us such as we are, was not "to lead us to repentance," but was a design of innocence: intended we should serve him as the sun and the moon do, as fire and water do; never to prevaricate the laws he fixed to us, that we might have needed no repentance. But since we did degenerate, and being by God made better and more noble creatures than all the inhabitants of the air, the water, and the earth besides,—we made ourselves baser and more ignoble than any: for no dog, crocodile, or swine, was ever God's enemy, as we made ourselves. Yet then from thenceforward God began his work of "leading us to repentance" by the "riches of his goodness." He caused us to be born of Christian parents, under whom we were taught the mysteriousness of its goodness and designs for the redemption of man; and by the design of which religion, repentance was taught to mankind, and an excellent law given for distinction of good and evil. And this is a blessing, which though possibly we do not often put into our eucharistical litanies to give God thanks for; yet if we sadly consider what had become of us, if we had been born under the dominion of a Turkish lord, or in America, where no Christians do inhabit, where they worship the devil, where witches are their priests, their prophets, their physicians, and their oracles: can we choose but apprehend a visible notorious necessity of perishing in those sins, which we then should not have understood by the glass of a divine law to have declined, nor by a revelation have been taught to repent of? But since the best of God does, in the midst of all the great advantages of laws, and examples, and promises, and threatenings, do many things he ought to be ashamed of, and needs to repent of; we can understand the riches of the Divine goodness best, by considering, that the very design of our birth and education in the

Christian religion is, that we may recover of and cure our follies by the antidote of repentance, which is preached to us as a doctrine, and propounded as a favour; which was put into a law, and purchased for us by a great expense; which God does not more command to us as a duty, than he gives us as a blessing. For now that we shall not perish for our first follies, but be admitted to new conditions, to be repaid by second thoughts, to have our infirmities excused, and our sins forgiven, our habits lessened, and our malice cured, after we were wounded, and sick, and dead, and buried, and in the possession of the devil; this was such a blessing, so great riches of the Divine goodness, that as it was taught to no religion but the Christian, revealed by no lawgiver but Christ, so it was a favour greater than ever God gave to the angels and devils: for although God was rich in the effusion of his goodness towards them, yet they were not admitted to the condition of second thoughts; Christ never shed one drop of blood for them, "his goodness did not lead them to repentance:" but to us it was that he made this largeness of his goodness; to us, to whom he made himself a brother, and sucked the paps of our mother; he paid the scores of our sin, and shame, and death, only that we might be admitted to repent, and that this repentance might be effectual to the great purposes of felicity and salvation. And if we would consider this sadly, it might make us better to understand our madness and folly in refusing to repent; that is, to be sorrowful,—and to leave all our sins,—and to make amends by a holy life. For that we might be admitted and suffered to do so, God was fain to pour forth all the riches of his goodness: it cost our dearest Lord the price of his dearest blood, many a thousand groans, millions of prayers and sighs, and at this instant he is praying for our repentance; nay, he hath prayed for our repentance these sixteen hundred years incessantly, night and day, and shall do so till doomsday; "He sits at the right hand of God making intercession for us." And that we may know what he prays for, he hath sent us ambassadors to declare the purpose of all his design; for St. Paul saith, "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though he did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God." The purpose of our embassy and ministry is a prosecution of the mercies of God, and the work of redemption, and the intercession

and mediation of Christ: it is the work of atonement and reconciliation that God designed, and Christ died for, and still prays for, and we preach for, and you all must labour for.

And therefore here consider, if it be not infinite impiety to "despise the riches of such a goodness," which at so great a charge, with such infinite labour and deep mysterious arts, invites us to repentance; that is, to such a thing as could not be granted to us unless Christ should die to purchase it; such a glorious favour, that is the issue of Christ's prayers in heaven, and of all his labours, his sorrows, and his sufferings on earth. If we refuse to repent now, we do not so much refuse to do our own duty, as to accept of a reward. It is the greatest and the dearest blessing that ever God gave to men, that they may repent: and therefore, to deny it or delay it, is to refuse health, brought us by the skill and industry of the physician; it is to refuse liberty indulged to us by our gracious Lord. And certainly we had reason to take it very ill, if, at a great expense, we should purchase a pardon for a servant, and he, out of a peevish pride or negligence, shall refuse it; the scorn pays itself, the folly is its own scourge, and sits down in an inglorious ruin.

After the enumeration of these glories, these prodigies of mercies and loving-kindnesses, of Christ's dying for us, and interceding for us, and merely that we may repent and be saved; I shall less need to instance those other particularities whereby God continues, as by so many arguments of kindness, to sweeten our natures, and make them malleable to the precepts of love and obedience, the twin-daughters of holy repentance: but the poorest person amongst us, besides the blessing and graces already reckoned, hath enough about him, and the accidents of every day, to shame him into repentance. Does not God send his "angels to keep thee in all thy ways?" are not they ministering spirits sent forth to wait upon thee as thy guard; art not thou kept from drowning, from fracture of bones, from madness, from deformities, by the riches of the Divine goodness? Tell the joints of thy body; dost thou want a finger? and if thou dost not understand how great a blessing that is, do but remember, how ill thou canst spare the use of it when thou hast but a thorn in it. The very privative blessings, the blessings of immunity, safeguard, and integrity, which

we all enjoy, deserve a thanksgiving of a whole life. If God should send a cancer upon thy face, or a wolf into thy breast, if he should spread a crust of leprosy upon thy skin, what wouldst thou give to be but as now thou art? Wouldst not thou repent of thy sins upon that condition? Which is the greater blessing, to be kept from them, or to be cured of them? And why therefore shall not this greater blessing lead thee to repentance? Why do we, not so aptly, promise repentance when we are sick, upon the condition to be made well, and yet perpetually forget it when we are well? As if health never were a blessing, but when we have it not. Rather I fear the reason is, when we are sick we promise to repent, because then we cannot sin the sins of our former life; but in health our appetites return to their capacity, and in all the way "we despise the riches of the Divine goodness," which preserves us from such evils, which would be full of horror and amazement, if they should happen to us.

Hath God made any of you all chappfallen? Are you affrighted with spectres and illusions of the spirits of darkness? How many earthquakes have you been in? How many days have any of you wanted bread? How many nights have you been without sleep? Are any of you distracted of your senses? And if God gives you meat and drink, health and sleep, proper seasons of the year, entire senses and a useful understanding; what a great unworthiness is it to be unthankful to so good a God, so benign a Father, so gracious a Lord? All the evils and baseness of the world can show nothing baser and more unworthy than ingratitude: and therefore it was not unreasonably said of Aristotle, *Εὐτυχία φιλοθεος*, "Prosperity makes a man love God," supposing men to have so much humanity left in them, as to love him from whom they have received so many favours. And Hippocrates said, that although poor men use to murmur against God, yet rich men will be offering sacrifice to their Deity, whose beneficiaries they are. Now, since the riches of the Divine goodness are so poured out upon the meanness of us all, if we shall refuse to repent (which is a condition so reasonable, that God requires it only for our sake, and that it may end in our felicity) we do ourselves despise, to be unthankful to God; that is, we become miserable by making ourselves basely criminal. And if any man, whom God hath used to no other method but of his sweetness

and the effusion of mercies, brings no other fruits but the apples of Sodom in return of all his culture and labours, God will cut off that unprofitable branch, that with Sodom it may suffer the flames of everlasting burning.

Ὅτι αὐ τοῖς θανάτοις, ὃ Νικήραε
Τριφῆς ἀπάσης μεταλαβόντας ἐν βίῳ,
Πεφυγίαι τὸ θείον. PHILEMON.

If here we have good things, and a continual shower of blessings to soften our stony hearts, and we shall remain obdurate against those sermons of mercy which God makes us every day, there will come a time when this shall be upbraided to us, that we had not *voῦν ἀντίετον*, a thankful mind, but made God to sow his seed upon the sand, or upon the stones, without increase or restitution. It was a sad alarm which God sent to David by Nathan, to upbraid his ingratitude: "I anointed thee king over Israel, I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul, I gave thee thy master's house and wives into thy bosom, and the house of Israel and Judah; and if this had been too little, I would have given thee such and such things; wherefore hast thou despised the name of the Lord?" But how infinitely more can God say to all of us than all this came to; he hath anointed us kings and priests in the royal priesthood of Christianity; he hath given us his Holy Spirit to be our guide, his angels to be our protectors, his creatures for our food and raiment; he hath delivered us from the hands of Satan, hath conquered death for us, hath taken the sting out, and made it harmless and medicinal, and proclaimed us heirs of heaven, coheirs with the eternal Jesus; and if after all this we despise the commandment of the Lord, and defer and neglect our repentance, what shame is great enough, what miseries are sharp enough, what hell painful enough, for such horrid ingratitude? St. Lewis the king having sent Ivo, bishop of Chartres, on an embassy, the bishop met a woman on the way, grave, sad, fantastic, and melancholic, with fire in one hand, and water in the other. He asked what those symbols meant. She answered, My purpose is with fire to burn paradise, and with my water to quench the flames of hell, that men may serve God without the incentives of hope and fear, and purely for the love of God. But this woman began at the wrong end: the love of God is not produced in us after we have contracted evil habits, till God, with "his fan in his hand,

hath thoroughly purged his floor," till he hath cast out all the devils, and swept the house with the instrument of hope and fear, and with the achievements and efficacy of mercies and judgments. But then, since God may truly say to us, as of old to his rebellious people, "Am I a dry tree to the house of Israel?" that is, Do I bring them no fruit? Do they "serve me for nought?" and he expects not our duty till first we feel his goodness; we are now infinitely inexcusable to throw away so great riches, to "despise such a goodness."

However, that we may see the greatness of this treasure of goodness, God seldom leaves us thus: for he sees, (be it spoken to the shame of our natures, and the dishonour of our manners,) he sees that his mercies do not allure us, do not make us thankful, but, (as the Roman said,) "*Felicitate corrumpimur*," "We become worse for God's mercy," and think it will be always holiday; and are like the crystal of Arabia, hardened not by cold, but made crusty and stubborn by the warmth of the Divine fire, by its refreshments and mercies; therefore, to demonstrate that God is good indeed, he continues his mercies still to us, but in another instance; he is merciful to us in punishing us, that we may be led to repentance by such instruments which will scare us from sin; he delivers us up to the pedagogy of the Divine judgments: and there begins the second part of God's method, intimated in the word *ἀνοχή*, or "forbearance." God begins his cure by caustics, by incisions and instruments of vexation, to try if the disease that will not yield to the allectives of cordials and perfumes, frictions and baths, may be forced out by deleteries, scarifications, and more salutary, but less pleasing, physic.

2. *Ἀνοχή*, "Forbearance," it is called in the text; which signifies "laxamentum" or "inducias;" that is, when the decrees of the Divine judgments temporal are gone out, either wholly to suspend the execution of them, which is "*induciae*," or a "reprieve;" or else, when God hath struck once or twice, he takes off his hand, that is "laxamentum," an "ease or remission" of his judgment. In both these, although "in judgment God remembers mercy," yet we are under discipline, we are brought into the penitential chamber; at least we are showed the rod of God; and if, like Moses' rod, it turns us into serpents, and that we repent not, but grow more devils; yet then it turns into a rod again, and finishes

up the smiting, or the first-designed affliction.

But I consider it first in general. The riches of the Divine goodness are manifest in beginning this new method of curing us, by severity and by a rod. And that you may not wonder that I expound this "forbearance" to be an act of mercy punishing, I observe, that besides that the word supposes the method changed, and it is a mercy about judgments, and their manner of execution; it is also, in the nature of the thing, in the conjunction of circumstances, and the designs of God, a mercy when he threatens us or strikes us into repentance.

We think that the way of blessings and prosperous accidents, is the finer way of securing our duty; and that when our heads are anointed, our cups crowned, and our tables full, the very caresses of our spirits will best of all dance before the ark, and sing perpetual anthems to the honour of our benefactor and patron, God; and we are apt to dream that God will make his saints reign here as kings in a millenary kingdom, and give them the riches and fortunes of this world, that they may rule over men, and sing psalms to God for ever. But I remember what Xenophanes says of God,

Οὔτε δέμας ἀνθρώπων ὁμοίους, οὔτε νόημα.

"God is like to men neither in shape nor in counsel;" he knows that his mercies confirm some, and encourage more, but they convert but few: alone they lead men to dissolution of manners, and forgetfulness of God, rather than repentance: not but that mercies are competent and apt instruments of grace, if we would; but because we are more dispersed in our spirits, and by a prosperous accident are melted into joy and garrishness, and drawn off from the sobriety of recollection. "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked." Many are not able to suffer and endure prosperity; it is like the light of the sun to a weak eye; glorious indeed in itself, but not proportioned to such an instrument. Adam himself (as the rabbins say) did not dwell one night in Paradise, but was poisoned with prosperity, with the beauty of his fair wife, and a beauteous tree: and Noah and Lot were both righteous and exemplary, the one to Sodom, the other to the old world, so long as they lived in a place in which they were obnoxious to the common suffering; but as soon as the one of them had escaped from drowning, and the

other from burning, and were put into security, they fell into crimes which have dishonoured their memories for above thirty generations together, the crimes of drunkenness and incest. Wealth and a full fortune make men licentiously vicious, tempting a man with power to act all that he can desire or design viciously.

Inde iræ faciles

Namque ut opes nimias mundo fortuna subacto
Intulit, et rebus mores cessere secundis,

—Cultus, gestare decoros

Vix nribus, rapuere mares;—totoque accersit
tur orbe

Quo gens quæque perit

LUCAN. lib. 1.

And let me observe to you, that though there are in the New Testament many promises and provisions made for the poor in that very capacity, they having a title to some certain circumstances and additionals of grace and blessing; yet to rich men our blessed Saviour was pleased to make none at all, but to leave them involved in general comprehensions, and to have a title to the special promises only, by becoming poor in spirit, and in preparation of mind, though not in fortune and possession. However, it is hard for God to persuade us to this, till we are taught it by a sad experience, that those prosperities which we think will make us serve God cheerfully, make us to serve the world and secular ends diligently, and God not at all.

Repentance is a duty that best complies with affliction; it is a symbolical estate, of the same complexion and constitution; half the work of repentance is done by a sad accident, our spirits are made sad, our gaieties mortified, our wildness corrected, the watersprings are ready to run over: but if God should grant our desires, and give to most men prosperity, with a design to lead them to repentance, all his pomp, and all his employment, and all his affections and passions, and all his circumstances, are so many degrees of distance from the conditions and nature of repentance. It was reported by Dio concerning Nero's mother, that she often wished that her son might be emperor, and wished it with so great passion, that, upon that condition, she cared not though her son might kill her. Her first wish and her second fear were both granted: but when she began to fear that her son did really design to murder her, she used all the art and instruments of diversion that a witty and a powerful, a timorous person and a woman, could invent or apply.

Just so it is with us : so we might have our wishes of prosperity, we promise to undergo all the severities of repentance ; but when we are landed upon our desire, then every degree of satisfaction of those sensualities is a temptation against repentance : for a man must have his affections weaned from those possessions before he can be reconciled to the possibilities of repentance.

And because God knows this well, and loves us better than we do ourselves, therefore he sends upon us the scrolls of vengeance, "the hand-writing upon the wall," to denounce judgment against us : for God is so highly resolved to bring us to repentance some way or other, that if, by his goodness, he cannot shame us into it, he will try if, by his judgments, he can scare us into it : not that he strikes always as soon as he hath sent his warrants out ; οὐδὲ τοῖς ἀμαρτάνουσιν εὐθὺς ἐπίξεισιν ὁ Θεός· ἀλλὰ δίδωσι χρόνον εἰς μετάνοιαν, καὶ τὴν τοῦ ὀφειλόμετου ἰασίν, said Philo. Thus God sent Jonas, and denounced judgments against Nineveh ; but with the ἀνοχή, with the "forbearance" of forty days for the time of their escape, if they would repent. When Noah, the great preacher of righteousness, denounced the flood to all the world, it was with the ἀνοχή, with the "forbearance" of a hundred and twenty years. And when the great extermination of the Jewish nation, and their total deletion from being God's people, was foretold by Christ, and decreed by God ; yet they had the ἀνοχή of forty years, in which they were perpetually called to repentance. These were reprieves and deferrings of the stroke.

But sometimes God strikes once, and then forbears. And such are all those sadnesses, which are less than death : every sickness, every loss, every disgrace, the death of friends and nearest relatives, sudden discontents ; these are all of them the louder calls of God to repentance ; but still instances of forbearance.

Indeed, many times this forbearance makes men impudent. It was so in the case of Pharaoh ; when God smote him, and then forebore, Pharaoh's heart grew callous and insensible, till God struck again : and this was the meaning of these words of God, "I will harden the heart of Pharaoh," that is, I will forbear him ; smite him, and then take the blow off : "Sic enim Deus induravit Pharaonis cor," said St. Basil. For as water taken off from fire will sooner congeal

and become icy, than if it had not been attenuated by the heat ; so is the heart of some men ; when smitten by God, it seems soft and pliable, but taken off from the fire of affliction, it presently becomes horrid, then stiff, and then hard as a rock of adamant, or as the gates of death and hell. But this is beside the purpose and intention of the Divine mercy ; this is an ἀντιπερίστασις, a plain "contradiction" to the riches of God's goodness ; this is to be evil because God is good ; to burn with flames because we are cooled with water ; this is to put out the lamps of heaven, or (if we cannot do it) to put our own eyes out, lest we should behold the fair beauty of the Lord, and be enamoured of his goodness, and repent, and live. O take heed of despising this goodness ; for this is one of God's latest arts to save us ; he hath no way left beyond this, but to punish us with a lasting judgment and a poignant affliction. In the tomb of Terentia, certain lamps burned under ground many ages together ; but as soon as ever they were brought into the air, and saw a bigger light, they went out, never to be re-enkindled. So long as we are in the retirements of sorrow, of want, of fear, of sickness, or of any sad accident, we are burning and shining lamps ; but when God comes with his ἀνοχή with his "forbearance," and lifts us up from the gates of death, and carries us abroad into the open air, that we converse with prosperity and temptation, we go out in darkness ; and we cannot be preserved in heat and light, but by still dwelling in the regions of sorrow. And if such be our weaknesses or our folly, it concerns us to pray against such deliverances, to be afraid of health, to beg of God to continue a persecution, and not deny us the mercy of an affliction.

And do not we find all this to be a great truth in ourselves ? Are we so great strangers to our own weakness and unworthiness, as not to remember when God scared us with judgments in the neighbourhood, where we lived in a great plague, or if we were ever in a storm, or God had sent a sickness upon us ? Then we may please to remember, that repentance was our business that we designed mountains of piety, renewed our holy purposes, made vows and solemn sacraments to God to become penitent and obedient persons : and we may also remember, without much considering, that as soon as God began to forbear us, we would no longer forbear to sin, but add flame

to flame, a heap of sins to a treasure of wrath, already too big: being like Pharaoh or Herod, or like the ox and mule, more hard and callous for our stripes; and melted in the fire, and frozen harder in the cold; worse for all our afflictions, and the worse for all God's judgments; not bettered by his goodness, nor mollified by his threatenings: and what is there more left for God to do unto us? He that is not won by the sense of God's mercy, can never find any thing in God that shall convert him; and he whom fear and sense of pain cannot mend, can never find any argument from himself that shall make him wise. This is sad, that nothing from without, and nothing from within, shall move us: nothing in heaven, and nothing in hell; neither love, nor fear; gratitude to God, nor preservation of ourselves, shall make us to repent. Θεοῦ δὲ πληγὴν οὐχ ὑπερτιθεῖ Βροτός. That shall be his final sentence: he shall never escape that ruin from which the greatest art of God could not entice, nor his terror scare him: "he loved cursing, therefore shall it happen to him: he loved not blessing, therefore shall it be far from him."

Let, therefore, every one of us take the account of our lives, and read over the sermons that God hath made us: besides that sweet language of his mercy, and his "still voice" from heaven, consider what voices of thunder you heard, and presently that noise ceased, and God was heard in the "still voice" again. What dangers have any of you escaped? Were you ever assaulted by the rudeness of an ill-natured man? Have you never had a dangerous fall, and escaped it? Did none of you ever escape drowning, and in a great danger saw the forbearance of God? Have you never been sick (as you feared) unto death? Or, suppose none of these things have happened, hath not God threatened you all, and forborne to smite you? or smitten you, and forborne to kill you? That is evident. But if you had been a privado, and of the cabinet-council with your angel-guardian, that from him you might have known how many dangers you have escaped, how often you have been near a ruin, so near, that if you had seen your danger with a sober spirit, the fear of it would have half killed you; if he had but told you how often God had sent out his warrants to the exterminating angel, and our blessed Saviour by his intercession hath obtained a reprieve, that he might have the content of rejoicing at

thy conversion and repentance; if you had known from him the secrets of that providence which governs us in secret, and how many thousand times the devil would have done thee hurt, and how often himself, as a ministering spirit of God's "goodness and forbearance," did interpose and abate or divert a mischief which was falling on thy head: it must needs cover thy head with a cloud of shame and blushing at that ingratitude and that folly, that neither will give God thanks nor secure thy own well-being.

Hadst thou never any dangerous fall in thy intemperance? Then God showed thee thy danger, and that he was angry at thy sin; but yet did so pity thy person, that he would forbear thee a little longer, else that fall had been into thy grave. When thy gluttony gave thee a surfeit, and God gave thee a remedy, his meaning then was, that thy gluttony rather should be cured than thy surfeit; that repentance should have been thy remedy, and abstinence and fasting should be thy cure. Did ever thy proud and revengeful spirit engage thee upon a duel, or vexatious lawsuit, and God brought thee off with life or peace? His purpose then was, that his mercy should teach thee charity. And he that cannot read the purposes of God written with the finger of judgment, (for as yet his whole hand is not laid on), either is consigned to eternal ruin, because God will no more endeavour his cure; or, if his mercy still continues and goes on in long-suffering, it shall be by such vexatious instruments, such caustics and corrosives, such tormenting and desperate medicaments, such which, in the very cure, will soundly punish thy folly and ingratitude. For, deceive not yourselves, God's mercy cannot be made a patron for any man's impiety; the purpose of it is to bring us to repentance: and God will do it by the mercies of his mercies, or by mercies of his judgments; he will either break our hearts into a thousand fragments of contrition, or break our bones in the ruins of the grave and hell. And since God rejoices in his mercy above all his works he will be most impatient that we shall despise that in which he most delights, and in which we have the greatest reason to delight: the riches of that goodness which is essential, and part of his glory, and is communicated to us, to bring us to repentance, that we may partake of that goodness, and behold that glory.

SERMON XXXVIII.

PART II.

3. *Μακροθυμία*, "Long-suffering."—In this one word are contained all the treasures of the Divine goodness: here is the length and extension of his mercy: "Pertrahit spiritum super nos Dominus," so the Syrian interpreter reads, Luke xviii. 7. "God holds his breath: he retains his anger within him, lest it should come forth and blast us." And here is also much of the Divine justice: for although God suffers long, yet he does not let us alone; he forbears to destroy us, but not to punish us: and in both he, by many accidents, gives probation of his power; according to the prayer of the wise man, *Ἐλεῖς δι πάντας, ὅτι πάντα δύνασαι καὶ παροῦς ἀμαρτήματα ἀνθρώπων εἰς μετάνοιαν.* "Thou art merciful towards us all, because thou canst do all things: and thou passest by the sins of men, that they may repent."* And, that God should support our spirit, and preserve our patience, and nourish our hope, and correct our stubbornness, and mortify our pride, and bring us to him, whether we will or not, by such gracious violences and merciful judgments, which he uses towards us as his last remedies, is not only the demonstration of a mighty mercy, but of an almighty power. So hard a thing it is to make us leave our follies, and become wise, that, were not the mercies of God an effective pity, and clothed in all the way of its progress with mightiness and power, every sinner should perish irrecoverably. But this is the fiery trial, the last purgatory fire which God uses, to burn the thistles, and purify the dross. When the gentle influence of a sunbeam will not wither them, nor the weeding-hook of a short affliction cut them out; then God comes with fire to burn us, with the axe laid to the root of the tree. But then observe, that when we are under this state of cure, we are so near destruction, that the same instrument that God uses for remedy to us, is also prepared to destroy us; the fire is as apt to burn us to ashes as to cleanse us when we are so overgrown; and the axe as instrumental to cut us down for fuel, as to square us for building in God's temple: and therefore when it comes thus far, it will be hard discerning what the purpose of the axe

is; and, whether the fire means to burn, we shall know it by the change wrought upon ourselves. For what Plato said concerning his dream of purgatory, is true here: "Quicumque non purgatus migrat ad inferos, jacebit in luto; quicumque vero mitratus illuc accesserit, habitabit cum Deis." "He that dies in his impurity, shall lie in it forever; but he that descends to his grave purged and mitred,—that is,—having quitted his vices, 'et superinduens justitiam,' 'being clothed with righteousness,' shall dwell in light and immortality." It is said that we put God to such extremities: and as it happens in long diseases, those which physicians use for the last remedies seldom prevail; and when consumptive persons come to have their heads shaven, they do not often escape; so it is when we put God to his last remedies: God indeed hath the glory of his patience and his long-suffering, but we seldom have the benefit and the use of it. For if, when our sin was young, and our strength more active, and our habits less, and virtue not so much a stranger to us,—we suffered sin to prevail upon us, to grow stronger than the ruins of our spirit, and to lessen us into the state of sickness and disability, in the midst of all those remedies which God used to our beginning-diseases: much more desperate is our recovery, when our disease is stronger, and our faculties weaker; when our sins reign in us, and our thoughts of virtue are not alive.

However, although I say this, and it is highly considerable to the purpose that we never suffer things to come to this extremity, yet, if it be upon us, we must do as well as we can: but then we are to look upon it as a design of God's last mercy, beyond which, if we protract our repentance, our condition is desperately miserable. The whole state of which mercy we understand by the parable of the king reckoning with his servants that were in arrears to him: "One was brought to him which owed him ten thousand talents: but forasmuch as he had not to pay, his Lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made." The man, you see, was under the arrest; the sentence was passed upon him, he was a condemned man: but, before the execution of it, he fell down, and worshipped, and said, *Κύριε μακροθύμησον;* "Lord, 'suffer me longer awhile;' have patience with me, and I will pay thee all." This tells its meaning: this is "a long

* Wisd. xi. 24.

sufferance," by being "a forbearance" only of execution of the last sentence, a putting off damnation upon a longer trial of our emendation; but in the mean time it implies no other case, but that, together with his long sufferance, God may use all other severities and scourges to break our untamed spirits, and to soften them with hammers; so death be put off, no matter else what hardship and loads of sufferance we have. "Hic ure, hic seca, ut in æternum parcas;" so St. Austin prayed: "Here, O Lord, cut me, here burn me; spare me not now, that thou mayest spare me for ever." And it is just like the mercy used to a madman, when he is kept in a dark room, and tamed with whips; it is a cruel mercy, but such as his condition requires; he can receive no other mercy, all things else were cruelly unmerciful.

I remember what Bion observed wittily of the punishment inflicted upon the daughters of Danaus, whom the old poets feigned to be condemned in hell to fill a bottomless tub with water, and, to increase the pain, (as they fancied,) this water they were to carry in sieves, and never to leave work till the tub were full; it is well, (says he,) since their labour must be eternal, that it is so gentle; for it were more pains to carry their water in whole vessels, and a sad burden to go laden to a leaking tub with unfruitful labours. Just so is the condition of those persons, upon whom a wrath is gone out; it is a sad sentence, but acted with a gentle instrument; and since they are condemned to pay the scores of their sins with the sufferance of a load of judgments, it is well they are such as will run quite through them, and not stick upon them to eternity. "Omnes enim pœnæ exterminantes, sunt medicinales;" All punishments whatsoever, which do not destroy us, are intended to save us, they are lancets which make a wound, but to let forth the venom of our ulcers. When God slew twenty-three thousand of the Assyrians for their fornication, that was a final justice upon their persons, and consigned them to a sad eternity; for beyond such an infliction there was no remedy. But when God sent lions to the Assyrian inhabitants of Samaria, and the judgment drove them to inquire after the manner of the God of the land, and they sent for priests from Jerusalem to teach them how to worship the God of Israel; that was a mercy and judgment too: "the long forbearance of God," who destroyed not all the inhabitants, "led" the rest "unto repentance."

1. And I must make this observation to you; that when things come to this pass, that God is forced to the last remedies of judgments, this long-sufferance will little or nothing concern particular persons, but nations and communities of men; for those who are smitten with judgment, if God takes his hand off again, and so opens a way for their repentance by prolonging their time; that comes under the second part of God's method, the *ἀνοχη*, or "forbearance:" but if he smites a single person with a final judgment, that is "a long-suffering," not of him, but towards others; and God hath destroyed my neighbour, to make me repent, my neighbour's time being expired, and the date of his possibility determined. For a man's death-bed is but an ill station for a penitent; and a final judgment is no good monitor to him, to whom it is a severe executioner. They that perished in the gainsaying of Korah, were out of the conditions of repentance. But the people that were affrighted with the neighbourhood of the judgment, and the expresses of God's anger manifested in such visible remonstrances, they were the men called unto repentance. But concerning the whole nations of communities of men, this long-sufferance is a sermon of repentance; loud, clamorous, and highly argumentative. When God suffered the mutinies, the affronts, the baseness and ingratitude, the follies and relapses, of the children of Israel, who murmured against God ten times in the wilderness; God sent evil angels among them, and fiery serpents, and pestilence, and fire from heaven, and prodigies from the earth, and a prevailing sword of the enemies; and in all these accidents, although some innocent persons felt the contingencies and variety of mortality, yet those wicked persons who fell by the design of God's anger, were made examples unto others, and instances of God's forbearance to the nation; and yet this forbearance was such, that although God preserved the nation in being, and in title to the first promises, yet all the particular persons that came from Egypt died in the wilderness, two only excepted.

2. And I desire you to observe this, that you may truly estimate the arts of the Divine justice and mercy. For all the world being one continual and entire argument of the Divine mercy, we are apt to abuse that mercy to vain confidences and presumption; first mistaking the end, as if God's mercy would be indulgent to our sin, to which it is

the greatest enemy in the world; for it is a certain truth, that the mercy of God is as great an enemy to sin as his justice is; and as God's justice is made the handmaid of his mercy to cure sin, so it is the servant also and the instrument to avenge our despite and contempt of mercy; and in all the way where a difference can be, there justice is the less principal. And it were a great sign of folly, and a huge mistake, to think our Lord and our friends do us offices of kindness, to make themselves more capable of affronts; and that our fathers' care over us, and provision for us, can tempt us to disobey them: the very purpose of all those emanations is, that their love may return in duty, and their providence be the parent of our prudence, and their care be crowned with our piety; and then we shall all be crowned, and shall return like the year, that ends into its own circle; and the fathers and the children, the benefactors and the beneficiary, shall knit the wreath, and bind each other in the eternal enclosures and circlings of immortality. But besides, as the men who presume to sin because of God's mercy, do mistake the very end and design of God's mercy, so they also mistake the economy of it, and the manner of its ministration.

3. For if God suffers men to go on in sins, and punishes them not, it is not a mercy, it is not a forbearance; it is a hardening them, a consigning them to ruin and reprobation; and themselves give the best argument to prove it; for they continue in their sin, they multiply their iniquity, and every day grow more enemy to God; and that is no mercy that increases their hostility and enmity with God. A prosperous iniquity is the most unprosperous condition in the world. "When he slew them, they sought him, and turned them early, and inquired after God;" but as long as they prevailed upon their enemies, "they forgot that God was their strength, and the high God was their Redeemer." It was well observed by the Persian ambassador of old; when he was telling the king a sad story of the overthrow of all his army by the Athenians, he adds this of his own: that the day before the fight, the young Persian gallants, being confident they should destroy their enemies, were drinking drunk, and railing at the timorousness and fears of religion, and against all their gods, saying, there were no such things, and that all things came by chance and industry, nothing by the providence of the Supreme Power. But the next day when

they had fought unprosperously, and flying from their enemies who were eager in their pursuit, they came to the river Strymon, which was so frozen that their boats could not launch, and yet it began to thaw, so that they feared the ice would not bear them; then you should see the bold gallants, that the day before said there was no God, most timorously and superstitiously fall upon their faces, and beg of God, that the river Strymon might bear them over from their enemies. What wisdom, and philosophy, and perpetual experience, and revelation, and promises, and blessings, cannot do, a mighty fear can, it can allay the confidences of bold lust and imperious sin, and soften our spirit into the lowness of a child, or revenge into the charity of prayers, our impudence into the blushings of a chidden girl; and therefore God hath taken a course proportionable: for he is not so unmercifully merciful, as to give milk to an infirm lust, and hatch the egg to the bigness of a cockatrice. And, therefore, observe how it is that God's mercy prevails over all his works; it is even then when nothing can be discerned but his judgments: for as when a famine had been in Israel in the days of Ahab for three years and a half, when the angry prophet Elijah met the king, and presently a great wind arose, and the dust blew into the eyes of them that walked abroad, and the face of the heavens was black and all tempest, yet then the prophet was most gentle, and God began to forgive, and the heavens were more beautiful than when the sun puts on the brightest ornaments of a bridegroom, going from his chambers of the east: so it is in the economy of the Divine mercy; when God makes our faces black, and the winds blow so loud till the cordage cracks, and our gay fortunes split, and our houses are dressed with cypress and yew, "and the mourners go about the streets," this is nothing but the "pompa misericordiae," this is the funeral of our sins, dressed indeed with emblems of mourning, and proclaimed with sad accents of death: but the sight is refreshing, as the beauties of the field which God had blessed, and the sounds are healthful as the noise of a physician.

This is that riddle spoken of in the Psalm, "Calix in manu Domini vini meri plenus misto;" "The pure impure, the mingled unmingled cup:"* for it is a cup in which God hath poured much of his severity and

* Psal. lxxv. 8.

anger, and yet it is pure and unmingled; for it is all mercy. And so the riddle is resolved, and our cup is full and made more wholesome; "Lymphatum crescit, dulcescit, lædere nescit;" it is some justice, and yet it is all mercy; the very justice of God being an act of mercy; a forbearance of the man or the nation, and the punishing of the sin. Thus it was in the case of the children of Israel; when they ran after the bleating of the idolatrous calves, Moses prayed passionately, and God heard his prayer, and forgave their sin unto them. And this was David's observation of the manner of God's mercy to them; "Thou wast a God and forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions."* For God's mercy is given to us by parts, and to certain purposes. Sometimes God only so forgives us, that he does not cut us off in the sin, but yet lays on a heavy load of judgments: so he did to his people, when he sent them to school under the discipline of seventy years' captivity. Sometimes he makes a judgment less, and forgives in respect of the degree of the infliction, he strikes more gently; and whereas God had designed, it may be, the death of thyself, or thy nearest relatives, he is content to take the life of a child. And so he did to David, when he forbore him; "The Lord hath taken away thy sin, thou shalt not die; nevertheless, the child that is born unto thee, *that* shall die."† Sometimes he puts the evil off to a farther day; as he did in the case of Ahab and Hezekiah; to the first he brought the evil upon his house, and to the second he brought the evil upon his kingdom in his son's days, God forgiving only so as to respite the evil, that they should have peace in their own days. And thus when we have committed a sin against God, which hath highly provoked him to anger, even upon our repentance we are not sure to be forgiven, so as we understand forgiveness, that is, to hear no more of it, never to be called to an account: but we are happy if God so forgive us, as not to throw us into the insufferable flames of hell, though he smite us till we groan for our misery, till we "chatter like a swallow," as David's expression is. And though David was an excellent penitent; yet after he had lost the child begotten of Bathsheba, and God had told him he had forgiven him, yet he raised up his darling son against him, and forced him to an inglorious flight, and his son lay

* Psal. xcix. 8.

† 2 Sam. xii. 13, 14.

with his father's concubines in the face of all Israel. So that when we are forgiven, yet it is ten to one but God will make us to smart and roar for our sins, for the very quietness of our souls.

For if we sin and ask God forgiveness, and then are quiet, we feel so little inconvenience in the trade, that we may more easily be tempted to make a trade of it indeed. I wish to God that for every sin we have committed, we could heartily cry "God mercy" and leave it, and judge ourselves for it, to prevent God's anger: but when we have done all that we commonly call repentance, and when possibly God hath forgiven us to some purposes, yet, it may be, he punishes our sin when we least think of it; that sin which we have long since forgotten. It may be, for the lust of thy youth thou hast a healthless old age. An old religious person long ago complained it was his case.

Quos nimis effrænes habui, nunc vapulo renes:
Sic luitur juvenis culpa, dolore senis.

It may be, thy sore eyes are the punishment of intemperance seven years ago; or God cuts thy days shorter, and thou shalt die in a florid age; or he raises up afflictions to thee in thine own house, in thine own bowels; or hath sent a gangrene into thy estate; or with an arrow out of his quiver he can wound thee, and the arrow shall stick fast in thy flesh, although God hath forgiven thy sin to many purposes. Our blessed Saviour "was heard in all that he prayed" (said the apostle): and he prayed for the Jews that crucified him, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do:" and God did forgive that great sin; but how far? Whereas it was just in God to deprive them of all possibility of receiving benefit from the death of Christ, yet God admitted them to it; he gave them time, and possibilities, and helps, and great advantages to bring them to repentance; he did not presently shut them up in his final and eternal anger; and yet he had finally resolved to destroy their city and nation, and did so, but forebore them forty years, and gave them all the helps of miracles and sermons apostolical to shame them, and force them into sorrow for their fault. And before any man can repent, God hath forgiven the man in one degree of forgiveness; for he hath given him grace of repentance, and taken from him that final anger of the spirit of reprobation: and when a man hath repeated, no man can say that God hath forgiven

him to all purposes, but hath reserves of anger to punish the sin, to make the man afraid to sin any more; and to represent, that when any man hath sinned, whatever he does afterwards, he shall be miserable as long as he lives, vexed with its adherences, and its neighbourhood and evil consequence. For as no man that hath sinned, can, during his life, ever return to an integral and perfect innocence; so neither shall he be restored to a perfect peace, but must always watch and strive against his sin, and always mourn and pray for its pardon, and always find cause to hate it, by knowing himself to be for ever in danger of enduring some grievous calamity, even for those sins for which he hath truly repented him, for which God hath, in many gracious degrees, passed his pardon: this is the manner of dispensation of the Divine mercy, in respect of particular persons and nations too.

But sometimes we find a severer judgment happening upon a people; and yet in that sad story God's mercy sings the triumph, which, although it be much to God's glory, yet it is a sad story to sinning people. Six hundred thousand fighting men, besides women and children and decrepit persons, came out of Egypt; and God destroyed them all in the wilderness, except Caleb and Joshua: and there it was that God's mercy prevailed over his justice, that he did not destroy the nation, but still preserved a succession to Jacob, to possess the promise. God drowned all the world except eight persons; his mercy there also prevailed over his justice, that he preserved a remnant to mankind; his justice devoured all the world, and his mercy which preserved but eight, had the honour of the prevailing attribute. God destroyed Sodom and the five cities of the plain, and rescued but four from the flames of that sad burning, and of the four lost one in the flight; and yet his mercy prevailed over his justice, because he did not destroy all.

And in these senses we are to understand the excellency of the Divine mercy: even when he smites, when "he rebukes us for sin," when he makes "our beauty to fail, and our flesh to consume away like a moth fretting a garment," yet then his mercy is the prevailing ingredient. If his judgments be but fines set upon our heads, according to the mercy of our old laws, "salvo contentemento," "so as to preserve our estates," to continue our hopes and possibilities of heaven; all the other judgments can be nothing but mercies, excellent instruments

of grace, arts to make us sober and wise, to take us off from our vanity, to restrain our wildnesses, which, if they were left unbridled, would set all the world on fire. God's judgments are like the censures of the Church, in which a sinner is "delivered over to Satan to be buffeted; that the spirit may be saved." The result of all this is, that God's mercies are not, ought not, cannot be instruments of confidence to sin, because the very purpose of his mercy is to the contrary, and the very manner of his economy and dispensation is such, that God's mercy goes along in complexion and conjunction with his judgments; the riches of his forbearance is this, that he forbears to throw us into hell, and sends the mercies of his rod to chide us into repentance, and the mercies of his rod to punish us for having sinned, and that when we have sinned we may never think ourselves secured, nor ever be reconciled to such dangers and deadly poisons. This, this is the manner of the Divine mercy. Go now, fond man, and, because God is merciful, presume to sin, as having grounds to hope that thou mayest sin, and be safe all the way! If this—hope, shall I call it, or sordid flattery, could be reasonable, then the mercies of God would not lead us to repentance; so unworthy are we in the sense and largeness of a wide fortune and pleasant accident. For impunity was never a good argument to make men to obey laws. "Quotusquisque reperitur, qui impunitate proposita abstinere possit injuriis? Impunitas est maxima peccandi illecebra," said Cicero.* And therefore, the wisdom of God hath so ordered the actions of the world, that the most fruitful showers shall be wrapped up in a cover of black clouds, that health shall be conveyed by bitter and ill-tasted drugs; that the temples of our bodies shall be purged by whips, and that the cords of the whip shall be the cords of love, to draw us from the entanglings of vanity and folly. This is the long suffering of God, the last remedy to our diseased souls: and *ἀναίσθητος, ὅστις πολλά παθῶν σὺ σωφρονίζεται,* said Phalaris; unless we be senseless, we shall be brought to sober courses by all those sad accidents, and wholesome, but ill-tasted mercies, which we feel in all the course and succession of the Divine long-sufferance.

The use of all the premises is that which St. Paul expresses in the text, that "we do not despise all this:" and he only despises not, who serves the ends of God in all these

* Offic. 5.

designs of mercy, that is, he that repents him of his sins. But there are a great many despisers; all they that live in their sins, they that have more blessings than they can reckon hours in their lives, that are courted by the Divine favour and wooed to salvation, as if mankind were to give, not to receive, so great a blessing, all they that answer not to so friendly summons,—they are despisers of God's mercies: and although God overflows with mercies, and does not often leave us to the only hopes of being cured by unctions and gentle cataplasms, but proceeds further, and gives us "stibium," or prepared steel, sharp arrows of his anger, and the sword, and the hand of sickness; yet we are not sure of so much favour as to be entertained longer in God's hospital, but may be thrust forth among the "incurabiles." Plutarch reports concerning swine, that their optic nerves are so disposed to turn their eyes downward, that they cannot look upwards, nor behold the face of heaven, unless they be thrown upon their backs. Such swine are we: we seldom can look up to heaven, till God by his judgments throws us upon our backs; till he humbles us and softens us with showers of our own blood, and tears of sorrow: and yet God hath not promised that he will do so much for us; but for aught we know, as soon as ever the devil enters into our swinish and brutish hearts, we shall run down the hill, and perish in the floods and seas of intolerable misery. And therefore, besides that it is a huge folly in us, that we will not be cured with pleasant medicines, but must be longing for coloquintida and for vomits, for knives and poniards, instead of the gentle showers of the Divine refreshments, besides that this is an imprudence and sottishness; we do infinitely put it to the venture, whether we shall be in a saveable condition or not, after the rejection of the first state of mercies. But, however, then begins the first step of the judgment and pungent misery, we are perishing people; or, if not, yet at the least not to be cured without the abscission of a member, without the cutting off a hand or a leg, or the putting out of an eye: we must be cut, to take the stone out of our hearts, and that is the state of a very great infelicity; and if we escape the stone, we cannot escape the surgeon's knife; if we escape death, yet we have a sickness; and though that be a great mercy in respect of death, yet it is as great misery in respect of health. And that is the first punishment

for the despite done to the first and most sensible mercies; we are fallen into a sickness, that cannot be cured but by disease and hardship.

But if this despite runs further, and when the mercies look on us with an angry countenance, and that God gives us only the mercy of a punishment, if we despise this too, we increase but our misery, as we increase our sin. The sum of which is this: that if Pharaoh will not be cured by one plague, he shall have ten; and if *ten* will not do it, the great and tenth wave, which is far bigger than all the rest, the severest and the last arrow of the quiver, then we shall perish in the Red sea, the sea of flames and blood, in which the ungodly shall roll eternally.

But some of these despisers are such as are unmoved when God smites others; like Gallio, when the Jews took Sosthenes, and beat him in the pleading-place, he "cared for none of these things;" he was not concerned in that interest: and many Gallios there are among us, that understand it not to be a part of the divine method of God's "long-sufferance," to strike others to make us afraid. But however we sleep in the midst of such alarms, yet know, that there is not one death in all the neighbourhood but is intended to thee; every crowing of the cock is to awake thee to repentance: and if thou sleepest still, the next turn may be thine; God will send his angel, as he did to Peter, and smite thee on thy side, and wake thee from thy dead sleep of sin and sottishness. But beyond this some are despisers still, and hope to drown the noises of mount Sinai, the sound of cannons, of thunders and lightnings, with a counter-noise of revelling and clamorous roarings, with merry meetings; like the sacrifices to Moloch, they sound drums and trumpets, that they might not hear the sad shriekings of their children, as they were dying in the cavity of the brazen idol: and when their conscience shrieks out or murmurs in a sad melancholy, or something that is dear to them is smitten, they attempt to drown it in a sea of drink, in the heathenish noises of idle and drunken company; and that which God sends to lead them to repentance, leads them to a tavern, not to refresh their needs of nature, or for ends of a tolerable civility, or innocent purposes; but like the condemned persons among the Levantines, they tasted wine freely, that they might die and be insensible. I could easily reprove such persons with an old Greek proverb mention-

ed by Plutarch, *Περὶ τῆς Εὐθυμίας, οὐτε ποδάγρας ἀπαλλάττει κάλιος*, "You shall ill be cured of the knotted gout, if you have nothing else but a wider shoe." But this reproof is too gentle for so great madness: it is not only an incompetent cure, to apply the plaster of a sin or vanity to cure the smart of a divine judgment; but it is a great increaser of the misery, by swelling the cause to bigger and monstrous proportions. It is just as if an impatient fool, feeling the smart of his medicine, shall tear his wounds open, and throw away the instruments of his cure, because they bring him health at the charge of a little pain, *Ἐγγύς Κυρίου πλείους μαστίγων*, "He that is full of stripes" and troubles, and decked round about with thorns, he "is near to God:" but he that, because he sits uneasily when he sits near the King that was crowned with thorns, shall remove thence, or strew flowers, roses and jessamine, the down of thistles and the softest gossamer, that he may die without pain, die quietly and like a lamb, sink to the bottom of hell without noise; this man is a fool, because he accepts death if it arrest him in civil language, is content to die by the sentence of an eloquent judge, and prefers a quiet passage to hell before going to heaven in a storm.

That Italian gentleman was certainly a great lover of his sleep, who was angry with the lizard that waked him, when a viper was creeping into his mouth: when the evil is entering into us to poison our spirits, and steal our souls away while we are sleeping in the lethargy of sin, God sends his sharp messages to awaken us; and we call that the enemy, and use arts to cure the remedy, not to cure the disease. There are some persons that will never be cured, not because the sickness is incurable, but because they have ill stomachs, and cannot keep the medicine. Just so is his case that despises God's method of curing him by these instances of long suffering, that he uses all the arts he can to be quit of his physician, and to spill his physic, and to take cordials as soon as his vomit begins to work. There is no more to be said in this fair, but to read the poor wretch's sentence, and to declare his condition. As at last, when he despised the first great mercies, God sent him sharpness and sad accidents to sober his spirits: so now that he despises his mercy also, the mercy of the Lord, God will take it away from him, and when I hope all is well. Miserable man that

thou art! this is thy undoing; if God ceases to strike thee, because thou wilt not mend, thou art sealed up to ruin and reprobation for ever; the physician hath given thee over, he hath no kindness for thee. This was the desperate estate of Judah, "Ah, sinful nation! a people laden with iniquity: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel. Why should ye be stricken any more?"* This is the *ἀνάθεμα μαρὰν ἀθά*, the most bitter curse, the greatest excommunication, when the delinquent is become a heathen and a publican, without the covenant, out of the pale of the church: the church hath nothing to do with them: for what have I to do with them that are without?" said St. Paul. It was not lawful for the church any more to punish them. And this court Christian is an imitation and parallel of the justice of the court of heaven: when a sinner is not mended by judgments at long-running, God cuts him off from his inheritance, and the lot of sons; he will chastise him no more, but let him take his course, and spend his portion of prosperity, such as shall be allowed him in the great economy of the world. Thus God did to his vineyard which he took such pains to fence, to plant, to manure, to dig, to cut, and to prune: and when, after all, it brought forth wild grapes, the last and worst of God's anger was this; "Auferam sepem ejus:"† God had fenced it with a hedge of thorns, and "God would take away all that hedge," he would not leave a thorn standing, not one judgment to reprove or admonish them, but all the wild beasts, and wilder and more beastly lusts, may come and devour it, and trample it down in scorn.

And now what shall I say, but those words quoted by St. Paul in his sermon, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish;"‡ perish in your own folly by stubbornness and ingratitude. For it is a huge contradiction to the nature and designs of God: God calls us, we refuse to hear; he invites us with fair promises, we hear and consider not; he gives us blessings, we take them and understand not his meaning; we take out the token, but read not the letter: then he threatens us, and we regard not; he strikes our neighbours, and we are not concerned: then he strikes us gently, but we feel it not: then he does like the physician in the Greek epigram, who being to

* Isaiah i. 4, 5. † Isaiah v. 5. ‡ Acts xiii. 41.

cure a man of a lethargy, locked him into the same room with a madman, that he by dry-beating him might make him at least sensible of blows; but this makes us, instead of running to God, to trust in unskillful physicians, or, like Saul, to run to a Pytho-nisse; we run for cure to a crime, we take sanctuary in a pleasant sin; just as if a man, to cure his melancholy, should desire to be stung with a tarantula, that at least he may die merrily. What is there more to be done that God hath not yet done? He is forced at last to break off with "Curavimus Babylonem, et non est sanata," "We dressed and tended Babylon," but she was incurable: there is no help but such persons must die in their sins, and lie down in eternal sorrow.

SERMON XXXIX.

OF GROWTH IN GRACE.

PART I.

But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ: to whom be glory both now and for ever. Amen.—2 Pet. iii. 18.

WHEN Christianity, like the day-spring from the east, with a new light, did not only enlighten the world, but amazed the minds of men, and entertained their curiosities, and seized upon their warmer and more pregnant affections, it was no wonder, that whole nations were converted at a sermon, multitudes were instantly professed, and their understandings followed their affections, and their wills followed their understandings, and they were convinced by miracle, and overcome by grace, and passionate with zeal, and wisely governed by their guides, and ravished with the sanctity of the doctrine, and the holiness of their examples. And this was not only their duty, but a great instance of providence, that by the great religion and piety of the first professors, Christianity might be firmly planted, and unshaken by scandal, and hardened by persecution; and that these first lights might be actual precedents for ever, and copies for us to transcribe in all descending ages of Christianity, that thither we might run to fetch oil to enkindle our extinguished lamps. But then piety was so universal, that it might well be enjoined

by St. Paul, that "if a brother walked disorderly," the Christians should avoid his company: he forbade them not to accompany with the heathens that walked disorderly; "for then a man must have gone out of the world;" but they were not to endure so much as "to eat with," or, "to salute, a disorderly brother," and ill-living Christian. But now, if we should observe this canon of St. Paul, and refuse to eat or to converse with a fornicator, or a drunkard, or a perjured person, or covetous, we must also "go out of the world:" for a pious or a holy person is now as rare as a disorderly Christian was at first; and as Christianity is multiplied every where in name and title, so it is destroyed in life, essence, and proper operation; and we have very great reason to fear, that Christ's name will serve us to no end but to upbraid our baseness, and his person only to be our judge, and his laws are so many bills of accusation, and his graces and helps offered us but as aggravations of our unworthiness, and our baptism but an occasion of vow-breach, and the holy communion but an act of hypocrisy, formality, or sacrilege, and all the promises of the gospel but as pleasant dreams, and the threatenings but as arts of affrightment. For Christianity lasted pure and zealous, it kept its rules, and observed its own laws for three hundred years, or thereabouts; so long the church remained a virgin; for so long they were warmed with their first fires, and kept under discipline by the rod of persecution: but it hath declined almost fourteen hundred years together; prosperity and pride, wantonness and great fortunes, ambition and interest, false doctrine upon mistake and upon design, the malice of the devil and the arts of all his instruments, the want of zeal, and a weariness of spirit, filthy examples, and a disreputation of piety and a strict life, seldom precedents and infinite discouragements, have caused so infinite a declension of piety and holy living, that what Papirius Massonius, one of their own, said of the popes of Rome, "In pontificibus nemo hodie sanctitatem requirit; optimi putantur, si vel leviter mali sint, vel minus-boni quam ceteri mortales esse solent:" "No man looks for holiness in the bishops of Rome; those are the best popes who are not extremely wicked:" the same is too true of the greatest part of Christians; men are excellent persons, if they be not traitors or adulterous, oppressors or injurious, drunkards or scandalous,

if they be not "as this publican," as the vilest person with whom they converse.

*Nunc, si depositum non inficietur amicus,
Si reddat veterem cum totâ æruginè foilem;
Prodigiosa fides, et Thuscis digna libellis,
Quæque coronatâ lustrari debeat agnâ.*

Juv. Sat. 13.

He that is better than the dregs of his own age, whose religion is something above profaneness, and whose sobriety is a step or two from downright intemperance, whose discourse is not swearing, nor yet apt to edify, whose charity is set out in piety, and a gentle yearning and saying "God help," whose alms are contemptible, and his devotion infrequent; yet, as things are now, he is "unus è millibus," "one of a thousand," and he stands eminent and conspicuous in the valleys and lower grounds of the present piety; for a bank is a mountain upon a level: but what is rare and eminent in the manners of men in this day would have been scandalous, and have deserved the rod of an apostle, if it had been confronted with the fervours and rare devotion and religion of our fathers in the gospel.

Men of old looked upon themselves as they stood by the examples and precedents of martyrs, and compared their piety to the life of St. Paul, and estimated their zeal by flames of the Boanerges, St. James and his brother; and the bishops were thought reprobable, as they fell short of the ordinary government of St. Peter and St. John; and the assemblies of Christians were so holy, that every meeting had religion enough to hallow a house, and convert it to a church; and every day of feasting was a communion, and every fasting-day was a day of repentance and alms, and every day of thanksgiving was a day of joy and alms; and religion began all their actions, and prayer consecrated them, and they ended in charity, and were not polluted with design: they despised the world heartily, and pursued after heaven greedily; they knew no ends, but to serve God and to be saved; and had no designs upon their neighbours, but to lead them to God and to felicity; till Satan, full of envy to see such excellent days, mingled covetousness and ambition within the throngs and conventions of the church, and a vice crept into an office, and then the mutual confidence grew less, and so charity was lessened; and heresies crept in, and then faith began to be sullied; and pride crept in, and then men snatched at offices, not for

the work, but for the dignity; and then they served themselves more than God and the church; till at last it came to that pass where now it is, that the clergy live lives no better than the laity, and the laity are stooped to imitate the evil customs of strangers and enemies of Christianity; so that we should think religion in a good condition, if that men did offer up to God but the actions of an ordinary, even, and just life, without the scandal and allays of a great impiety. But because such is the nature of things, that either they grow towards perfection, or decline towards dissolution; there is no proper way to secure it but by setting its growth forward: for religion hath no station or natural periods; if it does not grow better it grows much worse; not that it always returns the man into scandalous sins, but that it establishes and fixes him in a state of indifference and lukewarmness; and he is more averse to a state of improvement, and dies in an incurious, ignorant, and unrelenting condition.

"But grow in grace:"—That is the remedy, and that would make us all wise and happy, blessed in this world, and sure of heaven: concerning which, we are to consider, first, What the state of grace is into which every one of us must be entered, that we may "grow" in it: secondly, The proper parts, acts, and offices of "growing in grace:" thirdly, The signs, consequences, and proper significations, by which if we cannot perceive the "growing," yet afterwards we may perceive that "we are grown," and so judge of the state of our duty, and concerning our final condition of being saved.

1. Concerning the state of grace, I consider that no man can be said to be in the state of grace, who retains an affection to any one sin. The state of pardon and the Divine favour begins at the first instance of anger against our crimes, when we leave our fondnesses and kind opinions, when we excuse them not, and will not endure their shame, when we feel the smarts of any of their evil consequents: for he that is a perfect lover of sin, and is sealed up to a reprobate sense, endures all that sin brings along with it; and is reconciled to all its mischiefs; he can suffer the sickness of his own drunkenness, and yet call it pleasure; he can wait like a slave to serve his lust, and yet count it no disparagement; he can suffer the dishonour of

being counted a base and dishonest person, and yet look confidently, and think himself no worse. But when the grace of God begins to work upon a man's spirit, it makes the conscience nice and tender: and although the sin, as yet, does not displease the man, but he can endure the flattering and alluring part, yet he will not endure to be used so ill by his sin; he will not be abused and dishonoured by it. But because God hath so allayed the pleasure of his sin, that he that drinks the sweet should also strain the dregs through his throat; by degrees of God's grace doth irreconcile the convert, and discovers, first, its base attendants, then its worst consequents, then the displeasure of God; that here commence the first resolutions of leaving the sin, and trying if, in the service of God, his spirit and the whole appetite of man may be better entertained. He that is thus far entered, shall quickly perceive the difference, and meets arguments enough to invite him farther; for then God treats the man as he treated the spies, that went to discover the land of promise; he ordered the year in plenty, and directed them to a pleasant and a fruitful place, and prepared bunches of grapes of a miraculous and prodigious greatness, that they might report good things of Canaan, and invite the whole nation to attempt its conquest; so God's grace represents to the new converts, and the weak ones in faith, the pleasures and first deliciousnesses of religion; and when they come to spy the good things of that way that leads to heaven, they presently perceive themselves eased of the load of an evil conscience, of their fears of death, of the confusion of their shame; and God's Spirit gives them a cup of sensible comfort, and makes them to rejoice in their prayers, and weep with pleasures mingled with innocent passion and religious changes. And although God does not deal with all men in the same method, or in manners that can regularly be described; and all men do not feel, or do not observe, or cannot, for want of skill, discern, such accidental sweetnesses and pleasant grapes at their first entrance into religion; yet God to every man does minister excellent arguments of invitation; and such, that if a man will attend to them, they will certainly move either his affections or his will, his fancy or his reason, and most commonly both. But while the Spirit of God is doing this work in man, man must also be *σύνεργος τοῦ Θεοῦ*, "a fellow-worker with God;" he must entertain

the Spirit, attend his inspirations, receive his whispers, obey all his motions, invite him farther, and truly renounce all confederacy with his enemy, sin; at no hand suffering any "root of bitterness to spring up," not allowing to himself any reserve of carnal pleasure, no clancular lust, no private oppressions, no secret covetousness, no love to this world, that may discompose his duty. For if a man prays all day, and at night is intemperate; if he spends his time in reading, and his recreation be sinful; if he studies religion, and practises self-interest; if he leaves his swearing, and yet retains his pride; if he becomes chaste, and yet remains peevish and imperious; this man is not changed from the state of sin into the first stage of the state of grace, he does at no hand belong to God; he hath suffered himself to be scared from one sin, and tempted from another by interest, and hath left a third by reason of his inclination, and a fourth for shame or want of opportunity; but the Spirit of God hath not yet planted one perfect plant there: God may make use of the accidentally-prepared advantages; but as yet the Spirit of God hath not begun the proper and direct work of grace in his heart. But when we leave every sin, when we resolve never to return to the chains, when we have no love for the world but such as may be a servant of God; then I account that we are entered into a state of grace, from whence I am now to begin to reckon the commencement of this precept, "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

{ 2. And now the first part of this duty is, —to make religion to be the business of our lives;—for this is the great instrument which will naturally produce our growth in grace, and the perfection of a Christian. For a man cannot, after a state of sin, be instantly a saint; the work of Heaven is not done by a flash of lightning, or a dash of affectionate rain, or a few tears of a relenting pity: God and his church have appointed holy intervals, and have taken portions of our time for religion, that we may be called off from the world, and remember the end of our creation, and do honour to God, and think of heaven with hearty purposes and peremptory designs to get thither. But as we must not neglect those times, which God hath reserved for his service, or the church hath prudently decreed; nor yet act religion upon such days with forms and outsides, or to comply with customs, or to seem reli-

gious; so we must take care, that all the other portions of our time be hallowed with little retirements of our thoughts, and short conversations with God, and all along be guided with holy intention; that even our works of nature may pass into the relations of grace, and the actions of our calling may help towards the "obtaining the prize of our high calling;" while our eatings are actions of temperance, our labours are profitable, our humiliations are acts of obedience, and our alms of charity, and our marriages are chaste; and "whether we eat or drink," sleep or wake, we may "do all to the glory of God," by a direct intuition, or by a reflex act; by design, or by supplement; by foresight, or by an after-election. And to this purpose we must not look upon religion as our trouble and our hindrance, nor think alms chargeable or expensive, nor our fastings vexatious and burdensome; nor our prayers a weariness of spirit; but we must make these, and all other duties of religion, our employment, our care, the work and end for which we came into the world; and remember that we never do the work of men, nor serve the ends of God, nor are in the proper employment and business of our life, but when we worship God, or live like wise or sober persons, or do benefit to our brother.

I will not turn this discourse into a reproof, but leave it represented as a duty. Remember that God sent you into the world for religion; we are but to pass through our pleasant fields, or our hard labours; but to dodge a little while in our fair palaces, or our meaner cottages; but to bait in the way at our full tables, or with our spare diet; but then only man does his proper employment, when he prays and does charity, and mortifies his unruly appetites, and restrains his violent passions, and becomes like to God and imitates his holy Son, and writes after the copies of apostles and saints. Then he is dressing himself for eternity, where he must dwell or abide, either in an excellent beatifical country, or in a prison of amazement and eternal horror: and after all this, you may, if you please, call to mind how much time you allow to God and to your souls every day, or every month, or in a year, if you please, for I fear the account of the time is soon made; but the account for the neglect will be harder; and it will not easily be answered, that all our days and years are little enough to attend perishing things, and to be swallowed up in avari-

cious and vain attendances, and we shall not attend to religion with a zeal so great as is our revenge, or as is the hunger of one meal. Without much time, and a wary life, and a diligent circumspection, we cannot mortify our sins, or do the first works of grace. I pray God we be not found to have grown like the sinews of old age, from strength to remissness; from thence to dissolution, and infirmity, and death. Menedemus was wont to say, "that the young boys that went to Athens, the first year were wise men, the second year, philosophers, the third orators, and the fourth were but plebeians, and understood nothing but their own ignorance." And just so it happens to some in the progresses of religion; at first they are violent and active, and then they satiate all the appetites of religion; and that which is left is, that they were soon weary, and sat down in displeasure, and return to the world, and dwell in the business of pride or money; and, by this time, they understand that their religion is declined, and passed from the heats and follies of youth, to the coldness and infirmities of old age: the remedy of which is only a diligent spirit and a busy religion; a great industry, and a full portion of time in holy offices; that, as the oracle said to the Cirrhæans, "noctes diesque belligerandum," they could not be happy "unless they waged war night and day;" so unless we perpetually fight against our own vices, and repel our ghostly enemies, and stand upon our guard, we must stand for ever in the state of babes in Christ; or else return to the first imperfections of an unchristened soul and an un sanctified spirit. That is the first particular.

2. The second step of our growth in grace is,—when virtues grow habitual, apt, and easy, in our manners and dispositions;—for, although many new converts have a great zeal, and a busy spirit, apt enough, as they think, to contest against all the difficulties of a spiritual life; yet they meet with such powerful oppositions from without, and a false heart within, that their first heats are soon broken; and either they are for ever discouraged, or are forced to march more slowly, and proceed more temperately for ever after.

*Τὴν μίσητον κακότητα καὶ ἰλαδὸν εἶσθαι
Ῥηιδίως, ἀλίγη μὲν ὁδὸς, μάλα δ' ἐγγύθει ναίει.*

"It is an easy thing to commit any wickedness, for temptation and infirmity are always too near us;" but God hath made

care and sweat, prudence and diligence, experience and watchfulness, wisdom and labour at home, and good guides abroad, to be instruments and means to purchase virtue.

The way is long and difficult at first; but in the progress and pursuit, we find all the knots made plain, and the rough ways made smooth.

— jam monte potitus
Ridet —

Now the spirit of grace is like a new soul within him, and he hath new appetites, and new pleasures, when the things of the world grow unsavoury, and the things of religion are delicious: when his temptations to his old crimes return but seldom, and prevail not at all, or in very inconsiderable instances, and stay not at all, but are reproached with a penitential sorrow and speedy amendment; when we do actions of virtue, quickly, frequently, and with delight, then we have grown in grace, in the same degree in which they can perceive these excellent dispositions. Some persons there are who dare not sin: they dare not omit their hours of prayer, and they are restless in their spirits till they have done; but they go to it as to execution; they stay from it as long as they can, and they drive, like Pharaoh's chariots, with the wheels off, sadly and heavily; and, besides that, such persons have reserved to themselves the best part of their sacrifice, and do not give their will to God: they do not love him with all their heart; they are, also, soonest tempted to retire and fall off. Sextius Romanus resigned the honours and offices of the city, and betook himself to the severity of a philosophical life; but when his unusual diet and hard labour began to pinch his flesh, and he felt his propositions smart; and that, which was fine in discourse at a symposiac or an academical dinner, began to sit uneasily upon him in the practice, he so despaired, that he had like to have cast himself into the sea, to appease the labours of his religion; because he never had gone farther than to think it a fine thing to be a wise man: he would commend it, but he was loath to pay for it at the price that God and the philosopher set upon it. But he that is "grown in grace," and hath made religion habitual to his spirit, is not at ease but when he is doing the works of the new man; he rests in religion, and comforts his sorrows with thinking of his prayers; and in all crosses of the world he is patient, because his joy is at hand to refresh him when

he list, for he cares not so he may serve God; and if you make him poor here, he is rich there, and he counts that to be his proper service, his work, his recreation, and reward.

3. But because in the course of holy living, although the duty be regular and constant, yet the sensible relishes and the flowerings of affections, the zeal and the visible expressions, do not always make the same emission; but sometimes by design, sometimes by order, and sometimes by affection, we are more busy, more entire, and more intent upon the actions of religion: in such cases we are to judge of our growth in grace, if after every interval of extraordinary piety, the next return be more devout and more affectionate, the labour be more cheerful and more active, and if religion returns oftener, and stays longer in the same expressions, and leaves more satisfaction upon the spirit. Are your communions more frequent? and, when they are, do you approach nearer to God? Have you made firmer resolutions, and entertained more hearty purposes of amendment? Do you love God more dutifully, and your neighbour with a greater charity? Do you not so easily return to the world as formerly? Are not you glad when the thing is done? Do you go to your secular accounts with a more weaned affection than before? If you communicate well, it is certain that you will still do it better; if you do not communicate well, every opportunity of doing it is but a new trouble, easily excused, readily omitted; done because it is necessary, but not because we love it; and we shall find that such persons, in their old age, do it worst of all. And it was observed by a Spanish confessor, who was also a famous preacher, that in persons not very religious, the confessions, which they made upon their death-bed, were the coldest, the most imperfect, and with less contrition than he had observed them to make in many years before. For so the canes of Egypt, when they newly arise from their bed of mud and slime of Nilus, start up into an equal and continual length, and are interrupted but with few knots, and are strong and beauteous, with great distances and intervals; but when they are grown to their full length, they lessen into the point of a pyramid, and multiply their knots and joints, interrupting the fineness and smoothness of its body; so are the steps and declensions of him that does not grow in grace. At first, when he springs up from

his impurity by the waters of baptism and repentance, he grows straight and strong, and suffers but few interruptions of piety; and his constant courses of religion are but rarely intermitted, till they ascend up to a full age, or towards the ends of their life; then they are weak, and their devotions often intermitted, and their breaches are frequent, and they seek excuses, and labour for dispensations, and love God and religion less and less,—till their old age, instead of a crown of their virtue and perseverance, ends in levity and unprofitable courses; light and useless as the tufted feathers upon the cane, every wind can play with it and abuse it, but no man can make it useful. When, therefore, our piety interrupts its greater and more solemn expressions, and, upon the return of the greater offices and bigger solemnities, we find them to come upon our spirits like the wave of a tide, which retired only because it was natural so to do, and yet came farther upon the strand at the next rolling; when every new confession, every succeeding communion, every time of separation, for more solemn and intense prayer, is better spent, and more affectionate, leaving a greater relish upon the spirit, and possessing greater portions of our affections, our reason, and our choice; then we may give God thanks, who hath given us more grace to use that grace, and a blessing to endeavour our duty, and a blessing upon our endeavour.

¶ 4. To discern our growth in grace,—we must inquire concerning our passions, whether they be mortified and quiet, complying with our ends of virtue, and under command;—for since the passions are the matter of virtue and vice respectively, he that hath brought into his power all the strengths of the enemy, and the forts from whence he did infest him, he only hath secured his holy walking with God. But because this thing is never perfectly done, and yet must always be doing, grace grows according as we have finished our portions of this work. And in this we must not only inquire concerning our passions, whether they be sinful and habitually prevalent, for if they be we are not in the state of grace; but whether they return upon us in violences and indecencies, in transportation, and unreasonable and impudent expressions; for although a good man may be incident to a violent passion, and that without sin, yet a perfect man is not; a well-grown Christian hath seldom such sufferings. To suffer such

things sometimes may stand with the being of virtue, but not with its security; for if passions range up and down, and transport us frequently and violently, we may keep in our forts and in our dwellings; but our enemy is master of the field, and our virtues are restrained, and apt to be starved, and will not hold out long. A good man may be spotted with a violence, but a wise man will not; and he that does not add wisdom to his virtue, the knowledge of Jesus Christ to his virtuous habits, will be a good man but till a storm come. But, beyond this, inquire after the state of your passions in actions of religion. Some men fast to mortify their lust, and their fasting makes them peevish; some reprove a vice, but they do it with much impatience; some charitably give excellent counsel, but they do that, also, with a pompous and proud spirit; and passion, being driven from open hostilities, is forced to march along in the retinue and troops of virtue. And although this be rather a deception and a cozenage than an imperfection, and supposes a state of sin, rather than an imperfect grace; yet, because it tacitly and secretly creeps along among the circumstances of pious actions,—as it spoils a virtue in some, so it lessens it in others, and therefore is considerable also in this question.

And although no man must take accounts of his being in or out of the state of grace, by his being dispassionate, and free from all the assaults of passion; yet, as to the securing his being in the state of grace, he must provide that he be not a slave of passion: so, to declare his growth in grace, he must be sure to take the measures of his affections, and see that they be lessened, more apt to be suppressed; not breaking out to inconvenience and imprudences; not rifting our spirit, and drawing us from our usual and more sober tempers. Try, therefore, if your fear be turned into caution; your lust, into chaste friendships; your imperious spirit, into prudent government; your revenge, into justice; your anger, into charity; and your peevishness and rage, into silence and suppression of language. Is our ambition changed into virtuous and noble thoughts? Can we emulate without envy? Is our covetousness lessened into good husbandry, and mingled with alms, that we may certainly discern the love of money to be gone? Do we leave to despise our inferiors? and can we willingly endure to admit him that excels us in any gift or grace whatsoever; and to commend it without abatement, and mingling allays with

the commendation, and disparagements to the man? If we be arrived but thus far it is well, and we must go farther. But we use to think that all disaffections of the body are removed, if they be changed into the more tolerable, although we have not an athletic health, or the strength of porters or wrestlers. For, although it be felicity to be quit of all passion that may be sinful or violent, and part of the happiness of heaven shall consist in that freedom; yet our growth in grace consists in the remission and lessening of our passions: only he that is incontinent in his lust, or in his anger; in his desires of money, or of honour; in his revenge, or in his fear; in his joys, or in his sorrows; that man is not grown at all in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. This only: in the scrutiny and consequent judgment concerning our passions, it will concern the curiosity of our care to watch against passions in the reflex act, against pride or lust; complacency and peevishness attending upon virtue. For he was noted for a vain person, who, being overjoyed for the cure (as he thought) of his pride, cried out to his wife: "Cerue, Dionysia, deposui fastum;" "Behold, I have laid aside all my pride:" and of that very dream the silly man thought he had reason to boast; but considered not that it was an act of pride and levity besides. If thou hast given a noble present to thy friend; if thou hast rejected the unjust desire of thy prince; if thou hast endured thirst and hunger for religion or continence; if thou hast refused an offer like that which was made to Joseph; sit down and rest in thy good conscience, and do not please thyself in opinions and fantastic noises abroad; and do not despise him that did not do so, as thou hast done, and reprove no man with an upbraiding circumstance; for it will give thee but an ill return, and a contemptible reward, if thou shalt overlay thy infant virtue, or drown it with a flood of breast-milk.

SERMON XL.

PART II.

5. HE is well grown in or towards the state of grace, who is more patient of a sharp reproof than of a secret flattery. For a reprehension contains so much mortification to the pride and complacencies of a man, is

so great an affront to an easy and undisturbed person, is so empty of pleasure and so full of profit, that he must needs love virtue in a great degree, who can take in that which only serves her end, and is displeasing to himself and all his gaieties. A severe reprehender of another's vice comes dressed like Jacob, when he went to cozen his brother of the blessing; his outside is "rough and hairy," but "the voice is Jacob's voice:" rough hands and a healthful language get the blessing, even against the will of him that shall feel it; but he that is patient and even, not apt to excuse his fault, that is less apt to anger, or to scorn him that snatches him rudely from the flames of hell, he is virtue's confessor, and suffers these lesser stripes for that interest, which will end in spiritual and eternal benedictions.

They who are furious against their monitors, are incorrigible; but it is one degree of meekness to suffer discipline; and a meek man cannot easily be an ill man, especially in the present instance; he appears, at least, to have a healthful constitution; he hath good flesh to heal; his spirit is capable of medicine; and that man can never be despaired of, who hath a disposition so near his health as to improve all physic, and whose nature is relieved from every good accident from without. But that which I observe is, that this is not only a good disposition towards repentance and restitution, but is a sign of growth in grace, according as it becomes natural, easy, habitual. Some men chide themselves for all their misdemeanors, because they would be represented to the censures and opinions of other men with a fair character, and such as need not to be reprov'd: others, out of inconsideration, sleep in their own dark rooms, and, until the charity of a guide or a friend draws the curtain, and lets in a beam of light, dream on, until the grave opens, and hell devours them; but if they be called upon by the grace of God, let down with a sheet of counsels and friendly precepts, they are presently inclined to be obedient to the heavenly motions; but unless they be dressed with circumstances of honour and civility, with arts of entertainment and insinuation, they are rejected utterly, or received unwillingly. Therefore, although upon any terms to endure a sharp reproof be a good sign of amendment, yet the growth of grace is not properly signified by every such sufferance: for when this disposition begins, amendment also begins, and goes on in proportion to the increment of

this. To endure a reproof without adding a new sin is the first step to amendment; that is, to endure it without scorn, or hatred, or indignation. 2. The next is to suffer reproof without excusing ourselves; for he that is apt to excuse himself, is only desirous in a civil manner to set the reproof aside, and to represent the charitable monitor to be too hasty in his judgment, and deceived in his information; and the fault to dwell there, not with himself. 3. Then he that proceeds in this instance, admits the reprover's sermon or discourse without a private regret; he hath no secret murmurs or unwillingnesses to the humiliation, but is only ashamed that he should deserve it; but for the reprehension itself, that troubles him not, but he looks on it as his own medicine, and the other's charity. 4. But if to this he adds, that he voluntarily confesses his own fault, and of his own accord vomits out the loads of his own intemperance, and eases his spirit of the infection; then it is certain he is not only a professed and hearty enemy against sin, but a zealous, and a prudent, and an active person against all its interest; and never counts himself at ease but while he rests upon the banks of Sion, or at the gates of the temple; never pleased but in virtue and religion: then he knows the state of his soul and the state of his danger; he reckons it no objection to be abased in the face of man, so he may be gracious in the eyes of God: and that is a sign of a good grace and a holy wisdom; that man is "grown in the grace of God, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." "Justus in principio sermonis est accusator sui," said the wise man; "The righteous accuseth himself in the beginning;" that is, *quickly*, lest he be prevented. And certain it is, he cannot be either wise or good, that had rather have a real sin within him, than that a good man should believe him to be a repenting sinner; that had rather keep his crime than lose his reputation; that is, rather to *be* so than to be *thought* so; rather be without the favour of God than of his neighbour. Diogenes once spied a young man coming out of a tavern or place of entertainment, who, perceiving himself observed by the philosopher, with some confusion stepped back again, that he might, if possible, preserve his fame with that severe person. But Diogenes told him, "Quantò magis intraveris, tantò magis eris in cauponâ;" "The more you go back, the longer you are in the place where you are ashamed to be seen." And he that conceals his sin, still retains that

which he counts his shame and his burden. Hippocrates was noted for an ingenuous person, that he published and confessed his error concerning the sutures of the head: and all ages since St. Austin have called him pious, for writing his book of Retractions, in which he published his former ignorances, and mistakes; and so set his shame off to the world invested with a garment of modesty, and above half changed before they were seen. I did the rather insist upon this particular, because it is a consideration of huge concernment, and yet much neglected in all its instances and degrees. We neither confess our shame nor endure it: we are privately troubled, and publicly excuse it; we turn charity into bitterness, and our reproof into contumacy and scorn; and who is there amongst us that can endure a personal charge, or is not to be taught his personal duty by general discoursings, by parable and apologue, by acts of insinuation and wary distances? But by this state of persons we know the estate of our own spirits.

When God sent his prophets to the people, and "they stoned them with stones, and sawed them asunder, and cast them into dungeons, and made them beggars," the people fell into the condition of Babylon, "Quam curavimus, et non est sanata;" "We healed her," said the prophets, "but she would not be cured:" "Derelinquamus eam," that is her doom; let her enjoy her sins, and all the fruits of sin laid up in treasures of wrath against the day of vengeance and retribution.

6. He that is grown in grace and the knowledge of Christ esteems no sin to be little or contemptible, none fit to be cherished or indulged to. For it is not only inconsistent with the love of God, to entertain any indecency or beginning of a crime, any thing that displeases him; but he always remembers how much it cost him to arrive at the state of good things, whither the grace of God hath already brought him; he thinks of his prayers and tears, his restless nights and his daily fears, his late escape and his present danger, the ruins of his former state, and the difficulty and imperfect reparations of this new, his proclivity and aptness to vice, and natural averseness and uneasy inclinations to the strictness of holy living; and when these are considered truly, they naturally make a man unwilling to entertain any beginnings of a state of life contrary to that, which, with so much danger and difficulty, through so many objections and enemies, he

hath attained. And the truth is, when a man hath escaped the dangers of his first state of sin, he cannot but be extremely unwilling to return again thither, in which he can never hope for heaven. And so it must be; for a man must not flatter himself in a small crime, and say, as Lot did, when he begged a reprieve for Zoar, "Alas! Lord, is it not a little one, and my soul shall live?" And it is not, therefore, to be entertained because it is little: for it is the more without excuse, if it be little: the temptations to it are not great, the allurements not mighty, the promises not insuaring, the resistance easy; and a wise man considers it is a greater danger to be overcome by a little sin, than by a great one: a greater danger, I say; not directly, but accidentally; not in respect of the crime, but in relation to the person: for he that cannot overcome a small crime, is in the state of infirmity so great, that he perishes infallibly, when he is arrested by the sins of a stronger temptation: but he that easily can, and yet will not, he is in love with sin, and courts his danger, that he may at least kiss the apples of Paradise, or feast himself with the parings, since he is, by some displeasing instrument, affrighted from glutting himself with the forbidden fruit in ruder and bigger instances. But the well-grown Christian is curious of his newly-trimmed soul; and, like a nice person with clean clothes, is careful that no spot or stain sully the virgin whiteness of his robe; whereas another, whose albs of baptism are sullied in many places with the smoke and filth of Sodom and uncleanness, cares not in what paths he treads; and a shower of dirt changes not his state, who already lies wallowing in the puddles of impurity. It makes men negligent and easy, when they have an opinion, or certain knowledge, that they are persons extraordinary in nothing, that a little care will not mend them, that another sin cannot make them much worse: but it is a sign of a tender conscience, and a reformed spirit, when it is sensible of every alteration, when an idle word is troublesome, when a wandering thought puts the whole spirit upon its guard, when too free a merriment is wiped off with a sigh and a sad thought, and a severe recollection, and a holy prayer. Poycletus was wont to say, "That they had work enough to do, who were to make a curious picture of clay and dirt, when they were to take accounts for the handling of mud and mortar." A man's spirit is naturally careless of baser and uncostly materials; but if a man

be to work in gold, then he will save the filings of his dust, and suffer not a grain to perish: and when a man hath laid his foundations in precious stones, he will not build vile matter, stubble, and dirt, upon it. So it is in the spirit of a man; if he have built upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, and is grown up to a good stature in Christ, he will not easily dishonour his building, or lose his labours, by an incurious entertainment of vanities and little instances of sin; which as they can never satisfy any lust or appetite to sin, so they are like a fly in a box of ointment, or like little follies to a wise man; they are extremely full of dishonour and disparagement, they disarray a man's soul of his virtue, and dishonour him for cockle-shells and baubles, and tempt to a greater folly; which every man, who is grown in the knowledge of Christ, therefore carefully avoids, because he fears a relapse with a fear as great as his hopes of heaven are; and knows that the entertainment of small sins does but entice a man's resolutions to disband; they unravel and untwist his holy purposes, and begin in infirmities, and proceed in folly, and end in death.

7. He that is grown in grace, pursues virtue for its own interest, purely and simply without the mixture and allay of collateral designs and equally-inclining purposes. God, in the beginning of our returns to him, entertains us with promises and threatenings, the apprehensions of temporal advantages, with fear and shame, and with reverence of friends and secular respects, with reputation and coercion of human laws; and at first, men snatch at the lesser and lower ends of virtue; and such rewards as are visible, and which God sometimes gives in hand, to entertain our weak and imperfect desires. The young philosophers were very forward to get the precepts of their sect, and the rules of severity, that they might discourse with kings, not that they might reform their own manners; and some men study to get the ears and tongues of the people, rather than to gain their souls to God; and they obey good laws for fear of punishment, or to preserve their own peace; and some are worse, they do good deeds out of spite, and "preach Christ out of envy," or to lessen the authority and fame of others. Some of these lessen the excellency of the act, others spoil it quite: it is in some imperfect, in others criminal; in some it is consistent with a beginning infant-grace, in others it is an argument of the state of sin and death; but in

all cases, the well-grown Christian, he that improves or goes forward in his way to heaven, brings virtue forth, not into discourses and panegyrics, but into his life and manners. His virtue, although it serves many good ends accidentally, yet, by his intention, it only suppresses his inordinate passions, makes him temperate and chaste, casts out his devils of drunkenness and lust, pride and rage, malice and revenge; it makes him useful to his brother and a servant of God. And although these flowers cannot choose but please his eye and delight his smell, yet he chooses to gather honey, and licks up the dew of heaven, and feasts his spirit upon the manna, and dwells not in the collateral usages and accidental sweetnesses, which dwell at the gates of other senses; but like a bee, loads his thighs with wax and his bag with honey, that is, with the useful parts of virtue, in order to holiness and felicity; of which the best signs and notices we can take will be;—if we as earnestly pursue virtues which are acted in private, as those whose scene lies in public; if we pray in private, under the only eye of God and his ministering angels, as in churches; if we give our alms in secret rather than in public; if we take more pleasure in the just satisfaction of our consciences, than securing our reputation; if we rather pursue innocence than seek an excuse; if we desire to please God, though we lose our fame with men; if we be just to the poorest servant as to the greatest prince; if we choose to be among the jewels of God, though we be the *περικαθαρισμα*, “the scouring” of the world; if, when we are secure from witnesses and accusers, and not obnoxious to the notices of the law, we think ourselves obliged by conscience and practice, and live accordingly: then our services and intentions in virtue are right; then we are past the twilights of conversion, and the umbrages of the world, and walk in the light of God, of his word and of his Spirit, of grace and reason, as becometh not babes, but men in Christ Jesus. In this progress of grace I have not yet expressed that perfect persons should serve God out of mere love of God and the Divine excellencies, without the considerations of either heaven or hell; such a thing as that is talked of in mystical theology. And I doubt not but many good persons come to that growth of charity, that the goodness and excellency of God are more incumbent and actually pressing upon their spirit than any consider-

ations of reward. But then I shall add this, that when persons come to that height of grace, or contemplation rather, and they love God for himself, and do their duties in order to the fruition of him and his pleasure; all that is but heaven in another sense, and under another name: just as the mystical theology is the highest duty, and the choicest part of obedience under a new method. But in order to the present, that which I call a signification of our growth in grace is, a pursuance of virtue upon such reasons as are propounded to us as motives in Christianity, (such as are to glorify God, and to enjoy his promises in the way, and in our country to avoid the displeasure of God, and be united to his glories,) and then to exercise virtue in such parts and to such purposes as are useful to good life, and profitable to our neighbours; not to such only where they serve reputation or secular ends. For though the great Physician of our souls hath mingled profits and pleasures with virtue, to make its chalice sweet and apt to be drunk off; yet he that takes out the sweet ingredient, and feasts his palate with the less wholesome part, because it is delicious, serves a low end of sense or interest, but serves not God at all, and as little does benefit to his soul. Such a person is like Homer’s bird, deplumes himself to feather all the naked callows that he sees, and holds a taper that may light others to heaven, while he burns his own fingers; but a well-grown person, out of habit and choice, out of love of virtue and just intention, goes on his journey in straight ways to heaven, even when the bridle and coercion of laws, or the spurs of interest or reputation, are laid aside; and desires witnesses of his actions, not that he may advance his fame, but for reverence and fear, and to make it still more necessary to do holy things.

8. Some men there are in the beginning of their holy walking with God, and while they are babes in Christ, who are presently busied in delights of prayers, and rejoice in public communion, and count all solemn assemblies festival; but as they are pleased with them, so they can easily be without them. It is a sign of common and vulgar love, only to be pleased with the company of a friend, and to be as well without him: “*Amoris ad morsum qui verè senserit*,” “He that has felt the sting of a sharp and very dear affection,” is impatient in the absence of his beloved object: the soul that is sick and swallowed up with holy fire, loves nothing else;

all pleasures else seem unsavoury ; company is troublesome, visitors are tedious, homilies of comfort are flat and useless. The pleasures of virtue, to a good and perfect man, are not like the perfumes of nard-pistic, which is very delightful when the box is newly broken, but the want of it is no trouble, we are well enough without it: but virtue is like hunger and thirst, it must be satisfied or we die. And when we feel great longings after religion, and faintings for want of holy nutriment, when a famine of the word and sacraments is more intolerable, and we think ourselves really most miserable when the church-doors are shut against us, or like the Christians, in the persecution of the Vandals,—who thought it worse than death that their bishops were taken from them: if we understand excommunication, or Church-censures, (abating the disreputation and secular appendages,) in the sense of the Spirit, to be a misery next to hell itself; then we have made a good progress in the charity and grace of God: till then we are but pretenders, or infants, or imperfect, in the same degree in which our affections are cold and our desires remiss. For a constant and prudent zeal is the best testimony of our masculine and vigorous heats, and an hour of fervour is more pleasing to God than a month of lukewarmness and indifference.

9. But as some are active only in the presence of a good object, but remiss and careless for the want of it; so, on the other side, an infant-grace is safe in the absence of a temptation, but falls easily when it is in presence. He, therefore, that would understand if he be grown in grace, may consider if his safety consists only in peace, or in the strength of the Spirit. It is good that we will not seek out opportunities to sin; but are not we too apprehensive of it when it is presented? or do we not sink under it when it presses us? Can we hold our tapers near the flame, and not suck it in greedily like naphtha or prepared nitre? or can we, like the children of the captivity, walk in the midst of flames, and not be scorched or consumed? Many men will not, like Judah, go into highways, and untie the girdles of harlots; but can you reject the importunity of a beauteous and imperious lady, as Joseph did? We had need pray that we be “not led into temptation:” that is, not only into the possession, but not into the allurements and neighbourhood of it, lest by little and little, our strongest resolutions be untwist,

and crack in sunder, like an easy cord severed into single threads; but if we, by the necessity of our lives and manner of living, dwell where a temptation will assault us, then to resist is the sign of a great grace; but such a sign, that without it the grace turns to wantonness, and the man into a beast, and an angel into a devil. R. Moses will not allow a man to be a true penitent, until he hath left all his sin, and in all the like circumstances refuses those temptations, under which formerly he sinned and died; and indeed it may happen, that such a trial only can secure our judgment concerning ourselves. And although to be tried in all the same accidents be not safe, nor always contingent, and in such cases it is sufficient to resist all the temptations we have, and avoid the rest, and decree against all;—yet if it please God we are tempted, as David was by his eyes, or the martyrs by tortures, or Joseph by his wanton mistress, then to stand sure, and to ride upon the temptation like a ship upon a wave, or to stand like a rock in an impetuous storm, that is the sign of a great grace, and of a well-grown Christian.

10. No man is grown in grace, but he that is ready for every work, that chooses not his employment, that refuses no imposition from God or his superior. A ready hand, an obedient heart, and a willing, cheerful soul, in all the work of God, and in every office of religion, is a great index of a good proficient in the ways of godliness. The heart of a man is like a wounded hand or arm, which, if it be so cured that it can only move one way, and cannot turn to all postures and natural uses, it is but imperfect, and still half in health and half wounded: so is our spirit; if it be apt for prayer and close-fisted in alms, if it be sound in faith, and dead in charity, if it be religious to God and unjust to our neighbour, there wants some integral part, or there is a lameness; and “the deficiency in any one duty implies the guilt of all,” said St. James; and, “Bonum ex integrâ causâ, malum ex quâvis particulari:” every fault spoils a grace, but one grace alone cannot make a good man. But as to be universal in our obedience is necessary to our being in the state of grace, so, readily to change employment from the better to the worse, from the honourable to the poor, from useful to seemingly unprofitable, is a good character of a well-grown Christian, if he takes the worst part with indifference, and a spirit equally choosing all the events of the Divine Providence. Can you be content to

descend from ruling of a province to the keeping of a herd, from the work of an apostle to be confined in a prison, from disputing before princes to a conversation with shepherds? Can you be willing to all that God is willing, and suffer all that he chooses, as willingly as if you had chosen your own fortune? In the same degree in which you can conform to God, in the same you have approached towards that perfection, whither we must, by degrees, arrive, in our journey towards heaven.

This is not to be expected of beginners; for they must be enticed with apt employments; and, it may be, their office and work so fits their spirits, that it makes them first in love with it, and then with God for giving it. And many a man goes to heaven in the days of peace, whose faith, and hope, and patience, would have been dashed in pieces, if he had fallen into a storm of persecution. "Oppression will make a wise man mad," saith Solomon: there are some usages that will put a sober person out of all patience, such which are besides the customs of this life, and contrary to all his hopes, and unworthy of a person of his quality. And when Nero durst not die, yet when his servants told him, that the senators had condemned him to be put to death, "more majorum," that is, "by scourging like a slave," he was forced into preternatural confidence, and fell upon his own sword. But when God so changes thy estate, that thou art fallen into accidents, to which thou art no otherwise disposed but by grace and a holy spirit, and yet thou canst pass through them with quietness, and do the work of suffering as well as the works of prosperous employment;—this is an argument of a great grace and an extraordinary spirit. For many persons, in a change of fortune, perish, who, if they had still been prosperous, had gone to prison, being tempted in a persecution to perjuries, and apostasy, and unhandsome compliances, and hypocrisy, and irreligion; and many men are brought to virtue, and to God, and to felicity, by being persecuted and made unprosperous. And these are effects of a more absolute and irrelative predestination. But when the grace of God is great, and prudent, and masculine, and well grown, it is unaltered in all changes; save only that every accident that is new and violent, brings him nearer to God, and makes him, with greater caution and severity, to dwell in virtue.

11. Lastly: Some there are, who are firm in all great and foreseen changes, and have laid up in the storehouses of the spirit,—*reason* and *religion*,—arguments and discourses enough to defend them against all violences, and stand at watch so much, that they are safe, where they can consider and deliberate; but there may be something wanting yet; and in the direct line, in the straight progress to heaven, I call that an infallible sign of a great grace, and indeed the greatest degree of a great grace, when a man is prepared against sudden invasions of the spirit, surreptitious and extemporary assaults. Many a valiant person dares fight a battle, who yet will be timorous and surprised in a midnight alarm, or if he falls into a river. And how many discreet persons are there, who, if you offer them a sin, and give them time to consider, and tell them of it beforehand, will rather die than be perjured, or tell a deliberate lie, or break a promise; who it may be, tell many sudden lies, and excuse themselves, and break their promises, and yet think themselves safe enough, and sleep without either affrightments or any apprehension of dishonour done to their persons or their religion! Every man is not armed for all sudden arrests of passions. Few men have cast such fetters upon their lusts, and have their passions in so strict confinement, that they may not be overrun with a midnight flood or an unlooked-for inundation. He that does not start, when he is smitten suddenly, is a constant person. And that is it which I intend in this instance; that he is a perfect man, and well grown in grace, who hath so habitual a resolution, and so unhasty and wary a spirit, as that he decrees upon no act, before he hath considered maturely, and changed the sudden occasion into a sober counsel. David, by chance, spied Bathsheba washing herself; and, being surprised, gave his heart away, before he could consider; and when it was once gone, it was hard to recover it; and sometimes a man is betrayed by a sudden opportunity, and all things fitted for his sin ready at the door; the act stands in all its dress, and will not stay for an answer; and inconsideration is the defence and guard of the sin, and makes that his conscience can the more easily swallow it: what shall the man do then? Unless he be strong by his old strengths, by a great grace, by an habitual virtue, and a sober unmoved spirit,—he falls and dies the death, and hath no new

strengths, but such as are to be employed for his recovery; none for his present guard, unless upon the old stock, and if he be a well-grown Christian.

These are the parts, acts, and offices of our growing in grace; and yet I have sometimes called them signs; but they are signs, as eating and drinking are signs of life; they are signs so as also they are parts of life; and these are parts of our growth in grace, so that a man can grow in grace to no other purpose but to these or the like improvements.

Concerning which I have a caution or two to interpose. 1. The growth of grace is to be estimated as other moral things are, not according to the growth of things natural. Grace does not grow by observation, and a continual efflux, and a constant proportion: and a man cannot call himself to an account for the growth of every day, or week, or month: but, in the greater portions of our life, in which we have had many occasions and instances to exercise and improve our virtues, we may call ourselves to account; but it is a snare to our consciences to be examined in the growth of grace in every short revolution of solemn duty, as against every communion or great festival.

2. Growth in grace is not always to be discerned, either in single instances or in single graces. Not in single instances; for every time we are to exercise a virtue, we are not in the same natural dispositions, nor do we meet with the same circumstances; and it is not always necessary that the next act should be more earnest and intense than the former: all single acts are to be done after the manner of men, and, therefore, are not always capable of increasing, and they have their times, beyond which they cannot easily swell; and, therefore, if it be a good act and zealous, it may proceed from a well-grown grace; and yet a younger and weaker person may do some acts as great and as religious as it. But neither do single graces always afford a regular and certain judgment in this affair. For some persons, at the first, had rather die than be unchaste or perjured; and "greater love than this no man hath, that he lay down his life" for God: he cannot easily grow in the substance of that act; and if other persons or himself, in process of time, do it more cheerfully or with fewer fears, it is not always a sign of a greater grace, but sometimes of greater collateral assistances, or a better habit of body, or more fortunate circum-

stances: for he that goes to the block trembling for Christ, and yet endures his death certainly, and endures his trembling too, and runs through all his infirmities and the bigger temptations, looks not so well many times in the eyes of men, but suffers more for God, than those confident martyrs that courted death in the primitive church; and therefore, may be much dearer in the eyes of God. But that which I say in this particular is, that a smallness in one is not an argument of the imperfection of the whole estate: because God does not always give to every man occasions to exercise, and therefore not to improve, every grace; and the passive virtues of a Christian are not to be expected to grow so fast in prosperous as in suffering Christians. But in this case we are to take accounts of ourselves by the improvement of those graces which God makes to happen often in our lives; such as are charity and temperance in young men; liberality and religion in aged persons; ingenuity and humility in scholars; justice in merchants and artificers; forgiveness of injuries in great men and persons tempted by law-suits: for since virtues grow like other moral habits, by use, diligence, and assiduity,—there where God hath appointed our work and our instances, there we must consider concerning our growth in grace; in other things we are but beginners. But it is not likely that God will try us concerning degrees hereafter, in such things, of which, in this world, he was sparing to give us opportunities.

3. Be careful to observe that these rules are not all to be understood negatively, but positively and affirmatively: that is, that a man may conclude that he is grown in grace, if he observes these characters in himself, which I have here discoursed of; but he must not conclude negatively, that he is not grown in grace, if he cannot observe such signal testimonies: for sometimes God covers the graces of his servants, and hides the beauty of his tabernacle with goat's hair and the skins of beasts, that he may rather suffer them to want present comfort than the grace of humility. For it is not necessary to preserve the gayeties and their spiritual pleasures; but if their humility fails, (which may easily be under the sunshine of conspicuous and illustrious graces,) their virtues and themselves perish in a sad declension. But sometimes men have not skill to make a judgment; and all this discourse seems too artificial to be tried by, in

the hearty purposes of religion. Sometimes they let pass much of their life, even of their better days, without observance of particulars; sometimes their cases of conscience are intricate, or allayed with unavoidable infirmities; sometimes they are so uninstructed in the more secret parts of religion, and there are so many illusions and accidental miscarriages, that if we shall conclude negatively in the present question, we may produce scruples infinite, but understand nothing more of our estate, and do much less of our duty.

4. In considering concerning our growth in grace, let us take more care to consider matters that concern justice and charity, than that concern the virtue of religion; because in this there may be much, in the other there cannot easily be any, illusion and cozenage. That is a good religion that believes, and trusts, and hopes in God, through Jesus Christ, and for his sake does all justice and all charity that he can; and our blessed Lord gives no other description of "love" to God, but obedience and "keeping his commandments." Justice and charity are like the matter, religion is the form, of Christianity: but although the form be more noble and the principle of life, yet it is less discernible, less material, and less sensible; and we judge concerning the form by the matter, and by material accidents, and by actions: and so we must of our religion, that is, of our love to God, and of the efficacy of our prayers, and the usefulness of our fastings; we must make our judgments by the more material parts of our duty, that is, by sobriety, and by justice, and by charity.

I am much prevented in my intention for the perfecting of this so very material consideration: I shall therefore only tell you, that to these parts and actions of a good life, or of our growth in grace, some have added some accidental considerations, which are rather signs than parts of it. Such are: 1. To praise all good things, and to study to imitate what we praise. 2. To be impatient hat any man should excel us; not out of envy to the person, but of noble emulation of the excellency. For so Themistocles could not sleep, after the great victory at Marathon purchased by Miltiades, till he made himself illustrious by equal services to his country. 3. The bearing of sickness patiently, and ever with improvement, and the addition of some excellent principle, and the firm pursuing it. 4. Great devotion,

and much delight in our prayers. 5. Frequent inspirations, and often whispers, of the Spirit of God, prompting us to devotion and obedience; especially if we add to this a constant and ready obedience to all those holy invitations. 6. Offering peace to them that have injured me, and the abating of the circumstances of honour or of right, when either justice or charity is concerned in it. 7. Love to the brethren. 8. To behold our companions, or our inferiors, full of honour and fortune; and if we sit still at home and murmur not, or if we can rejoice both in their honour and our own quiet, that is a fair work of a good man. And now, 9. After all this, I will not trouble you with reckoning a freedom from being tempted, not only from being overcome, but from being tried: for though that be a rare felicity, and hath in it much safety: yet it hath less honour, and fewer instances of virtue, unless it proceed from a confirmed and heroical grace; which is indeed a little image of heaven and of a celestial charity, and never happens signally to any, but to old and very eminent persons. 10. But some also add an excellent habit of body and material passions, such as are chaste and virtuous dreams; and suppose, that, as a disease abuses the fancy, and a vice doth prejudice it, so may an excellent virtue of the soul smooth and calcine the body, and make it serve perfectly, and without rebellious indispositions. 11. Others are in love with Mary Magdalen's tears, and fancy the hard knees of St. James, and the sore eyes of St. Peter, and the very recreations of St. John; "Proh! quam virtute præditos omnia decent!" thinking "all things become a good man," even his gestures and little incuriosities. And though this may proceed from a great love of virtue, yet because some men do thus much and no more, and this is to be attributed to the lustre of virtue, which shines a little through a man's eyelids, though he perversely winks against the light; yet (as the former of these two is too metaphysical, so is the latter too fantastical) he that, by the foregoing material parts and proper significations of a growing grace, does not understand his own condition, must be content to work on still "super totam materiam," without considerations of particulars; he must pray earnestly, and watch diligently, and consult with prudent guides, and ask of God great measures of his Spirit, and "hunger and thirst after righteousness:" for he that does so, shall

certainly "be satisfied." And if he understands not his present good condition, yet if he be not wanting in the downright endeavours of piety, and in hearty purposes, he shall then find that he is grown in grace, when he springs up in the resurrection of the just, and shall be ingrafted upon a tree of paradise, which beareth fruit for ever, glory to God, rejoicing to saints and angels, and eternal felicity to his own pious, though undiscerning soul. "Prima sequentem, honestum est in secundis aut tertiis consistere."⁸

SERMON XLI.

OF GROWTH IN SIN: OR, THE SEVERAL STATES AND DEGREES OF SINNERS, WITH THE MANNER HOW THEY ARE TO BE TREATED.

PART I.

And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire.—Jude Epist. ver. 22, 23.

MAN hath but one entrance into the world; but a thousand ways to pass from thence. And as it is in the natural, so it is in the spiritual: nothing but the union of faith and obedience can secure our regeneration, and our new birth, and can bring us to see the light of heaven; but there are a thousand passages of turning into darkness. And it is not enough, that our bodies are exposed to so many sad infirmities and dishonourable imperfections, unless our soul also be a subject capable of so many diseases, irregular passions, false principles, accursed habits and degrees of perverseness, that the very kinds of them are reducible to a method, and make up the part of a science. There are a variety of stages and descents to death, as there are diversity of torments, and of sad regions of misery in hell, which is the centre and kingdom of sorrows. But that we may a little refresh the sadness of this consideration; for every one of these stages of sin, God hath measured out a proportion of mercy: for, "If sin abounds, grace shall much more abound;" and "God hath concluded all under sin," not with purpose to destroy us, but "ut omnium misereatur," "that he might have mercy upon all;" that light may break forth from the deepest enclosures of darkness, and mercy may rejoice upon the recessions of justice, and grace may triumph upon the

ruins of sin, and God may be glorified in the miracles of our conversion, and the wonders of our preservation, and glories of our being saved. There is no state of sin, but, if we be persons capable (according to God's method of healing) of receiving antidotes, we shall find a sheet of mercy spread over our wounds and nakedness. If our diseases be small, almost necessary, scarce avoidable; then God does, and so we are commanded to cure them, and cover them with a veil of pity, compassion, and gentle remedies: if our evils be violent, inveterate, gangrened, and incorporated into our nature by evil customs, they must be pulled from the flames of hell with censures, and cauteries, and punishments, and sharp remedies, quickly and rudely; their danger is present and sudden, its effect is quick and intolerable, and there are no soft counsels then to be entertained; they are already in the fire, but they may be saved for all that. So great, so infinite, so miraculous is God's mercy, that he will not give a sinner over, though the hairs of his head be singed with the flames of hell. God's desires of having us to be saved continue, even when we begin to be damned; even till we will not be saved, and are gone beyond God's method, and all the revelations of his kindness. And certainly that is a bold and a mighty sinner, whose iniquity is swelled beyond all the bulk and heap of God's revealed loving-kindnesses: if sin hath swelled beyond grace, and superabounds over it, that sin is gone beyond the measures of a man; such a man is removed beyond all the malice of human nature, into the evil and spite of devils and accursed spirits; there is no greater sadness in the world than this. God hath not appointed a remedy in the vast treasures of grace for some men, and some sins; they have sinned like the fallen angels, and having overrun the ordinary evil inclinations of their nature, they are without the protection of the Divine mercy, and the conditions of that grace, which was designed to save all the world, and was sufficient to have saved twenty. This is a condition to be avoided with the care of God and his angels, and all the whole industry of man. In order to which end, my purpose now is to remonstrate to you the several states of sin and death, together with those remedies which God hath proportioned out to them; that we may observe the evils of the least, and so avoid the intolerable mischiefs of the greater, even of those sins which still are within the power

* Cicero.

and possibilities of recovery; lest insensibly we fall into those sins, and into those circumstances of person, for which Christ never died, which the Holy Ghost never means to cure, and which the eternal God never will pardon: for there are of this kind more than commonly men imagine, whilst they amuse their spirits with gayeties and false principles, till they have run into horrible impieties, from whence they are not willing to withdraw their foot, and God is resolved never to snatch and force them thence.

I. "Of some have compassion."—And these I shall reduce to four heads or orders of men and actions; all which have their proper cure proportionable to their proper state, gentle remedies to the lesser irregularities of the soul. 1. The first are those that sin without observation of their particular state; either because they are uninstructed in the special cases of conscience, or because they do an evil, against which there is no express commandment. It is a sad calamity, that there are so many millions of men and women that are entered into a state of sickness and danger, and yet are made to believe they are in perfect health; and they do actions, concerning which they never made a question whether they were just or not, nor were ever taught by what names to call them. For while they observe that modesty is sometimes abused by a false name, and called clownishness and want of breeding; and contentedness and temperate living is suspected to be want of courage and noble thoughts; and severity of life is called imprudent and unsociable; and simplicity and hearty honesty is counted foolish and impolitic: they are easily tempted to honour prodigality and foolish dissolution of their estates with the title of liberal and noble usages. Timorousness is called caution, rashness is called quickness of spirit, covetousness is frugality, amorousness is society and gentile, peevishness and anger is courage, flattery is humane and courteous: and under these false veils virtue slips away (like truth from under the hand of them that fight for her) and leaves vice dressed up with the same imagery, and the fraud not discovered till the day of recompenses, when men are distinguished by their rewards. But so men think they sleep freely, when their spirits are laden with lethargy; and they call a hectic fever the vigour of a natural heat, till nature changes those less discerned states into the notorious im-

ages of death. Very many men never consider, whether they sin or not in ten thousand of their actions, every one of which is very disputable, and do not think they are bound to consider: these men are to be pitied and instructed, they are to be called upon to use religion like a daily diet; their consciences must be made tender, and their catechism enlarged; teach them, and make them sensible, and they are cured.

But the other in this place are more considerable: men sin without observation, because their actions have no restraint of an express commandment, no letter of the law to condemn them by an express sentence. And this happens when the crime is comprehended under a general notion, without the instancing of particulars; for if you search over all the Scripture, you shall never find incest named and marked with the black character of death; and there are divers sorts of uncleanness to which Scripture therefore gives no name, because she would have them have no being. And it had been necessary that God should have described all particulars, and all kinds, if he had not given reason to man: for so it is fit that a guide should point out every turning, if he be to teach a child or a fool to return to his father's roof. But he that bids us avoid intemperance for fear of a fever, supposes you to be sufficiently instructed that you may avoid the plague: and, when to look upon a woman with lust is condemned, it will not be necessary to add, "You must not do more," when even the least is forbidden: and when to uncover the nakedness of Noah brought a universal plague upon the posterity of Cham, it was not necessary that the lawgiver should say, "You must not ascend to your father's bed, or draw the curtains from your sister's retirements." When the Athenians forbade to transport figs from Athens, there was no need to name the gardens of Alcibiades; much less was it necessary to add, that Chabrias should send no plants to Sparta. Whatever is comprised under the general notion, and partakes of the common nature and the same iniquity, needs no special prohibition; unless we think we can mock God, and elude his holy precepts with an absurd trick of mistaken logic. I am sure that will not save us harmless from a thunderbolt.

Men sin without an express prohibition, when they commit a thing that is like a forbidden evil. And when St. Paul had

reckoned many works of the flesh, he adds, "and such like," all that have the same unreasonableness and carnality. For thus polygamy is unlawful: for if it be not lawful for a Christian "to put away his wife and marry another, unless for adultery," much less may he keep a first, and take a second, when the first is not put away. If a Christian may not be drunk with wine, neither may he be drunk with passion; if he may not kill his neighbour, neither must he tempt him to sin, for that destroys him more; if he may not wound him, then he may not persuade him to intemperance, and a drunken fever; if it be not lawful to cozen a man, much less is it permitted that he make a man a fool, and a beast, and exposed to every man's abuse, and to all ready evils. And yet men are taught to start at the one half of these, and make no conscience of the other half; whereof some have a greater baseness than the other that are named, and all have the same unreasonableness.

3. A man is guilty, even when no law names his action, if he does any thing that is a cause or an effect, a part or unhand-some adjunct, of a forbidden instance. He that forbade all intemperance, is as much displeased with the infinite of foolish talk that happens at such meetings, as he is at the spoiling of the drink, and the destroying the health. If God cannot endure wantonness, how can he suffer lascivious dressings, tempting circumstances, wanton eyes, high diet? If idleness be a sin, then all immoderate mispending of our time, all long and tedious games, all absurd contrivances how to throw away a precious hour, and a day of salvation also, are against God and against religion. He that is commanded to be charitable, it is also intended he should not spend his money vainly, but be a good husband and provident, that he may be able to give to the poor, as he would be to purchase a lordship, or pay his daughter's portion. And upon this stock it is that Christian religion forbids jeering and immoderate laughter, and reckons "jestings" amongst the "things that are unseemly." This also would be considered.

4. Besides the express laws of our religion, there is a universal line and limit to our passions and designs, which is called "the analogy of Christianity;" that is, the proportion of its sanctity, and the strictness of its holy precepts. This is is not forbidden; but does this become you? Is it decent to see a Christian live in plenty and

ease, and heap up money, and never to partake of Christ's passions? There is no law against a judge's being a dresser of gardens, or a gatherer of sycamore fruits; but it becomes him not, and deserves a reproof. If I do exact justice to my neighbour, and cause him to be punished legally for all the evils he makes me suffer, I have not broken a fragment from the stony tables of the law: but this is against the analogy of our religion; it does not become the disciple of so gentle a Master to take all advantages that he can. Christ, that quitted all the glories that were essential to him, and that grew up in his nature when he lodged in his Father's bosom; Christ, that suffered all the evils due for the sins of mankind, himself remaining most innocent; Christ, that promised persecution, injuries, and affronts, as part of our present portion, and gave them to his disciples as a legacy, and gave us his Spirit to enable us to suffer injuries, and made that the parts of suffering evils should be the matter of three or four Christian graces, of patience, of fortitude, of longanimity, and perseverance; he that of eight beatitudes, made that five of them should be instanced in the matter of humiliation and suffering temporal inconvenience;—that blessed Master was certainly desirous that his disciples should take their crowns from the cross, not from the evenness and felicities of the world; he intended we should give something, and suffer more things, and forgive all things, all injuries whatsoever. And though together with this may consist our securing a just interest; yet, in very many circumstances, we shall be put to consider, how far it becomes us to quit something of that to pursue peace; and when we have secured the letter of the law, that we also look to its analogy; when we do what we are strictly bound to, then also we must consider what becomes us who are disciples of such a Master, who are instructed with such principles, charmed with so severe precepts, and invited with the certainty of infinite rewards. Now, although this discourse may seem new and strange and very severe, yet it is infinitely reasonable, because Christianity is a law of love and voluntary services; it can in no sense be confined with laws and strict measures: well may the ocean receive its limits, and the whole capacity of fire be glutted, and the grave have his belly so full that it shall cast up all its bowels and disgorge the continued meal of so many thousand years;

but love can never have a limit; and it is indeed to be swallowed up, but nothing can fill it but God, who hath no bound. Christianity is a law for sons, not for servants; and God, that gives his grace without measure, and rewards without end, and acts of favour beyond our askings, and provides for us beyond our needs, and gives us counsels beyond commandments, intends not to be limited out by the just evennesses and stricken measures of the words of a commandment. Give to God "full measure, shaken together, pressed down, heaped up, and running over;" for God does so to us; and when we have done so to him, we are infinitely short of the least measure of what God does for us; "we are still unprofitable servants." And therefore, as the breaking any of the laws of Christianity provokes God to anger, so the prevaricating in the analogy of Christianity stirs him up to jealousy. He hath reason to suspect our hearts are not right with him, when we are so reserved in the matter and measures of our services; and if we will give God but just what he calls for by express mandate, it is just in him to require all of that at our hands without any abatement, and then we are sure to miscarry. And let us remember, that when God said he was "a jealous God," he expressed the meaning of it to be, he did "punish to the third and fourth generation." "Jealousy is like the rage of a man;" but if it be also like the anger of God, it is insupportable, and will crush us into the ruins of our grave.

But because these things are not frequently considered, there are very many sins committed against religion, which, because the commandment hath not marked, men refuse to mark, and think God requires no more. I am entered into a sea of matter, which I must not now prosecute; but I shall only note this to you, that it is but reasonable we should take accounts of our lives by the proportions, as well as by the express rules, of our religion, because in human and civil actions all the nations of the world use to call their subjects to account. For that which in the accounts of men is called reputation and public honesty, is the same which in religion we call analogy and proportion; in both cases there being some things which are besides the notices of laws, and yet are the most certain consignations of an excellent virtue. He is a base person that does any thing against public honesty; and yet no man can be punished, if

he marries a wife the next day after his first wife's funeral: and so he that prevaricates the proportions and excellent reasons of Christianity, is a person without zeal and without love; and, unless care be taken of him, he will quickly be without religion. But yet these, I say, are a sort of persons, which are to be used with gentleness, and treated with compassion: for no man must be handled roughly to force him to do a kindness; and coercion of laws and severity of judges, serjeants, and executioners, are against offenders of commandments; but the way to cure such persons is the easiest and gentlest remedy of all others. They are to be instructed in all the parts of duty, and invited forward by the consideration of the great rewards which are laid up for all the sons of God, who serve him without constraint, without measures and allays, even as fire burns, and as the roses grow, even as much as they can, and to all the extent of their natural and artificial capacities. For it is a thing fit for our compassion, to see men fettered in the iron bands of laws, and yet to break the golden chains of love; but all those instruments, which are proper to enkindle the love of God, and to turn fear into charity, are the proper instances of that compassion, which is to be used towards these men.

2. The next sort of those who are in the state of sin, and yet to be handled gently and with compassion, are those who entertain themselves with the beginnings and little entrances of sin: which as they are to be more pitied, because they often come by reason of inadvertency, and an unavoidable weakness in many degrees; so they are more to be taken care of, because they are undervalued, and undiscernibly run into inconvenience. When we see a child strike a servant rudely, or jeer a silly person, or wittingly cheat his play-fellow, or talk words light as the skirt of a summer garment; we laugh, and are delighted with the wit and confidence of the boy, and encourage such hopeful beginnings: and in the mean time we consider not, that from these beginnings he shall grow up, till he become a tyrant, an oppressor, a goat, and a traitor. "Nemo simul malus fit, et malus esse cernitur; sicut nec scorpiis tum innascuntur stimuli, cum pungunt." No man is discerned to be vicious so soon as he is so; and vices have their infancy and their childhood; and it cannot be expected that in a child's age should be the vice of a man; that were

monstrous, as if he wore a beard in his cradle; "and we do not believe that a serpent's sting does just then grow, when he strikes us in a vital part;" the venom and the little spear was there, when it first began to creep from his little shell. And little boldnesses and looser words, and wrangling for nuts, and lying for trifles, are of the same proportion to the malice of a child, as impudence, and duels, and injurious lawsuits, and false witness in judgment, and perjuries, are in men. And the case is the same when men enter upon a new stock of any sin: the vice is at first apt to be put out of countenance, and a little thing discourages it, and it amuses the spirit with words, and fantastic images, and cheap instances of sin; and men think themselves safe, because they are as yet safe from laws, and the sin does not as yet outdry the healthful noise of Christ's loud cryings and intercession with his Father, nor call for thunder or an amazing judgment: but, according to the old saying, "The thorns of Dauphine will never fetch blood, if they do not scratch the first day;" and we shall find that the little indecencies and riflings of our souls, the first openings and disparklings of our virtue, differ only from the state of perdition, as infancy does from old age, as sickness from death; it is the entrance into those regions, whither whosoever passes finally, shall lie down and groan with an eternal sorrow. Now in this case it may happen, that a compassion may ruin a man, if it be the pity of an indiscreet mother, and nurse the sin from its weakness to the strength of habit and impudence. The compassion that is to be used to such persons, is the compassion of a physician or a severe tutor: chastise thy infant-sin by discipline, and acts of virtue; and never begin that way, from whence you must return with some trouble and much shame; or else, if you proceed, you finish your eternal ruin.

He that means to be temperate, and avoid the crime and dishonour of being a drunkard, must not love to partake of the songs, or to bear a part in the foolish scenes of laughter, which distract wisdom, and fright her from the company. And Lavina, that was chaster than the elder Sabines, and severer than her philosophical guardian, was well instructed in the great lines of honour and cold justice to her husband: but when she gave way to the wanton ointments and looser circumstances of Baia, and bathed often in Avernus, and from thence hurried

to the companies and dressings of Lucrinus, she quenched her honour, and gave her virtue and her body as a spoil to the follies and intemperance of a young gentleman. For so have I seen the little purls of a spring sweat through the bottom of a bank, and internate the stubborn pavement, till it hath made it fit for the impression of a child's foot; and it was despised, like the descending purls of a misty morning, till it had opened its way, and made a stream large enough to carry away the ruins of the undermined strand, and to invade the neighbouring gardens; but then the despised drops were grown into an artificial river, and an intolerable mischief. So are the first entrances of sin stopped with the antidotes of a hearty prayer, and checked into sobriety by the eye of a reverend man, or the counsels of a single sermon: but when such beginnings are neglected, and our religion hath not in it so much philosophy as to think any thing evil as long as we can endure it, they grow up to ulcers and pestilential evils; they destroy the soul by their abode, who, at their first entry, might have been killed with the pressure of a little finger.

Ἀρχὴν ἰδοῦσαι πολλὸν καίον ἢ τελευτήν.

Those men are in a condition, in which they may, if they please, pity themselves; keep their green wound from festering and uncleanness, and it will heal alone: "Non procul absunt," "They are not far" from the kingdom of heaven, but they are not yet within its portion. And let me say this, that although little sins have not yet made our condition desperate, but left it easily recoverable; yet it is a condition that is quite out of God's favour: although they are not far advanced in their progress to ruin, yet they are not at all in the state of grace; and, therefore, though they are to be pitied and relieved accordingly, yet that supposes the incumbency of a present misery.

3. There are some very much to be pitied and assisted, because they are going into hell, and, as matters stand with them, they cannot, or they think they cannot, avoid it. "Quidam ad alienum dormiunt somnum, ad alienum edunt appetitum: amare et odiasse (res omnium maximè liberas) jubentur:" "There are some persons whose life is so wholly in dependence from others, that they sleep when others please, they eat and drink according to their masters' appetite or intemperance: they are commanded to love

or hate, and are not left free in the very charter and privileges of nature." "Miserrum est, servire sub dominis parum felicibus." For suppose the prince or the patron be vicious; suppose he calls his servants to bathe their souls in the goblets of intemperance; if he be also imperious, (for such persons love not to be contradicted in their vices,) it is the loss of that man's fortune not to lose his soul; and it is the servant's excuse, and he esteems it also his glory, that he can tell a merry tale, how his master and himself did swim in drink, till they both talked like fools, and then did lie down like beasts. "Facinus quos inquinat, æquat." There is then no difference, but that the one is the fairest bull, and the master of the herd. And how many tenants and relatives are known to have a servile conscience, and to know no affirmation or negation but such as shall serve their landlord's interest! Alas! the poor men live by it, and they must beg their bread, if ever they turn recreant, or shall offer to be honest. There are trades whose very foundation is laid in the vice of others; and in many others, if a thread of deceit do not quite run through all their negotiations, they decay into the sorrows of beggary; and, therefore, they will support their neighbour's vice, that he may support their trade. And what would you advise those men to do, to whom a false oath is offered to their lips and a dagger to their heart? Their reason is surprised, and their choice is seized upon, and all their consultation is arrested; and if they did not prepare beforehand, and stand armed with religion and perfect resolution, would not any man fall, and think that every good man will say his case is pitiable? Although no temptation is bigger than the grace of God, yet many temptations are greater than our strengths; and we do not live at the rate of a mighty and a victorious grace.

Those persons which cause those vicious necessities upon their brethren, will lie low in hell; but the others will have but small comfort in feeling a lesser damnation.

Of the same consideration it is, when ignorant people are catechized into false doctrine, and know nothing but such principles which weaken the nerves and enfeeble the joints of holy living; they never heard of any other. Those that follow great and evil examples, the people that are engaged in the public sins of a kingdom, which they understand not, and either must venture to be undone upon the strength of their own

little reasonings and weak discoursings, or else must go "quâ itur, non quâ eundum est," there where the popular misery hath made the way plain before their eyes, though it be uneven and dangerous to their consciences. In these cases I am forced to reckon a catalogue of mischiefs; but it will be hard to cure any of them. Aristippus, in his discourses, was a great flatterer of Dionysius of Sicily, and did own doctrines which might give an easiness to some vices, and knew not how to contradict the pleasures of his prince, but seemed like a person disposed to partake of them, that the example of a philosopher and the practice of a king might do countenance to a shameful life. But when Dionysius sent him two women-slaves, fair and young, he sent them back, and shamed the easiness of his doctrine by the severity of his manners; he daring to be virtuous when he was alone, though, in the presence of him whom he thought it necessary to flatter, he had no boldness to own the virtue. So it is with too many: if they be left alone, and that they stand unshaken with the eye of their tempter, or the authority of their lord, they go whither their education or their custom carries them: but it is not in some natures to deny the face of a man and the boldness of a sinner, and, which is yet worse, it is not in most men's interest to do it. These men are in a pitiable condition, and are to be helped by the following rules.

1. Let every man consider that he hath two relations to serve, and he stands between God and his master and his nearest relative; and in such cases it comes to be disputed whether interest be preferred, which of the persons is to be displeased, God or my master, God or my prince, God or my friend. If we be servants of the man, remember also that I am a servant of God: add to this, that if my present service to the man be a slavery in me, and a tyranny in him, yet God's service is a noble freedom. And Apollonius said well, "It was for slaves to lie, and for freemen to speak the truth." "If you be freed by the blood of the Son of God, then you are free indeed:" and then consider how dishonourable it is to lie, to the displeasure of God, and only to please your fellow-servant. The difference here is so great, that it might be sufficient only to consider the antithesis. Did the man make you what you are? Did he pay his blood for you, to save you from death? Does he keep you from sickness? True: you eat at

his table; but they are of God's provisions that he and you feed of. Can your master free you from a fever, when you have drunk yourself into it; and restore your innocence, when you have forsworn yourself for his interest? Is the change reasonable? He gives you meat and drink, for which you do him service: but is he not a tyrant and a usurper, an oppressor and an extortioner, if he will force thee to give thy soul for him, to sell thy soul for old shoes and broken bread? But when thou art to make thy accounts of eternity, will it be taken for an answer, My patron or my governor, my prince or my master, forced me to it? or if it will not, will he undertake a portion of thy flames? or, if that may not be, will it be, in the midst of all thy torments, any ease to thy sorrows to remember all the rewards and clothes, all the money and civilities, all the cheerful looks and familiarity and fellowship of vices, which, in your lifetime, made your spirit so gay and easy? It will, in the eternal loads of sorrow, add a duplicate of groans and indignation, when it shall be remembered for how base and trifling an interest, and upon what weak principles, we fell sick and died eternally.

2. The next advice to persons thus tempted is, that they would learn to separate duty from mistaken interest, and let them be both served in their just proportions, when we have learned to make a difference. A wife is bound to her husband in all his just designs, and in all noble usages and Christian comportments: but a wife is no more bound to pursue her husband's vicious hatreds, than to serve and promote his unlawful and wandering loves. It is not always a part of duty to think the same propositions, or to curse the same persons, or to wish him success in unjust designs: and yet the sadness of it is, that a good woman is easily tempted to believe the cause to be just; and when her affection hath forced her judgment, her judgment for ever after shall carry the affection to all its erring and abused determinations. A friend is turned a flatterer, if he does not know that the limits of friendship extend no further than the pale and enclosures of reason and religion. No master puts it into his covenant that his servant shall be drunk with him, or give in evidence in his master's cause, according to his master's scrolls: and, therefore, it is besides and against the duty of a servant to sin by that authority; it is as if

he should set mules to keep his sheep, or make his dogs to carry burdens; it is besides their nature and design. And if any person falls under so tyrannical relation, let him consider how hard a master he serves, where the devil gives the employment, and shame is his entertainment, and sin is his work, and hell is his wages. Take, therefore, the counsel of the son of Sirach: "Accept no person against thy soul, and let not the reverence of any man cause thee to fall."

3. When passion mingles with duty, and is a necessary instrument of serving God, let not passion run its own course, and pass on to liberty, and thence to license and dissolution; but let no more of it be entertained than will just do the work. For no zeal of duty will warrant a violent passion to prevaricate a duty. I have seen some officers of war, in passion and zeal of their duty, have made no scruple to command a soldier with a dialect of cursing and accents of swearing, and pretended they could not else speak words effective enough, and of sufficient authority: and a man may easily be overtaken in the issues of his government, while his authority serves itself with passion; if he be not curious in his measures, his passion also will serve itself upon the authority, and overrule the ruler.

4. Let every such tempted person remember, that all evil comes from ourselves, and not from others; and, therefore, all pretences and prejudices, all commands and temptations, all opinions and necessities, are but instances of our weakness, and arguments of our folly; for, unless we listed, no man can make us drink beyond our measures; and if I tell a lie for my master's or my friend's advantage, it is because I prefer a little end of money or flattery before my honour and my innocence. They are huge follies which go up and down in the mouths and heads of men. "He that knows not how to dissemble, knows not how to reign:" he that will not do as his company does, must go out of the world, and quit all society of men. We create necessities of our own, and then think we have reason to serve their importunity. "Non ego sum ambitiosus, sed nemo aliter Romæ potest vivere; non ego sumptuosus, sed urbs ipsa magnas impensas exigit. Non est meum vitium quod iracundus sum, quod nondum constitui certum vitæ genus; adolescentia hæc facit:" "The place we live

in makes us expensive, the state of life I have chosen renders me ambitious, my age makes me angry or lustful, proud or peevish." These are nothing else but resolutions never to amend as long as we can have excuses for our follies, and until we can cozen ourselves no more. There is no such thing as a necessity for a prince to dissemble, or for a servant to lie, or for a friend to flatter, for a civil person and a sociable to be drunk; we cozen ourselves with thinking the fault is so much derivative from others, till the smart and the shame falls upon ourselves, and covers our heads with sorrow. And unless this gap be stopped, and that we build our duty upon our own bottoms, as supported with the grace of God, there is no vice but may find a patron,—and no age, or relation, or state of life, but will be an engagement to sin; and we shall think it necessary to be lustful in our youth, and revengeful in our manhood, and covetous in our old age; and we shall perceive that every state of men, and every trade and profession, lives upon the vices of others, or upon their miseries, and, therefore, they will think it necessary to promote or to wish it. If men were temperate, physicians would be poor; and unless some princes were ambitious, or others injurious, there would be no employment for soldiers. The vintner's retail supports the merchant's trade, and it is a vice that supports the vintner's retail; and if all men were wise and sober persons, we should have fewer beggars and fewer rich. And if our lawgivers should imitate Demades of Athens, who condemned a man that lived by selling things belonging to funerals, as supposing he could not choose but wish the death of men, by whose dying he got his living; we should find most men accounted criminals, because vice is so involved in the affairs of the world, that it is made the support of many trades, and the business of great multitudes of men. Certainly from hence it is that iniquity does so much abound; and unless we state our questions right, and perceive the evil to be designed only from ourselves, and that no such pretence shall keep off the punishment or the shame from ourselves, we shall fall into a state which is only capable of compassion, because it is irrecoverable; and then we shall be infinitely miserable, when we can only receive a useless and ineffective pity. Whatsoever is necessary cannot be avoided; he, therefore, that shall say, he cannot avoid his sin, is out of the mercies

of this text: they who are appointed guides and physicians of souls, cannot, to any purpose, do their offices of pity. It is necessary that we serve God, and do our duty, and secure the interest of our souls, and be as careful to preserve our relations to God as to our friend or prince. But if it can be necessary for any man, in any condition, to sin, it is also necessary for that man to perish.

SERMON XLII.

PART II.

4. The last sort of them that sin, and yet are to be treated with compassion, is of them that interrupt the course of an honest life with single acts of sin, stepping aside and "starting like a broken bow;" whose resolution stands fair, and their hearts are towards God, and they sojourn in religion, or rather dwell there; but that, like evil husbands, they go abroad, and enter into places of dishonour and unthriftiness. Such as these all stories remember with a sad character; and every narrative concerning David, which would end in honour and fair report, is sullied with the remembrance of Bathsheba; and the Holy Ghost hath called him "a man after God's own heart, save in the matter of Uriah:" there, indeed, he was a man after his own heart; even then, when his reason was stolen from him by passion, and his religion was sullied by the beauties of a fair woman. I wish we lived in an age, in which the people were to be treated with concerning renouncing the single actions of sin, and the seldom interruptions of piety. Men are taught to say, that every man sins in every action he does; and this is one of the doctrines, for the believing of which he shall be accounted a good man: and upon this ground it is easy for men to allow themselves some sins, when, in all cases and in every action, it is unavoidable. I shall say nothing of the question, save that the scriptures reckon otherwise; and in the accounts of David's life reckon but one great sin; and in Zachary and Elizabeth give a testimony of an unblamable conversation; and Hezekiah did not make his confession when he prayed to God in his sickness, and said, "he had walked uprightly before God:" and, therefore, St. Paul, after his conversion, designed

and laboured hard, and therefore, certainly, with hopes to accomplish it, that "he might keep his conscience void of offence, both towards God and towards man;" and one of Christ's great purposes is, "to present his whole church pure and spotless to the throne of grace;" and St. John the Baptist offended none but Herod; and no pious Christian brought a bill of accusation against the holy virgin-mother. Certain it is, that God hath given us precepts of such a holiness and such a purity, such a meekness and such humility, as hath no pattern but Christ, no precedent but the purities of God: and, therefore, it is intended we should live with a life, whose actions are not chequered with white and black, half sin and half virtue. God's sheep are not like Jacob's flock, "streaked and spotted;" it is an entire holiness that God requires, and will not endure to have a holy course interrupted by the dishonour of a base and ignoble action. I do not mean that a man's life can be as pure as the sun, or the rays of celestial Jerusalem; but like the moon, in which there are spots, but they are no deformity; a lessening only and an abatement of light, no cloud to hinder and draw a veil before its face, but sometimes it is not so serene and bright as at other times. Every man hath his indiscretions and infirmities, his arrests and sudden incursions, his neighbourhoods and semblances of sin, his little violences to reason, and peevish melancholy, and humorous, fantastic discourses; unaptness to a devout prayer, his fondness to judge favourably in his own cases, little deceptions, and voluntary and involuntary cozenages, ignorances, and inadvertences, careless hours, and unwatchful seasons. But no good man ever commits one act of adultery; no godly man will, at any time, be drunk; or if he be, he ceases to be a godly man, and is run into the confines of death, and is sick at heart, and may die of the sickness, die eternally. This happens more frequently in persons of an infant piety, when the virtue is not corroborated by a long abode, and a confirmed resolution, and a usual victory, and a triumphant grace; and the longer we are accustomed to piety, the more unfrequent will be the little breaches of folly, and a returning to sin. But as the needle of a compass, when it is directed to its beloved star, at the first addresses waves on either side, and seems indifferent in his courtship of the rising or declining sun; and when it seems

first determined to the north, stands awhile trembling, as if it suffered inconvenience in the first fruition of its desires, and stands not still in full enjoyment till after first a great variety of motion, and then an undisturbed posture; so is the piety and so is the conversion of a man wrought by degrees and several steps of imperfection; and at first our choices are wavering; convinced by the grace of God, and yet not persuaded; and then persuaded, but not resolved, and then resolved, but deferring to begin; and then beginning, but, as all beginnings are, in weakness and uncertainty; and we fly out often into huge indiscretions, and look back to Sodom, and long to return to Egypt; and when the storm is quite over, we find little bubbings and unevenness upon the face of the waters, we often weaken our own purposes by the returns of sin; and we do not call ourselves conquerors, till by the long possession of virtues it is a strange and unusual, and, therefore, an uneasy and unpleasant thing, to act a crime. When Polemon of Athens, by chance coming into the schools of Xenocrates, was reformed upon the hearing of that one lecture, some wise men gave this censure of him: "Peregrinatus est hujus animus in nequitia, non habitavit:" "His mind wandered in wickedness, and travelled in it, but never dwelt there." The same is the case of some men; they make inroads into the enemy's country, not like enemies to spoil, but like Dinah, to be satisfied with the stranger beauties of the land, till their virtues are deflowered, and they enter into tragedies, and are possessed by death and intolerable sorrows. But because this is like the fate of Jacob's daughter, and happens not by design, but folly; not by malice, but surprise; not by the strength of will, but by the weakness of grace; and yet carries a man to the same place whither a great vice usually does; it is hugely pitiable, and the persons are to be treated with compassion, and to be assisted by the following considerations and exercises.

First, let us consider, that for a good man to be overtaken in a single crime is the greatest dishonour and unthriftiness in the whole world. "As a fly in a box of ointment, so is a little folly to him who is accounted wise," said the son of Sirach. No man chides a fool for his weakness, or scorns a child for playing with flies, and preferring the present appetite before all the possibilities of to-morrow's event; but

men wondered when they saw Socrates ride upon a cane; and when Solomon laid his wisdom at the foot of Pharaoh's daughter, and changed his glory for the interest of wanton sleep, he became the discourse of heaven and earth: and men think themselves abused, and their expectation cozened, when they see a wise man do the actions of a fool, and a good man seized upon by the dishonours of a crime. But the loss of his reputation is the least of his evil. It is the greatest improvidence in the world to let a healthful constitution be destroyed in the surfeit of one night. For although when a man, by the grace of God, and a long endeavour, hath obtained the habit of Christian graces, every single sin does not spoil the habit of virtue, because that cannot be lost but as it was gotten, that is, by parts and succession; yet every crime interrupts the acceptance of the grace, and makes the man to enter into the state of enmity and displeasure with God. The habit is only lessened naturally, but the value of it is wholly taken away. And in this sense is that of Josephus, *Τὸ γὰρ ἐπὶ μικροῦς καὶ μεγάλους παρανομίαις ἰσοδυναμῶν ἴσται* which St. James well renders, "He that keeps the whole law, and offends in one point, is guilty of all;"* that is, if he prevaricates in any commandment, the transgression of which, by the law, was capital, he shall as certainly die as if he broke the whole law. And the same is the case of those single actions which the school calls deadly sins, that is, actions of choice in any sin that hath a name; and makes a kind, and hath a distinct matter. And sins once pardoned return again to all the purposes of mischief if we, by a new sin, forfeit God's former loving-kindness. "When the righteous man turneth from his righteousness and committeth iniquity, all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be remembered: in the trespass that he hath trespassed, and in the sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die."† Now then consider how great a fool he is, who, when he hath, with much labour and, by suffering violence, contradicted his first desires; when his spirit hath been in agony and care, and, with much uneasiness, hath denied to please the lower man; when, with many prayers and groans, and innumerable sighs, and strong cryings to God, with sharp sufferances and a long severity, he hath obtained of God to begin

his pardon and restitution, and that he is in some hopes to return to God's favour, and that he shall become an heir of heaven; when some of his amazing fears and distracting cares begin to be taken off; when he begins to think that now it is not certain he shall perish in a sad eternity, but he hopes to be saved, and he considers how excellent a condition that is; he hopes, when he dies, to go to God, and that he shall never enter into the possession of devils; and this state, which is but the twilight of a glorious felicity, he hath obtained with great labour, and much care, and infinite danger: that this man should throw all this structure down, and then, when he is ready to reap the fruits of his labours, by one indiscreet action to set fire upon his corn-fields, and destroy all his dear-earned hopes, for the madness and loose wanderings of an hour: this man is an indiscreet gamester, who doubles his stake as he thrives, and at one throw, is dispossessed of all the prosperities of a lucky hand.

They that are poor, as Plutarch observes, are careless of little things; because, by saving them, they think no great moments can accrue to their estates; and they, despairing to be rich, think such frugality impertinent: but they that feel their banks swell, and are within the possibilities of wealth, think it useful if they reserve the smaller minutes of expense, knowing that every thing will add to their heap. But then, after long sparing, in one night to throw away the wealth of a long purchase, is an imprudence becoming none but such persons who are to be kept under tutors and guardians, and such as are to be chastised by their servants, and to be punished by them whom they clothe and feed.

—ἀλλὰ καὶ ἔμπης

Αἰσχρὸν τοι δὴρὸν τε μένειν, κενεὸν τε νίεσθαι.

HOM. II. β.

These men sow much and gather little, stay long and return empty; and after a long voyage they are dashed in pieces, when their vessels are laden with the spoils of provinces. Every deadly sin destroys the rewards of a seven-years' piety. I add to this, that God is more impatient at a sin committed by his servants, than at many by persons that are his enemies; and an uncivil answer from a son to a father, from an obliged person to a benefactor, is a greater indecency, than if an enemy should storm his house, or revile him to his head. Augustus Cæsar taxed all the world, and God took no public notices of it;

* Chap. ii. 10.

† Ezek. xviii. 24.

but when David taxed and numbered a petty province, it was not to be expiated without a plague; because such persons, besides the direct sin, add the circumstance of ingratitude to God, who hath redeemed them from their vain conversation, and from death, and from hell, and consigned them to the inheritance of sons, and given them his grace and his Spirit, and many periods of comfort, and a certain hope, and visible earnest of immortality. Nothing is baser than that such a person, against his reason, against his interest, against his God, against so many obligations, against his custom, against his very habits and acquired inclinations, should do an action

Quam nisi seductis nequeas committere divis;

which a man must forever be ashamed of, and, like Adam, must run from God himself to do it, and depart from the state in which he had placed all his hopes, and to which he had designed all his labours. The consideration is effective enough, if we sum up the particulars; for he that hath lived well, and then falls into a deliberate sin, is infinitely dishonoured, is most imprudent, most unsafe, and most unthankful.

2. Let persons tempted to the single instances of sin in the midst of a laudable life, be very careful that they suffer not themselves to be drawn aside by the eminence of great examples. For some think drunkenness hath a little honesty derived unto it by the example of Noah; and adultery is not so scandalous and intolerably dishonourable, since Bathsheba bathed, and David was defiled; and men think a flight is no cowardice, if a general turns his head and runs:

"Pompeio fugiente timent." LUCAN.

Well might all the gowned "Romans fear, when Pompey fled." And who is there that can hope to be more righteous than David, or stronger than Samson, or have less hypocrisy than St. Peter, or be more temperate than Noah? These great examples bear men of weak discourses and weaker resolutions from the severity of virtues. But, as Diagoras, to them that showed to him the votive garments of those that had escaped shipwreck, upon their prayers and vows to Neptune, answered, that they kept no account of those that prayed and vowed, and yet were drowned: so do these men keep catalogues of those few persons, who broke the thread of a fair life in sunder with the violence of a great crime, and, by

the grace of God, recovered, and repented, and lived; but they consider not concerning those infinite numbers of men, who died in their first fit of sickness, who, after a fair voyage, have thrown themselves over-board, and perished in a sudden wildness. One said well, "Si quid Socrates aut Aristippus contra morem et consuetudinem fecerunt, idem sibi ne arbitretur quis licere: magnis enim illi et divinis bonis hanc licentiam assequabantur:" "If Socrates did any unusual thing, it is not for thee, who art of an ordinary virtue, to assume the same license; for he, by a divine and excellent life, hath obtained leave or pardon respectively" for what thou must never hope for, till thou hast arrived to the same glories. First, be as devout as David, as good a Christian as St. Peter, and then thou wilt not dare, with design, to act that which they fell into by surprise; and if thou dost fall as they did, by that time thou hast also repented like them, it may be said concerning thee, that thou didst fall and break thy bones, but God did heal thee and pardon thee. Remember that all the damned souls shall bear an eternity of torments for the pleasures of a short sinfulness; but for a single transient action to die for ever, is an intolerable exchange, and the effect of so great a folly, that who-soever falls into it, and then considers it, it will make him mad and distracted for ever.

3. Remember, that since no man can please God, or be partaker of any promises, or reap the reward of any actions in the returns of eternity, unless he performs to God an entire duty, according to the capacities of a man so taught, and so tempted, and so assisted; such a person must be curious, that he be not cozened with the duties and performances of any one relation. 1. Some there are, that think all our religion consists in prayers and public or private offices of devotion, and not in moral actions, or intercourses of justice and temperance, of kindness and friendships, of sincerity and liberality, of chastity and humility, of repentance and obedience. Indeed no humour is so easy to be counterfeited as devotion; and yet no hypocrisy is more common among men, nor any so useless as to God: for it being an address to him alone, who knows the heart and all the secret purposes, it can do no service in order to heaven, so long as it is without the power of godliness, and the energy and vivacity of a holy life. God will not suffer us to commute a duty, because all is his due; and religion shall not pay for

want of temperance. If the devoutest hermit be proud, or he that "fasts thrice in the week;" be uncharitable once; or he that gives much to the poor gives also too much liberty to himself; he hath planted a fair garden, and invited a wild boar to refresh himself under the shade of the fruit-trees; and his guest, being something rude, hath disordered his paradise, and made it become a wilderness. 2. Others there are, that judge themselves by the censures that kings and princes give concerning them, or as they are spoken of by their betters; and so make false judgments concerning their condition. For, our betters, to whom we show our best parts, to whom we speak with caution and consider what we represent, they see our arts and our dressings, but nothing of our nature and deformities: trust not their censures concerning thee; but to thy own opinion of thyself, whom thou knowest in thy retirements, and natural peevishness, and unhandsome inclinations, and secret baseness. 3. Some men have been admired abroad, in whom the wife and the servant never saw any thing excellent: a rare judge and a good commonwealth's man in the streets and public meetings, and a just man to his neighbour, and charitable to the poor: for in all these places the man is observed, and kept in awe by the sun, by light, and by voices: but this man is a tyrant at home, an unkind husband, an imperious master. And such men are like "prophets in their own countries," not honoured at home; and can never be honoured by God, who will not endure that many virtues should excuse a few vices, or that any of his servants shall take pensions of the devil, and in the profession of his service do his enemy single advantages.

4. He that hath passed many stages of a good life, to prevent his being tempted to a single sin, must be very careful that he never entertain his spirit with the remembrances of his past sin, nor amuse it with the fantastic apprehensions of the present. When the Israelites fancied the sapidness and relish of the flesh pots, they longed to taste and to return.

So when a Libyan tiger, drawn from his wilder foragings, is shut up, and taught to eat civil meat, and suffer the authority of a man, he sits down tamely in his prison, and pays to his keeper fear and reverence for his meat: but if he chance to come again, and taste a draught of warm blood, he presently leaps into his natural cruelty. He

scarce abstains from eating those hands that brought him discipline and food.* So is the nature of a man made tame and gentle by the grace of God, and reduced to reason, and kept in awe by religion and laws, and, by an awful virtue, is taught to forget those alluring and sottish relishes of sin: but if he diverts from his path, and snatches handfuls from the wanton vineyards, and remembers the lasciviousness of his unwholesome food, that pleased his childish palate; then he grows sick again, and hungry after unwholesome diet, and longs for the apples of Sodom. A man must walk through the world without eyes or ears, fancy or appetites, but such as are created and sanctified by the grace of God; and being once made a new man, he must serve all the needs of nature by the appetites and faculties of grace; nature must be wholly a servant: and we must so look towards the deliciousness of our religion and the ravishments of heaven, that our memory must be for ever useless to the affairs and perceptions of sin. We cannot stand, we cannot live, unless we be curious and watchful in this particular.

By these, and all other arts of the spirit, if we stand upon our guard, never indulging to ourselves one sin because it is but one, as knowing that one sin brought in death upon all the world, and one sin brought slavery upon the posterity of Cham; and always fearing lest death surprise us in that one sin; we shall, by the grace of God, either not need, or else easily perceive the effects and blessings of that compassion which God reserves, in the secrets of his mercy, for such persons whom his grace hath ordained and disposed with excellent dispositions unto life eternal.

These are the sorts of men which are to be used with compassion, concerning whom we are to make a difference; "making a difference," so says the text. And it is of high concernment that we should do so, that we may relieve the infirmities of the men, and relieve their sicknesses, and transcribe the copy of the Divine mercy, who loves not to "quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed." For although all sins are against God's commandments directly, or by certain consequents, by line, or by

* Sic ubi, desuetæ sylvæ, in carcere clausæ,
Mansuere feræ, et vultus posuere minaces
Atque hominem didicere pati: si torrida parvus,
Venit in ora cruor, redeunt rabiesque furorque,
Admonitæque tument gustato sanguine fauces;
Fervet, et a trepido vix abstinet ira magistro.

analogy; yet they are not all of the same tincture and mortality.

Nec vincit ratio hoc, tantundem ut peccet
idemque,
Qui teneros caules alieni fregerit horti,
Et qui nocturnus divum sacra legerit.

“He that robs a garden of coleworts, and carries away an armful of spinage, does not deserve hell, as he that steals the chalice from the Church, or betrays a prince;” and therefore men are distinguished accordingly.

Est inter Tanaim quiddam socerumque Viselli.—
HOR.

The poet that Sejanus condemned for dishonouring the memory of Agamemnon, was not an equal criminal with Cataline or Gracchus: and Simon Magus and the Nicolaitans committed crimes which God hated more than the complying of St. Barnabas, or the dissimulation of St. Peter; and therefore God does treat these persons severally. Some of these are restrained with a fit of sickness, some with a great loss, and in these there are degrees; and some arrive at death. And in this manner God scourged the Corinthians, for their irreverent and disorderly receiving the holy sacrament. For although even the least of the sins that I have discoursed of will lead to death eternal, if their course be not interrupted, and the disorder chastised; yet because we do not stop their progress instantly, God many times does, and visits us with proportionable judgments; and so not only checks the rivulet from swelling into rivers and a vastness, but plainly tells us that although smaller crimes shall not be punished with equal severity as the greatest, yet even in hell there are eternal rods as well as eternal scorpions; and the smallest crime that we act with an infant malice and manly deliberation, shall be revenged with the lesser strokes of wrath, but yet with the infliction of a sad eternity. But then that we also should make a difference, is a precept concerning church-discipline, and therefore not here proper to be considered, but only as it may concern our own particulars in the actions of repentance, and our brethren in fraternal correction.

—adsit
Regula, quæ pœnas peccatis irroget æquas,
Ne scutica dignum horribili sectere flagello.

HOR.

Let us be sure that we neglect no sin, but repent for every one, and judge ourselves for every one, according to the proportion of the malice, or the scandal, or the danger.

And although in this there is no fear that we would be excessive; yet, when we are to reprove a brother, we are sharp enough, and, either by pride or by animosity, by the itch of government or the indignation of an angry mind, we run beyond the gentleness of a Christian monitor. We must remember, that by Christ's law some are to be admonished privately, some to be shamed and corrected publicly; and, beyond these, there is an abscission, or a cutting off from the communion of faithful people, “a delivering over to Satan.” And to this purpose is that old reading of the words of my text, which is still in some copies, *καὶ τοῖς μὴν ἐδάχετε διακρινομένους*, “Reprove them sharply, when they are convinced,” or “separate by sentence.” But because this also is a design of mercy acted with an instance of discipline, it is a punishment of the flesh, that the soul may be saved in the day of the Lord; it means the same with the usual reading and with the last words of the text, and teaches us our usage towards the worst of recoverable sinners.

11. “Others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire.” Some sins there are, which in their own nature are damnable, and some are such as will certainly bring a man to damnation: the first are curable, but with much danger; the second are desperate and irrecoverable. When a man is violently tempted, and allured with an object that is proportionable and pleasant to his vigorous appetite, and his unabated, unmortified nature, this man falls into death; but yet we pity him, as we pity a thief that robs for his necessity: this man did not tempt himself, but his spirit suffers violence, and his reason is invaded, and his infirmities are mighty, and his aids not yet prevailing. But when this single temptation hath prevailed for a single instance, and leaves a relish upon the palate, and this produces another, and that also is fruitful, and swells into a family and kindred of sin, that is, it grows, first into approbation, then to a clear assent and an untroubled conscience, thence into frequency, from thence unto a custom, and easiness, and a habit; this man is fallen into the fire. There are also some single acts of so great a malice, that they must suppose a man habitually sinful, before he could arrive at that height of wickedness. No man begins his sinful course with killing of his father or his prince: and Simon Magus had preambulatory impieties; he was covetous and ambitious long before he

offered to buy the Holy Ghost. "Nemo repente fuit turpissimus." And although such actions may have in them the malice and the mischief, the disorder and the wrong, the principle and the permanent effect of a habit and a long course of sin; yet because they never, or very seldom, go alone, but after the predisposition of other ushering crimes, we shall not amiss comprise them under the name of habitual sins; for such they are, either formally or equivalently. And if any man hath fallen into a sinful habit, into a course and order of sinning, his case is little less than desperate; but that little hope that is remanent, hath its degree, according to the infancy or the growth of the habit.

1. For all sins less than habitual, it is certain a pardon is ready to penitent persons; that is, to all that sin in ignorance or in infirmity, by surprise or inadvertency, in smaller instances or infrequent returns, with involuntary actions or imperfect resolutions. ^{Ἐκτίνατε τὰς χεῖρας ὑμῶν πρὸς τὸν αὐτοκράτορα Θεόν, ἱκετεύοντες αὐτὸν ἰλεῶν γενέσθαι, εἰ τι ἄκαιροί ἐσθε ἡμάρτετε,} said Clemens in his epistle: "Lift up your hands to Almighty God, and pray him to be merciful to you in all things, when you sin unwillingly;" that is, in which you sin with an imperfect choice. For no man sins against his will directly, but when his understanding is abused by an inevitable or an intolerable weakness, or their wills follow their blind guide, and are not the perfect mistresses of their own actions; and therefore leave a way and easiness to repent, and be ashamed of them, and therefore a possibility and readiness for pardon. And these are the sins that we are taught to pray to God that he would pardon, as he gives us our bread, that is, every day. For "in many things we offend all," said St. James; that is, in many smaller matters, in matters of surprise or inevitable infirmity. And therefore Possidonius said, that St. Austin was used to say, that "he would not have even good and holy priests go from this world without the susception of equal and worthy penances:" and the most innocent life in our account is not a competent instrument of a peremptory confidence, and of justifying ourselves. "I am guilty of nothing," said St. Paul; that is, of no ill intent, or negligence, in preaching the gospel; "yet I am not hereby justified;" for God, it may be, knows many little irregularities and insinuations of sin. In this case we are to make a difference; but hu-

mility, and prayer, and watchfulness, are the direct instruments of the expiation of such sins.

But then, secondly, whosoever sins without these abating circumstances, that is, in great instances, in which a man's understanding cannot be cozened, as in drunkenness, murder, adultery; and in the frequent repetitions of any sort of sin whatsoever, in which a man's choice cannot be surprised, and in which it is certain there is a love of the sin, and a delight in it, and a power over a man's resolutions; in these cases it is a miraculous grace, and an extraordinary change, that must turn the current and the stream of the iniquity; and when it is begun, the pardon is more uncertain, and the repentance more difficult, and the effect much abated, and the man must be made miserable, that he may not be accursed for ever.

1. I say, his pardon is uncertain; because there are some sins which are unpardonable, (as I shall show,) and they are not all named in particular; and the degrees of malice being uncertain, the salvation of that man is to be wrought with infinite fear and trembling. It was the case of Simon Magus: "Repent, and ask pardon for thy sin, if peradventure the thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee."* *If peradventure*; it was a new crime, and concerning its possibility of pardon no revelation had been made, and by analogy to other crimes it was very like an unpardonable sin: for it was "a thinking a thought" against the Holy Ghost, and that was next to "speaking a word" against him. Cain's sin was of the same nature: "It is greater than it can be forgiven:" his passion and his fear was too severe and detrectory; it was pardonable, but truly we never find that God did pardon it.

2. But besides this, it is uncertain in the pardon, because it may be the time of pardon is past: and though God hath pardoned to other people the same sins, and to thee too sometimes before, yet it may be, he will not now: he hath not promised pardon so often as we sin, and in all the returns of impudence, apostasy, and ingratitude; and it may be, "thy day is past," as was Jerusalem's in the day that they crucified the Saviour of the world.

3. Pardon of such habitual sins is uncertain, because life is uncertain; and such

* Acts viii. 22.

sins require much time for their abolition and expiation. And therefore, although these sins are not "necessariò mortifera," that is, unpardonable; yet by consequence they become deadly; because our life may be cut off, before we have finished or performed those necessary parts of repentance, which are the severe, and yet the only condition of getting pardon. So that you may perceive, that not only every great single crime, but the habit of any sin is dangerous: and therefore these persons are to be "snatched from the fire," if you mean to rescue them: *ἐκ τοῦ πυρός ἀπαΐζοντες*. If you stay a day, it may be you stay too long.

4. To which I add this fourth consideration, that every delay of return is, in the case of habitual sins, an approach to desperation; because the nature of habits is like that of crocodiles, they grow as long as they live; and if they come to obstinacy or confirmation, they are in hell already, and can never return back. For so the Pannonian bears, when they have clasped a dart in the region of their liver, wheel themselves upon the wound, and with anger and malicious revenge strike the deadly barb deeper, and cannot be quit from that fatal steel; but, in flying, bear along that which themselves make the instrument of a more hasty death: so is every vicious person struck with a deadly wound, and his own hands force it into the entertainments of the heart; and because it is painful to draw it forth by a sharp and salutary repentance, he still rolls and turns upon his wound, and carries his death in his bowels, where it first entered by choice, and then dwelt by love, and at last shall finish the tragedy by Divine judgments and an unalterable decree.

But as the pardon of these sins is uncertain, so the conditions of restitution are hard even to them who shall be pardoned: their pardon, and themselves too, must be fetched from the fire; water will not do it; tears and ineffective sorrow cannot take off a habit, or a great crime.

O nimium faciles, qui tritica crimina cædis
Tolli flumineâ posse putatis aquâ!

Bion, seeing a prince weep and tearing his hair for sorrow, asked if baldness would cure his grief? Such pompous sorrows may be good indices, but no perfect instruments of restitution. St. James plainly declares the possibilities of pardon to great sins, in the cases of contention, adultery, lust, and envy, which are the four great inde-

cencies that are most contrary to Christianity:* and in the fifth chapter,† he implies also a possibility of pardon to an habitual sinner, whom he calls *τὸν πλανήθευτα ἀπὸ τῆς ὁδοῦ τῆς ἀληθείας*, "one that errs from the truth," that is, from the life of a Christian, the life of the Spirit of truth: and he adds, that such a person may be reduced, and so be pardoned, though he have sinned long; "He that converts such a one, shall hide a multitude of sins." But then the way that he appoints for the restitution of such persons, is humility and humiliation, penances and sharp penitential sorrows, and afflictions, resisting the devil, returning to God, weeping and mourning, confessions, and prayers, as you may read at large in the fourth and fifth chapters: and there it is that you shall find it a duty, that such persons should "be afflicted," and should "confess to their brethren:" and these are harder conditions than God requires in the former cases; these are a kind of fiery trial.

I have now done with my text; and should add no more, but that the nature of these sins is such, that they may increase in their weight and duration and malice, and then they increase in mischief and fatality, and so go beyond the text. Cicero said well, "*Ipsa consuetudo assentiendi periculosa esse videtur et lubrica*:"‡ "The very custom of consenting in the matters of civility is dangerous and slippery," and will quickly engage us in error: and then we think we are bound to defend them; or else we are made flatterers by it, and so become vicious: and we love our own vices that we are used to, and keep them till they are incurable, that is, till we will never repent of them; and some men resolve never to repent, that is, they resolve they will not be saved, they tread under foot the blood of the everlasting covenant. Those persons are in the fire too, but they will not be pulled out: concerning whom God's prophets must say as once concerning Babylon, "*Curavimus, et non est sanata; derelinquamus eam*:"—"We would have healed them, but they would not be healed; let us leave them in their sins, and they shall have enough of it." Only this: those that put themselves out of the condition of mercy, are not to be endured in Christian societies; they deserve it not, and it is not safe that they should be suffered.

* Chap. iv. 1, 3. † Ver. ult. ‡ Acad. Qu. lib. iv.

But besides all this, I shall name one thing more unto you; for

—nunquam adeò fedis adeòque pudendis
Uimur exemplis, ut non pejora supersint.

JUV.

There are some single actions of sin of so great a malice, that in their own nature they are beyond the limit of gospel pardon: they are not such things for the pardon of which God entered into covenant, because they are such sins which put a man into perfect indispositions and incapacities of entering into or being in the covenant. In the first ages of the world atheism was of that nature, it was against their whole religion; and the sin is worse now, against the whole religion still, and against a brighter light. In the ages after the flood, idolatry was also just such another: for God was known first only as the Creator; then he began to manifest himself in special contracts with men, and he quickly was declared the God of Israel; and idolatry perfectly destroyed all that religion, and therefore was never pardoned entirely, but God did visit it upon them that sinned; and when he pardoned it in some degrees, yet he also punished it in some: and yet rebellion against the supreme power of Moses and Aaron was worse; for that also was a perfect destruction of the whole religion, because it refused to submit to those hands, upon which God had placed all the religion and all the government. And now, if we would know in the gospel what answers these precedent sins; I answer, first, the same sins acted by a reasonable hand and heart are worse now than ever they were: and a third or fourth is also to be added; and that is apostasy, or a voluntary malicious renouncing the faith. The church hath often declared that sin to be unpardonable. Witchcraft, or final impenitence and obstinacy in any sin, are infallibly desperate; and in general, and by a certain parity of reason, whatsoever does destroy charity, or the good life of a Christian, with the same general venom and delectery as apostasy destroys faith: and he that is a renegado from charity, is as unpardonable as he that returns to solemn atheism or infidelity: for all that is directly the sin against the Holy Ghost, that is, a throwing that away whereby only we can be Christians, whereby only we can hope to be saved. To "speak a word against the Holy Ghost," in the Pharisees was declared unpardonable, because it was such a word which, if it had

been true or believed, would have destroyed the whole religion; for they said that Christ wrought by Beelzebub, and by consequence did not come from God. He that destroys all the whole order of priesthood, destroys one of the greatest parts of the religion, and one of the greatest effects of the Holy Ghost: he that destroys government, destroys another part. But that we may come nearer to ourselves: To "quench the Spirit of God" is worse than to speak some words against him; to "grieve the Spirit of God" is a part of the same impiety; to "resist the Holy Ghost" is another part: and if we consider that every great sin does this in proportion, it would concern us to be careful lest we fall into "presumptuous sins, lest they get the dominion over us." Out of this that I have spoken, you may easily gather what sort of men those are, who cannot be "snatched from the fire;" for whom as St. John says, "we are not to pray;" and how near men come to it that continue in any known sin. If I should descend to particulars, I might lay a snare to scrupulous and nice consciences. This only: every confirmed habitual sinner does manifest the divine justice in punishing the sins of a short life with a never-dying worm and a never-quenched flame; because he that hath an affection to sin, that no time will diminish, but such as would increase to eternal ages; and accordingly, as any man hath a degree of love, so he hath lodged in his soul a spark, which, unless it be speedily and effectively quenched, will break forth into unquenchable fire.

SERMON XLIII.

THE FOOLISH EXCHANGE.

PART I.

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?—Matt. xvi. 26.

WHEN the eternal mercy of God had decreed to rescue mankind from misery and infelicity, and so triumphed over his own justice; the excellent wisdom of God resolved to do it in ways contradictory to the appetites and designs of man, that it also might triumph over our weaknesses and imperfect conceptions. So God decreed to glo-

rify his mercy by curing our sins, and to exalt his wisdom by the reproof of our ignorance, and the representing upon what weak and false principles we had built our hopes and expectations of felicity; pleasure and profit, victory over our enemies, riches and pompous honours, power and revenge, desires according to sensual appetites, and prosecutions violent and passionate of those appetites, health, and long life, free from trouble, without poverty or persecution.

Hæc sunt, jucundissime Martialis,
Vitam quæ faciunt beatiorem.

MART.

These are the measures of good and evil, the object of our hopes and fears, the securing our content, and the portion of this world; and for the other, let it be as it may. But the blessed Jesus,—having made revelations of an immortal duration, of another world, and of a strange restitution to it, even by the resurrection of the body, and a new investiture of the soul with the same upper garment, clarified and made pure, so as no fuller on earth can whiten it;—hath also preached a new philosophy, hath cancelled all the old principles, reduced the appetites of sense to the discourses of reason, and heightened reason to the sublimities of the Spirit, teaching us abstractions and immaterial conceptions, giving us new eyes, and new objects, and new proportions: for now sensual pleasures are not delightful, riches are dross, honours are nothing but the appendages of virtue, and in relation to it are to receive their account. But now if you would enjoy life, you must die; if you would be at ease, you must take up Christ's cross, and conform to his sufferings; if you would "save your life," you must "lose it;" and if you would be rich, you must abound in good works, you must be "poor in spirit," and despise the world, and be rich unto God: for whatsoever is contrary to the purchases and affections of this world, is an endearment of our hopes in the world to come. And, therefore, he having stated the question so, that either we must quit this world or the other; our affections, I mean, and adherences to this, or our interest and hopes of the other: the choice is rendered very easy by the words of my text, because the distance is not less than infinite, and the comparison hath terms of a vast difference; heaven and hell, eternity and a moment, vanity and real felicity, life and death eternal, all that can be hoped for, and all that

can be feared; these are the terms of our choice: and if a man have his wits about him, and be not drunk with sensuality and senselessness, he need not much to dispute before he pass the sentence. For nothing can be given to us to recompense the loss of heaven; and if our souls be lost, there is nothing remaining to us whereby we can be happy.

"What shall it profit a man?" or, "What shall a man give?" Is there any exchange for a man's soul? The question is an ἀίτησις of the negative. Nothing can be given for an ἀντάλλαγμα, or "a price," to satisfy for its loss.

The blood of the Son of God was given to recover it, or as an ἀντάλλαγμα to God; and when our souls were forfeit to him, nothing less than the life and passion of God and man could pay the price, I say, to God; who yet was not concerned in the loss, save only that such was his goodness, that it pitied him to see his creature lost. But to us what shall be the ἀντάλλαγμα? what can make us recompense when we have lost our own souls, and are lost in a miserable eternity? What can then recompense us? Not all the world, not ten thousand worlds: and of this that miserable man whose soul is lost is the best judge. For the question is ἀδυνατικόν, and hath a potential signification, and means πῶσα ἂν δώσει; that is, Suppose a man ready to die, condemned to the sentence of a horrid death, heightened with the circumstances of trembling and amazement, "what would he give" to save his life? "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life." And this turned to a proverb among the Jews; for so the last words of the text are, τί δώσει ἄνθρωπος ἀντάλλαγμα τῆς ψυχῆς; which proverb being usually meant concerning a temporal death, and intended to represent the sadness of a condemned person, our blessed Saviour fits to his own purpose, and translates to the signification of death eternal, which he first revealed clearly to the world. And because no interest of the world can make a man recompense for his life, because to lose that makes him incapable of enjoying the exchange, (and he were a strange fool, who, having no design upon immortality or virtue, should be willing to be hanged for a thousand pounds "per annum,") this argument increases infinitely in the purpose of our blessed Saviour; and to gain the world, and to lose our souls, in the Christian sense, is

infinitely more madness, and a worse exchange, than when our souls signify nothing but a temporal life. And although possibly the indefinite hopes of Elysium, or an honourable name, might tempt some hardy persons to leave this world, hoping for a better condition, even among the heathen; yet no excuse will acquit a Christian from madness, if, for the purchase of this world, he lose his eternity.

Here, then, first, we will consider the propositions of the exchange, the "world and a man's soul," by way of supposition, supposing all that is propounded were obtained, "the whole world." Secondly, we will consider, what is likely to be obtained "really" and "indeed" of the world, and what are really the miseries of a lost soul. For it is propounded in the text, by way of supposition, "if a man should gain the world," which no man ever did nor ever can; and he that gets most, gets too little to be exchanged for a temporal life. And, thirdly, I shall apply it to your practice, and make material considerations.

1. First, then, suppose a man gets all the world, what is it that he gets? It is a bubble and a fantasm, and hath no reality beyond a present transient use; a thing that is impossible to be enjoyed, because its fruits and usages are transmitted to us by parts and by succession. He that hath all the world, (if we can suppose such a man,) cannot have a dish of fresh summer-fruits in the midst of winter, not so much as a green fig; and very much of its possessions is so hid, so fugacious, and of so uncertain purchase, that it is like the riches of the sea to the lord of the shore; all the fish and wealth within all its holownesses are his, but he is never the better for what he cannot get: all the shell-fishes that produce pearl, produce them not for him; and the bowels of the earth shall hide her treasures in undiscovered retirements; so that it will signify as much to this great purchaser to be entitled to an inheritance in the upper region of the air; he is so far from possessing all its riches, that he does not so much as know of them, nor understand the philosophy of her minerals.

2. I consider, that he that is the greatest possessor in the world, enjoys its best and most noble parts, and those which are of most excellent perfection, but in common with the inferior persons, and the most despicable of his kingdom. Can the greatest prince enclose the sun, and set one little star in his cabinet for his own use, or secure to

himself the gentle and benign influences of any one constellation? Are not his subjects' fields bedewed with the same showers that water his gardens of pleasure?

Nay, those things which he esteems his ornament, and the singularity of his possessions, are they not of more use to others than to himself? For suppose his garments splendid and shining, like the robe of a cherub, or the clothing of the fields, all that he that wears them enjoys, is, that they keep him warm, and clean, and modest; and all this is done by clean and less pompous vestments; and the beauty of them, which distinguishes him from others, is made to please the eyes of the beholders; and he is like a fair bird, or the meretricious paintings of a wanton woman, made wholly to be looked on, that is, to be enjoyed by every one but himself; and the fairest face and the sparkling eye cannot perceive or enjoy their own beauties but by reflection. It is I that am pleased with beholding his gaiety; and the gay man, in his greatest bravery, is only pleased because I am pleased with the sight; so borrowing his little and imaginary complacency from the delight that I have, not from any inherency of his own possession.

The poorest artizan of Rome, walking in Cæsar's gardens, had the same pleasures which they ministered to their lord; and although, it may be, he was put to gather fruits to eat from another place, yet his other senses were delighted equally with Cæsar's; the birds made him as good music, the flowers gave him as sweet smells; he there sucked as good air, and delighted in the beauty and order of the place, for the same reason and upon the same perception as the prince himself; save only that Cæsar paid, for all that pleasure, vast sums of money, the blood and treasure of a province, which the poor man had for nothing.

3. Suppose a man lord of all the world (for still we are but in supposition); yet since every thing is received, not according to its own greatness and worth, but according to the capacity of the receiver, it signifies very little as to our content or to the riches of our possession. If any man should give to a lion a fair meadow full of hay, or a thousand quince trees; or should give to the goodly bull, the master and the fairest of the whole herd, a thousand fair stags; if a man should present to a child a ship laden with Persian carpets, and the ingredients of the rich scarlet; all these, being

disproportionate either to the appetite or to the understanding, could add nothing of content, and might declare the freeness of the presenter, but they upbraid the incapacity of the receiver. And so it does if God should give the whole world to any man. He knows not what to do with it; he can use no more but according to the capacities of a man; he can use nothing but meat, and drink, and clothes; and infinite riches, that can give him changes of raiment every day and a full table, do but give him a clean trencher every bit he eats; it signifies no more but wantonness and variety to the same, not to any new purposes. He to whom the world can be given to any purpose greater than a private estate can minister, must have new capacities created in him; he needs the understanding of an angel, to take the accounts of his estate; he had need have a stomach like fire or the grave, for else he can eat no more than one of his healthful subjects; and unless he hath an eye like the sun, and a motion like that of a thought, and a bulk as big as one of the orbs of heaven, the pleasures of his eye can be no greater than to behold the beauty of a little prospect from a hill, or to look upon the heap of gold packed up in a little room, or to dote upon a cabinet of jewels, better than which there is no man that sees at all, but sees every day. For, not to name the beauties and sparkling diamonds of heaven, a man's, or a woman's, or a hawk's eye, is more beauteous and excellent than all the jewels of his crown. And when we remember that a beast, who hath quicker senses than a man, yet hath not so great delight in the fruition of any object, because he wants understanding and the power to make reflex acts upon his perception; it will follow, that understanding and knowledge is the greatest instrument of pleasure, and he that is most knowing, hath a capacity to become happy, which a less knowing prince, or a rich person, hath not; and in this only a man's capacity is capable of enlargement. But then, although they only have power to relish any pleasure rightly, who rightly understand the nature, and degrees, and essences, and ends of things; yet they that do so, understand also the vanity and the unsatisfyingness of the things of this world, so that the relish, which could not be great but in a great understanding, appears contemptible, because its vanity appears at the same time; the understanding sees all, and sees through it.

4. The greatest vanity of this world is remarkable in this, that all its joys summed up together are not big enough to counterpoise the evil of one sharp disease, or to allay a sorrow. For imagine a man great in his dominion as Cyrus, rich as Solomon, victorious as David, beloved like Titus, learned as Trismegist, powerful as all the Roman greatness; all this, and the results of all this, give him no more pleasure, in the midst of a fever or the tortures of the stone, than if he were only lord of a little dish, and a dishful of fountain water. Indeed the excellency of a holy conscience is a comfort and a magazine of joy, so great, that it sweetens the most bitter potion of the world, and makes tortures and death not only tolerable, but amiable; and, therefore, to part with this, whose excellency is so great, for the world, that is of so considerable a worth, as not to have in it recompence enough for the sorrows of a sharp disease, is a bargain fit to be made by none but fools and madmen. Antiochus Epiphanes, and Herod the Great, and his grandchild, Agrippa, were sad instances of this great truth; to every of which it happened, that the grandeur of their fortune, the greatness of their possessions, and the increase of their estate, disappeared and expired like camphire, at their arrest by those several sharp diseases, which covered their head with cypress, and hid their crowns in an inglorious grave.

For what can all the world minister to a sick person, if it represents all the spoils of nature, and the choicest delicacies of land and sea? Alas! his appetite is lost, and to see a pebble-stone is more pleasing to him: for he can look upon that without loathing, but not so upon the most delicious fare that ever made famous the Roman luxury. Perfumes make his head ache; if you load him with jewels, you press him with a burden as troublesome as his grave-stone; and what pleasure is in all those possessions that cannot make his pillow easy, nor tame the rebellion of a tumultuous humour, nor restore the use of a withered hand, or straighten a crooked finger? Vain is the hope of that man, whose soul rests upon vanity and such unprofitable possessions.

5. Suppose a man lord of all this world, a universal monarch, as some princes have lately designed; all that cannot minister content to him; not that content which a poor contemplative man, by the strength of Christian philosophy, and the support of a

very small fortune, daily does enjoy. All his power and greatness cannot command the sea to overflow his shores, or to stay from retiring to the opposite strand: it cannot make his children dutiful or wise. And though the world admired at the greatness of Philip the Second's fortune, in the accession of Portugal and the East Indies to his principalities, yet this could not allay the infelicity of his family, and the unhandsomeness of his condition, in having a proud, and indiscreet, and vicious young prince, likely to inherit all his greatness. And if nothing appears in the face of such a fortune to tell all the world that it is spotted and imperfect; yet there is, in all conditions of the world, such weariness and tediousness of the spirits, that a man is ever more pleased with hopes of going off from the present, than in dwelling upon that condition, which, it may be, others admire and think beautiful, but none knoweth the smart of it but he that drank off the little pleasure, and felt the ill relish of the appendage. How many kings have groaned under the burden of their crowns, and have sunk down and died! How many have quitted their pompous cares, and retired into private lives, there to enjoy the pleasures of philosophy and religion, which their thrones denied!

And if we consider the supposition of the text, the thing will demonstrate itself. For he who can be supposed the owner and purchaser of the whole world, must either be a king or a private person. A private person can hardly be supposed to be the man; for if he be subject to another, how can he be lord of the whole world? But if he be a king, it is certain that his cares are greater than any man's, his fears are bigger, his evils mountainous, the accidents that discompose him are more frequent, and sometimes intolerable; and of all his great possessions he hath not the greatest use and benefit; but they are like a great harvest, which more labourers must bring in, and more must eat of; only he is the centre of all the cares, and they fix upon him, but the profits run out to all the lines of the circle, to all that are about him, whose good is therefore greater than the good of the prince, because what they enjoy is the purchase of the prince's care; and so they feed upon his cost.

Privatusque magis vivam te rege beatus.

HOR. l. i. sat. 3.

Servants live the best lives, for their care

is single, only how to please their lord; but all the burden of a troublesome providence and ministration makes the outside pompous and more full of ceremony, but intricates the condition and disturbs the quiet of the great possessor.

And imagine a person as blest as can be supposed upon the stock of worldly interest; when all his accounts are cast up, he differs nothing from his subjects or his servants but in mere circumstance, nothing of reality or substance. He hath more to wait at his tables, or persons of higher rank to do the meanest offices; more ceremonies of address, a fairer escutcheon, louder titles: but can this multitude of dishes make him have a good stomach, or does not satiety cloy it? when his high diet is such, that he is not capable of being feasted, and knows not the frequent delights and oftener possibilities a poor man hath of being refreshed, while not only his labour makes hunger, and so makes his meat delicate (and then it cannot be ill fare, let it be what it will); but also his provision is such, that every little addition is a direct feast to him, while the greatest owner of the world, giving to himself the utmost of his desires, hath nothing left beyond his ordinary, to become the entertainment of his festival days, but more loads of the same meat.* And then let him consider how much of felicity can this condition contribute to him, in which he is not further gone beyond a person of a little fortune in the greatness of his possession, than he is fallen short in the pleasures and possibility of their enjoyment.

And that is a sad condition, when, like Midas, all that the man touches turns to gold: and his is no better, to whom a perpetual full table, not recreated with fasting, not made pleasant with intervening scarcity, ministers no more good than a heap of gold does; that is, he hath no benefit of it, save the beholding of it with his eyes. Cannot a man quench his thirst as well out of an urn or chalice as out of a whole river? It is an ambitious thirst, and a pride of draught, that had rather lay his mouth to Euphrates than to a petty goblet; but if he had rather, it adds not so much to his content as to his danger and his vanity.

— eo fit,

*Plenior ut siquos delectet copia justo,
Cum ripâ simul avulsos ferat Aufidus acer.*

HOR.

* Rare volte ha fame chista sempre à tavola.

For so I have heard of persons whom the river hath swept away, together with the turf they pressed, when they stooped to drown their pride rather than their thirst.

6. But this supposition hath a lessening term. If a man could be born heir of all the world, it were something; but no man ever was so except him only who enjoyed the least of it, the Son of man, that "had not where to lay his head." But in the supposition it is, "If a man could gain the whole world," which supposes labour and sorrow, trouble and expense, venture and hazard, and so much time expired in its acquit and purchase, that, besides the possession is not secured to us for a term of life, so our lives are almost expired before we become estated in our purchases. And, indeed, it is a sad thing to see an ambitious or a covetous person make his life unpleasant, troublesome, and vexatious, to grasp a power bigger than himself, to fight for it with infinite hazards of his life, so that it is a thousand to one but he perishes in the attempt, and gets nothing at all but an untimely grave, a reproachful memory, and an early damnation. But suppose he gets a victory, and that the unhappy party is put to begin a new game; then to see the fears, the watchfulness, the diligence, the laborious arts to secure a possession, lest the desperate party should recover a desperate game. And suppose this, with a new stock of labours, danger, and expense, be seconded by a new success; then to look upon the new emergencies, and troubles, and discontents, among his friends, about parting the spoil; the envies, the jealousies, the slanders, the underminings, and the perpetual insecurity of his condition: all this, I say, is to see a man take infinite pains to make himself miserable. But if he will be so unlearned as to call this gallantry or a splendid fortune; yet, by this time, when he remembers he hath certainly spent much of his time in trouble, and how long he shall enjoy this he is still uncertain; he is not certain of a month; and suppose it be seven years, yet when he comes to die, and cast up his accounts, and shall find nothing remaining but a sad remembrance of evils and troubles past, and expectations of worse, infinitely worse, he must acknowledge himself convinced, that to gain all this world is a fortune not worth the labour and the dangers, the fears and transportations of passions, though the soul's loss be not considered in the bargain.

II. But I told you all this while that this is but a supposition still, the putting of a case, or like a fiction of law; nothing real. For if we consider, in the second place, how much every man is likely to get, really, and how much it is possible for any man to get, we shall find the account far shorter yet, and the purchase most trifling and inconsiderable. For, first, the world is at the same time enjoyed by all its inhabitants, and the same portion of it by several persons in their several capacities. A prince enjoys his whole kingdom, not as all his people enjoy it, but in the manner of a prince; the subject in the manner of subjects. The prince hath certain regalia beyond the rest; but the feudal right of subjects does them more emolument, and the regalia does the prince more honour: and those that hold the fees in subordinate right, transmit it also to their tenants, beneficiaries, and dependants, to public uses, to charity, and hospitality; all which is a lessening of the lord's possessions, and a cutting his river into little streams, not that himself alone, but that all his relatives, may drink to be refreshed. Thus the well where the woman of Samaria sat, was Jacob's well, and he drank of it; but so did his wives, and his children, and his cattle. So that what we call ours, is really ours but for our portion of expense and use; we have so little of it, that our servants have far more; and that which is ours, is nothing but the tide, and the care, and the trouble of securing and dispensing; save only that God, whose stewards we all are, will call such owners (as they are pleased to call themselves) to strict accounts for their disbursements. And by this account, the possession or dominion is but a word, and serves a fancy, or a passion, or a vice, but no real end of nature. It is the use and spending it that makes a man, to all real purposes of nature, to be the owner of it; and in this the lord and master hath but a share.

2. But, secondly, consider how far short of the whole world the greatest prince that ever reigned did come. Alexander, that wept because he had no more worlds to conquer, was in his knowledge deceived and brutish as in his passion: he overran much of Asia; but he could never pass the Ganges, and never thrust his sword in the bowels of Europe, and knew nothing of America. And the *οἰκουμένη*, or "the whole world," began to have an appropriate sense; and was rather put to the Roman greatness, as an honourable appellation, than did signify that

they were lords of the world, who never went beyond Persia, Egypt, or Britain.

But why do I talk of great things in this question of the exchange of the soul for the world? Because it is a real bargain which many men (too many, God knows) do make, we must consider it as applicable to practice. Every man that loses his soul for the purchase of the world, must not look to have the portion of a king. How few men are princes! and of those that are not born so, how seldom instances are found in story of persons, that, by their industry, became so! But we must come far lower yet. Thousands there are that damn themselves; and yet their purchase, at long running, and after a base and weary life spent, is but five hundred pounds a year: nay, it may be, they only cozen an easy person out of a good estate, and pay for it at an easy rate, which they obtain by lying, by drinking, by flattery, by force; and the gain is nothing but a thousand pounds in the whole, or, it may be, nothing but a convenience. Nay, how many men hazard their salvation for an acre of ground, for twenty pounds, to please a master, to get a small and a kind usage from a superior! These men get but little, though they did not give so much for it: so little, that Epictetus thought the purchase dear enough, though you paid nothing for it but flattery and observance: *Ὁ παρεκλήθης ἐφ' ἐστίασίν τινος; οὐ γὰρ ἔδωκας τῷ καλοῦντι οὐδὲν πωλεῖται τὸ δίκαιον ἰπταίου δ' αὐτὸ πωλεῖ, θεραπειᾶς πωλεῖ.* "Observance was the price of his meal;" and he paid too dear for one that gave his birthright for it; but he that exchanges his soul for it, knows not the vanity of his purchase nor the value of his loss. He that gains the purchase and spoil of a kingdom, hath got that, which to all that are placed in heaven, or to a man that were seated in the paths of the sun, seems but like a spot in an eye, or a mathematical point, so without vastness, that it seems to be without dimensions. But he whose purchase is but his neighbour's field, or a few unjust acres, hath got that which is inconsiderable, below the notice and description of the map: for by such hieroglyphical representations, Socrates chid the vanity of a proud Athenian.

3. Although these premises may suffice to show that the supposed purchase is but vain, and that all which men use really to obtain, is less than trifles; yet even the possession of it, whatsoever it be, is not mere and unmixed, but allayed with sorrow and uneasiness; the gain hath but enlarged his

appetite, and, like a draught to an hydropic person, hath enraged his thirst; and still that which he hath not, is infinitely bigger than what he hath, since the first enlargement of his purchase was not to satisfy necessity, but his passion, his lust or his avarice, his pride or his revenge. These things cease not by their fuel; but their flames grow bigger, and the capacities are stretched, and they want more than they did at first. For who wants most, he that wants five pounds, or he that wants five thousand? And supposing a man naturally supported and provided for, in the dispensation of nature there is no difference, but that the poor hath enough to fill his belly, and the rich man can never have enough to fill his eye. The poor man's wants are no greater than what may be supplied by charity; and the rich man's wants are so big that none but princes can relieve them; and they are left to all the temptations of great vices and huge cares to make their reparations.

*Dives eget gemmis, Cereali munere pauper:
Sed cum egeant ambo, pauper egens minus est.*
AUSON.

If the greatness of the world's possessions produce such fruits, vexation, and care, and want; the ambitious requiring of great estates is but like the selling of a fountain to buy a fever, a parting with content to buy necessity, and the purchase of an unhandsome condition at the price of infelicity.

4. He that enjoys a great portion of this world, hath most commonly the alloy of some great cross, which, although sometimes God designs in mercy, to wean his affections from the world, and for the abstracting them from sordid adherences and cohabitation, to make his eyes like stars, to fix them in the orbs of heaven and the regions of felicity, yet they are an inseparable appendant and condition of humanity. Solomon observed the vanity of some persons, that heaped up great riches for their heirs, and yet "knew not whether a wise man or a fool should possess them; this is a great evil under the sun." And if we observe the great crosses many times God permits in great families, as discontent in marriages, artificial or natural bastardies, a society of man and wife like the conjunction of two politics, full of state, and ceremony, and design, but empty of those sweet caresses, and natural hearty complications and endearments, usual in meaner and innocent persons; the perpetual sickness, fullness of diet, fear of dying, the abuse of flat-

terers, the trouble and noise of company; the tedious officiousness of impertinent and ceremonious visits, the declension of estate, the sadness of spirit, the notoriousness of those dishonours which the meanness of lower persons conceals, but their eminency makes as visible as the spots in the moon's face; we shall find him to be most happy that hath most of wisdom and least of the world, because he only hath the least danger and the most security.

5. And lastly, his soul so gets nothing that wins all this world, if he loses his soul, that it is ten to one but he that gets the one therefore shall lose the other: for to a great and opulent fortune, sin is so adherent and insinuating, that it comes to him in the nature of civility. It is a sad sight to see a great personage undertake an action passionately and upon great interest; and let him manage it as indiscreetly, let the whole design be unjust, let it be acted with all the malice and impotency in the world, he shall have enow to tell him that he proceeds wisely enough, to be servants of his interest, and promoters of his sin, instruments of his malice, and actors of revenge. But which of all his relatives shall dare to tell him of his indiscretion, of his rage, and of his folly? He had need be a bold man and a severe person that shall tell him of his danger, and that he is in a direct progress towards hell. And indeed such personages have been so long nourished up in softness, flattery, and effeminacy, that too often themselves are impatient of a monitor, and think the charity and duty of a modest reprehension to be a rudeness and incivility. That prince is a wise man that loves to have it otherwise; and, certainly, it is a strange civility and dutifulness in friends and relatives, to suffer him to go to hell uncontrolled, rather than to seem unmannerly towards a great sinner. But, certainly, this is none of the least infelicities of them who are lords of the world, and masters of great possessions.

I omit to speak of the habitual intemperance which is too commonly annexed to festival and delicious tables, where there is no other measure or restraint upon the appetite, but its fulness and satiety, and when it cannot or dare not eat more. Oftentimes it happens, that the intemperance of a poor table is more temperate and hath less of luxury in it than the temperance of a rich. To this are consequent all the evil accidents and effects of fulness, pride, lust, wantonness, softnesses of disposition, and dissolu-

tion of manners, huge talking, imperiousness, despite and contempt of poor persons; and, at the best, it is a great temptation for a man to have in his power whatsoever he can have in his sensual desires. Who then shall check his voracity, or calm his revenge, or allay his pride, or mortify his lust, or humble his spirit? It is like as when a lustful, young, and tempted person lives perpetually with his amorous and delicious mistress: if he escapes burning that is inflamed from within and set on fire from without, it is a greater miracle than the escaping from the flames of the furnace by the three children of the captivity. And just such a thing is the possession of the world; it furnishes us with abilities to sin and opportunities of ruin, and it makes us to dwell with poisons, and dangers, and enemies.

And although the grace of God is sufficient to great personages and masters of the world, and that it is possible for a young man to be tied upon a bed of flowers, and fastened by the arms and band of a courtesan, and tempted wantonly, and yet to escape the danger and the crime, and to triumph gloriously; (for so St. Jerome reports of the son of the king of Nicomedia;) and riches and a free fortune are designed by God to be a mercy, and an opportunity of doing noble things, and excellent charity, and exact justice, and to protect innocence, and to defend oppressed people; yet it is a mercy mixed with much danger; yea, it is like the present of a whole vintage to a man in an hectic fever; he will be shrewdly tempted to drink of it, and, if he does, he is inflamed, and may chance to die with the kindness. Happy are those persons who use the world, and abuse it not; who possess a part of it, and love it for no other ends but for necessities of nature, and conveniences of person, and discharge of all their duty and the offices of religion, and charity to Christ and all Christ's members. But since he that hath all the world cannot command nature to do him one office extraordinary, and enjoys the best part but in common with the poorest man in the world, and can use no more of it but according to a limited and a very narrow capacity; and whatsoever he can use or possess, cannot outweigh the present pressure of a sharp disease, nor can it at all give him content, without which there can be nothing of felicity; since a prince, in the matter of using the world, differs nothing from his subjects, but in mere accidents and circumstances,

and yet these very many trifling differences are not to be obtained but by so much labour and care, so great expense of time and trouble, that the possession will not pay thus much of the price; and, after all this, the man may die two hours after he hath made his troublesome and expensive purchase, and is certain not to enjoy it long. Add to this last, that most men get so little of the world, that it is altogether of a trifling and inconsiderable interest; that they who have the most of this world, have the most of that but in tide and in supreme rights and reserved privileges, the real use descending upon others to more substantial purposes; that the possession of this trifle is mixed with sorrow upon other accidents, and is allayed with fear; and that the greatness of men's possessions increases their thirst, and enlarges their wants, by swelling their capacity; and, above all, is of so great danger to a man's virtue, that a great fortune and a very great virtue are not always observed to grow together. He that observes all this, and much more he may observe, will see that he that gains the whole world, hath made no such great bargain of it, although he had it for nothing but the necessary unavoidable troubles in getting it. But how great a folly it is to buy so great a trouble, so great a vanity, with the loss of our precious souls, remains to be considered in the following parts of the text.

SERMON XLIV.

PART II.

“AND lose his own soul?” or, “What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” And now the question is finally stated, and the dispute is concerning the sum of affairs.

De morte hominis nulla est cunctatio longa. JUV.

And, therefore, when the soul is at stake, not for its temporal, but for its eternal interest, it is not good to be hasty in determining, without taking just measures of the exchange. Solomon had the good things of the world actually in possession; and he tried them at the touchstone of prudence and natural value, and found them allayed with vanity and imperfection; and we that see them “weighed in the balance of the sanctuary,” and tried by the touchstone of

the Spirit, find them not only light and unprofitable, but pungent and dolorous. But now we are to consider what it is that men part with and lose, when, with passion and impotency, they get the world; and that will present the bargain to be an huge infelicity. And this I observe to be intimated in the word *lose*. For he that gives gold for cloth, or precious stones for bread, serves his needs of nature, and loses nothing by it; and the merchant that found a pearl of great price, and sold all that he had to make the purchase of it, made a good venture; he was no loser: but here the case is otherwise; when a man gains the whole world, and his soul goes in the exchange, he hath not done like a merchant, but like a child or prodigal; he hath given himself away, he hath lost all that can distinguish him from a slave or a miserable person, he loses his soul in the exchange. For the soul of a man all the world cannot be a just price; a man may lose it, or throw it away, but he can never make a good exchange when he parts with this jewel; and therefore our blessed Saviour rarely well expresses it by *ζημιών*, which is fully opposed to *κέρδος*, “gain;” it is such an ill market a man makes, as if he should proclaim his riches and goods vendible for a garland of thistles decked and trimmed up with the stinking poppy.

But we shall better understand the nature of this bargain if we consider the soul that is exchanged; what it is in itself, in order, not of nature, but to felicity and the capacities of joy; secondly, what price the Son of God paid for it; and, thirdly, what it is to lose it; that is, what miseries and tortures are signified by losing a soul.

I. First, if we consider what the soul is in its own capacity to happiness, we shall find it to be an excellency greater than the sun, of an angelical substance, sister to a cherubim, an image of the Divinity, and the great argument of that mercy whereby God did distinguish us from the lower form of beasts, and trees, and minerals.

For, so it was, the Scripture affirms that “God made man after his own image,” that is, “secundum illam imaginem et ideam quam concepit ipse;” nor according to the likeness of any of those creatures which were pre-existent to man's production, nor according to any of those images or ideas whereby God created the heavens and the earth, but by a new form, to distinguish him from all other substances;

“he made him by a new idea of his own,” by an uncreated exemplar. And besides, that this was a donation of intelligent faculties, such as we understand to be perfect and essential, or rather the essence of God, it is also a designation of him to a glorious immortality, and communication of the rays and reflections of his own essential felicities.

But the soul is all that whereby we may be, and without which we cannot be, happy. It is not the eye that sees the beauties of the heaven, nor the ear that hears the sweetness of music, or the glad tidings of a prosperous accident, but the soul that perceives all the relishes of sensual and intellectual perfections; and the more noble and excellent the soul is, the greater and more savoury are its perceptions. And if a child beholds the rich ermine, or the diamonds of a starry night, or the order of the world, or hears the discourses of an apostle; because he makes no reflex acts upon himself, and sees not that he sees, he can have but the pleasure of a fool, or the deliciousness of a mule. But, although the reflection of its own acts be a rare instrument of pleasure or pain respectively, yet the soul's excellency is, upon the same reason, not perceived by us, by which the rapidness of pleasant things of nature are not understood by a child; even because the soul cannot reflect far enough. For as the sun, which is the fountain of light and heat, makes violent and direct emissions of his rays from himself, but reflects them no farther than to the bottom of a cloud, or the lowest imaginary circle of the middle region, and, therefore, receives not a duplicate of his own heat: so is the soul of man; it reflects upon its own inferior actions of particular sense, or general understanding; but, because it knows little of its own nature, the manners of volition, the immediate instruments of understanding, the way how it comes to meditate; and cannot discern how a sudden thought arrives, or the solution of a doubt not depending upon preceding premises; therefore, above half its pleasure are abated, and its own worth less understood; and, possibly, it is the better it is so. If the elephant knew his strength, or the horse the vigorousness of his own spirit, they would be as rebellious against their rulers as unreasonable men against government; nay, the angels themselves, because their light reflected home to their orbs, and they understood all the secrets of their own per-

fection, they grew vertiginous, and fell from the battlements of heaven. But the excellency of a human soul shall then be truly understood, when the reflection will make no distraction of our faculties, nor enkindle any irregular fires; when we may understand ourselves without danger.

In the mean this consideration is gone high enough, when we understand the soul of a man to be so excellently perfect, that we cannot understand how excellently perfect it is; that being the best way of expressing our conceptions of God himself. And therefore, I shall not need by distinct discourses to represent that the will of man is the last resort and sanctuary of true pleasure, which; in its formality, can be nothing else but a conformity of possession or of being to the will; that the understanding, being the channel and conveyance of the noblest perceptions, feeds upon pleasures in all its proportionate acts, and unless it be disturbed by intervening sins and remembrances derived hence, keeps a perpetual festival; that the passions are every of them fitted with an object, in which they rest as in their centre; that they have such delight in these their proper objects, that too often they venture a damnation rather than quit their interest and possession. But yet from these considerations it would follow, that to lose a soul, which is designed to be an immense sea of pleasure, even in its natural capacities, is to lose all that whereby a man can possibly be, or be supposed happy. And so much the rather is this understood to be an insupportable calamity, because losing a soul in this sense is not a mere privation of those felicities, of which a soul is naturally designed to be a partaker, but it is an investing it with contrary objects, and cross effects, and dolorous perceptions: for the will, if it misses its desires, is afflicted; and the understanding, when it ceases to be ennobled with excellent things, is made ignorant as a swine, dull as the foot of a rock; and the affections are in the destitution of their perfective actions made tumultuous, vexed, and discomposed to the height of rage and violence. But this is but the ἀρχὴ ὀδύνης, “the beginning of those throes,” which end not but in eternal infelicity.

2. Secondly: If we consider the price that the Son of God paid for the redemption of a soul, we shall better estimate of it, than from the weak discourses of our imperfect and unlearned philosophy. Not the spoil of rich provinces, not the estimate of king-

doms, nor the price of Cleopatra's draught, nor any thing that was corruptible or perishing; for that which could not one minute retard the term of its own natural dissolution, could not be a price for the redemption of one perishing soul. And if we list but to remember, and then consider, that a miserable, lost, and accursed soul, does so infinitely undervalue and disrelish all the goods and riches that this world dotes on, that he hath no more gust in them, or pleasure, than the fox hath in eating a turf; that, if he could be imagined to be the lord of ten thousand worlds, he would give them all for any shadow of hope of a possibility of returning to life again; that Dives in hell would have willingly gone on embassy to his father's house, that he might have been quit a little from his flames, and on that condition would have given Lazarus the fee-simple of all his temporal possessions, though he had once denied to relieve him with the superfluities of his table; we shall soon confess that a moment of time is no good exchange for an eternity of duration; and a light unprofitable possession is not to be put in the balance against a soul, which is the glory of the creation; a soul with whom God had made a contract, and contracted excellent relations, it being one of God's appellatives, that he is, "the Lover of the souls."

When God made a soul, it was only, "Faciamus hominem ad imaginem nostram." He spake the word, and it was done. But, when man hath lost this soul which the Spirit of God breathed into him, it was not so soon recovered. It is like the resurrection, which hath troubled the faith of many, who are more apt to believe that God made a man from nothing, than that he can return a man from dust and corruption. But for this resurrection of the soul, for the reimplacing the Divine image, for the rescuing it from the devil's power, for the re-entitling it to the kingdoms of grace and glory, God did a greater work than the creation; he was fain to contract Divinity to a span, to send a person to die for us, who, of himself, could not die, and was constrained to use rare and mysterious arts to make him capable of dying; he prepared a person instrumental to his purpose, by sending his Son from his own bosom, a person both God and man, an enigma to all nations and to all sciences; one that ruled over all the angels, that walked upon the pavements of heaven, whose feet were clothed with stars,

whose eyes were brighter than the sun, whose voice is louder than thunder, whose understanding is larger than that infinite space, which we imagine in the uncircumscribed distance beyond the first orb of heaven; a person to whom felicity was as essential as life to God: this was the only person that was designed, in the eternal decrees of the Divine predestination, to pay the price of a soul, to ransom us from death; less than this person could not do it. For although a soul in its essence is finite, yet there were many infinites which were incident and annexed to the condition of lost souls. For all which because provision was to be made, nothing less than an infinite excellence could satisfy for a soul who was lost to infinite and eternal ages, who was to be afflicted with insupportable and undetermined, that is, next to infinite, pains; who was to bear the load of an infinite anger from the provocation of an eternal God. And yet if it be possible that infinite can receive degrees, this is but one-half of the abyss, and I think the lesser. For that this person, who was God eternal, should be lessened in all his appearances to a span, to the little dimensions of a man; and that he should really become very contemptibly little, although, at the same time, he was infinitely and unalterably great; that is, essential, natural, and necessary felicity should turn into an intolerable, violent, and immense calamity to his person; that this great God should not be admitted to pay the price of our redemption, unless he would suffer that horrid misery, which that lost soul should suffer; as it represents the glories of his goodness, who used such rare and admirable instruments in actuating the designs of his mercy, so it shows our condition to have been very desperate, and our loss invaluable.

A soul in God's account is valued at the price of the blood, and shame, and tortures of the Son of God; and yet we throw it away for the exchange of sins, that a man naturally is ashamed to own; we lose it for the pleasure, the sottish, beastly pleasure, of a night. I need not say, we lose our soul to save our lives; for, though that was our blessed Saviour's instance of the great unreasonableness of men, who by "saving their lives, lose them," that is, in the great account of doomsday; though this, I say, be extremely unreasonable, yet there is something to be pretended in the bargain; nothing to excuse him with God, but something in the accounts of timorous men;

but to lose our souls with swearing, that unprofitable, dishonourable, and unpleasant vice; to lose our souls with disobedience or rebellion, a vice that brings a curse and danger all the way in this life; to lose our souls with drunkenness, a vice which is painful and sickly in the very acting it, which hastens our damnation by shortening our lives; are instances fit to be put in the stories of fools and madmen. And all vice is a degree of the same unreasonableness; the most splendid temptation being nothing but a pretty well-woven fallacy, a mètre trick, a sophism, and a cheating and abusing the understanding. But that which I consider here is, that it is an affront and contradiction to the wisdom of God, that we should so slight and undervalue a soul, in which our interest is so concerned; a soul, which he who made it, and who delighted not to see it lost, did account a fit purchase to be made by the exchange of his Son, the eternal Son of God. To which also I add this additional account, that a soul is so greatly valued by God, that we are not to venture the loss of it to save all the world. For, therefore, whosoever should commit a sin to save kingdoms from perishing; or, if the case could be put, that all the good men, and good causes, and good things in this world, were to be destroyed by tyranny, and it were in our power by perjury to save all these; that doing this sin would be so far from hal- lowing the crime, that it were to offer to God a sacrifice of what he most hates, and to serve him with swine's blood; and the rescuing of all these from a tyrant, or a hang- man, could not be pleasing to God upon those terms, because a soul is lost by it, which is, in itself, a greater loss and misery than all the evils in the world put together can out- balance, and a loss of that thing for which Christ gave his blood a price. Persecutions and temporal death in holy men, and in a just cause, are but seeming evils, and, there- fore, not to be bought off with the loss of a soul, which is a real, but an intolerable calamity. And if God, for his own sake, would not have all the world saved by sin, that is, by the hazarding of a soul, we should do well, for our own sakes, not to lose a soul for trifles, for things that make us here to be miserable, and even here also to be ashamed.

3. But it may be, some natures, or some understandings, care not for all this; there- fore, I proceed to the third and most material consideration as to us, and I consider what

it is to lose a soul. Which Hierocles thus explicates, Ὡς οἶον τε τῇ ἀθανάτῳ οὐσίᾳ θανάτου μοίρας μεταλαχῆν, οὐ τῇ εἰς τὸ μὴ εἶναι ἐκδῶσαι, ἀλλὰ τῇ τὸν εὖ εἶναι ἀποπτῶσαι, "An immortal substance can die, not by ceasing to be, but by losing all being well," by becoming mis- erable. And it is remarkable, when our blessed Saviour gave us caution that we should "not fear them that can kill the body only, but fear him," (he says not that can kill the soul, but τὸν δυνάμενον καὶ ψυχὴν καὶ σῶμα ἀπωλέσαι ἐν γέεννῃ) "that is able to destroy the body and soul in hell;"* which word signifieth not "death," but "tortures." For some have chosen death for sanctuary, and fled to it to avoid intolerable shame, to give a period to the sense of a sharp grief, or to cure the earthquakes of fear; and the damned perishing souls shall wish for death with a desire as impatient as their calamity; but this shall be denied them, because death were a deliverance, a mercy, and a pleasure, of which these miserable persons must despair for ever.

I shall not need to represent to your con- siderations those expressions of Scripture, which the Holy Ghost hath set down to represent to our capacities the greatness of this perishing, choosing such circumstances of character as were then usual in the world, and which are dreadful to our understand- ing as any thing; "hell-fire" is the com- mon expression; for the Eastern nations ac- counted burnings the greatest of these miser- able punishments, and burning maléfactors was frequent. "Brimstone and fire," so St. John† calls the state of punishment, "pre- pared for the devil and all his servants;" he added the circumstance of brimstone, for by this time, the devil had taught the world more ingenious pains, and himself was new- ly escaped out of boiling oil and brimstone, and such bituminous matter; and the Spirit of God knew right well the worst expression was not bad enough. Σκότος ἕξώτερον, so our blessed Saviour calls it, "the outer dark- ness;" that is, not only an abjection from the beatific regions, where God, and his angels, and his saints, dwell for ever; but then there is a positive state of misery ex- pressed by darkness, ζόφου σκότους, as two apostles, St. Peter and St. Jude, call it, "the blackness of darkness for ever." In which, although it is certain that God, whose justice there rules, will inflict but just so much as our sins deserve, and not super-

* Matt. xix. 28.

† Revel. xiv. 10.

add degrees of undeserved misery, as he does to the saints of glory; (for God gives to blessed souls in heaven more, infinitely more, than all their good works could possibly deserve; and therefore their glory is infinitely bigger glory than the pains of hell are great pains;) yet because God's justice in hell rules alone, without the allays and sweeter abatements of mercy, they shall have pure and unmingled misery; no pleasant thought to refresh their weariness, no comfort in another accident to alleviate their pressures, no waters to cool their flames. But because when there is a great calamity upon a man, every such man thinks himself the most miserable; and though there are great degrees of pain in hell, yet there are none perceived by him that thinks he suffers the greatest; it follows, that every man that loses his soul in this darkness, is miserable beyond all those expressions, which the tortures of this world could furnish to the writers of the Holy Scripture.

But I shall choose to represent this consideration in that expression of our blessed Saviour, Mark ix. 44, which himself took out of the prophet Isaiah, lxvi. 24, "Where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." This is the *συντελεία ἐρήμου* spoken of by Daniel the prophet: for although this expression was a prediction of that horrid calamity and abscission of the Jewish nation, when God poured out a full vial of his wrath upon the crucifiers of his Son, and that this, which was the greatest calamity which ever did, or ever shall, happen to a nation, Christ, with great reason, took to describe the calamity of accursed souls, as being the greatest instance to signify the greatest torment: yet we must observe that the difference of each state makes the same words in the several cases to be of infinite distinction. The worm stuck close to the Jewish nation, and the fire of God's wrath flamed out till they were consumed with a great and unheard-of destruction, till many millions did die accursedly, and the small remnant became vagabonds, and were reserved, like broken pieces after a storm, to show the greatness of the storm and misery of the shipwreck: but then this being translated to signify the state of accursed souls, whose dying is a continual perishing, who cannot cease to be, it must mean an eternity of duration, in a proper and natural signification.

And that we may understand it fully, observe the place in Isa. xxxiv. 8, &c. The

prophet prophesies of the great destruction of Jerusalem for all her great iniquities: "It is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Sion. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day, the smoke thereof shall go up for ever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste, none shall pass through it, for ever and ever." This is the final destruction of the nation; but this destruction shall have an end, because the nation shall end, and the anger also shall end in its own period, even then when God shall call the Jews into the common inheritance with the gentiles, and all "become the sons of God." And this also was the period of their "worm," as it is of their "fire," the fire of the Divine vengeance upon the nation: which was not to be extinguished till they were destroyed, as we see it come to pass. And thus also in St. Jude, "the angels who kept not their first state," are said to be "reserved" by God in everlasting chains under darkness:" which word, "everlasting," signifies not absolutely to eternity, but to the utmost end of that period: for so it follows, "unto the judgment of the great day;" that "everlasting" lasts no longer. And in ver. 7. the word "eternal" is just so used. The men of "Sodom and Gomorrah are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire;" that is, of a fire which burned till they were quite destroyed, and the cities and the country with an irreparable ruin, never to be rebuilt and reinhabited as long as this world continues. The effect of which observation is this:

That these words, "for ever,—everlasting,—eternal,—the never-dying worm,—the fire unquenchable," being words borrowed by our blessed Saviour and his apostles from the style of the Old Testament, must have a signification just proportionable to the state in which they signify: so that as this worm, when it signifies a temporal infliction, means a worm that never ceases giving torment till the body is consumed: so when it is translated to an immortal state, it must signify as much in that proportion: that "eternal," that "everlasting," hath no end at all; because the soul cannot be killed in the natural sense, but is made miserable and perishing for ever; that is, the "worm shall not die" so long as the soul shall be unconsumed; "the fire shall not be

quenched" till the period of an immortal nature comes. And that this shall be absolutely for ever, without any restriction, appears unanswerable in this, because the same "for ever" that is for the blessed souls, the same "for ever" is for the accursed souls: but the blessed souls, "that die in the Lord, henceforth shall die no more, death hath no power over them; for death is destroyed, it is swallowed up in victory," saith St. Paul; and "there shall be no more death," saith St. John.* So that, because "for ever" hath no end, till the thing or the duration itself have end, in the same sense in which the saints and angels "give glory to God for ever," in the same sense the lost souls shall suffer the evils of their sad inheritance: and since, after this death of nature, which is a separation of soul and body, there remains no more death, but this second death, this eternal perishing of miserable accursed souls, whose duration must be eternal; it follows, that "the worm of conscience," and "the unquenchable" fire of hell, have no period at all, but shall last as long as God lasts, or the measures of a proper eternity; that they who provoke God to wrath by their base, unreasonable, and sottish practices, may know what their portion shall be in the everlasting habitations. And yet, suppose that Origen's opinion had been true, and that accursed souls should have ease and a period to their tortures after a thousand years; I pray, let it be considered, whether it be not a great madness to choose the pleasures or the wealth of a few years here, with trouble, with danger, with uncertainty, with labour, with intervals of sickness; and for this to endure the flames of hell for a thousand years together. The pleasures of the world no man can have for a hundred years; and no man hath pleasure for a hundred days together, but he hath some trouble intervening, or at least a weariness and a loathing of the pleasure: and therefore, to endure insufferable calamities, suppose it be for a hundred years, without any interruption, without so much comfort as the light of a candle, or a drop of water amounts to in a fever, is a bargain to be made by no man that loves himself, or is not in love with infinite affliction.

If a man were condemned but to lie still, or to lie in bed in one posture without turning, for seven years together, would he not buy it off with the loss of all his estate? If

a man were to be put upon the rack for every day for three months together, (suppose him able to live so long,) what would not he do to be quit of his torture? Would any man curse the king to his face, if he were sure to have both his hands burnt off, and to be tormented with torments three years together. Would any man in his wits accept of a hundred pounds a year for forty years, if he were sure to be tormented in the fire for the next hundred years together without intermission? Think then what a thousand years may signify; ten ages, the ages of two empires. But this account, I must tell you, is infinitely short, though I thus discourse to you how great fools wicked men are, though this opinion should be true. A goodly comfort, surely, that for two or three years' sottish pleasure, a man shall be infinitely tormented but for a thousand years! But then when we cast up the minutes, and years, and ages of eternity, the consideration itself is a great hell to those persons, who, by their evil lives, are consigned to such sad and miserable portions.

A thousand years is a long while to be in torment: we find a fever of one and twenty days to be like an age in length; but when the duration of an intolerable misery is for ever in the height, and for ever beginning, and ten thousand years have spent no part of its term, but it makes a perpetual efflux, and is like the centre of a circle, which ever transmits lines to the circumference: this is a consideration so sad, that the horror of it, and the reflection upon its abode and duration, make a great part of the hell: for hell could not be hell without the despair of accursed souls; for any hope were a refreshment, and a drop of water, which would help to allay those flames, which as they burn intolerably, so they must burn for ever.

And I desire you to consider, that although the Scripture uses the word "fire" to express the torments of accursed souls, yet fire can no more equal the pangs of hell than it can torment an immaterial substance; the pains of perishing souls being as much more afflictive than the smart of fire, as the smart of fire is troublesome beyond the softness of Persian carpets, or the sensuality of the Asian luxury. For the pains of hell, and the perishing or losing the soul, is, to suffer the wrath of God: *και γαρ ο θεος ημων πυρ καταναλυσκον*, "our God is a consuming fire," that is, the fire of hell. When God takes away all comfort from us, nothing

* Rev. xxi. 4.

to support our spirit is left us; when sorrow is our food, and tears our drink; when it is eternal night, without sun, or star, or lamp, or sleep; when we burn with fire without light, that is, are laden with sadness without remedy, or hope of ease; and that this wrath is to be expressed and to fall upon us in spiritual, immaterial, but most accursed, most pungent, and dolorous emanations; then we feel what it is to lose a soul.

We may guess at it by the terrors of a guilty conscience, those "verbera et laniatus," those secret "lashings and whips" of the exterminating angel, those thorns in the soul, when a man is haunted by an evil spirit; those butcheries,—which the soul of a tyrant, or a violent or a vicious person, when he falls into fear or any calamity, does feel,—are the infinite arguments, that hell,—which is the consummation of the torment of conscience, just as manhood is the consummation of infancy, or as glory is the perfection of grace,—is an affliction greater than the bulk of heaven and earth; for there it is that God pours out the treasures of his wrath, and empties the whole magazine of thunderbolts, and all the armory of God is employed, not in the chastising, but in the tormenting, of a perishing soul. Lucian brings in Radamanthus, telling the poor wandering souls upon the banks of Elysium, Ὅποσα ἂν τις ἡμῶν πονηρὸς ἐργάσῃται παρὰ τὸν βίον, καθ' ἕκαστον αὐτῶν ἀφανῆ στίγματα ἐπὶ τῆς ψυχῆς περιφέρει, "For every wickedness that any man commits in his life, when he comes to hell, he hath stamped upon his soul an invisible brand" and mark of torment, and this begins here, and is not cancelled by death, but there is enlarged by the greatness of infinite, and the abodes of eternity. How great these torments of conscience are here, let any man imagine that can but understand what despair means; despair upon just reason: let it be what it will, no misery can be greater than despair. And because I hope none here have felt those horrors of an evil conscience which are consignations to eternity, you may please to learn it by your own reason, or else by the sad instances of story. It is reported of Petrus Hlosuanus, a Polonian schoolmaster, that having read some ill-managed discourses of absolute decrees and Divine reprobation, began to be fantastic and melancholic, and apprehensive that he might be one of those many whom God had decreed for hell from all eternity. From possible to probable, from probable to certain, the temptation soon

carried him: and when he once began to believe himself to be a person inevitably perishing, it is not possible to understand perfectly what infinite fears, and agonies, and despairs, what tremblings, what horrors, what confusion and amazement, the poor man felt within him, to consider that he was to be tormented extremely, without remedy, even to eternal ages. This, in a short continuance, grew insufferable, and prevailed upon him so far, that he hanged himself, and left an account of it to this purpose in writing in his study: "I am gone from hence to the flames of hell, and have forced my way thither, being impatient to try what those great torments are, which here I have feared with an insupportable amazement." This instance may suffice to show what it is to lose a soul. But I will take off from this sad discourse; only I shall crave your attention to a word of exhortation.

That you take care, lest for the purchase of a little, trifling, inconsiderable portion of the world, you come into this place and state of torment. Although Homer was pleased to compliment the beauty of Helena to such a height, as to say, "it was a sufficient price for all the evils which the Greeks and Trojans suffered in ten years:"

Ὁὐ νέμεσις Τρῶας καὶ εὐκνημίδας Ἀχαιοὺς
Τοιῆ δ' ἄμφι γυναικὶ πολὺν χρόνον ἀλγία πάσχειν.
Iliad. γ.

yet it was a more reasonable conjecture of Herodotus, that, during the ten years' siege of Troy, Helena, for whom the Greeks fought, was in Egypt, not in the city; because it was unimaginable but the Trojans would have thrown her over the walls, rather than, for the sake of such a trifle, have endured so great calamities. We are more sottish than the Trojans, if we retain our Helena, any one beloved lust, a painted devil, any sugared temptation, with (not the hazard, but) the certainty of having such horrid miseries, such invaluable losses. And certainly it is a strange stupidity of spirit that can sleep in the midst of such thunder; when God speaks from heaven with his loudest voice, and draws aside his curtain, and shows his arsenal and his armoury, full of arrows steeled with wrath, headed and pointed, and hardened with vengeance, still to snatch at those arrows, if they came but in the retinue of a rich fortune or a vain mistress, if they wait but upon pleasure or profit, or in the rear of an ambitious design. But let us not have such a hardness

against the threats and representments of the Divine vengeance, as to take the little imposts and revenues of the world, and stand in defiance against God and the fears of hell; unless we have a charm that we can be ἀόρατοι τῷ κριτῇ, "invisible to the Judge" of heaven and earth, and are impregnable against, or are sure we shall be invisible of, the miseries of a perishing soul.

There is a sort of men, who, because they will be vicious and atheistical in their lives, have no way to go on with any plaisance and without huge disturbances, but by being also atheistical in their opinions; and to believe that the story of hell is but a bug-bear to affright children and fools, easy-believing people, to make them soft and apt for government and designs of princes. And this is an opinion that befriends none but impure and vicious persons. Others there are, that believe God to be all mercy, that he forgets his justice; believing that none shall perish with so sad a ruin, if they do but at their death-bed ask God forgiveness, and say they are sorry, but yet continue their impiety till their house be ready to fall; being like the Circassians, whose gentlemen enter not in the church till they be three-score years old, that is, in effect, till by their age they cannot any longer use rapine; till then they hear service at their windows, dividing unequally their life between sin and devotion, dedicating their youth to robbery, and their old age to a repentance without restitution.

Our youth, and our manhood, and old age, are all of them due to God, and justice and mercy are to him equally essential: and as this life is a time of the possibilities of mercy, so to them that neglect it, the next world shall be a state of pure and unmin- gled justice.

Remember the fatal and decretory sentence which God hath passed upon all mankind: "It is appointed to all men once to die, and after death comes judgment." And if any of us were certain to die next morning, with what earnestness should we pray! with what hatred should we remember our sins! with what scorn should we look upon the licentious pleasures of the world! Then nothing could be welcome unto us but a prayer-book, no company but a comforter and a guide of souls, no employment but repentance, no passions but in order to religion, no kindness for a lust that hath undone us. And if any of you have been arrested with alarms of death, or been in

hearty fear of its approach, remember what thoughts and designs then possessed you, how precious a soul was then in your account, and what then you would give that you had despised the world, and done your duty to God and man, and lived a holy life. It will come to that again; and we shall be in that condition in which we shall perfectly understand, that all the things and pleasures of the world are vain, and unprofitable, and irksome, and that he only is a wise man who secures the interest of his soul, though it be with the loss of all this world, and his own life into the bargain. When we are to depart this life, to go to strange company and stranger places, and to an unknown condition, then a holy conscience will be the best security, the best possession; it will be a horror, that every friend we meet shall, with triumph, upbraid to us the sottishness of our folly: "Lo, this is the goodly change you have made! you had your good things in your lifetime, and how like you the portion that is reserved to you for ever?" The old rabbins, those poets of religion, report of Moses, that when the courtiers of Pharaoh were sporting with the child Moses, in the chamber of Pharaoh's daughter, they presented to his choice an ingot of gold in one hand and a coal of fire in the other; and that the child snatched at the coal, thrust it into his mouth, and so singed and parched his tongue, that he stammered ever after. And certainly it is infinitely more childish in us, for the glittering of the small glow-worms and the charcoal of worldly possessions, to swallow the flames of hell greedily in our choice: such a bit will produce a worse stammering than Moses had: for so the accursed and lost souls have their ugly and horrid dialect; they roar and blaspheme, blaspheme and roar, for ever. And suppose God should now, at this instant, send the great archangel with his trumpet, to summon all the world to judgment, would not all this seem a notorious visible truth, a truth which you will then wonder that every man did not lay to his heart and preserve there, in actual, pious, and effective consideration? Let the trumpet of God perpetually sound in your ears, "Surgite mortui, et venite ad judicium:" place yourselves, by meditation, every day upon your death-bed, and remember what thoughts shall then possess you, and let such thoughts dwell in your understanding for ever, and be the parent of all your resolutions and actions.

The doctors of the Jews report, that when Absalom hanged among the oaks by the hair of the head, he seemed to see under him hell gaping wide ready to receive him; and he durst not cut off the hair that entangled him, for fear he should fall into the horrid lake, whose portion is flames and torment, but chose to protract his miserable life a few minutes in that pain of posture, and to abide the stroke of his pursuing enemies: his condition was sad when his arts of remedy were so vain.

Τὸ γὰρ βροτῶν ἂν σὺν κακοῖς περιμύμενον
Θνησκεῖν ὁ μέλλων τοῦ χρόνου κέρδος φέρει;
SOPH.

A condemned man hath but small comfort to stay the singing of a long psalm; it is the case of every vicious person. Hell is wide open to every impenitent persevering sinner, to every unpurged person.

Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis.
ÆN.

And although God hath lighted his candle, and the lantern of his word and clearest revelations is held out to us, that we can see hell in its worst colours and most horrid representations; yet we run greedily after baubles, unto that precipice which swallows up the greatest part of mankind; and then only we begin to consider, when all consideration is fruitless.

He, therefore, is a huge fool, that heaps up riches, that greedily pursues the world, and at the same time (for so it must be) "heaps up wrath to himself against the day of wrath;" when sickness and death arrest him, then they appear unprofitable, and himself extremely miserable; and if you would know how great that misery is, you may take account of it by those fearful words and killing rhetoric of Scripture: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God;" and, "Who can dwell with the everlasting burnings?" That is, no patience can abide there one hour, where they dwell forever.

SERMON XLV.

OF CHRISTIAN PRUDENCE.

PART I.

Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.—Matt. x. latter part of verse 16.

WHEN our blessed Saviour entailed a law and a condition of sufferings, and promised

a state of persecution to his servants; and withal had charmed them with the bands and unactive chains of so many passive graces, that they should not be able to stir against the violence of tyrants, or abate the edge of axes, by any instrument but their own blood; being "sent forth as sheep among wolves," innocent and silent, harmless and defenceless, certainly exposed to sorrow, and uncertainly guarded in their persons; their condition seemed nothing else but a designation to slaughter: and when they were drawn into the folds of the church, they were betrayed into the hands of evil men, infinitely and unavoidably: and when an apostle invited a proselyte to come to Christ, it was in effect a snare laid for his life; and he could neither conceal his religion, nor hide his person, nor avoid a captious question, nor deny his accusation, nor elude the bloody arts of orators and informers, nor break prisons, nor any thing but die. If the case stood just thus, it was well eternity stood at the outer days of our life, ready to receive such harmless people: but surely there could be no art in the design, no pitying of human weaknesses, no complying with the condition of man, no allowances made for customs and prejudices of the world, no inviting men by the things of men, no turning nature into religion: but it was all the way a direct violence, and an open prostitution of our lives, and a throwing away our fortune into a sea of rashness and credulity. But, therefore, God ordered the affairs and necessities of religion in other ways, and to other purposes. Although God bound our hands behind us, yet he did not tie our understandings up: although we might not use our swords, yet we might use our reason: we were not suffered to be violent, but we might avoid violence by all the arts of prudence and innocence: if we did take heed of sin, we might also take heed of men. And because in all contentions between wit and violence, prudence and rudeness, learning and the sword, the strong hand took it first, and the strong head possessed it last; the strong man first governed, and the witty man succeeded him, and lasted longer; it came to pass, that the wisdom of the Father hath so ordered it, that all his disciples should overcome the power of the Roman legions by a wise religion; and prudence and innocence should become the mightiest guards; and the Christian, although exposed to persecution, yet is so secured that he shall never need to

die, but when the circumstances are so ordered, that his reason is convinced that then it is fit he should; fit, I say, in order to God's purposes and his own.

For he that is innocent, is safe against all the rods and the axes of all the consuls of the world, if they rule by justice; and he that is prudent, will also escape from many rudenesses and irregular violences that can come by injustice: and no wit of man, no government, no armies, can do more. For Cæsar perished in the midst of all his legions and all his honours; and against chance and irregularities there is no provision less than infinite that can give security. And although prudence alone cannot do this, yet innocence gives the greatest title to that Providence which only can, if he pleases, and will, if it be fitting. Here, then, are the two arms defensive of a Christian: prudence against the evils of men, innocence against the evils of devils and all that relates to his kingdom.

Prudence fences against persecution and the evil snares, against the opportunities and occasions of sin; it prevents surprises, it fortifies all its proper weaknesses, it improves our talents, it does advantage to the kingdom of Christ and the interests of the gospel, it secures our condition, and instructs our choice in all the ways and just passages to felicity, it makes us to live profitably and die wisely; and without it, simplicity would turn to silliness, zeal into passion, passion into fury, religion into scandal, conversation into a snare, civilities into temptation, courtesies into danger, and an imprudent person falls into the condition of harmless, rich, and unwary fools, or rather of birds, sheep, and beavers, who are hunted and persecuted for the spoils of their fleece or their flesh, their skins or their entrails, and have not the foresight to avoid a snare, but by their fear and undefending follies are driven thither where they die infallibly. *Σκαιόσι πολλοῖς εἰς σοφὸς διόλλυται.** Every good man is encircled with many enemies and dangers; and his virtue shall be rifled, and the decency of his soul and spirit shall be discomposed, and turned into a heap of inarticulate and disorderly fancies, unless, by the methods and guards of prudence, it be managed and secured.

But in order to the following discourse

and its method, we are first to consider, whether this be, or, indeed, can be, a commandment, or, what it is. For can all men that give up their names in baptism, be enjoined to be wise and prudent? It is as if God would command us to be eloquent or witty men, fine speakers, or straight-bodied, or excellent scholars, or rich men: if he please to make us so, we are so. And prudence is a gift of God, a blessing of an excellent nature, and of great leisure, and a wise opportunity, and a severe education, and a great experience, and a strict observation, and good company; all which, being either wholly or in part out of our power, may be expected as free gifts, but cannot be imposed as commandments.

To this I answer, that Christian prudence is, in very many instances, a direct duty; in some, an instance and advice, in order to degrees and advantages. Where it is a duty, it is put into every man's power; where it is an advice, it is only expected according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not; and even here, although the events of prudence are out of our power, yet the endeavours and the observation, the diligence and caution, the moral part of it, and the plain conduct of our necessary duty, (which are portions of this grace), are such things which God will demand in proportion to the talent which he hath entrusted into our banks. There are, indeed, some Christians very unwary and unwise in the conduct of their religion; and they cannot at all help it, at least not in all degrees; but yet they may be taught to do prudent things, though not to be prudent persons: if they have not the prudence of advice and conduct, yet they may have the prudence of obedience and of disciples. And the event is this: without prudence their virtue is unsafe, and their persons defenceless, and their interest is unguarded; for prudence is a handmaid waiting at the production and birth of virtue; it is a nurse to it in its infancy, its patron in assaults, its guide in temptations, its security in all portions of chance and contingencies; and he that is imprudent, if he have many accidents and varieties, is in great danger of being none at all; or, if he be, at the best he is but a "weak and unprofitable servant," useless to his neighbour, vain in himself, and as to God, "the least in the kingdom:" his virtue is contingent and by chance, not proportioned to

* Stobæus.

the reward of wisdom, and the election of a wise religion.

Προνοίας οὐδὲν ἀνθρώποις ἔστι
Καρδὸς λαβεῖν ἀμεινων, οὐδὲ τοῦ σοφοῦ.

SOPHOCL.

No purchase, no wealth, no advantage, is great enough to be compared to a wise soul and a prudent spirit; and he that wants it, hath a less virtue, and a defenceless mind, and will suffer a mighty hazard in the interest of eternity. Its parts and proper acts consist in the following particulars.

I. It is the duty of Christian prudence to choose the end of a Christian, that which is perfective of a man, satisfactory to reason, the rest of a Christian, and the beatification of his spirit: and that is, to choose, and desire, and propound to himself heaven, and the fruition of God, as the end of all his acts and arts, his designs and purposes. For, in the nature of things, that is most eligible and most to be pursued, which is most perfective of our nature, and is the acquiescence, the satisfaction, and proper rest of our most reasonable appetites. Now the things of this world are difficult and uneasy, full of thorns and empty of pleasures; they fill a diseased faculty or an abused sense, but are an infinite dissatisfaction to reason and the appetites of the soul; they are short and transient, and they never abide, unless sorrow, like a chain, be bound about their leg, and then they never stir till the grace of God and religion breaks it, or else that the rust of time eats the chain in pieces; they are dangerous and doubtful, few and difficult, sordid and particular, not only not communicable to a multitude, but not diffusive upon the whole man, there being no one pleasure or object in this world that delights all the parts of man: and, after all this, they are originally from earth and from the creatures, only that they oftentimes contract alliances with hell and the grave, with shame and sorrow; and all these put together make no great amability or proportion to a wise man's choice. But, on the other side, the things of God are the noblest satisfactions to those desires which ought to be cherished and swelled up to infinite; their deliciousness is vast and full of relish, and their very appendant thorns are to be chosen; for they are gilded, they are safe and medicinal, they heal the wound they make, and bring forth fruit of a blessed and a holy life. The things of God and of religion are easy and sweet, they bear entertainments in their hand, and

reward at their back; their good is certain and perpetual, and they make us cheerful and pleasant to-morrow; and spiritual songs end not in a sigh and a groan: neither, like unwholesome physic, do they let loose a present humour, and introduce an habitual indisposition; but they bring us to the felicity of God, "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever:" they do not give a private and particular delight, but their benefit is public; like the incense of the altar, it sends up a sweet smell to heaven, and makes atonement for the religious man that kindled it, and delights all the standers-by, and makes the very air wholesome. There is no blessed soul goes to heaven, but he makes a general joy in all the mansions where the saints do dwell, and in all the chapels where the angels sing: and the joys of religion are not univocal, but productive of rare, and accidental, and preternatural pleasures; for the music of holy hymns delights the ear, and refreshes the spirit, and makes the very bones of the saint to rejoice. And charity, or the giving alms to the poor, does not only ease the poverty of the receiver, but makes the giver rich, and heals his sickness, and delivers from death: and temperance, though it be in the matter of meat, and drink, and pleasures, yet hath an effect upon his understanding, and makes the reason sober, and the will orderly, and the affections regular, and does things beside and beyond their natural and proper efficacy: for all the parts of our duty are watered with the showers of blessing, and bring forth fruit according to the influence of heaven, and beyond the capacities of nature.

And now let the voluptuous person go and try whether putting his wanton hand to the bosom of his mistress will get half such honour as Scævola put upon his head, when he put his hand into the fire. Let him see whether a drunken meeting will cure a fever or make him wise: a hearty and persevering prayer will. Let him tell me, if spending great sums of money upon his lusts will make him sleep soundly, or be rich: charity will; alms will increase his fortune, and a good conscience shall charm all his cares and sorrows into a most delicious slumber. Well may a full goblet wet the drunkard's tongue, and then the heat rising from the stomach will dry the sponge, and heat it into the scorchings and little images of hell: and the follies of a wanton bed will turn the itch into a smart, and empty the

reins of all their lustful powers: but can they do honour or satisfaction in any thing that must last, and that ought to be provided for? No; all the things of this world are little, and trifling, and limited, and particular, and sometimes necessary, because men are miserable, wanting, and imperfect; but they never do any thing toward perfection, but their pleasure dies like the time in which it danced awhile; and when the minute is gone, so is the pleasure too, and leaves no footstep but the impression of a sigh, and dwells no where but in the same house where you shall find yesterday, that is, in forgetfulness and annihilation; unless its only child, sorrow, shall marry, and breed more of its kind, and so continue its memory and name to eternal ages. It is, therefore, the most necessary part of prudence to choose well in the main stake: and the dispute is not much; for if eternal things be better than temporal, the soul more noble than the body, virtue more honorable than the basest vices, a lasting joy to be chosen before an eternal sorrow, much to be preferred before little, certainty before danger, public good things before private evils, eternity before moments; then let us sit down in religion, and make heaven to be our end, God to be our Father, Christ our elder Brother, the Holy Ghost the earnest of our inheritance, virtue to be our employment; and then we shall never enter into the portion of fools and accursed ill-choosing spirits. Nazianzen said well, "*Malim prudentiæ guttam quam fecundioris fortunæ pelagus*:" "One drop of prudence is more useful than an ocean of a smooth fortune:" for prudence is a rare instrument towards heaven; and a great fortune is made oftentimes the highway to hell and destruction. However, thus far prudence is our duty; every man can be so wise, and is bound to it, to choose heaven, and a cohabitation with God, before the possessions and transient vanities of the world.

2. It is a duty of Christian prudence to pursue this great end with apt means and instruments in proportion to that end. No wise man will sail to Ormus in a cock-boat, or use a child for his interpreter; and that general is a Cyclops without an eye, who chooses the sickest men to man his towns and the weakest to fight his battles. It cannot be a vigorous prosecution, unless the means have an efficacy or worth commensurate to all the difficulty, and something of the excellency of that end which is designed.

And, indeed, men use not to be so weak in acquiring the possessions of their temporals; but in matters of religion they think any thing effective enough to secure the greatest interest: as if all the fields of heaven and the regions of that kingdom were waste ground, and wanted a colony of planters; and that God invited men to heaven upon any terms, that he might rejoice in the multitude of subjects. For certain it is, men do more to get a little money than for all the glories of heaven: men "rise up early," and "sit up late," and "eat the bread of carefulness," to become richer than their neighbours; and are amazed at every loss, and impatient of an evil accident, and feel a direct storm of passion if they suffer in their interest. But in order to heaven they are cold in their religion, undevout in their prayers, incurious in their walking, unwatchful in their circumstances, indifferent in the use of their opportunities, infrequent in their discourses of it, not inquisitive of the way, and yet think they shall surely go to heaven. But a prudent man knows, that by the greatness of the purchase he is to make an estimate of the value and the price. When we ask of God any great thing,—as wisdom, delivery from sickness, his Holy Spirit, the forgiveness of sins, the grace of chastity, restitution to his favour, or the like,—do we hope to obtain them without a high opinion of the things we ask? and if we value them highly, must we not desire them earnestly? and if we desire them earnestly, must we not beg for them fervently? and whatsoever we ask for fervently, must not we beg for frequently? And then, because prayer is but one hand toward the reaching a blessing, and God requires our co-operation and endeavour, and we must work with both hands, are we not convinced that our prayers are either faint, or a design of laziness, when we either ask coldly, or else pray loudly, hoping to receive the graces we need without labour? A prudent person, that knows to value the best object of his desires, will also know that he must observe the degrees of labour, according to the excellency of the reward. That prayer must be effectual,—fervent,—frequent,—continual,—holy,—passionate,—that must get a grace or secure a blessing: the love that we must have to God, must be such as to keep his commandments, and make us willing to part with all our estate, and all our honour, and our life, for the testimony of a holy conscience: our charity to our

neighbour must be expressive in a language of a real friendship, aptness to forgive, readiness to forbear, in pitying infirmities, in relieving necessities, in giving our goods and our lives, and quitting our privileges to save his soul, to secure and support his virtue: our repentance must be full of sorrows and care, of diligence and hatred against sin; it must drive out all, and leave no affections towards it; it must be constant and persevering, fearful of relapse, and watchful of all accidents: our temperance must sometimes turn into abstinence, and most commonly be severe, and ever without reproof: "He that striveth for masteries is temperate," saith St. Paul, "in all things." He that does all this, may, with some pretence and reason, say, he intends to go to heaven. But they that will not deny a lust, nor restrain an appetite; they that will be drunk when their friends do merrily constrain them, or love a cheap religion, and a gentle and lame prayer, short and soft, quickly said and soon passed over, seldom returning and but little observed; how is it possible that they should think themselves persons disposed to receive such glorious crowns and sceptres, such excellent conditions, which they have not faith enough to believe, nor attention enough to consider, and no man can have wit enough to understand? But so might an Arcadian shepherd look from the rocks, or through the clefts of the valley where his sheep graze, and wonder that the messenger stays so long from coming to him to be crowned king of all the Greek islands, or to be adopted heir to the Macedonian monarchy. It is an infinite love of God that we have heaven upon conditions which we can perform with greatest diligence: but truly the lives of men are generally such, that they do things in order to heaven, things, I say, so few, so trifling, so unworthy, that they are not proportionable to the reward of a crown of oak, or a yellow riband, the slender reward with which the Romans paid their soldiers for their extraordinary valour. True it is, that heaven is not, in a just sense of a commutation, a reward, but a gift, and an infinite favour: but yet it is not reached forth but to persons disposed by the conditions of God, which conditions when we pursue in kind, let us be very careful we do not fail of the mighty prize of our high calling, for want of degrees and just measures, the measures of zeal and a mighty love.

3. It is an office of prudence to serve God so that we may, at the same time, preserve our lives and our estates, our interest and reputation, for ourselves and our relatives, so far as they can consist together. St. Paul, in the beginning of Christianity, was careful to instruct the forwardness and zeal of the new Christians into good husbandry, and to catechize the men into good trades, and the women into useful employments, that they might not be unprofitable. For Christian religion carrying us to heaven, does it by the way of a man, and by the body it serves the soul, as by the soul it serves God; and, therefore, it endeavours to secure the body and its interest, that it may continue the opportunities of a crown, and prolong the stage in which we are to run for the mighty "prize of our salvation;" and this is that part of prudence which is the defensive and guard of a Christian in the time of persecution, and it hath in it much of duty. He that, through an indiscreet zeal, casts himself into a needless danger, hath betrayed his life to tyranny, and tempts the sin of an enemy; he loses to God the service of many years, and cuts off himself from a fair opportunity of working his salvation, in the main parts of which we shall find a long life and very many years of reason to be little enough; he betrays the interest of his relatives, which he is bound to preserve; he disables himself of making "provision for them of his own house;" and he that fails in this duty by his own fault "is worse than an infidel;" and denies the faith, by such unseasonable dying, or being undone, which by that testimony he did intend gloriously to confess; he serves the end of ambition and popular services, but not the sober ends of religion; he discourages the weak, and weakens the hands of the strong, and by upbraiding their weariness, tempts them to turn it into rashness or despair; he affrights strangers from entering into religion, while by such imprudence he shall represent it to be impossible, at the same time, to be wise and to be religious; he turns all the whole religion into frowardness of dying or beggary, leaving no space for the parts and offices of a holy life, which, in times of persecution, are infinitely necessary for the advantages of the institution. But God hath provided better things for his servants: "Quem fata cogunt, ille cum venia est miser;" "he whom God by an inevitable necessity calls to sufferance, he hath leave to be undone;" and that ruin

of his estate or loss of his life shall secure first a providence, then a crown.

At si quis ultra se malis offert volens,
Seque ipse torquet, perdere est dignus bona,
Quis nescit uti :— SEN.

“But he that invites the cruelty of a tyrant by his own follies, or the indiscretions of an insignificant and impertinent zeal, suffers as a wilful person, and enters into the portion and reward of fools.” And this is the precept of our blessed Saviour, next after my text, “Beware of men.” Use your prudence to the purposes of avoiding their snare. *Τῶν θηρίων βροτός μᾶλλον ἀνημέρος.* “Man is the most harmful of all the wild beasts.” “Ye are sent as sheep among wolves; be, therefore, wise as serpents;” when you can avoid it, suffer not men to ride over your heads, or trample you under-foot; that is the wisdom of serpents. And so must we; that is, by all just compliances, and toleration of all indifferent changes in which a duty is not destroyed, and in which we are not active, so preserve ourselves, that we might be permitted to live, and serve God, and to do advantages to religion: so purchasing time to do good in, by bending in all those flexures of fortune and condition which we cannot help, and which we do not set forward, and which we never did procure. And this is the direct meaning of St. Paul: “See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil;”^{*} that is, we are fallen into times that are troublesome, dangerous, persecuting, and afflictive; purchase as much respite as you can; buy or “redeem the time” by all honest arts, by humility, by fair carriage and sweetnesses of society, by civility and a peaceful conversation, by good words and all honest offices, by praying for your persecutors, by patient sufferance of what is unavoidable. And when the tyrant draws you forth from all these guards and retirements, and offers violence to your duty, or tempts you to do a dishonest act, or to omit an act of obligation, then come forth into the theatre, and lay your necks down to the hangman’s axe, and fear not to die the most shameful death of the cross or the gallows. For so have I known angels ascending and descending upon those ladders; and the Lord of glory suffered shame and purchased honour upon the cross. Thus we are, “to walk in wis-

dom towards them that are without, redeeming the time :”^{**} for so St. Paul renews that permission or commandment; give them no just cause of offence; with all humility, and as occasion is offered, represent their duty, and invite them sweetly to felicities and virtue, but do not, in ruder language, upbraid and reproach their baseness; and, when they are incorrigible, let them alone, lest, like cats, they run mad with the smell of delicious ointments. And, therefore, Pothinus, Bishop of Lyons, being asked by the unbaptized president, “Who was the God of Christians?” answered, *Ἐὰν ᾗς ἀξίως γινώσῃ.* “If you be disposed with real and hearty desires of learning, what you ask you shall quickly know;” but if your purpose be indirect, I shall not preach to you, to my hurt, and your no advantage. Thus the wisdom of the primitive Christians was careful not to profane the temples of the heathen, not to revile their false gods; and, when they were in duty to reprehend the follies of their religion, they chose to do it from their own writings, and as relators of their own records; they fled from the fury of a persecution, they hid themselves in caves, and wandered about in disguises, and preached in private, and celebrated their synaxes and communions in grottoes and retirements; and made it appear to all the world they were peaceable and obedient, charitable and patient, and at this price bought their time.

*Καρὸς γὰρ, ὡς περ ἀνδράσι
Μέγιστος ἔργου παντός ἐστ’ ἐπιστάτης.*

SOPH.

As knowing that, even in this sense, time was very precious, and the opportunity of giving glory to God by the offices of an excellent religion was not too dear a purchase at that rate. But then when the wolves had entered into the folds, and seized upon a lamb, the rest fled, and used all the innocent art of concealment. St. Athanasius being overtaken by his persecutors, but not known, and asked whether he saw Athanasius passing that way, pointed out forward with his finger, “Non longè abest Athanasius,” “the man is not far off;” a swift footman will easily overtake him. And St. Paul divided the counsel of his judges, and made the Pharisees his parties by a witty insinuation of his own belief of the resurrection, which was not the main question, but an incident to the matter of his accusa-

* Eph. v. 15. 16.

** Col. iv. 5.

tion. And when Plinius Secundus, in the face of a tyrant court, was pressed so invidiously to give his opinion concerning a good man in banishment, and under the disadvantage of an unjust sentence, he diverted the snare of Marcus Regulus, by referring his answer to a competent judicatory, according to the laws; being pressed again, by offering a direct answer upon a just condition, which he knew they would not accept; and, the third time, by turning the envy upon the impertinent and malicious orator; that he won great honour, the honour of a severe honesty, and a witty man, and a prudent person. The thing I have noted, because it is a good pattern to represent the arts of honest evasion, and religious, prudent honesty; which any good man may transcribe and turn into his own instances, in any equal case should occur.

For in this case, the rule is easy; if we are commanded to be "wise" and "redeem our time," that we serve God and religion, we must not use unlawful arts which set us back in the accounts of our time, no lying subterfuges, no betraying of a truth, no treachery to a good man, no insnaring of a brother, no secret renouncing of any part or proposition of our religion, no denying to confess the article when we are called to it. For when the primitive Christians had got a trick to give money for certificates that they had sacrificed to idols, though indeed they did not do it, but had corrupted the officers and ministers of state, they dishonoured their religion, and were marked with the appellative of "libellatici," "libellers;" and were excommunicated, and cast off from the society of Christians, and the hopes of heaven, till they had returned to God by a severe repentance. "Optandum est, ut, quod libenter facis, diu facere possis;" "It is good to have time long to do that which we ought to do;" but to pretend that which we dare not do, and to say we have when we have not, if we know we ought not, is to dishonour the cause and the person too; it is expressly against confession of Christ, of which St. Paul saith, "By the mouth confession is made unto salvation;" and our blessed Saviour, "He that confesseth me before men, I will confess him before my heavenly Father;" and if here he refuseth to own me, I will not own him hereafter. It is also expressly against Christian fortitude and nobleness, and against the simplicity and sincerity of our religion, and it turns prudence into

craft, and brings the devil to wait in the temple, and to minister to God; and it is a lesser kind of apostasy. And it is well that the man is tempted no farther; for, if the persecutors could not be corrupted with money, it is odds but the complying man would; and though he would, with the money, hide his shame, yet he will not, with the loss of all his estate, redeem his religion. *Αυτηρως δ' εχει, ει τοις ιουαντης τον βιον σωσω χακοις.* "Some men will lose their lives, rather than a fair estate:" and do not almost all the armies of the world (I mean those that fight in the justest causes) pretend to fight and die for their lands and liberties? and there are too many also, that will die twice, rather than be beggars once, although we all know that the second death is intolerable. Christian prudence forbids us to provoke a danger; and they were fond persons that ran to persecution, and, when the proconsul sat on the life and death, and made strict inquisition after Christians, went and offered themselves to die; and he was a fool, that, being in Portugal, ran to the priest as he elevated the host, and overthrew the mysteries, and openly defied the rites of that religion. God, when he sends a persecution, will pick out such persons whom he will have to die, and whom he will consign to banishment, and whom to poverty. In the mean time, let us do our duty when we can, and as long as we can, and with as much strictness as we can; walking *αχρηβως*, (as the apostle's phrase is,) "not prevaricating" in the least title; and then, if we can be safe with the arts of civil, innocent, inoffensive compliance, let us bless God for his permissions made to us, and his assistances in the using them. But if either we turn our zeal into the ambition of death, and the follies of an unnecessary beggary; or on the other side turn our prudence into craft and covetousness; to the first I say, that "God hath no pleasure in fools;" to the latter, "If you gain the whole world, and lose your own soul," your loss is infinite and intolerable.

SERMON XLVI.

PART II.

4. It is the office of Christian prudence so to order the affairs of our life, as that, in all

the offices of our souls and conversation, we do honour and reputation to the religion we profess. For the follies and vices of the professors give great advantages to the adversary to speak reproachfully, and do alienate the hearts, and hinder the compliance of those undetermined persons, who are apt to be persuaded, if their understandings be not prejudiced.

But as our necessary duty is bound upon us by one ligament more, in order to the honour of the cause of God, so it particularly binds us to many circumstances, adjuncts, and parts of duty, which have no other commandment but the law of prudence. There are some sects of Christians which have some one constant indisposition, which, as a character, divides them from all others, and makes them reprov'd on all hands. Some are so suspicious and ill-natured, that, if a person of a facile nature and gentle disposition fall into their hands, he is presently soured, and made morose, unpleasant, and uneasy in his conversation. Others there are, that do things so like to what themselves condemn, that they are forced to take sanctuary and labour in the mine of insignificant distinctions, to make themselves believe they are innocent; and, in the mean time, they offend all men else, and open the mouths of their adversaries to speak reproachful things, true or false (as it happens). And it requires a great wit to understand all the distinctions and devices thought of for legitimating the worshipping of images; and those people that are liberal in their excommunications, make men think they have reason to say, "their judges are proud, or self-willed, or covetous, or ill-natured people." These that are the faults of governors, and continued, are quickly derived upon the sect, and cause a disreputation to the whole society and institution. And who can think that congregation to be a true branch of the Christian, which makes it their profession to kill men to save their souls against their will, and against their understanding? who, calling themselves disciples of so meek a Master, do live like bears upon prey, and spoil, and blood? It is a huge dishonour to the sincerity of a man's purposes, to be too busy in fingering money in the matters of religion; and they that are zealous for their rights, and tame in their devotion, furious against sacrilege, and companions of drunkards, implacable against breakers of a canon, and careless

and patient enough with them that break the fifth or sixth commandments of the decalogue, tell all the world their private sense is to preserve their own interest with scruple and curiosity, and leave God to take care for his.

Thus Christ reprov'd the Pharisees for "straining at a gnat, and swallowing a camel;" the very representation of the manner and matter of fact discovers the vice by reprov'ing the folly of it. They that are factious to get a rich proselyte, and think the poor not worth saving, dishonour their zeal, and teach men to call it covetousness: and though there may be a reason of prudence to desire one more than the other, because of a bigger efficacy the example of the one may have more than the other; yet it will quickly be discovered, if it be done by secular design; and the Scripture, that did not allow the preferring of a gay man before a poor saint in the matter of place, will not be pleased, that in the matter of souls, which are all equal, there should be a faction, and design, and an acceptance of persons. Never let sins pollute our religion with arts of the world, nor offer to support the ark with unhallowed hands, nor mingle false propositions with true, nor make religion a pretence to profit or preferment, nor do things which are like a vice; neither ever speak things dishonourable of God, nor abuse thy brother for God's sake; nor be solicitous and over-busy to recover thy own little things, neither always think it fit to lose thy charity by forcing thy brother to do justice; and all those things which are the outsides and faces, the garments and most discern'd parts of religion, be sure that they be dressed according to all the circumstances of men, and by all the rules of common honesty and public reputation. Is it not a sad thing that the Jew should say the Christians worship images? or that it should become a proverb, that "the Jew spends all in his passover, the Moor in his marriage, and the Christian in his law-suits?" that what the first sacrifice to religion, and the second to public joy, we should spend in malice, covetousness, and revenge?

— *Pudet hæc opprobria nobis
Et dici potuisse, et non potuisse refelli.*

But among ourselves also we serve the devil's ends, and minister to an eternal disunion, by saying and doing things which look unhandsomely. One sort of men is superstitious, fantastical, greedy of honour,

and tenacious of propositions to fill the purse, and his religion is thought nothing but policy and opinion. Another says, "he hath a good religion," but he is the most indifferent and cold person in the world either to maintain it, or to live according to it. The one dresses the images of saints with fine clothes: the other lets the poor go naked, and disrobes the priests that minister in the religion. A third uses God worse than all this, and says of him such things that are scandalous even to an honest man, and such which would undo a good man's reputation. And a fourth, yet, endures no governor but himself, and pretends to set up Christ, and make himself his lieutenant. And a fifth hates all government. And from all this it comes to pass, that it is hard for a man to choose his side; and he that chooses wisest, takes that which hath in it least hurt: but some he must endure, or live without communion; and every church of one denomination is, or hath been, too incurious of preventing infamy or disreputation to their confessions.

One thing I desire should be observed, that here the question being concerning prudence, and the matter of doing reputation to our religion, it is not enough to say, we can with learning justify all that we do, and make all whole with three or four distinctions: for possibly that man that went to visit the Corinthian Lais, if he had been asked why he dishonoured himself with so unhandsome an entrance, might find an excuse to legitimate his act, or at least to make himself believe well of his own person; but he that intends to do himself honour, must take care that he be not suspected, that he give no occasion of reproachful language; for fame and honour is a nice thing, tender as a woman's chastity, or like the face of the purest mirror, which a foul breath, or an unwholesome air, or a watery eye can sully, and the beauty is lost, although it be not dashed in pieces. When a man, or a sect, is put to answer for themselves in the matter of reputation, they, with their distinctions, wipe the glass, and at last can do nothing but make it appear it was not broken; but their very abstersion and laborious excuses confess it was foul and faulty. We must know that all sorts of men, and all sects of Christians, have not only the mistakes of men and their prejudices to contest withal, but the calumnies and aggravation of devils; and, therefore, it will much ease our account of doomsday, if we are now so prudent that men will not be offended here,

nor the devils furnished with a libel in the day of our great account.

To this rule appertains, that we be curious in observing the circumstances of men, and satisfying all their reasonable expectations, and doing things at that rate of charity and religion, which they are taught to be prescribed in the institution. There are some things which are indecencies rather than sins, such which may become a just heathen, but not a holy Christian; a man of the world, but not a man "professing godliness:" because when the greatness of the man, or the excellency of the law, hath engaged us upon great severity or an exemplary virtue, whatsoever is less than it, renders the man unworthy of the religion, or the religion unworthy its fame. Men think themselves abused, and, therefore, return shame for payment. We never read of an apostle that went to law; and it is but reasonable to expect, that, of all men in the world, Christians should not be such fighting people, and clergymen should not command armies, and kings should not be drunk, and subjects should not strike princes for justice, and an old man should not be youthful in talk or in his habit, and women should not swear, and great men should not lie, and a poor man should not oppress; for, besides the sin of some of them, there is an indecency in all of them; and by being contrary to the end of an office, or to the reputation of a state, or the sobrieties of a graver or sublimed person, they asperse the religion as insufficient to keep the persons within the bounds of fame and common reputation.

But, above all things, those sects of Christians whose professed doctrine brings destruction and diminution to government, give the most intolerable scandal and dishonour to the institution; and it had been impossible that Christianity should have prevailed over the wisdom and power of the Greeks and Romans, if it had not been humble to superiors, patient of injuries, charitable to the needy, a great exactor of obedience to kings, even to heathens, that they might be won and convinced; and to persecutors, that they might be sweetened in their anger, or upbraided for their cruel injustice; for so doth the humble vine creep at the foot of an oak, and leans upon its lowest base, and begs shade and protection, and leave to grow under its branches, and to give and take mutual refreshment, and pay a friendly influence for a mighty patronage; and they grow and dwell together, and are the most

remarkable of friends and married pairs of all the leafy nation. Religion of itself is soft, easy, and defenceless; and God hath made it grow up with empires, and lean upon the arms of kings, and it cannot well grow alone; and if it shall, like the ivy, suck the heart of the oak, upon whose body it grew and was supported, it will be pulled down from its usurped eminence, and fire and shame shall be its portion. We cannot complain, if princes arm against those Christians, who, if they were suffered to preach, will disarm the princes: and it will be hard to persuade that kings are bound to protect and nourish those that will prove ministers of their own exauration; and no prince can have juster reason to forbid, nor any man have greater reason to deny, communion to a family, than when they go about to destroy the power of the one, or corrupt the duty of the other. The particulars of this rule are very many: I shall only instance in one more, because it is of great concernment to the public interest of Christendom.

There are some persons whose religion is hugely disgraced, because they change their propositions, according as their temporal necessities or advantages do return. They that, in their weakness and beginning, cry out against all violence as against persecution, and from being sufferers swell up till they be prosperous, and from thence to power, and at last to tyranny, and then suffer none but themselves, and trip up those feet which they humbly kissed, that themselves should not be trampled upon;—these men tell all the world, that, at first, they were pusillanimous, or at last outrageous; that their doctrine at first served their fear, and at last served their rage, and that they did not at all intend to serve God: and then who shall believe them in any thing else? Thus some men declaim against the faults of governors, that themselves may govern; and when the power is in their hands, what was a fault in others, is in them necessity; as if a sin could be hallowed for coming into their hands. Some Greeks, at Florence, subscribed the article of purgatory, and condemned it in their own diocesses: and the king's supremacy in causes ecclesiastical was earnestly defended against the pretences of the bishop of Rome; and yet when he was thrust out, some men were, and are, violent to submit the king to their consistories; as if he were supreme in defiance of the pope, and yet not supreme over his

own clergy. These articles are managed too suspiciously.

Omnia si perdas, famam servare memento:

“You lose all the advantages to your cause, if you lose your reputation.”

5. It is a duty also of Christian prudence, that the teachers of others by authority, or reprovers of their vices by charity, should also make their persons apt to do it without objection.

Loripedem rectus derideat, Æthiopem albus.—

Juv.

“No man can endure the Gracchi preaching against sedition, nor Verres prating against thievery,” or Milo against homicide: and if Herod had made an oration of humility, or Antiochus of mercy, men would have thought it had been a design to evil purposes. He that means to gain a soul, must not make his sermon an ostentation of his eloquence, but the law of his own life. If a grammarian should speak solecisms, or a musician sing like a bittern, he becomes ridiculous for offending in the faculty he professes. So it is in them who minister to the conversion of souls: if they fail in their own life, when they profess to instruct another, they are defective in their proper part, and are unskilful to all their purposes; and the cardinal of Crema did, with ill success, tempt the English priests to quit their chaste marriages, when himself was deprehended in unchaste embraces. For good counsel seems to be unhallowed, when it is reached forth by an impure hand; and he can ill be believed by another, whose life so confutes his rules, that it is plain he does not believe himself. Those churches that are zealous for souls, must send into their ministries men so innocent, that evil persons may have no excuse to be any longer vicious. When Gorgias went about to persuade the Greeks to be at peace, he had eloquence enough to do advantage to his cause, and reason enough to press it; but Melanthius was glad to put him off, by telling him that he was not fit to persuade peace, who could not agree at home with his wife, nor make his wife agree with her maid; and he that could not make peace between three single persons, was unapt to prevail for the reuniting fourteen or fifteen commonwealths. And this thing St. Paul remarks, by enjoining that a bishop should be chosen such a one as knew well to rule his own house; or else he is not fit to rule the church of God. And when thou persuadest thy brother to be

chaste, let him not deride thee for thy intemperance; and it will ill become thee to be severe against an idle servant, if thou thyself beest useless to the public; and every notorious vice is infinitely against the spirit of government, and "depresses the man to an evenness" with common persons: "Facinus quos inquinat æquat." To reprove belongs to a superior; and as innocence gives a man advantage over his brother, giving him an artificial and adventitious authority; so the follies and scandals of a public and governing man, destroy the efficacy of that authority that is just and natural. Now this is directly an office of Christian prudence, that good offices and great authority become not ineffective by ill conduct.

Hither also it appertains, that in public or private reproofs we observe circumstances of time,—of place,—of person,—of disposition. The vices of a king are not to be opened publicly, and princes must not be reprehended as a man reproves his servant; but by categorical propositions, by abstracted declamations, by reprehensions of a crime in its single nature, in private, with humility and arts of insinuation; and it is against Christian prudence, not only to use a prince or great personage with common language, but it is as great an imprudence to pretend, for such a rudeness, the examples of the prophets in the Old Testament. For their case was extraordinary, their calling peculiar, their commission special, their spirit miraculous, their authority great as to that single mission; they were like thunder or the trump of God, sent to do that office plainly, for the doing of which in that manner, God had given no commission to any ordinary minister. And therefore we never find that the priests did use that freedom which the prophets were commanded to use, whose very words being put into their mouths, it was not to be esteemed a human act, or a lawful manner of doing an ordinary office; neither could it become a precedent to them, whose authority is precarious and without coercion, whose spirit is allayed with Christian graces and duties of humility, whose words are not prescribed, but left to the conduct of prudence, as it is to be advised by public necessities and private circumstances, in ages where all things are so ordered, that what was fit and pious amongst the old Jews, would be uncivil and intolerable to the latter Christians. He also that reproves a vice, should also treat the persons with honour and civilities, and by fair opinions

and sweet addresses place the man in the regions of modesty, and the confines of grace, and the fringes of repentance. For some men are more restrained by an imperfect feared shame, so long as they think there is a reserve of reputation which they may secure, than they can be with all the furious declamations of the world, when themselves are represented ugly and odious, full of shame, and actually punished with the worst of temporal evils, beyond which he fears not here to suffer, and from whence, because he knows it will be hard for him to be redeemed by an after-game of reputation, it makes him desperate and incorrigible by fraternal correction.

A zealous man hath not done his duty, when he calls his brother "drunkard" and "beast;" and he may better do it by telling him he is a man, and sealed with God's spirit, and honoured with the title of a Christian, and is, or ought to be, reputed as a discreet person by his friends, and a governor of a family, or a guide in his country, or an example to many, and that it is huge pity so many excellent things should be sullied and allayed with what is so much below all this. Then a reprover does his duty when he is severe against the vice, and charitable to the man, and careful of his reputation, and sorry for his real dishonour, and observant of his circumstances, and watchful to surprise his affections and resolutions there, where they are most tender and most tenable: and men will not be in love with virtue, whither they are forced with rudeness and incivilities; but they love to dwell there whither they are invited friendly, and where they are treated civilly, and feasted liberally, and led by the hand and the eye to honour and felicity.

6. It is a duty of Christian prudence not to suffer our souls to walk alone, unguarded, unguided, and more single than in other actions and interests of our lives, which are of less concernment. "Væ soli et singulari," said the wise man: "Woe to him that is alone." And if we consider, how much God hath done to secure our souls, and after all that, how many ways there are for a man's soul to miscarry, we should think it very necessary to call to a spiritual man to take us by the hand to walk in the ways of God, and to lead us in all the regions of duty, and through the labyrinths of danger. For God, who best loves and best knows how to value our soul, set a price no less upon it than the life-

blood of his holy Son; he hath treated it with variety of usages, according as the world had new guises and new necessities; he abates it with punishment, to make us avoid greater; he shortened our life, that we might live for ever; he turns sickness into virtue; he brings good out of evil, he turns enmities to advantages, our very sins into repentances and stricter walking; he defeats all the follies of men and all the arts of the devil, and lays snares and uses violence to secure obedience; he sends prophets and priests to invite us and to threaten us to felicities; he restrains us with laws, and he bridles us with honour and shame, reputation and society, friends and foes; he lays hold on us by the instruments of all the passions; he is enough to fill our love; he satisfies our hope; he affrights us with fear; he gives us part of our reward in hand, and entertains all our faculties with the promises of an infinite and glorious portion; he curbs our affections; he directs our wills; he instructs our understandings with scriptures, with perpetual sermons, with good books, with frequent discourses, with particular observations and great experience, with accidents and judgments, with rare events of providence and miracles; he sends his angels to be our guard, and to place us in opportunities of virtue, and takes us off from ill company and places of danger, to set us near to good examples; he gives us his Holy Spirit, and he becomes to us a principle of a mighty grace, descending upon us in great variety and undiscerned events, besides all those parts of it which men have reduced to a method and an art: and, after all this, he forgives us infinite irregularities, and spares us every day, and still expects, and passes by, and waits all our days, still watching to do us good, and to save that soul which he knows is so precious, one of the chiefest of the works of God, and an image of Divinity. Now from all these arts and mercies of God, besides that we have infinite reason to adore his goodness, we have also a demonstration that we ought to do all that possibly we can, and extend all our faculties, and watch all our opportunities, and take in all assistances, to secure the interest of our soul, for which God is pleased to take such care, and use so many arts for its security. If it were not highly worth it, God would not do it: if it were not all of it necessary, God would not do it. But if it be worth it, and all of it be necessary, why should we not labour in order to

this great end? If it be worth so much to God, it is so much more to us: for if we perish, his felicity is undisturbed; but we are undone, infinitely undone. It is, therefore, worth taking in a spiritual guide; so far we are gone.

But because we are in the question of prudence, we must consider whether it be necessary to do so: for every man thinks himself wise enough as to the conduct of his soul, and managing of his eternal interest; and divinity is every man's trade, and the scriptures speak our own language, and the commandments are few and plain, and the laws are the measure of justice; and if I say my prayers, and pay my debts, my duty is soon summed up: and thus we usually make our accounts for eternity, and at this rate only take care for heaven. But let a man be questioned for a portion of his estate, or have his life shaken with diseases; then it will not be enough to employ one agent, or to send for a good woman to minister a potion of the juices of her country-garden; but the ablest lawyers, and the skilfullest physicians, and the advice of friends, and huge caution and diligent attendances, and a curious watching concerning all the accidents and little passages of our disease. And truly a man's life and health is worth all that and much more, and, in many cases, it needs it all.

But then is the soul the only safe and the only trifling thing about us? Are not there a thousand dangers, and ten thousand difficulties, and innumerable possibilities of a misadventure? Are not all the congregations in the world divided in their doctrines, and all of them call their own way necessary, and most of them call all the rest damnable? We had need of a wise instructor and a prudent choice, at our first entrance and election of our side; and when we are well in the matter of faith for its object and institution, all the evils of myself, and all the evils of the church, and all the good that happens to evil men, every day of danger, the periods of sickness, and the day of death, are days of tempest and storm, and our faith will suffer shipwreck, unless it be strong, and supported and directed. But who shall guide the vessel, when a stormy passion or a violent imagination transports the man? Who shall awaken his reason, and charm his passion into slumber and instruction? How shall a man make his fears confident, and allay his confidence with fear, and make the allay with just pro-

portions, and steer evenly between the extremes, or call upon his sleeping purposes, or actuate his choices, or bind him to reason in all his wanderings and ignorances, in his passions and mistakes? For suppose the man of great skill and great learning in the ways of religion; yet if he be abused by accident or by his own will, who shall then judge his cases of conscience, and awaken his duty, and renew his holy principle, and actuate his spiritual powers? for physicians that prescribe to others, do not minister to themselves in cases of danger and violent sicknesses; and in matter of distemperature we shall not find that books alone will do all the work of a spiritual physician, more than of a natural. I will not go about to increase the dangers and difficulties of the soul, to represent the assistance of a spiritual man to be necessary. But of this I am sure, our not understanding and our not considering our soul, makes us first to neglect, and then many times to lose it. But is not every man an unequal judge in his own case? and, therefore, the wisdom of God and the laws hath appointed tribunals, and judges, and arbitrators. And that men are partial in the matter of souls, it is infinitely certain, because amongst those millions of souls that perish, not one in ten thousand but believes himself in a good condition; and all the sects of Christians think they are in the right, and few are patient to inquire whether they be or no. Then add to this, that the questions of souls, being clothed with circumstances of matter and particular contingency, are or may be infinite; and most men are so unfortunate, that they have so entangled their cases of conscience, that there where they have done something good, it may be they have mingled half a dozen evils: and, when interests are confounded, and governments altered, and power strives with right, and insensibly passes into right, and duty to God would fain be reconciled with duty to our relatives, will it not be more than necessary, that we should have some one that we may inquire of after the way to heaven, which is now made intricate by our follies and inevitable accidents? But by what instrument shall men alone, and in their own cases, be able to discern the spirit of truth from the spirit of that illusion, just confidence from presumption, fear from pusillanimity? Are not all the things and assistances in the world little enough to defend us against pleasure and pain, the two great fountains of temptation? Is it

not harder to cure a lust than to cure a fever? And are not the deceptions and follies of men, and the arts of the devil, and enticements of the world, and the deceptions of a man's own heart, and the evils of sin, more evil and more numerous than the sicknesses and diseases of any one man? And if a man perishes in his soul, is it not infinitely more sad than if he could rise from his grave and die a thousand deaths over? Thus we are advanced a second step in this prudential motive: God used many arts to secure our soul's interest; and there are infinite dangers and infinite ways of miscarriage in the soul's interest; and, therefore, there is great necessity God should do all those mercies of security, and that we should do all the under-ministries we can in this great work.

But what advantage shall we receive by a spiritual guide? Much, every way. For this is the way that God hath appointed, who, in every age, hath sent a succession of spiritual persons, whose office is to minister in holy things, and to be "stewards of God's household," "shepherds of the flock," "dispensers of the mysteries," under-mediators, and ministers of prayer; preachers of the law, expounders of questions, monitors of duty, conveyances of blessings; and that which is a good discourse in the mouth of another man, is, from them, an ordinance of God: and besides its natural efficacy and persuasion, it prevails by the way of blessing, by the reverence of his person, by Divine institution, by the excellency of order, by the advantages of opinion and assistances of reputation, by the influence of the Spirit, who is the president of such ministries, and who is appointed to all Christians, according to the dispensation that is appointed to them; to the people, in their obedience and frequenting of the ordinance; to the priest, in his ministry and public and private offices. To which also I add this consideration, that as the holy sacraments are hugely effective to spiritual purposes, not only because they convey a blessing to the worthy suscipi-ents, but because men cannot be worthy suscipi-ents unless they do many excellent acts of virtue, in order to a previous disposition; so that in the whole conjunction and transaction of affairs, there is good done by way of proper efficacy and Divine blessing: so it is in following the conduct of a spiritual man, and consulting with him in the matter of our souls; we cannot do it unless we consider our souls, and make religion

our business, and examine our present state, and consider concerning our danger, and watch and design for our advantages, which things of themselves will set a man much forwarder in the way of godliness: besides that naturally every man will less dare to act a sin for which he knows he shall feel a present shame in his discoveries made to the spiritual guide, the man that is made the witness of his conversation: *Τοὺς ἐκ Δεὸς γὰρ εἰκός ἐστι πάνθ' ὁρᾶν** "Holy men ought to know all things from God," and that relate to God, in order to the conduct of souls. And there is nothing to be said against this, if we do not suffer the devil in this affair to abuse us, as he does many people, in their opinions, teaching men to suspect there is a design and a snake under the plantain. But so may they suspect kings when they command obedience, or the Levites when they read the law of tithes, or parents when they teach their children temperance, or tutors when they watch their charge. However, it is better to venture the worst of the design, than to lose the best of the assistance; and he that guides himself, hath much work and much danger; but he that is under the conduct of another, his work is easy, little, and secure; it is nothing but diligence and obedience: and though it be a hard thing to rule well, yet nothing is easier than to follow and be obedient.

SERMON XLVII.

PART III.

7. As it is a part of Christian prudence to take into the conduct of our souls a spiritual man for a guide; so it is also of great concernment that we be prudent in the choice of him, whom we are to trust in so great an interest.

Concerning which it will be impossible to give characters and significations particular enough to enable a choice, without the interval-assistances of prayer, experience, and the grace of God. He that describes a man, can tell you the colour of his hair, his stature, and proportion, and describe some general lines enough to distinguish him from a Cyclops or a Saracen; but when you chance to see the man, you will dis-

cover figures or little features, of which the description had produced in you no fantasy or expectation. And in the exterior significations of a sect, there are more resemblances than in men's faces, and greater uncertainty in the signs; and what is faulty strives so craftily to act the true and proper images of things; and the more they are defective in circumstances, the more curious they are in forms; and they also use such arts of gaining proselytes, which are of most advantage towards an effect, and, therefore, such which the true Christian ought to pursue, and the apostles actually did; and they strive to follow their patterns in arts of persuasion, not only because they would seem like them, but because they can have none so good, so effective to their purposes; that it follows, that it is not more a duty to take care that we be not corrupted with false teachers, than that we be not abused with false signs: for we as well find a good man teaching a false proposition, as a good cause managed by ill men; and a holy cause is not always dressed with healthful symptoms, nor is there a cross always set upon the doors of those congregations, who are infected with the plague of heresy.

When St. John was to separate false teachers from true, he took no other course but to mark the doctrine which was of God, and that should be the mark of cognizance to distinguish right shepherds from robbers and invaders: "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God; he that denieth it, is not of God." By this, he bids his scholars to avoid the present sects of Ebion, Cerinthus, Simon Magus, and such other persons as denied that Christ was at all before he came, or that he came really in the flesh and proper humanity. This is a clear note; and they that conversed with St. John, or believed his doctrine, were sufficiently instructed in the present questions. But this note will signify nothing to us: for all sects of Christians "confess Jesus Christ come in the flesh," and the following sects did avoid that rock, over which a great apostle had hung out so plain a lantern.

In the following ages of the Church men have been so curious to signify misbelievers, that they have invented and observed some signs, which, indeed, in some cases, were true, real appendages of false believers; but yet such which were also, or might be, common to them with good men and members of the Catholic church. Some few I shall

* Sophocl.

remark, and give a short account of them, that by removing the uncertain, we may fix our inquiries, and direct them by certain significations, lest this art of prudence turn into folly and faction, error and secular design.

1. Some men distinguish error from truth by calling their adversaries' doctrine, "new and of yesterday." And certainly this is a good sign, if it be rightly applied; for since all Christian doctrine is that which Christ taught his Church, and the Spirit enlarged or expounded, and the apostles delivered; we are to begin the Christian era for our faith, and parts of religion by the period of their preaching; our account begins then, and whatsoever is contrary to what they taught is new and false, and whatsoever is besides what they taught, is no part of our religion;—and then no man can be prejudiced for believing it or not;—and if it be adopted into the confessions of the Church, the proposition is always so uncertain, that it is not to be admitted into the faith; and therefore, if it be old in respect of our days, it is not, therefore, necessary to be believed; if it be new it may be received into opinion according to its probability, and no sects nor interests are to be divided upon such accounts. This only I desire to be observed, that when a truth returns from banishment by a "postliminium," if it was from the first, though the holy fire hath been buried, or the river ran under ground, yet we do not call that new; since newness is not to be accounted of by a proportion to our short-lived memories, or to the broken records and fragments of story left after the inundation of barbarism, and war, and change of kingdoms, and corruption of authors; but, by its relation to the fountain of our truths, and the birth of our religion under our fathers in Christ, the holy apostles and disciples. A camel was a new thing to them that saw it in the fable, but yet it was created as soon as a cow or the domestic creatures; and some people are apt to call every thing new which they never heard of before, as if all religion were to be measured by the standards of their observation or country customs. Whatsoever was not taught by Christ or his apostles, though it came in by Papias or Dionysius, by Arius or Liberius, is certainly new as to our account; and whatsoever is taught to us by the doctors of the present age, if it can show its test from the beginning of our period for revelation, is not to be called new, though

it be pressed with a new zeal, and discoursed of by unheard-of arguments; that is, though men be ignorant, and need to learn it, yet it is not therefore new or unnecessary.

2. Some would have false teachers sufficiently signified by a name, or the owning of a private appellation, as of Papist, Lutheran, Calvinist, Zuinglian, Socinian; and think it enough to denominate them not of Christ, if they are called by the name of a man. And, indeed, the thing is in itself ill: but then, if by this mark we shall esteem false teachers sufficiently signified, we must follow no man, no Church, nor no communion; for all are, by their adversaries, marked with an appellation of separation and singularity, and yet themselves are tenacious of a good name, such as they choose, or such as is permitted to them by fame, and the people, and a natural necessity of making a distinction. Thus the Donatists called themselves "the Flock of God," and the Novatians called the Catholics "Traditors," and the Eustathians called themselves "Catholics;" and the worshippers of images made "Inconoclast" to be a name of scorn; and men made names as they listed, or as the fate of the market went. And if a doctor preaches a doctrine which another man likes not, but preaches the contradictory, he that consents, and he that refuses, have each of them a teacher; by whose name, if they please to wrangle, they may be signified. It was so in the Corinthian church, with this only difference, that they divided themselves by names which signified the same religion; "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I am of Peter, and I of Christ." These apostles were ministers of Christ, and so does every teacher, new or old, among the Christians pretend himself to be. Let that, therefore, be examined; if he ministers to the truth of Christ and the religion of his Master, let him be entertained a servant of the Lord; but, if an appellation be taken from his name, there is a faction commenced in it, and there is a fault in the man, if there be none in the doctrine; but that the doctrine be true or false, to be received or to be rejected, because of the name, is accidental and extrinsic, and, therefore, not to be determined by this sign.

3. Amongst some men a sect is sufficiently thought to be reproved if it subdivides and breaks into little fractions, or changes its own opinions. Indeed, if it declines its own doctrine, no man hath reason

to believe them upon their word, or to take them upon the stock of reputation, which (themselves being judges) they have forfeited and renounced in the changing that, which at first they obtruded passionately. And, therefore, in this case there is nothing to be done, but to believe the men so far as they have reason to believe themselves; that is, to consider when they prove what they say: and they that are able to do so, are not persons in danger to be seduced by a bare authority unless they list themselves; for others that sink under an unavoidable prejudice, God will take care for them, if they be good people, and their case shall be considered by and by. But for the other part of the sign, when men fall out among themselves for other interests or opinions, it is no argument that they are in an error concerning that doctrine, which they all unitedly teach or condemn respectively; but it hath in it some probability, that their union is a testimony of truth, as certainly as that their fractions are a testimony of their zeal, or honesty, or weakness,—as it happens. And if we Christians be too decretory in this instance, it will be hard for any of us to keep a Jew from making use of it against the whole religion, which, from the days of the apostles, hath been rent into innumerable sects and under-sects, springing from mistake or interest, from the arts of the devil or the weakness of man. But from hence we may make an advantage in the way of prudence, and become sure that all that doctrine is certainly true, in which the generality of Christians who are divided in many things, yet do constantly agree; and that that doctrine is also sufficient, since it is certain, that because in all communions and churches there are some very good men, that do all their duty to the getting of truth, God will not fail in any thing that is necessary to them, that honestly and heartily desire to obtain it; and, therefore, if they rest in the heartiness of that, and live accordingly, and superinduce nothing to the destruction of that, they have nothing to do but to rely upon God's goodness, and if they perish, it is certain they cannot help it; and that is demonstration enough that they cannot perish, considering the justice and goodness of our Lord and Judge.

4. Whoever break the bands of a society or communion, and go out from that congregation in whose confession they are baptized, do an intolerable scandal to their doctrine and persons, and give suspicious men

reason to decline their assemblies, and not to choose them at all for any thing of their authority or outward circumstances. And St. Paul bids the Romans to "mark them that cause divisions and offences;" but the following words make their caution prudent and practicable, "contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them:" they that recede from the doctrine which they have learned, *they* cause the offence, and if they also obtrude this upon their congregations, they also make the division. For it is certain, if we receive any doctrine contrary to what Christ gave and the apostles taught, for the authority of any man, then we "call men master," and leave "our Master which is in heaven;" and in that case we must separate from the congregation, and adhere to Christ. But this is not to be done, unless the case be evident and notorious. But as it is hard that the public doctrine of a church should be rifted, and misunderstood, and reproved, and rejected, by any of her wilful or ignorant sons and daughters; so it is also as hard, that they should be bound not to see, when the case is plain and evident. There may be mischiefs on both sides; but the former sort of evils men may avoid if they will; for they may be humble and modest, and entertain better opinions of their superiors than of themselves, and in doubtful things give them the honour of a just opinion; and if they do not do so, that evil will be their own private; for, that it become not public, the king and the bishop are to take care. But for the latter sort of evil, it will certainly become universal; if, I say, an authoritative false doctrine be imposed, and is to be accepted accordingly; for then all men shall be bound to profess against their conscience, that is, "with their mouths not to confess unto salvation, what with their hearts they believe unto righteousness." The best way of remedying both the evils is, that governors lay no burden of doctrines or laws but what are necessary or very profitable; and that inferiors do not contend for things unnecessary, nor call any thing necessary that is not; till then there will be evils on both sides. And although the governors are to carry the question in the point of law, reputation, and public government, yet as to God's judicature they will bear the bigger load, who in his right do him an injury, and by the impresses of his authority destroy his truth. But, in this case also, although separating by a suspicious thing, and intolerable,

unless it be when a sin is imposed; yet to separate is also accidental to truth, for some men separate with reason, some men against reason. Therefore, here all the certainty that is in the thing, is when the truth is secured, and all the security to the men will be in the humility of their persons, and the heartiness and simplicity of their intention, and diligence of inquiry. The church of England had reason to separate from the confession and practices of Rome in many particulars; and yet if her children separate from her, they may be unreasonable and impious.

5. The ways of direction which we have from Holy Scripture, to distinguish the false apostles from true, are taken from their doctrine, or their lives. That of the doctrine is the more sure way, if we can hit upon it; but that also is the thing signified, and needs to have other signs. St. John and St. Paul took this way, for they were able to do it infallibly. "All that confess Jesus incarnate, are of God," said St. John. Those men that deny it are heretics; avoid them. And St. Paul bids to "observe them that cause divisions and offences against the doctrine delivered;" them also avoid that do so. And we might do so as easily as they, if the world would only make their "depositum" that doctrine which they delivered to all men, that is, "the creed;" and superinduce nothing else, but suffer Christian faith to rest in its own perfect simplicity, unmingled with arts, and opinions, and interests. This course is plain and easy, and I will not intricate it with more words, but leave it directly in its own truth and certainty, with this only direction, that when we are to choose our doctrine or our side, we take that which is in the plain unexpounded words of Scripture; for in that only our religion can consist. Secondly, choose that which is most advantageous to a holy life, to the proper graces of a Christian, to humility, to charity, to forgiveness and alms, to obedience, and complying with governments, to the honour of God and the exaltation of his attributes, and to the conservation and advantages of the public societies of men; and this last St. Paul directs, "Let us be careful to maintain good works for necessary uses:" for he that heartily pursues these proportions, cannot be an ill man, though he were accidentally, and in the particular explications, deceived.

6. But, because this is an act of wisdom rather than prudence, and supposes science

or knowledge rather than experience, therefore, it concerns the prudence of a Christian to observe the practice and the rules of practice, their lives and pretences, the designs and colours, the arts of conduct, and gaining proselytes, which their doctors and catechists do use in order to their purposes, and in their ministry about souls. For although many signs are uncertain, yet some are infallible, and some are highly probable.

7. Therefore, those teachers that pretend to be guided by a private spirit, are certainly false doctors. I remember what Simmias in Plutarch tells concerning Socrates, that if he heard any man say he saw a divine vision, he presently esteemed him vain and proud; but, if he pretended only to have heard a voice, or the word of God, he listened to that religiously, and would inquire of him with curiosity. There was some reason in his fancy; for God does not communicate himself by the eye to men, but by the ear: "Ye saw no figure, but ye heard a voice," said Moses to the people concerning God. And, therefore, if any man pretends to speak the word of God, we will inquire concerning it; the man may the better be heard, because he may be certainly reprov'd if he speaks amiss; but, if he pretends to visions and revelations, to a private spirit, and a mission extraordinary, the man is proud and unlearned, vicious and impudent. "No scripture is of private interpretation," saith St. Peter; that is, "private emission" or "declaration." God's words were delivered indeed by single men, but such as were publicly designed prophets, remarked with a known character, approved of by the high priest and Sanhedrim, endued with a public spirit, and his doctrines were always agreeable to the other scriptures. But, if any man pretends now to the Spirit, either it must be a private or public. If it be private, it can but be useful to himself alone, and it may cozen him too, if it be not assisted by the spirit of a public man. But if it be a public spirit, it must enter in at the public door of ministries and Divine ordinances, of God's grace and man's endeavour: it must be subject to the prophets; it is discernible and judicable by them, and, therefore, may be rejected, and then it must pretend no longer. For he that will pretend to an extraordinary spirit, and refuses to be tried by the ordinary ways, must either prophesy or work miracles, or must have a voice from heaven to give him testimony. The prophets in the Old Testament, and the apostles in the

New, and Christ between both, had no other way of extraordinary probation; and they that pretend to any thing extraordinary, cannot, ought not to be believed, unless they have something more than their own word: "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true," said Truth itself, our blessed Lord. But, secondly, they that intend to teach by an extraordinary spirit, if they pretend to teach according to Scripture, must be examined by the measures of Scripture, and then their extraordinary must be judged by the ordinary spirit, and stands or falls by the rules of every good man's religion and public government; and then we are well enough. But if they speak any thing against Scripture, it is the spirit of antichrist, and the spirit of the devil: "For if an angel from heaven" (he certainly is a spirit) "preach any other doctrine, let him be accursed."

But this pretence of a single and extraordinary spirit is nothing else but the spirit of pride, error, and delusion; a snare to catch easy and credulous souls, which are willing to die for a gay word and a distorted face; it is the parent of folly and giddy doctrine, impossible to be proved, and, therefore, useless to all purposes of religion, reason, or sober counsels; it is like an invisible colour, or music without a sound; it is, and indeed is so intended to be, a direct overthrow of order, and government, and public ministries: it is bold to say any thing, and resolved to prove nothing; it imposes upon willing people after the same manner that oracles and the lying demons did of old time, abusing men, not by proper efficacy of its own, but because the men love to be abused: it is a great disparagement to the sufficiency of Scripture, and asperses the Divine Providence, for giving so many ages of the church an imperfect religion, expressly against the truth of their words, who said, they "had declared the whole truth of God," and "told all the will of God:" and it is an affront to the Spirit of God, the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge, of order, and public ministries. But the will furnishes out malice, and the understanding sends out levity, and they marry, and produce a fantastic dream; and the daughter, sucking wind instead of "the milk of the word," grows up to madness, and the spirit of reprobation. Besides all this, an extraordinary spirit is extremely unnecessary; and God does not give emissions and miracles from heaven to no purpose, and to no necessities of his church; for the supplying of which he hath given apostles

and evangelists, prophets and pastors, bishops and priests, the spirit of ordination and the spirit of instruction, catechists and teachers, arts and sciences, scriptures, and a constant succession of expositors, the testimony of churches, and a constant line of tradition, or delivery of apostolical doctrine, in all things necessary to salvation. And, after all this, to have a fungus arise from the belly of mud and darkness, and nourish a glow-worm, that shall challenge to outshine the lantern of God's word, and all the candles which God set upon a hill, and all that the Spirit hath set upon the candlesticks, and all the stars of Christ's right hand, is to annul all the excellent, established, orderly, and certain effects of the Spirit of God, and to worship the false fires of the night. He, therefore, that will follow a guide that leads him by an extraordinary spirit, shall go an extraordinary way, and have a strange fortune, and a singular religion, and a portion by himself, a great way off from the common inheritance of the saints, who are all led by the Spirit of God, and have one heart and one mind, one faith and one hope, the same baptism, and the helps of the ministry, leading them to the common country, which is the portion of all that are the sons of adoption, consigned by the Spirit of God, the earnest of their inheritance.

Concerning the pretence of a private spirit for interpretation of the confessed doctrine of God, (the Holy Scriptures,) it will not so easily come into this question of choosing our spiritual guides; because every person that can be a candidate in this office, that can be chosen to guide others, must be a public man, that is, of a holy calling, sanctified or separate publicly to the office; and then to interpret is part of his calling and employment, and to do so is the work of a public spirit; he is ordained and designed, he is commanded and enabled to do it: and in this there is no other caution to be interposed, but that the more public a man is, of the more authority his interpretation is; and he comes nearer to a law of order, and in the matter of government is to be observed: but the more holy and the more learned the man is, his interpretation in matter of question is more likely to be true; and, though less to be pressed as to the public confession, yet it may be more effective to a private persuasion, provided it be done without scandal, or lessening the authority, or disparagement to the more public person.

8. Those are to be suspected for evil guides,

who, to get authority among the people, pretend a great zeal, and use a bold liberty in reproving princes and governors, nobility and prelates; for such homilies cannot be the effects of a holy religion, which lay a snare for authority, and undermine power, and discontent the people, and make them bold against kings, and immodest in their own stations, and trouble the government. Such men may speak a truth, or teach a true doctrine; for every such design does not unhallow the truth of God: but they take some truths, and force them to minister to an evil end. But, therefore, mingle not in the communities of such men; for they will make it a part of your religion, to prosecute that end openly, which they, by arts of the tempter, have insinuated privately.

But if ever you enter into the seats of those doctors that speak reproachfully of their superiors, or detract from government, or love to curse the king in their heart, or slander him with their mouths, or disgrace their person, bless yourself and retire quickly; for there dwells the plague, but the Spirit of God is not president of the assembly. And, therefore, you shall observe in all the characters which the blessed apostles of our Lord made for describing and avoiding societies of heretics, false guides, and bringers in of strange doctrines,—still they reckon treason and rebellion. So St. Paul: “In the last day perilous times shall come; then men shall have the form of godliness, and deny the power of it; they shall be traitors, heady, highminded;”* that is the characteristic note. So St. Peter: “The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: but chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government; presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.”†—The same also is recorded and observed by St. Jude: “Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.”‡ These three testimonies are but the declaration of one great contingency; they are the same prophecy, declared by three apostolical men that had the gift of prophecy; and by this character the Holy Ghost in all ages hath given us caution to avoid such assemblies, where the speaking and ruling man shall be

the canker of government, and a preacher of sedition, who shall either ungird the prince’s sword, or unloose the button of their mantle.

9. But the apostles in all these prophecies have remarked lust to be the inseparable companion of these rebel prophets: “They are filthy dreamers, they defile the flesh,” so St. Jude; “They walk after the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness,” so St. Peter; “They are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, incontinent and sensual,” so St. Paul. And by this part of the character, as the apostles remarked the Nicolaitans, the Gnostics, the Carpocratians, and all their impure branches, which began in their days, and multiplied after their deaths; so they prophetically did fore-signify all such sects to be avoided, who, to catch silly women laden with sins, preach doctrines of ease and licentiousness, apt to countenance and encourage vile things, and not apt to restrain a passion, or mortify a sin:—such as these: that God sees no sin in his children; that no sin will take us from God’s favour; that all of such a party are elect people; that God requires of us nothing but faith; and that faith which justifies is nothing but a mere believing that we are God’s chosen; that we are not tied to the law of commandments; that the law of grace is the law of liberty, and that liberty is to do what we list; that divorces are to be granted upon many and slight causes; that simple fornication is no sin. These are such doctrines, that upon the belief of them men may do any thing, and will do that which shall satisfy their own desires, and promote their interests, and seduce their she-disciples. And, indeed, it was not without great reason that these three apostles joined lust and treason together; because the former is so shameful a crime, and renders a man’s spirit naturally averse to government, that if it falls upon the person of a ruler, it takes from him the spirit of government, and renders him diffident, pusillanimous, private, and ashamed: if it happen in the person of a subject, it makes him hate the man that shall shame him and punish him; it hates the light and the sun, because that opens him, and, therefore, is much more against government, because that publishes and punishes too. One thing I desire to be observed, that though the primitive heretics now named, and all those others, their successors, practised and taught horrid impurities, yet they did not invade govern-

* 2 Tim. iii. 1, &c.

† 2 Pet. ii. 9, 10.

‡ Jude 5, 8.

ment at all; and, therefore, those sects that these apostles did signify by prophecy, and in whom both these are concentrated,—were to appear in some later times, and the days of the prophecy were not then to be fulfilled. What they are since, every age must judge by its own experience, and for its own interest. But Christian religion is so pure and holy, that chastity is sometimes used for the whole religion; and to do an action chastely signifies purity of intention, abstraction from the world, and separation from low and secular ends, the virginity of the soul, and its union with God;* and all deviations and estrangements from God, and adhesion to forbidden objects, is called fornication and adultery. Those sects, therefore, that teach, encourage, or practise impious or unhallowed mixtures, and shameful lusts, are issues of the impure spirit, and most contrary to God, who can behold no unclean thing.

10. Those prophets and pastors,—that pretend severity and live loosely, or are severe in small things, and give liberty in greater, or forbid some sins with extreme rigour, and yet practise or teach those that serve their interest or constitute their sect,—are to be suspected and avoided accordingly: “Nihil est hominum inepetâ persuasione falsius, nec fictâ severitate inepetius.” All ages of the church were extremely curious to observe, when any new teachers did arise, what kind of lives they lived; and if they pretended severely and to a strict life, then they knew their danger doubled; for it is certain all that teach doctrines contrary to the established religion delivered by the apostles, all they are evil men. God will not suffer a good man to be seduced damnably, much less can he be a seducer of others; and, therefore, you shall still observe the false apostles to be furious and vehement in their reproofs, and severe in their animadversions of others; but then if you watch their private, or stay till their numbers are full, or observe their spiritual habits, you shall find them indulgent to themselves, or to return from their disguises, or so spiritually wicked, that their pride or their revenge, their envy or their detraction, their scorn or their complacency in themselves, their desire of pre-eminence and their impatience of a revival, shall place them far enough in distance from a poor carnal sinner, whom they shall load with censures and an upbraid-

ing scorn; but themselves are like devils, the spirits of darkness, “the spiritual wickednesses in high places.” Some sects of men are very angry against servants for recreating and easing their labours with a less prudent and unsevere refreshment: but the patrons of their sects shall oppress a wicked man and unbelieving person; they shall chastise a drunkard and entertain murmurers; they shall not abide an oath, and yet shall force men to break three or four. This sect is to be avoided, because although it is good to be severe against carnal and bodily sins, yet it is not good to mingle with them who chastise a bodily sin to make way for a spiritual; or reprove a servant, that his lord may sin alone; or punish a stranger and a beggar, that will not approve their sin, but will have sins of his own. Concerning such persons, St. Paul hath told us, that “they shall not proceed far, but their folly shall be manifest;” *Ὁρίον χρόνον δύναιτ' ἂν τις πλάσσειαι τὸν τρόπον τοῦ αὐτοῦ*, said Ly-sias: “Citò ad naturam facta reciderunt suam.” They that dissemble their sin and their manners, or make severity to serve looseness, and an imaginary virtue to minister to a real vice; they that abhor idols, and would commit sacrilege; chastise a drunkard, and promote sedition; declaim against the vanity of great persons, and then spoil them of their goods; reform manners, and engross estates; talk godly, and do impiously; these are teachers which the Holy Spirit of God hath, by three apostles, bid us to beware of and decline, as we would run from the hollowness of a grave, or the despairs and sorrows of the damned.

11. The substance of all is this: that we must not choose our doctrine by our guide, but our guide by the doctrine; and if we doubt concerning the doctrine, we may judge of that by the lives and designs of the teachers: “By their fruits ye shall know them;” and by the plain words of the Scripture, by the apostles’ creed, and by the commandments, and by the certain known and established forms of government. These are the great indices, and so plain, apt, and easy, that he that is deceived, is so because he will be so; he is betrayed into it by his own lust, and a voluntary chosen folly.

12. Besides these premises, there are other little candles that can help to make the judgment clearer; but they are such as do not signify alone, but in conjunction with some of the precedent characters, which are drawn by the great lines of Scripture. Such as

* *Eloquia Domini casta eloquia.*

are: 1. When the teachers of sects stir up unprofitable and useless questions. 2. When they causelessly retire from the universal customs of Christendom. 3. And cancel all the memorials of the greatest mysteries of our redemption. 4. When their confessions and catechisms and their whole religion consists *in γνώσει*, "in speculations" and ineffective notions, in discourses of angels and spirits, in abstractions and raptures, in things they understand not, and of which they have no revelation. 5. Or else if their religion spends itself in ceremonies, outward guises, and material solemnities, and imperfect forms, drawing the heart of the vine forth into leaves and irregular fruitless suckers, turning the substance into circumstances, and the love of God into gestures, and the effect of the Spirit into the impertinent offices of a burdensome ceremonial: for by these two particulars the apostles reprov'd the Jews and the Gnostics, or those that from the school of Pythagoras pretended conversation with angels, and great knowledge of the secrets of the spirits, choosing tutelar angels, and assigning them offices and charges, as in the church of Rome, to this day, they do to saints. To these add, 6. That we observe whether the guides of souls avoid to suffer for their religion; for then the matter is foul, or the man not fit to lead, that dares not die in cold blood for his religion. Will the man lay his life and his soul upon the proposition? If so, then you may consider him upon his proper grounds; but if he refuses that, refuse his conduct sure enough. 7. You may also watch whether they do not choose their proselytes among the rich and vicious; that they may serve themselves upon his wealth, and their disciple upon his vice. 8. If their doctrines evidently and greatly serve the interest of wealth or honour, and are ineffective to piety. 9. If they strive to gain any one to their confession, and are negligent to gain them to good life. 10. If, by pretences, they lessen the severity of Christ's precepts, and are easy in dispensations and licentious glosses. 11. If they invent suppletories to excuse an evil man, and yet to reconcile his bad life with the hopes of heaven; you have reason to suspect the whole, and to reject these parts of error and design, which in themselves are so unhandsome always, and sometimes criminal. He that shall observe the church of Rome so implacably fierce for purgatory and the pope's supremacy, for clerical im-

munities and the superiority of the ecclesiastical persons to secular, for indulgences and precious and costly pardons, and then so full of devices to reconcile an evil life with heaven, requiring only contrition even at the last for the abolition of eternal guilt, and having a thousand ways to commute and take off the temporal; will see he hath reason to be jealous that interest is in these bigger than the religion, and yet the danger of the soul is greater than that interest; and, therefore, the man is to do accordingly.

Here, indeed, is the great necessity that we should have the prudence and discretion, the *ἀξυδερκίς* of serpents.

—magis ut cernamus acutum

Quam aut aquila, aut serpens Epidaurius. Hor.

For so serpents, as they are curious to preserve their heads from contrition or a bruise, so also to safeguard themselves that they be not charmed with sweet and enticing words of false prophets, who charm not wisely but cunningly, leading aside unstable souls; against these we must stop our ears, or lend our attention according to the foregoing measures and significations. But here also I am to insert two or three cautions.

1. We cannot expect that by these or any other signs we shall be enabled to discover concerning all men, whether they teach an error or no: neither can a man by these reprove a Lutheran or a Zuinglian, a Dominican or a Franciscan, a Russian or a Greek, a Muscovite or a Georgian; because those that are certain signs of false teachers, do signify such men who destroy an article of faith or a commandment. God was careful to secure us from death by removing the lepers from the camp, and giving certain notices of distinction, and putting a term between the living and the dead: but he was not pleased to secure every man from innocent and harmless errors, from the mistakes of men and the failings of mortality: the signs which can distinguish a living man from a dead, will not also distinguish a black man from a brown, or a pale from a white: it is enough that we decline those guides that lead us to hell, but not to think that we are enticed to death by the weaknesses of every disagreeing brother.

2. In all discerning of sects, we must be careful to distinguish the faults of men from the evils of their doctrine; for some there are that say very well and do very ill; *εἰσὶ γὰρ*

Δὴ θάρβοφοροὶ πολλοὶ, Βάκχοδὲ γε παῖροι,
Multos thyrsigeros, paucos est cernere Bacchos;

Many men of holy calling and holy religion, that are of unholy lives: "Homines ignavi opera, philosophi sententia." But these must be separated from the institution: and the evil of the men is only to be noted, as that such persons be not taken to our single conduct and personal ministry. I will be of the man's religion if it be good, though he be not; but I will not make him my confessor, *Μετῶ σοφιστῆν, ὅστις οὐχ ἀτρεῖ σοφός.** If he be not wise for himself, I will not sit down at his feet, lest we mingle filthiness instead of being cleansed and instructed.

3. Let us make one separation more, and then we may consider and act according to the premises. If we espy a design or an evil mark upon one doctrine, let us divide it from the others that are not so spotted. For indeed the public communions of men are at this day so ordered, that they are as fond of their errors as of their truths, and sometimes most zealous for what they have least reason to beso. And if we can, by any arts of prudence, separate from an evil proposition, and communicate in all the good, then we may love colleges of religious persons, though we do not worship images; and we may obey our prelates, though we do no injury to princes; and we may be zealous against a crime, though we be not imperious over men's persons; and we may be diligent in the conduct of souls, though we be not rapacious of estates; and we may be moderate exactors of obedience to human laws, though we do not dispense with the breach of the Divine; and the clergy may represent their calling necessary, though their persons be full of modesty and humility; and we may preserve our lights, and not lose our charity. For this is the meaning of the apostle: "Try all things, and retain that which is good;" from every sect and community of Christians take any thing that is good, that advances holy religion and the Divine honour. For one hath a better government, a second a better confession, a third hath excellent spiritual arts for the conduct of souls, a fourth hath fewer errors; and by what instrument soever a holy life is advantaged, use that, though thou grindest thy spears and arrows at the forges of the Philistines; knowing thou hast no master but Christ, no religion but the Christian, no rule but the Scriptures, and the laws, and right reason: other things that are helps, are to be used accordingly.

* Eurip.

These are the general rules of Christian prudence, which I have chosen to insist upon: there are many others more particular indeed, but yet worth not only the enumerating, but observing also, and that they be reduced to practice. For the prudence of a Christian does oblige and direct respectively all the children of the institution, that we be careful to decline a danger, watchful against a temptation, always choosing that that is safe and fitted to all circumstances; that we be wise in choosing our company, reserved and wary in our friendships, and communicative in our charity; that we be silent, and retentive of what we hear and what we think, not credulous, not inconstant; that we be deliberate in our election and vigorous in our prosecutions; that we suffer not good nature to discompose our duty, but that we separate images from substances, and the pleasing of a present company from our religion to God and our eternal interest: for sometimes that which is counselled to us by Christian prudence, is accounted folly by human prudence, and so it is ever accounted when our duty leads us into a persecution. Hither also appertain, that we never do a thing that we know we must repent of; that we do not admire too many things, nor any thing too much; that we be even in prosperity and patient in adversity, but transported with neither into the regions of despair or levity, pusillanimity or tyranny, dejection or garishness; always to look upon the scar we have impressed upon our flesh, and no more to handle dangers and knives; to abstain from ambitious and vexatious suits; not to contend with a mighty man; ever to listen to him, who, according to the proverb, "hath four ears, reason, religion, wisdom, and experience;" rather to lose a benefit, than to suffer a detriment and an evil; to stop the beginnings of evil; to pardon and not to observe all the faults of friends or enemies; of evils to choose the least, and of goods to choose the greatest, if it be also safest; not to be insolent in success, but to proceed according to the probability of human causes and contingencies; ever to be thankful for benefits, and profitable to others, and useful in all that we can; to watch the seasons and circumstances of actions; to do that willingly which cannot be avoided, lest the necessity serve another's appetite, and it be lost to all our purposes: "Insignis enim est prudentiæ ut quod non facere non possis, id ita facere ut libenter fecisse vi-

dearis;" not to pursue difficult, uncertain, and obscure things, with violence and passion. These if we observe, we shall do advantage to ourselves and to the religion; and avoid those evils which fools and unwary people suffer for nothing, dying or bleeding without cause and without pity. I end this with the saying of Socrates: *Χωριστόμενα φρονήσεως, και ἀλλαττόμενα ἀντι ἀληθῶν, μὴ σκιαγραφία τις ἢ ἡ τοιαύτη ἀρετῆ, και τῷ ὄντι ἀνδραποδῆς εἰ, και οὐδὲν ἕγιες, οὐδ' ἀσθηθῆς ἕχη** "Virtue is but a shadow and a servile employment, unless it be adorned and instructed with prudence;"* which gives motion and conduct, spirits and vigourousness to religion, making it not only human and reasonable, but Divine and celestial.

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SERMON XLVIII.

OF CHRISTIAN SIMPLICITY.

PART I.

And harmless as doves.—Matt. x. latter part of verse 16.

OUR blessed Saviour having prefaced concerning prudence, adds to the integrity of the precept, and for the conduct of our religion, that we be simple as well as prudent, innocent as well as wary. Harmless and safe together do well: for without this blessed union, prudence turns into craft, and simplicity degenerates into folly. "Prudens simplicitas" is Martial's character of a good man; a wary and cautious innocence, a harmless prudence and provision; "Vera simplicitate bonus." A true simplicity is that which leaves to a man arms defensive, his castles and strong forts; but takes away his swords and spears, his anger and his malice, his peevishness and spite. But such is the misery and such is the iniquity of mankind, that craft hath invaded all the contracts and intercourses of men, and made simplicity so weak a thing, that it is grown into contempt, sometimes with, and sometimes without reason; "Et homines simplices, minime malos," the Romans called "parum cautos, sæpe stolidos;" unwary fools and defenceless people were called simple. And when the innocence of the old simple Romans in Junius Brutus's time, in Fabricius and Camillus's, began to degenerate, and to need the Aquilian law to

force men to deal honestly; quickly the mischief increased, till the Aquilian law grew as much out of power as honesty was out of countenance; and there, and every where else, men thought they got a purchase when they met with an honest man: and *ἡλιθῖον* Aristotle calls, *χρηστόν*, and *τὸν ὀργίλον και τὸν μανικὸν, ἀπλοῦν** "A fool is a profitable person, and he that is simple is little better than mad:" and so it is when simplicity wants prudence. He that, because he means honestly himself, thinks every man else does so, and therefore is unwary in all or any of his intercourses, is a simple man in an evil sense: and therefore St. Gregory Nazianzen remarks Constantius with a note of folly, for suffering his easy nature to be abused by Georgius, *Οἰκειούται τὴν βασιλείας ἀπλότητα. ὄντως γὰρ ἐγὼ καλῶ σὴν κοπιότητα, αἰδούμενος τὴν εὐλάβειαν** "The prince's simplicity, so he calls it for reverence;"* but indeed it was folly, for it was zeal without knowledge. But it was a better temper which he observed in his own father, *ἡ ἀπλότης και τὸ τοῦ ἡθους ἀδολον*, such "a simplicity which only wanted craft or deceit," but wanted no prudence or caution: and that is truly Christian simplicity, or the sincerity of an honest, and ingenious, and a fearless person; and it is a rare band, not only of societies and contracts, but also of friendships and advantages of mankind.

We do not live in an age in which there is so much need to bid men be wary, as to take care that they be innocent. Indeed in religion we are usually too loose and ungirt, exposing ourselves to temptation, and others to offence, and our name to dishonour, and the cause itself to reproach, and we are open and ready to every evil but persecution: from that we are close enough, and that alone we call prudence; but in the matter of interest we are wary as serpents, subtle as foxes, vigilant as the birds of the night, rapacious as kites, tenacious as grappling-hooks and the weightiest anchors, and above all, false and hypocritical as a thin crust of ice spread upon the face of a deep, smooth, and dissembling pit; if you set your foot, your foot slips, or the ice breaks, and you sink into death, and are wound in a sheet of water, descending into mischief or your grave, suffering a great fall or a sudden death, by your confidence and unsuspecting foot. There is a universal crust of hypocrisy, that covers the face of the greatest part

* Plat. Phædo.

* Orat. 21.

of mankind. Their religion consists in forms and outsides, and serves reputation or a design, but does not serve God. Their promises are but fair language, and the civilities of the piazzas or exchanges, and disband and untie like the air that beat upon their teeth, when they spake the delicious and hopeful words. Their oaths are snares to catch men, and make them confident; their contracts are arts and stratagems to deceive, measured by profit and possibility; and every thing is lawful that is gainful. And their friendships are trades of getting; and their kindness of watching a dying friend is but the office of a vulture, the gaping for a legacy, the spoil of the carcass. And their sicknesses are many times policies of state; sometimes a design to show the riches of our bedchamber. And their funeral tears are but the paranymps and pious solicitors of a second bride. And every thing that is ugly must be hid, and every thing that is handsome must be seen; and that will make a fair cover for a huge deformity. And therefore it is, as they think, necessary that men should always have some pretences and forms, some faces of religion or sweetness of language, confident affirmatives or bold oaths, protracted treaties or multitude of words, affected silence or grave deportment, a good name or a good cause, a fair relation or a worthy calling, great power or a pleasant wit; any thing that can be fair or that can be useful, any thing that can do good or be thought good, we use it to abuse our brother, or promote our interest. Leporina resolved to die, being troubled for her husband's danger; and he resolved to die with her that had so great a kindness for him, as not to outlive the best of her husband's fortune. It was agreed; and she tempered the poison, and drank the face of the unwholesome goblet; but the weighty poison sunk to the bottom, and the easy man drank it all off, and died, and the woman carried him forth to funeral; and after a little illness, which she soon recovered, she entered upon the inheritance, and a second marriage.

Tuta frequensque via est ———

It is a usual and safe way to cozen, upon colour of friendship or religion; but that is hugely criminal: to tell a lie to abuse a man's belief, and by it to enter upon any thing of his possession to his injury, is a perfect destruction of all human society, the most ignoble of all human follies, per-

fectly contrary to God, who is truth itself, the greatest argument of a timorous and a base, a cowardly and a private mind, not at all honest, or confident to see the sun, "a vice fit for slaves;" ἀνόητον καὶ δουλοκρατεῖς, as Dio Chrysostomus* calls it; ὁρῶν καὶ ὄτι θηρίων τὰ δευρότατα καὶ ἀγενέστερα τὰ ἐκείνα φέυδεται πάντων μάλιστα, καὶ ἰξοπατᾷ. "for the most timorous and the basest of the beasts use craft," and lie in wait, and take their prey, and save their lives by deceit. And it is the greatest injury to the abused person in the world: for, besides that it abuses his interest, it also makes him for ever insecure, and uneasy in his confidence, which is the period of cares, the rest of a man's spirit; it makes it necessary for a man to be jealous and suspicious, that is, to be troublesome to himself and every man else: and above all, lying, or craftiness, and unfaithful usages, rob a man of the honour of his soul, making his understanding useless and in the condition of a fool, spoiled, and dishonoured, and despised. Πᾶσα ψυχὴ ἀκούσα στερεῖται τῆς ἀληθείας, said Plato: "Every soul loses truth very unwillingly." Every man is so great a lover of truth, that if he hath it not, he loves to believe he hath, and would fain have all the world to believe as he does; either presuming that he hath truth, or else hating to be deceived, or to be esteemed a cheated and an abused person. "Non licet suffurari mentem hominis etiam Samaritani," said R. Moses; † "sed veritatem loquere, atque age ingenuè:" "If a man be a Samaritan, that is, a hated person, a person from whom you differ in matter of religion, yet steal not his mind away, but speak truth to him honestly and ingenuously." A man's soul loves to dwell in truth, it is his resting-place; and if you take him from thence, you take him into strange regions, a place of banishment and dishonour. "Qui ignotos lædit, latro appellatur; qui amicos, paulò minus quam parricida:" "He that hurts strangers is a thief; but he that hurts his friend is little better than a parricide." This is the brand and stigma of hypocrisy and lying: it hurts our friends, "Mendacium in damnum potens;" and makes the man that owns it guilty of a crime, that is to be punished by the sorrows usually suffered in the most execrable places of the cities. But I must reduce the duty to particulars, and discover

* Dissert. 1. de Regno.

† Can. Eth.

the contrary vice by several parts of its proportion.

1. The first office of a Christian simplicity consists in our religion and manners; that they be open and honest, public and justifiable, the same at home and abroad; for, besides the ingenuity, and honesty of this, there is an indispensable and infinite necessity it should be so; because whoever is a hypocrite in his religion, mocks God, presenting to him the outside, and reserving the inward for his enemy; which is either a denying God to be the searcher of our hearts, or else an open defiance of his omniscience and of his justice. To provoke God that we may deceive men; to defy his almightiness, that we may abuse our brother; is, to destroy all that is sacred, all that is prudent; it is an open hostility to all things human and Divine, a breaking from all the bands of all relations; and uses God so cheaply, as if he were to be treated or could be cozened like a weak man, and an undiscerning and easy merchant. But so is the life of many men:

Vita fallax! abditos sensus gerens,
Animisque pulchram turpibus faciem induens
Pudor impudentem celat, audacem quies,
Pietas nefandum; vera fallaces probant;
Simulantque molles dura.

SENEC.

It is a crafty life that men live, carrying designs, and living upon secret purposes. Men pretend modesty, and under that red veil are bold against superiors; saucy to their betters upon pretences of religion; invaders of others' rights by false propositions in theology; pretending humility, they challenge superiority above all orders of men; and for being thought more holy, think that they have title to govern the world: they bear upon their face great religion, and are impious in their relations, false to their trust, unfaithful to their friend, unkind to their dependants; ἄφροῦς ἐπιηρότες, καὶ τὸ φρόνημον ζητῶντες ἐν τοῖς περιπάτοις, "turning up the white of their eye, and seeking for reputation in the streets:" so did some of the old hypocrites, the gentle Pharisees; "Asperum cultum, et intonsum caput, negligentiore barbam, et nitidum argento odium, et cubile humi positum, et quicquid aliud ambitionem viâ perversâ sequitur;" being the softest persons under an austere habit, the loosest livers under a contracted brow, under a pale face having the reddest and most sprightly livers. This kind of men have abused all ages of the

world, and all religions; it being so easy in nature, so prepared and ready for mischiefs, that men should creep into opportunities of devouring the flock, upon pretence of defending them, and to raise their estates upon colour of saving their souls.

Introrsum turpes, speciosi pelle decorâ.

HOR.

Men that are like painted sepulchres, entertainment for the eye, but images of death, chambers of rottenness, and repositories of dead men's bones. It may, sometimes, concern a man to seem religious; God's glory may be shown by fair appearances, or the edification of our brother, or the reputation of a cause; but this is but sometimes: but it always concerns us that we be religious; and we may reasonably think, that, if the colours of religion so well do advantage to us, the substance and reality would do it much more. For no man can have a good by seeming religious, and another by not being so; the power of godliness never destroys any well-built fabric, that was raised upon the reputation of religion and its pretences. "Nunquam est peccare utile, quia semper est turpe," said Cicero; "It is never profitable to sin, because it is always base and dishonest." And if the face of religion could do a good turn, which the heart and substance does destroy, then religion itself were the greatest hypocrite in the world, and promises a blessing which it never can perform, but must be beholden to its enemy to verify its promises. No: we shall be sure to feel the blessings of both the worlds, if we serve in the offices of religion, devoutly and charitably, before men and before God: if we ask of God things honest in the sight of men, μετὰ φωνῆς εὐχόμενοι, (as Pythagoras gave in precept), "praying to God with a free heart and a public prayer," and doing before men things that are truly pleasing to God, turning our heart outwards and our face inwards, that is, conversing with men as in the presence of God; and in our private towards God, being as holy and devout as if we prayed in public, and in the corners of the streets. Pliny, praising Ariston, gave him the title of an honest and hearty religion: "Ornat hunc magnitudo animi, quæ nihil ad ostentationem, omnia ad conscientiam refert; recteque facti, non ex populi sermone, mercedem, sed ex facto petit."* And this does

* Lib. i. ep. 22.

well state the question of a sincere religion, and an ingenuous goodness: it requires that we do nothing for ostentation, but every thing for conscience; and we may be obliged in conscience to publish our manner of lives; but then it must be, not that we may have a popular noise for a reward, but that God may be glorified by our public worshippings, and others edified by our good examples.

Neither doth the sincerity of our religion require, that we should not conceal our sins: for he that sins, and dares to own them publicly, may become impudent: and, so long as in modesty we desire our shame should be hid, and men to think better of us than we deserve, I say, for no other reason but either because we would not derive the ill examples to others, or the shame to ourselves; we are within the protection of one of virtue's sisters, and we are not far from the gates of the kingdom of heaven; easy and apt to be invited in, and not very unworthy to enter.

But if any other principle draws the veil, if we conceal our vices because we would be honoured for sanctity, or because we would not be hindered in our designs, we serve the interest of pride and ambition, covetousness or vanity. If an innocent purpose hides the ulcer, it does half heal it; but if it retires into the secrecy of sin and darkness, it turns into a plague, and infects the heart, and it dies infallibly of a double exulceration. The Macedonian boy,—that kept the coal in his flesh, and would not shake his arm, lest he should disturb the sacrifice, or discompose the ministry before Alexander the Great,—concealed his pain to the honour of patience and religion: but the Spartan boy, who suffered the little fox to eat his bowels, rather than confess his theft, when he was in danger of discovery, paid the price of a bold hypocrisy; that is the dissimulation reprobable in matter of manners, which conceals one sin to make way for another. Οἱ καὶ μάλα σεμνοὶ καὶ σπουδαῖοι τὰ ἐξω καὶ τὰ δημοσίᾳ φαίνόμενοι, εἰ παιδὸς ὤραιον ἢ γυναικὸς λάβωται, ὅσα ποιοῦσιν; Lucian notes it of his philosophical hypocrites, dissemblers in matter of deportment and religion; they seem severe abroad, but they enter into the vaults of harlots, and are not ashamed to see a naked sin in the midst of its ugliness and undressed circumstances. A mighty wrestler, that had won a crown at Olympus for contending prosperously, was observed to turn his head and go for-

ward with his face upon his shoulder, to behold a fair woman that was present; and he lost the glory of his strength, when he became so weak, that a woman could turn his head about, which his adversary could not. These are the follies and weaknesses of man, and dishonours to religion, when a man shall contend nobly, and do handsomely, and then be taken in a base or dishonourable action, and mingle venom with his delicious ointment.

Quid? quod olet gravius mistum diapasmate virus,
Atque duplex animæ longius exit odor?—MART.

When Fescennia perfumed her breath, that she might not smell of wine, she condemned the crime of drunkenness; but grew ridiculous, when the wine broke through the cloud of a tender perfume, and the breath of a lozenge. And that, indeed, is the reward of an hypocrite; his laborious arts of concealment furnish all the world with declamation and severity against the crime, which himself condemns with his caution. But when his own sentence too is prepared against the day of his discovery.

Notas ergo nimis fraudes deprensaque furta
Jam tollas, et sis ebria simpliciter.—MART.

A simple drunkard hath but one fault: but they that avoid discovery, that they may drink on without shame or restraint, add hypocrisy to their vicious fulness; and for all the amazements of their consequent discovery, have no other recompence, but that they pleased themselves in the security of their crime, and their undeserved reputation.

Sic, quæ nigrior est cadente moro,
Cerulea sibi placet Lycoris.—MART.

For so the most easy and deformed woman, whose girdle no foolish young man will unloose, because "she is blacker than the falling mulberry, may please herself under a skin of ceruce," and call herself fairer than Pharaoh's daughter, or the hinds living upon the snowy mountains.

One thing more there is to be added as an instance to the simplicity of religion, and that is, that we never deny our religion, or lie concerning our faith, nor tell our propositions and articles deceitfully, nor instruct novices or catechumens with fraud; but that when we teach them, we do it honestly, justly, and severely; not always to speak all, but never to speak otherwise than it is, nor to hide a truth from them, whose souls are concerned in it that it be known.

“*Neque enim id est celare, cum quid reticeas; sed cum, quod tu scias, id ignorare emolumentum tui causa velis eos, quorum interest id scire;*” so Cicero* determines the case of prudence and simplicity. The discovery of pious frauds, and the disclaiming of false, but profitable and rich propositions; the quitting honours fraudulently gotten, and unjustly detained; the reducing every man to the perfect understanding of his own religion, so far as can concern his duty; the disallowing false miracles, legends, and fabulous stories, to cozen the people into awfulness, fear, and superstition; these are parts of Christian simplicity, which do integrate this duty. For religion hath strengths enough of its own to support itself; it needs not a devil for its advocate; it is the breath of God; and as it is purer than the beams of the morning, so it is stronger than a tempest, or the combination of all the winds, though united by the prince that ruleth in the air. And we find that the Nicene faith prevailed upon all the world, though some Arian bishops went from Ariminum to Nice, and there decreed their own articles, and called it the faith read at Nice, and used all arts, and all violence, and all lying, and diligence, to discountenance it; yet it could not be; it was the truth of God; and, therefore, it was stronger than all the gates of hell, than all the powers of darkness. And he that tells a lie for his religion, or goes about by fraud and imposture to gain proselytes, either dares not trust his cause, or dares not trust his God. True religion is open in its articles, honest in its prosecutions, just in its conduct, innocent when it is accused, ignorant of falsehood, sure in its truth, simple in its sayings, and (as Julius Capitolinus said of the emperor Verus) it is “*morum simplicium, et quæ adumbrare nihil possit:*” it covers, indeed, a multitude of sins, by curing them, and obtaining pardon for them; but it can dissemble nothing of itself, it cannot tell or do a lie: but it can become a sacrifice; a good man can quit his life, but never his integrity. That is the first duty; the sum of which is that which Aristilius said concerning fraud and craft; “*bona fides,*” “the honesty of a man’s faith and religion is destroyed,” “*cum aliud simulatum, aliud actum sit,*” “when either we conceal what we ought to publish, or do not act what we pretend.”

2. Christian simplicity, or the innocence

of prudence, relates to laws both in their sanction and execution; that they be decreed with equity, and proportioned to the capacity and profit of the subjects, and that they be applied to practice with remissions and reasonable interpretations, agreeable to the sense of the words and the mind of the lawgiver. But laws are not to be cozened and abused by contradictory glosses and fantastic allusions; as knowing that if the majesty and sacredness of them be once abused, and subjected to contempt, and unreasonable and easy resolutions, their girdle is unloosed, and they suffer the shame of prostitution and contempt. When Saul made a law, that he that did eat before night should die, the people persuaded him directly to rescind it in the case of Jonathan; because it was unequal and unjust, that he who had wrought their deliverance, and, in that working, was absent from the promulgation of the law, should suffer for breaking it, in a case of violent necessity, and of which he heard nothing, upon so fair and probable a cause. And it had been well that the Persian had been so rescued, who, against the laws of his country, killed a lion to save the life of his prince. In such cases it is fit the law be rescinded and dispensed withal, as to certain particulars; so it be done ingenuously, with competent authority, in great necessity, and without partiality. But that which I intend here is, that in the rescission or dispensation of the law, the process be open and free, and such as shall preserve the law and its sacredness, as well as the person and his interest. The laws of Sparta forbade any man to be twice admiral; but, when their affairs required it, they made Aræus titular, and Lysander supervisor of him, and admiral to all real and effective purposes: this wanted ingenuity, and laid a way open for them to despise the law, which was made patient of such a weak evasion. The Lacedemonian ambassador persuaded Pericles to turn the tables of the law, which were forbidden to be removed; and another ordained in a certain case, that the laws should sleep twenty-four hours; a third decreed that June should be called May, because the time of an election appointed by the law was elapsed. These arts are against the ingenuity and simplicity of laws and lawgivers, and teach the people to cheat in their obedience, when their judges are so fraudulent in the administration of their laws. Every law should be made plain, open, honest, and significant;

* Cic. lib. 3. Offic.

and he that makes a decree, and intricates it on purpose, or by inconsideration lays a snare or leaves one there, is either an imprudent person, and, therefore unfit to govern, or else he is a tyrant and a vulture. It is too much that a man can make a law by an arbitrary power. But when he shall also leave the law, so that every of the ministers of justice and the judges shall have power to rule by a loose, by an arbitrary, by a contradictory interpretation, it is intolerable. They that rule by prudence, should, above all things, see that the patrons and advocates of innocence should be harmless, and without an evil sting.

3. Christian simplicity relates to promises and acts of grace and favour; and its caution is, that all promises be simple, ingenuous, agreeable to the intention of the promiser, truly and effectually expressed, and never going less in the performance than in the promises and words of the expression; concerning which the cases are several. 1. First, all promises in which a third or a second person hath no interest, that is, the promises of kindness and civilities, are tied to pass into performance "*secundum æquum et bonum*;" and though they may oblige to some small inconvenience, yet never to a great one; as, I will visit you to-morrow morning, because I promised you, and, therefore, I will come, "*etiamsi non concocero*," "although I have not slept my full sleep;" but "*si febrecitavero*," "if I be in a fever," or have reason to fear one, I am disobliged. For the nature of such promises bears upon them no bigger burden than can be expounded by reasonable civilities, and the common expectation of kind, and the ordinary performances of just men, who do excuse and are excused respectively by all rules of reason proportionably to such small intercourses; and, therefore, although such conditions be not expressed in making promises, yet to perform or rescind them by such laws is not against Christian simplicity. 2. Promises in matters of justice or in matters of grace, as from a superior to an inferior, must be so singly and ingenuously expressed, intended, and performed accordingly, that no condition is to be reserved or supposed in them to warrant their non-performance but impossibility, or, that which is next to it, an intolerable inconvenience; in which cases we have a natural liberty to commute our promises, but so that we pay to the interested person a good at least

equal to that which we first promised. And to this purpose it may be added, that it is not against Christian simplicity to express our promises in such words, which we know the interested man will understand to other purposes than I intend, so it be not less that I mean than that he hopes for. When our blessed Saviour told his disciples that "they should sit upon twelve thrones," they presently thought they had his bond for a kingdom, and dreamed of wealth and honour, power and a splendid court; and Christ knew they did, but did not disentangle his promise from the enfolded and intricate sense, of which his words were naturally capable; but he performed his promise to better purposes than they hoped for; they were presidents in the conduct of souls, princes of God's people, the chief in sufferings, stood nearest to the cross, had an elder brother's portion in the kingdom of grace, were the founders of churches, and dispensers of the mysteries of the kingdom, and ministers of the Spirit of God, and channels of mighty blessings, under-mediators in the priesthood of their Lord, and "their names were written in heaven:" and this was infinitely better than to groan and wake under a head pressed with a golden crown and pungent cares, and to eat alone, and to walk in a crowd, and to be vexed with all the public and many of the private evils of the people: which is the sum total of an earthly kingdom.

When God promised to the obedient, that they should live long in the land which he would give them, he meant it of the land of Canaan, but yet reserved to himself the liberty of taking them quickly from that land and carrying them to a better. He that promises to lend me a staff to walk withal, and instead of that gives me a horse to carry me, hath not broken his promise nor dealt deceitfully. And this is God's dealing with mankind; he promises more than we could hope for; and when he hath done that, he gives us more than he hath promised. God hath promised to give to them that fear him, all that they need, food and raiment; but he adds, out of the treasures of his mercy, variety of food and changes of raiment; some to get strength, and some to refresh; something for them that are in health, and some for the sick. And though the skins of bulls, and stags, and foxes, and bears, could have drawn a veil thick enough to hide the apertures of sin and natural shame, and to defend us

from heat and cold; yet when he addeth the fleeces of sheep and beavers, and the spoils of silkworms, he hath proclaimed, that although his promises are the bounds of our certain expectation, yet they are not the limits of his loving-kindness; and if he does more than he hath promised, no man can complain that he did otherwise, and did greater things than he said. Thus God does; but therefore so also must we, imitating that example, and transcribing that copy of the Divine truth, always remembering, that "his promises are yea and amen." And although God often goes more, yet he never goes less; and therefore we must never go from our promises, unless we be thrust from thence by disability, or let go by leave, or called up higher by a greater intentment and increase of kindness. And, therefore, when Solyman had sworn to Ibrahim Bassa, that he would never kill him so long as he were alive, he quitted himself but ill, when he sent an eunuch to cut his throat when he slept, because the priest told him that sleep was death. His act was false and deceitful as his great prophet.

But in this part of simplicity we Christians have a most special obligation: for our religion being ennobled by the most and the greatest promises, and our faith made confident by the veracity of our Lord, and his word made certain by miracles, and prophecies, and voices from heaven, and all the testimony of God himself; and that truth itself is bound upon us by the efficacy of great endearments and so many precepts; if we shall suffer the faith of a Christian to be an instrument to deceive our brother, and that he must either be incredulous or deceived, uncharitable or deluded like a fool, we dishonour the sacredness of the institution, and become strangers to the spirit of truth and to the eternal word of God. Our blessed Lord would not have his disciples to swear at all,—no, not in public judicature, if the necessities of the world would permit him to be obeyed. If Christians will live according to the religion, the word of a Christian were a sufficient instrument to give testimony, and to make promises, to secure a faith; and upon that supposition oaths were useless, and, therefore, forbidden, because there could be no necessity to invoke God's name in promises or affirmations if men were indeed Christians, and therefore; in that case, would be a taking it in vain: but because many are not, and they that are in name, oftentimes are in nothing else,—it became

necessary that man should swear in judgment and in public courts. But consider who it was that invented and made the necessity of oaths, of bonds, of securities, of statutes, extents, judgments, and all the artifices of human diffidence and dishonesty. These things were indeed found out by men; but the necessity of these was from him that is the father of lies, from him that hath made many fair promises, but never kept any; or if he did, it was to do a bigger mischief, to cozen the more. For so does the devil: he promises rich harvests, and blasts the corn in the spring; he tells his servants they shall be rich, and fills them with beggarly qualities, makes them base and indigent, greedy and penurious; and they that serve him entirely, as witches and such miserable persons, never can be rich: if he promises health, then men grow confident and intemperate, and do such things whereby they shall die the sooner, and die longer; they shall die eternally. He deceives men in their trust, and frustrates their hopes, and eludes their expectations; and his promises have a period set, beyond which they cannot be true; for wicked men shall enjoy a fair fortune but till their appointed time, and then it ends in perfect and most accomplished misery: and therefore, even in this performance, he deceives them most of all, promising jewels, and performing coloured stones and glass gems, that he may cozen them of their glorious inheritance. All fraudulent breakers of promises dress themselves by his glass, whose best imagery is deformity and lies.

SERMON XLIX.

PART II.

4. CHRISTIAN simplicity teaches openness and ingenuity in contracts, and matters of buying and selling, covenants, associations, and all such intercourses, which suppose an equality of persons as to the matter of right and justice in the stipulation. Μετὰ τὴν ἀγορὰν ἀψευδεῖν, was the old Attic law; and nothing is more contrary to Christian religion, than that the intercourses of justice be direct snares, and that we should deal with men as men deal with foxes, and wolves, and vermin; do all violence: and when that cannot be, use all craft, and every thing whereby they can be made miserable.

Ἡ δόλαρ ἢ βίη, ἢ ἀμφαδὸν ἢ κρυφιδόν.

There are men in the world who love to smile; but that smile is more dangerous than the furrows of a contracted brow, or a storm in Adria; for their purpose is only to deceive: they easily speak what they never mean; they heap up many arguments to persuade that to others which themselves believe not; they praise that vehemently which they deride in their hearts; they declaim against a thing which themselves covet; they beg passionately for that which they value not, and run from an object, which they would fain have to follow and overtake them; they excuse a person dexterously where the man is beloved, and watch to surprise him where he is unguarded; they praise that they may sell, and disgrace that they may keep. And these hypocrisies are so interwoven and embroidered with their whole design, that some nations refuse to contract, till their arts are taken off by the society of banquets, and the good-natured kindnesses of festival chalices: for so Tacitus observes concerning the old Germans. "De adsciscendis principibus, de pace et bello, in convivis consultant; tanquam nullo magis tempore ad simplices cogitationes pateat animus, aut ad magnas incalescat." "As if then they were more simple when they were most valiant, and were least deceitful when they were least themselves."

But it is an evil condition, that a man's honesty shall be owing to his wine, and virtue must live at the charge and will of a vice. The proper band of societies and contracts is justice and necessities, religion and the laws; the measures of it are equity, and ourselves, and our own desires in the days of our need, natural or forced: but the instruments of the exchange and conveyance of the whole intercourse is words and actions, as they are expounded by custom, consent, or understanding of the interested person, in which, if simplicity be not severely preserved, it is impossible that human society can subsist, but men shall be forced to snatch at what they have bought, and take securities that men swear truly, and exact an oath that such is the meaning of the word; and no man shall think himself secure, but shall fear he is robbed, if he has not possession first; and it shall be disputed who shall trust the other, and neither of them shall have cause to be confident upon bands, or oaths, or witnesses, or promises, or all the honour of men, or all the engagements of religion. Οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἂν ἐπέ-

πιστεῖναι δύναιτο ὑμῖν, οὐδ' εἰ πάντῃ προθυμῶτα, ἰδὼν ἀδικούμενον τὸν μάλιστα φίλῳ προσέχοντα, said Cyrus in Xenophon: * A man, though he desires it, cannot be confident of the man that pretends truth, yet tells a lie, and is deprehended to have made use of the sacred name of friendship or religion, honesty or reputation, to deceive his brother.

But because a man may be deceived by deeds and open actions as well as words, therefore it concerns their duty, that no man by an action on purpose done to make his brother believe a lie, abuse his persuasion and his interest. When Pythius, † the Sicilian, had a mind to sell his garden to Canius, he invited him thither, and caused fishermen, as if by custom, to fish in the channel by which the garden stood, and they threw great store of fish into their arbours, and made Canius believe it was so every day; and the man grew greedy of that place of pleasure, and gave Pythius a double price, and the next day perceived himself abused. Actions of pretence and simulation are like snares laid, into which the beasts fall though you pursue them not, but walk in the inquiry for their necessary provisions: and if a man fall into a snare that you have laid, it is no excuse to say, you did not tempt him thither. To lay a snare is against the ingenuity of a good man and a Christian, and from thence he ought to be drawn; and, therefore, it is not fit we should place a danger, which ourselves are therefore bound to hinder, because from thence we are obliged to rescue him. "Vir bonus est, qui prodest quibus potest, nocet nemini:" "When we do all the good we can, and do an evil to no man, then only we are accounted good men." But this pretence of an action signifying otherwise than it looks for, is only forbidden in matter of contract, and the material interest of a second person. But when actions are of a double signification, or when a man is not abused or defeated of his right by an uncertain sign, it is lawful to do a thing to other purposes than is commonly understood. Flight is a sign of fear; but it is lawful to fly when a man fears not. Circumcision was the seal of the Jewish religion; and yet St. Paul circumcised Timothy, though he intended he should live like the gentle Christians, and "not as do the Jews." But because that rite did signify more things besides that one, he only did it to represent

* Lib. 8. Instit.

† Cicero.

that he was no enemy of Moses's law, but would use it when there was just reason, which was one part of the things which the using of circumcision could signify. So our blessed Saviour pretended that he would pass forth beyond Emmaus; but if he intended not to do it, yet he did no injury to the two disciples, for whose good it was that he intended to make this offer: and neither did he prevaricate the strictness of simplicity and sincerity, because they were persons with whom he had made no contracts, to whom he had passed no obligation: and in the nature of the thing, it is proper and natural, by an offer to give an occasion to another to do a good action; and in case it succeeds not, then to do what we intended not; and so the offer was conditional. But in all cases of bargaining, although the actions of themselves may receive naturally another sense, yet I am bound to follow that signification which may not abuse my brother, or pollute my own honesty, or snatch or rifle his interest: because it can be no ingredient into the commutation, if I exchange a thing which he understands not, and is, by error, led into this mistake, and I hold forth the fire, and delude him, and amuse his eye; for by me he is made worse.

But, secondly, as our actions must be of a sincere and determined signification in contract, so must our words; in which the rule of the old Roman honesty was this: "Uterque si ad eloquendum venerit, non plus quam semel loquetur:" "Every one that speaks, is to speak but once;" that is, "but one thing," because commonly that is truth; truth being but one, but error and falsehood infinitely various and changeable: and we shall seldom see a man so stiffened with impiety as to speak little and seldom, and pertinaciously adhere to a single sense, and yet that at first, and all the way after, shall be a lie. Men use to go about when they tell a lie, and devise circumstances, and stand off at distance, and cast a cloud of words, and intricate the whole affair, and cozen themselves first, and then cozen their brother, while they have minced the case of conscience into little particles, and swallowed the lie by crumbs, so that no one passage of it should rush against the conscience, nor do hurt, until it is all got into the belly, and unites in the effect; for by that time two men are abused, the merchant in his soul, and the contractor in his interest: and this is the certain effect of much talking

and little honesty. But he that means honestly, must speak but once, that is, one truth,—and hath leave to vary within the degrees of just prices and fair conditions, which because they have a latitude, may be enlarged or restrained according as the merchant pleases; save only he must never prevaricate the measures of equity, and the proportions of reputation, and the public. But in all parts of this traffic, let our words be the signification of our thoughts, and our thoughts design nothing but the advantages of a permitted exchange. In this case the severity is so great, so exact, and so without variety of case, that it is not lawful for a man to tell a truth with a collateral design to cozen and abuse; and, therefore, at no hand can it be permitted to lie or equivocate, to speak craftily, or to deceive by smoothness, or intricacy, or long discourses.

But this precept of simplicity in matter of contract, hath one step of severity beyond this: in matter of contract it is not lawful so much as to conceal the secret and undiscernible faults of the merchandize; but we must acknowledge them, or else affix prices made diminutive and lessened to such proportions and abatements as that fault should make. "Caveat emptor" is a good caution for him that buys, and it secures the seller in public judicature, but not in court of conscience; and the old laws of the Romans were as nice in this affair, as the conscience of a Christian. Titus Claudius Centumalus* was commanded by the augurs to pull down his house in the Cælian mountain, because it hindered their observation of the flight of birds. He exposes his house to sale; Publius Calphurnius buys it, and is forced to pluck it down; but complaining to the judges he had remedy, because Claudius did not tell him the true state of the inconvenience. He that sells a house infected with the plague, or haunted with evil spirits, sells that which is not worth such a price which it might be put at, if it were in health and peace; and therefore cannot demand it, but openly and upon publication of the evil. To which also this is to be added,—That in some great faults, and such as have danger, (as in the cases now specified,) no diminution of the price is sufficient to make the merchant just and sincere, unless he tells the appendant mischief; because to some persons in many cases, and to all persons in some cases, it is not at all valuable; and

* Cicero.

they would not possess it, if they might, for nothing. Marcus Gratidianus* bought a house of Sergius Orata, which himself had sold before; but because Sergius did not declare the appendant vassalage and service, he was recompensed by the judges: for although it was certain that Gratidianus knew it, because it had been his own, yet, "oportuit ex bonâ fide denunciari," said the law; "it concerned the ingenuity of a good man to have spoken it openly." In all cases it must be confessed in the price, or in the words: but when the evil may be personal, and more than matter of interest and money, it ought to be confessed, and then the goods proscribed, lest by my act I do my neighbour injury, and I receive profit by his damage. Certain it is, that ingenuity is the sweetest and easiest way; there is no difficulty or case of conscience in that; and it can have no objection in it, but that possibly sometimes we loose a little advantage, which, it may be, we may lawfully acquire, but still we secure a quiet conscience; and if the merchandise be not worth so much to me, then neither is it to him; if it be to him, it is also to me; and therefore I have no loss, no hurt to keep it, if it be refused. But he that secures his own profit, and regards not the interest of another, is more greedy of a full purse than of a holy conscience, and prefers gain before justice, and the wealth of his private before the necessity of public society and commerce,—being a son of earth, whose centre is itself, without relation to heaven, that moves upon another's point, and produces flowers for others, and sends influence upon all the world, and receives nothing in return but a cloud of perfume, or the smell of a fat sacrifice.

God sent justice into the world, that all conditions, in their several proportions, should be equal; and he that receives a good, should pay one; and he whom I serve, is obliged to feed and to defend me in the same proportions as I serve; and justice is a relative term, and supposes two persons obliged; and though fortunes are unequal, and estates are in majority and subordination, and men are wise or foolish, honoured or despised, yet in the intercourses of justice God hath made that there is no difference. And therefore it was esteemed ignoble to dismiss a servant, when corn was dear; in dangers of shipwreck, to throw out an unprofitable boy, and keep a fair horse;

or for a wise man to snatch a plank from a drowning fool; or if the master of the ship should challenge the board, upon which his passenger swims for life; or to obtrude false monies upon others, which we first took for true, but at last discover to be false; or not to discover the gold, which the merchant sold for alchymy. The reason of all these is, because the collateral advantages are not at all to be considered in matter of rights; and though I am dearest to myself, as my neighbour is to himself, yet it is necessary that I permit him to his own advantages, as I desire to be permitted to mine. Now, therefore, simplicity and ingenuity in all contracts is perfectly and exactly necessary, because its contrary destroys that equality which justice hath placed in the affairs of men, and makes all things private, and makes a man dearer to himself, and to be preferred before kings, and republics, and churches; it destroys society, and it makes multitudes of men to be but like herds of beasts, without proper instruments of exchange, and securities of possession; without faith, and without propriety; concerning all which there is no other account to be given, but that the rewards of craft are but a little money, and a great deal of dishonour, and much suspicion, and proportionable scorn; watches and guards, spies and jealousies, are his portion. But the crown of justice is a fair life, and a clear reputation, and an inheritance there where justice dwells since she left the earth, even "in the kingdom of the just," who shall call us to "judgment for every word, and render to every man according to his works." And what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when the Lord taketh away his soul? "Tollendum esse ex rebus contrahendis omne mendacium;* that is the sum of this rule. "No falsehood or deceit is to be endured in any contract."

5. Christian simplicity hath also its necessity, and passes obligation upon us towards enemies, in questions of law or war. Plutarch commends Lysander and Philopœmen for their craft and subtlety in war; but commends it not as an ornament to their manners, but that which had influence into prosperous events: just as Ammianus affirms, "Nullo discrimine virtutis ac doli, prosperos omnes laudari debere bellorum eventus:" "whatsoever in war is prosperous, men use to commend." But he that

* Cicero.

* Cicero.

is a good soldier, is not always a good man. Callieratidas was a good man, and followed the old way of downright hostility, ἀπλοῦν καὶ γενναῖον τῶν ἡγεμόνων τρόπον. But Lysander was παυόργος, καὶ σοφιστῆς ἀτάκταις διαποικίλλων τὰ τοῦ πολέμου, "a crafty man, full of plots, but not noble in the conduct of his arms."* I remember Euripides brings in Achilles, commending the ingenuity of his breeding, and the simplicity and nobleness of his own heart :

Ἐγὼ δ' εἰς ἄνδρος εὐσεβεστάτου πατρὸς,
Χείρωνος, ἔμαθον τοὺς τρόπους ἀπλοῦ ἔχειν†

"The good old man, Chiron, was my tutor, and he taught me to use simplicity and honesty in all my manners."† It was well and noble.—But yet some wise men do not condemn all soldiers, that use to get victories by deceit: St. Austin allows it to be lawful; and St. Chrysostom commends it.‡ These good men supposed that a crafty victory was better than a bloody war; and certainly so it is, if the power gotten by craft be not exercised in blood. But this business, as to the case of conscience, will quickly be determined. Enemies are no persons bound by contract and society, and therefore are not obliged to open hostilities and ingenuous prosecutions of the war; and if it be lawful to take by violence, it is not unjust to take the same thing by craft. But this is so to be understood, that, where there is an obligation, either by the law of nations or by special contracts, no man dare to violate his faith or honour, but in these things deal with an ingenuity equal to the truth of peaceful promises, and acts of favour, and endearment to our relatives. Josephus tells of the sons of Herod, that in their enmities with their uncle Pheroras, and Salome, they had disagreeing manners of prosecution, as they had disagreeing hearts:§ some railed openly, and thought their enmity the more honest, because it was not concealed; but, by the ignorance and rude untutored malice, lay open to the close designs of the elder brood of foxes. In this, because it was a particular and private quarrel, there is no rule of conscience, but that it be wholly laid aside, and appeased with charity; for the openness of the quarrel was but the rage and indiscretion of the malice; and the close design was but the craft and advantage of

the malice. But in just wars, on that side where a competent authority, and a just cause, warrants the arms, and turns the active opposition into the excuse and license of defence, there is no restraint upon the actions and words of men in the matter of sincerity, but that the laws of nations be strictly pursued, and all parties, promises, and contracts, observed religiously, and by the proportion of a private and Christian ingenuity. We find it by wise and good men mentioned, with honour, that the Romans threw bread from the besieged capitol into the stations of the Gauls, that they might think them full of corn; and that Agesilaus discouraged the enemies, by causing his own men to wear crowns, in token of a naval victory gotten by Pisander, who yet was at that time destroyed by Conon; and that Flaccus said the city was taken by Æmilius; and that Joshua dissembled a flight at Ai; and the consul, Quinctius, told aloud that the left wing of the enemies was fled, and that made the right wing fly; and that Valerius Lævinus bragged prudently that he had killed Pyrrhus; and that others use the ensigns of enemies' colours and garments. Concerning which sort of actions and words, Agesilaus, in Plutarch, said, οὐ μόνον τὸ δίκαιον, ἀλλὰ καὶ δόξα πολλή, καὶ τὸ μεθ' ἡδονῆς κερδαίνεω ἔνεστι, "It is just and pleasant, profitable and glorious." But to call a parley, and fall in upon the men that treat; to swear a peace, and watch advantage; to entertain heralds, and then to torment them, to get from them notices of their party; these are such actions which are dishonourable and unjust, condemned by the laws of nations, and essential justice, and by all the world. And the Hungarian army was destroyed by a Divine judgment, at the prayer and appeal of the Mahometan enemy, for their violating their faith and honour, and profaning the name of Christ, by using it in a solemn oath to deceive their enemies: Τὸ μὲν σπεισάμενον ἀδικεῖν, τῶν Θεῶν ἔστι καταφρονεῖν. "This is to despise God, when men first swear by him, and then violate their oaths or leagues, their treaties or promises." In other cases liberty hath been taken by all men, and it is reproved by no man, since the first simplicity of fighting and downright blows did cease, by the better instructed people of the world, which was, as is usually computed, about the end of the second Carthaginian war. Since that time, some few persons have been found so noble as to scorn to steal a victory, but had

* In Lysand. † Iphig. in Aul.

† Quæ 10. super Joshuam, lib. 1. de Sacerdotio.

§ Hist. lib. xvi. c. 6.

rather have the glory of a sharp sword than of a sharp wit.

But their fighting-gallantry is extrinsecal to the question of lawful or unlawful.

6. Thus we see how far the laws of ingenuity and Christian simplicity have put fetters upon our words and actions, and directed them in the paths of truth and nobleness: and the first degrees of permission of simulation are in the arts of war, and in the cases of just hostility. But here it is usually inquired, Whether it be lawful to tell a lie or dissemble, to save a good man's life, or to do him a great benefit?—a question which St. Austin was much troubled withal, affirming it to be of the greatest difficulty; for he saw, generally, all the doctors before his time allowed it; and of all the fathers, no man is noted to have reprov'd it but St. Austin alone, and he also, as his manner is, with some variety: those which followed him are to be accounted upon his score. And it relies upon such precedents, which are not lightly to be disallowed. For so Abraham and Isaac told a lie, in the case of their own danger, to Abimelech; so did the Israelitish midwives to Pharaoh; and Rahab, concerning the spies, and David to the king of Gath, and the prophet that anointed Saul, and Elisha to Hazael, and Solomon in the sentence of the stolen child; concerning which Irenæus hath given us a rule, That those whose actions the Scripture hath remarked, and yet not chastised or censured, we are not, without great reason and certain rule, to condemn. But whether his rule can extend to this case, is now to be inquired.

1. It is certain that children may be cozened into goodness, and sick men to health, and passengers in a storm into safety; and the reason of these is,—because not only the end is fair, and charitable, and just, but the means are such which do no injury to the persons which are to receive benefit; because there are persons who are, either naturally or accidentally, ignorant and incompetent judges of affairs: and if they be also wilful, as such persons most commonly are, there is in art and nature left no way to deal with them, but with innocent, charitable, and artificial deceptions; they are not capable of reason and solid discourses, and therefore either must be exposed to all harms, like lions' whelps, when their nurse and sire are taken in a toil, or else be provided for in ways proportionable to their capacity.

2. Sinners may not be treated with the liberty we take to children and sick persons, because they must serve God with choice and election; and therefore, although a sick man may be cozened into his health, yet a man must not be cozened into his duty; which is no duty at all, or pleasing to God, unless it be voluntary and chosen; and therefore they are to be treated with arguments proper to move their wills, by the instrument of understanding specially, being persons of perfect faculties, and apt to be moved by the ways of health and of a man. It is an argument of infirmity, that in some cases it is necessary to make pretences; but those pretences are not made legitimate, unless it be by the infirmity of the interested man with whom we do comply. My infirmity cannot make it lawful to make colours and images of things; but the infirmity of him with whom I deal may be such, that he can be defended or instructed no other way. But sinners that offend God by choice, must have their choice corrected, and their understandings instructed, or else their evil is not cured, nor their state amended.

3. For it is here very observable, that in intercourses of this nature we are to regard a double duty—the matter of justice, and the rights of charity; that is, that good be done by lawful instruments: for it is certain it is not lawful to abuse a man's understanding, with a purpose to gain him sixpence; it is not fit to do evil for a good end, or to abuse one man to preserve or do advantage to another. And therefore it is not sufficient that I intend to do good to my neighbour; for I may not therefore tell a lie and abuse his credulity, because his understanding hath a right as certain as his will hath, or as his money; and his right to truth is no more to be cozened and defrauded, than his right unto his money. And therefore such artificial intercourses are nowise to be permitted, but to such persons over whose understandings we have power and authority.—Plato said it was lawful for kings and governors to dissemble, because there is great necessity for them so to do; but it was but crudely said, so nakedly to deliver the doctrine: for in such things, which the people cannot understand and yet ought to obey, there is a liberty to use them as we use children, who are of no other condition or capacities than children; but in all things where they can and ought to choose, because their understanding is only a servant to God, no

man hath power to abuse their credulity and reason, to preserve their estates and peace. But because children, and mad people, and diseased, are such whose understandings are in minority and under tuition, they are to be governed by their proper instruments and proportions: *Τὸ γὰρ ἀγαθὸν κρείττον ἐστὶ τῆς ἀληθείας*, said Proclus; "A good turn is to be preferred before a true saying." It is only true to such persons who cannot value truth, and prefer an intellectual before a material interest. It is better for children to have warm clothes than a true proposition, and therefore, in all senses, they and their like may be so treated; but other persons, who have distinct capacities, have an injury done them by being abused into advantages; and although those advantages make them recompence, yet he that is tied to make a man recompence, hath done him injury, and committed a sin, by which he was obliged to restitution: and therefore the man ought not to be cozened for his own good.

4. And now, upon the grounds of this discourse, we may more easily determine concerning saving the life of a man by telling a lie in judgment. *Δεῖ με συμπράττειν τοῖς φίλοις, ἀλλὰ μὴχρι Θεῶν*, said Pericles of Athens, when his friend desired him to swear on his side; "I will assist my friend, so far as I may not dishonour God." And to lie in judgment is directly against the being of government, the honour of tribunals, and the commandment of God; and therefore by no accident can be hallowed; it is *καθ' αὐτὸ φαῖλον καὶ ψεκτὸν* as Aristotle said of a lie, it is "a thing evil in itself;" that is, it is evil in the whole kind, ever since it came to be forbidden by God. And therefore all those instances of crafty and delusive answers which are recorded in Scripture, were extra-judicial, and had not this load upon them, to be deceiving of authority in those things where they had right to command or inquire, and either were before or besides the commandment, not at all against it. And since the law of Moses forbade "lying in judgment" only, by that law we are to judge of those actions in the Old Testament, which were committed after its publication: and because in the sermons of the prophets, and especially in the New Testament, Christ hath superadded or enlarged the law of ingenuity and hearty simplicity, we are to leave the old Scripture precedents upon the ground of their own permissions, and finish our duty by the

rules of our religion: which hath so restrained our words, that they must always be just, and always charitable; and there is no leave given to prevaricate, but to such persons where there can be no obligation, persons that have no right, such with whom no contract can be made, such as children, and fools, and infirm persons, whose faculties are hindered or depraved. I remember that Secundus extremely commends Arria for deluding her husband's fears concerning the death of his beloved boy. She wiped her eyes, and came in confidently, and sat by her husband's bedside; and when she could no longer forbear to weep, her husband's sickness was excuse enough to legiūmate that sorrow, or else she could retire; but so long she forbore to confess the boy's death, till Cæcinnæ Pætus had so far recovered, that he could go forth to see the boy, and need not fear with sorrow to return to his disease. It was, indeed, a great kindness and rare prudence, as their affairs and laws were ordered; but we have better means to cure our sick; our religion can charm the passion, and enable the spirit to entertain and master a sorrow. And when we have such rare supplies out of the storehouses of reason and religion, we have less reason to use these arts and little devices, which are arguments of an infirmity as great as is the charity; and therefore we are to keep ourselves strictly to the foregoing measures. "Let every man speak the truth to his neighbour, putting away lying, for we are members one of another;"* and, "Be as harmless as doves," saith our blessed Saviour in my text; which contain the whole duty concerning the matter of truth and sincerity. In both which places, truth and simplicity are founded upon justice, and charity; and, therefore, wherever a lie is in any sense against justice, and wrongs any man of a thing, his judgment and his reason, his right or his liberty, it is expressly forbidden in the Christian religion. What cases we can truly suppose to be besides these, the law forbids not; and therefore it is lawful to say that to myself which I believe not, for what innocent purpose I please, and to all those over whose understanding I have, or ought to have, right.

These cases are intricate enough; and therefore I shall return plainly to press the doctrine of simplicity, which ought to be so

* Ephes. iv. 25.

sacred, that a man ought to do nothing indirectly, which it is not lawful to own; to receive no advantage by the sin of another, which I should account dishonest, if the action were my own; for whatsoever disputes may be concerning the lawfulness of pretending craftily in some rare and contingent cases, yet it is on all hands condemned, that my craft should do injury to my brother. I remember, that when some greedy and indigent people forged a will of Lucius Minutius Basilius, and joined M. Crassus and Q. Hortensius in the inheritance, that their power for their own interest might secure the others' share; they suspecting the thing to be a forgery, yet being not principals and actors in the contrivance, "alieni facinoris manusculum non repudiarunt," "refused not to receive a present made them by another's crime;"* but so they entered upon a moiety of the estate, and the biggest share of the dishonour. We must not be crafty to another's injury, so much as by giving countenance to the wrong; for tortoises and the ostrich hatch their eggs with their looks only; and some have designs which a dissembling face, or an acted gesture, can produce: but as a man may commit adultery with his eye, so with his eye also he may tell a lie, and steal with one finger, and do injury collaterally, and yet design it with a direct intuition, upon which he looks with his face over his shoulder; and by whatsoever instrument my neighbour may be abused, by the same instrument I sin, if I do design it antecedently, or fall upon it together with something else, or rejoice in it when it is done.

7. One thing more I am to add, that it is not lawful to tell a lie in jest. It was a virtue noted in Aristides and Epaminondas, that they would not lie, οὐδ' ἐν παιδιᾷ τι κέρως, "not in sport." And as Christian simplicity forbids all lying in matter of interest and serious rights; so there is an appendix to this precept, forbidding to lie in mirth; for "of every idle word a man shall speak, he shall give account in the day of judgment." And such are the "jestings" which St. Paul reckons amongst "things uncomely." But among these, fables, apologues, parables, or figures of

rhetoric, and any artificial instrument of instruction or innocent pleasure, are not to be reckoned. But he that, without any end of charity or institution, shall tell lies only to become ridiculous in himself, or mock another, hath set something upon his doomsday book, which must be taken off by water or by fire, that is, by repentance or a judgment.

Nothing is easier than simplicity and ingenuity; it is open and ready without trouble and artificial cares, fit for communities and the proper virtue of men, the necessary appendage of useful speech, without which language were given to man as nails and teeth to lions, for nothing but to do mischief. It is a rare instrument of institution, and a certain token of courage; the companion of goodness and a noble mind; the preserver of friendship, the band of society, the security of merchants, and the blessing of trade; it prevents infinite of quarrels, and appeals to judges, and suffers none of the evils of jealousy. Men, by simplicity, converse as do the angels; they do their own work, and secure their proper interest, and serve the public, and do glory to God. But hypocrites, and liars, and dissemblers, spread darkness over the face of affairs, and make men like the blind, to walk softly and timorously; and crafty men, like the close air, suck that which is open and devour its portion and destroy its liberty; and it is the guise of devils, and the dishonour of the soul, and the canker of society, and the enemy of justice, and truth, and peace, of wealth and honour, of courage and merchandise. He is a good man with whom a blind man may safely converse: "dignus quicum in tenebris mices,"* to whom, in respect of his fair treatings, the darkness and light are both alike; but he that bears light upon the face with a dark heart, is like him that transforms himself into an angel of light when he means to do most mischief. Remember this only; that false colours laid upon the face besmear the skin and dirty it, but they neither make a beauty nor mend it. "For without shall be dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."†

* Cicero.

* Cicero.

† Apocal. xxii. 15.

SERMON L.

THE MIRACLES OF THE DIVINE MERCY.

PART I.

*For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive ;
and plenteous in mercy to all them that call upon
thee.—Psal. lxxxvi. 5.*

MAN having destroyed that which God delighted in, that is, the beauty of his soul, fell into an evil portion, and being seized upon by the Divine justice, grew miserable, and condemned to an incurable sorrow. Poor Adam, being banished and undone, went and lived a sad life in the mountains of India, and turned his face and his prayers towards Paradise; thither he sent his sighs, to that place he directed his devotions, there was his heart now, where his felicity sometimes had been; but he knew not how to return thither, for God was his enemy, and, by many of his attributes, opposed himself against him. God's power was armed against him; and, poor man, whom a fly or a fish could kill, was assaulted and beaten with a sword of fire in the hand of a cherubim. God's eye watched him, his omniscience was man's accuser, his severity was the judge, his justice the executioner. It was a mighty calamity that man was to undergo, when he that made him armed himself against his creature, which would have died or turned to nothing, if he had but withdrawn the miracles and the almightiness of his power; if God had taken his arm from under him, man had perished. But it was, therefore, a greater evil when God laid his arm upon him and against him, and seemed to support him that he might be longer killing him. In the midst of these sadnesses, God remembered his own creature, and pitied it; and, by his mercy, rescued him from the hand of his power, and the sword of his justice, and the guilt of his punishment, and the disorder of his sin; and placed him in that order of good things where he ought to have stood. It was mercy that preserved the noblest of God's creatures here below; he who stood condemned and undone under all the other attributes of God, was only saved and rescued by his mercy; that it may be evident that God's mercy is above all his works, and above all ours, greater than the creation, and greater than our sins. As is his majesty, so is his mercy, that is,

without measures and without rules, sitting in heaven and filling all the world, calling for a duty that he may give a blessing, making man that he may save him, punishing him that he may preserve him. And God's justice bowed down to his mercy, and all his power passed into mercy, and his omniscience converted into care and watchfulness, into providence and observation for man's avail; and Heaven gave its influence for man, and rained showers for our food and drink; and the attributes and acts of God sat at the foot of mercy, and all that mercy descended upon the head of man. For so the light of the world in the morning of the creation was spread abroad like a curtain, and dwelt no where, but filled the "expansum" with a dissemination great as the unfoldings of the air's looser garment, or the wilder fringes of the fire, without knots, or order, or combination; but God gathered the beams in his hand, and united them into a globe of fire, and all the light of the world became the body of the sun; and he lent some to his weaker sister that walks in the night, and guides a traveller, and teaches him to distinguish a house from a river, or a rock from a plain field. So is the mercy of God, a vast "expansum," and a huge ocean; from eternal ages it dwelt round about the throne of God, and it filled all that infinite distance and space, that hath no measures but the will of God: until God, desiring to communicate that excellency and make it relative, created angels, that he might have persons capable of huge gifts; and man, who he knew would need forgiveness. For so the angels, our elder brothers, dwelt for ever in the house of their Father, and never brake his commandments; but we, the younger, like prodigals, forsook our Father's house, and went into a strange country, and followed stranger courses, and spent the portion of our nature, and forfeited all our title to the family, and came to need another portion. For, ever since the fall of Adam,—who, like an unfortunate man, spent all that a wretched man could need, or a happy man could have,—our life is repentance, and forgiveness is all our portion: and though angels were objects of God's bounty, yet man only is, in proper speaking, the object of his mercy: and the mercy which dwelt in an infinite circle, became confined to a little ring, and dwelt here below; and here shall dwell below, till it hath carried all God's portion up to heaven, where it shall reign in glory, upon our crowned heads for ever and ever!

But for him that considers God's mercies, and dwells awhile in that depth, it is hard not to talk widely, and without art and order of discoursings. St. Peter talked he knew not what, when he entered into a cloud with Jesus upon mount Tabor, though it passed over him like the little curtains that ride upon the north wind, and pass between the sun and us. And when we converse with a light greater than the sun, and taste a sweetness more delicious than the dew of heaven, and in our thoughts entertain the ravishments and harmony of that atonement, which reconciles God to man, and man to felicity,—it will be more easily pardoned, if we should be like persons that admire much, and say but little; and indeed we can best confess the glories of the Lord by dazzled eyes, and a stammering tongue, and a heart overcharged with the miracles of this infinity. For so those little drops that run over, though they be not much in themselves, yet they tell that the vessel was full, and could express the greatness of the shower no otherwise but by spilling, and in artificial expressions and runnings over. But because I have undertaken to tell the drops of the ocean, and to span the measures of eternity, I must do it by the great lines of revelation and experience, and tell concerning God's mercy as we do concerning God himself, that he is that great fountain of which we all drink, and the great rock of which we all eat, and on which we all dwell, and under whose shadow we all are refreshed. God's mercy is all this; and we can only draw the great lines of it, and reckon the constellations of our hemisphere, instead of telling the number of the stars; we only can reckon what we feel and what we live by: and though there be, in every one of these lines of life, enough to engage us for ever to do God service and to give him praises, yet it is certain there are very many mercies of God upon us, and towards us, and concerning us, which we neither feel, nor see, nor understand as yet; but yet we are blessed by them, and are preserved and secure, and we shall then know them, when we come to give God thanks in the festivities of an eternal sabbath. But that I may confine my discourse into order, since the subject of it cannot, I consider,

1. That mercy, being an emanation of the Divine goodness upon us, supposes us, and found us, miserable. In this account concerning the mercies of God, I must not reckon the miracles and graces of the creation, or any thing of the nature of man, nor tell

how great an endearment God passed upon us that he made us men, capable of felicity, apted with rare instruments of discourse and reason, passions and desires, notices of sense, and reflections upon that sense; that we have not the deformity of a crocodile, nor the motion of a worm, nor the hunger of a wolf, nor the wildness of a tiger, nor the birth of vipers, nor the life of flies, nor the death of serpents.

Our excellent bodies and useful faculties, the upright motion and the tenacious hand, the fair appetites and proportioned satisfactions, our speech and our perceptions, our acts of life, the rare invention of letters, and the use of writing, and speaking at distance, the intervals of rest and labour, (either of which, if they were perpetual, would be intolerable,) the needs of nature and the provisions of providence, sleep and business, refreshments of the body and entertainments of the soul; these are to be reckoned as acts of bounty rather than mercy: God gave us these when he made us, and before we needed mercy; these were portions of our nature, or provided to supply our consequent necessities: but when we forfeited all God's favour by our sins, then that they were continued or restored to us became a mercy, and therefore ought to be reckoned upon this new account. For it was a rare mercy that we were suffered to live at all, or that the anger of God did permit to us one blessing, that he did punish us so gently: but when the rack is changed into an axe, and the axe into an imprisonment, and the imprisonment changed into an enlargement, and the enlargement into an entertainment in the family, and this entertainment passes on to an adoption—these are steps of a mighty favour, and perfect redemption from our sin: and the returning back our goods is a gift, and a perfect donative, sweetened by the apprehensions of the calamity from whence every lesser punishment began to free us. And thus it was that God punished us, and visited the sin of Adam upon his posterity. He threatened we should die, and so we did, but not so as we deserved: we waited for death, and stood sentenced, and are daily summoned by sicknesses and uneasiness; and every day is a new reprieve, and brings a new favour, certain as the revolution of the sun upon that day; and at last, when we must die by the irreversible decree, that death is changed into a sleep, and that sleep is in the bosom of Christ, and there dwells all peace and security, and it shall pass forth into

glories and felicities. We looked for a judge, and behold a Saviour! we feared an accuser, and behold an Advocate! we sat down in sorrow, and rise in joy: we leaped upon rhubarb and aloes, and our aprons were made of the sharp leaves of Indian fig-trees, and so we fed, and so were clothed; but the rhubarb proved medicinal, and the rough leaf of the tree brought its fruit wrapped up in its foldings: and round about our dwellings was planted a hedge of thorns and bundles of thistles, the aconite and the briony, the nightshade and the poppy; and at the root of these grew the healing plantain, which, rising up into a tallness, by the friendly invitation of heavenly influence, turned about the tree of the cross, and cured the wounds of the thorns, and the curse of the thistles, and the malediction of man, and the wrath of God. "Si sic irascitur, quomodo convivatur?" "If God be thus kind when he is angry, what is he when he feasts us with the caresses of his more than tender kindness?" All that God restored to us after the forfeiture of Adam, grew to be a double kindness; for it became the expression of a bounty which knew not how to repent, a graciousness that was not to be altered, though we were; and that was it which we needed. That is the first general: all the bounties of the creation became mercies to us, when God continued them to us, and restored them after they were forfeit.

2. But as a circle begins every where and ends no where, so do the mercies of God: after all this huge progress, now it began anew: "God is good and gracious," and "God is ready to forgive." Now, that he had once more made us capable of mercies, God had what he desired, and what he could rejoice in, something upon which he might pour forth his mercies. And, by the way, this I shall observe, (for I cannot but speak without art, when I speak of that which hath no measure,) God made us capable of one sort of his mercies, and we made ourselves capable of another. "God is good and gracious," that is, desirous to give great gifts: and of this God made us receptive, first, by giving us natural possibilities,—that is, by giving those gifts, he made us capable of more; and next, by restoring us to his favour, that he might not by our provocations, be hindered from raining down his mercies. But God is also "ready to forgive:" and of this kind of mercy we made ourselves capable, even by not de-

serving it. Our sin made way for his grace, and our infirmities called upon his pity; and because we sinned we became miserable, and because we were miserable we became pitiable; and this opened the other treasure of his mercy; that because our "sin abounds," his "grace may superabound." In this method we must confine our thoughts:

1. Giving. { Thou, Lord, art } plenteous in
 { good, } mercy to all
2. Forgiving. { and ready to } them that call
 { forgive, } upon thee.

3. God's mercies, or the mercies of his giving, came first upon us by mending of our nature: for the ignorance we fell into, is instructed, and better learned in spiritual notices, than Adam's morning knowledge in paradise; our appetites are made subordinate to the Spirit, and the liberty of our wills is improved, having "the liberty of the sons of God;" and Christ hath done us more grace and advantage than we lost in Adam: and as man lost paradise, and got heaven; so he lost the integrity of the first, and got the perfection of the second Adam: his "living soul" is changed into "a quickening spirit;" our discerning faculties are filled with the spirit of faith, and our passions and desires are entertained with hope, and our election is sanctified with charity, and our first life of a temporal possession is passed into a better, a life of spiritual expectations; and, though our first parent was forbidden it, yet we live of the fruits of the tree of life. But I instance in two great things, in which human nature is greatly advanced, and passed on to greater perfections. The first is, that besides body and soul, which was the sum total of Adam's constitution, God hath superadded to us a third principle, the beginner of a better life, I mean, the Spirit:* so that now man hath a spiritual and celestial nature breathed into him, and the old man, that is, the old constitution, is the least part, and in its proper operation is dead or dying; but the new man is that which gives denomination, life, motion, and proper actions to a Christian, and that is renewed in us day by day. But, secondly, human nature is so highly exalted and mended by that mercy, which God sent immediately upon the fall of Adam, the promise of Christ, that when he did come, and actuate the purposes of this

* Vide Sermon II.

mission, and ascended up into heaven, he carried human nature above the seats of angels, to the place whither "Lucifer, the son of the morning," aspired to ascend, but in his attempt fell into hell. For (so said the prophet) the son of the morning said, "I will ascend into heaven, and sit in the sides of the north," that is, the throne of Jesus seated in the east, called the sides or obliquity of the north. And as the seating of his human nature in that glorious seat brought to him all adoration, and the majesty of God, and the greatest of his exaltation; so it was so great an advancement to us, that all the angels of heaven take notice of it, and feel a change in the appendage of their condition; not that they are lessened, but that we, who in nature are less than angels, have a relative dignity greater, and an equal honour of being fellow-servants. This mystery is plain in Scripture, and the real effect of it we read in both the Testaments. When Manoah, the father of Samson, saw an angel, he worshipped him;* and, in the Old Testament, it was esteemed lawful; for they were the lieutenants of God, sent with the impresses of his majesty, and took in his name the homage from us, who then were so much their inferiors. But when the man Christ Jesus was exalted, and made the Lord of all the angels, then they became our fellow-servants, and might not receive worship from any of the servants of Jesus, especially from prophets and martyrs, and those that are ministers of "the testimony of Jesus." And, therefore, when an angel appeared to St. John, and he, according to the custom of the Jews, fell down and worshipped him, as not yet knowing, or not considering any thing to the contrary; the angel reproved him, saying, "See thou do it not; I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God;† or, as St. Cyprian‡ reads it, "worship *Jesus*." God and man are now only capable of worship; but no angel: God, essentially; man, in the person of Christ, and in the exaltation of our great Redeemer: but angels not so high, and, therefore, not capable of any religious worship. And this dignity of man St. Gregory explicates fully;§ "Quid est, quod, ante Redemptoris adventum, adorantur ab hominibus

[angeli] et tacent, postmodum verò adorari refugiant?" "Why did the angels of old receive worshippings, and were silent; but, in the New Testament, decline it, and fear to accept it?" "Nisi quòd naturam nostram, quam priùs despexerant, postquam hanc super se assumptam aspiciunt, prostratam sibi videri pertimescunt; nec jam sub se velut infirmam contemnere ausi sunt, quam super se, viz. in cœli Rege, venerantur?" "The reason is because they, seeing our nature, which they did so lightly value, raised up above them, they fear to see it humbled under them; neither do they any more despise the weakness, which themselves worship in the King of heaven." The same also is the sense of the gloss of St. Ambrose, Ansbertus, Haymo, Ruperus, and others of old; and Ribera, Salmeron, and Lewis of Granada of late: which being so plainly consonant to the words of the angel, and consigned by the testimony of such men, I the rather note, that those who worship angels, and make religious addresses to them, may see what privilege themselves lose, and how they part with the honour of Christ, who in his nature relative to us is "exalted far above all thrones, and principalities, and dominions." I need not add lustre to this: it is like the sun, the biggest body of light, and nothing can describe it so well as its own beams: and there is not in nature, or the advantages of honour, any thing greater, than that we have the issues of that mercy which makes us fellow-servants with angels, too much honoured to pay them a religious worship, whose Lord is a man, and he that is their King is our Brother.

4. To this, for the likeness of the matter, I add, that the Divine mercy hath so prosecuted us with the enlargement of his favours, that we are not only fellow-ministers and servants with the angels, and, in our nature in the person of Christ, exalted above them; but we also shall be their judges. And if this be not an honour above that of Joseph or Mordecai, an honour beyond all the measures of a man, then there are in honour no degrees, no priority or distances, or characters of fame and nobleness. Christ is the great Judge of all the world; his human nature shall then triumph over evil men and evil spirits; then shall the devils, those angels that fell from their first originals, be brought in their chains from their dark prisons, and once be allowed to see the light, that light that shall confound them;

* Judges xiii. † Rev. xxii. 9.
‡ De Bono Patientiæ. § Homil. 8. in Evangel.

while all that follow the Lamb, and that are accounted worthy of that resurrection, shall be assessors in the judgment. "Know ye not," saith St. Paul, "that ye shall judge angels?"* And Tertullian, speaking concerning devils and accursed spirits, saith; "Hi sunt angeli quos judicaturi sumus; hi sunt angeli quibus in lavacro renuciavimus:" † "Those angels which we renounced in baptism, those we shall judge in the day of the Lord's glory, in the great day of recompences." † And that the honour may be yet greater, the same day of sentence that condemns the evil angels, shall also reward the good, and increase their glory: which because they derive from their Lord and ours, from their King and our elder Brother, "the King of glories," whose glorious hands shall put the crown upon all our heads, we, who shall be servants of that judgment, and some way or other assist in it, have a part of that honour, to be judges of all angels, and of all the world. The effect of these things ought to be this, that we do not by base actions dishonour that nature, that sits upon the throne of God, that reigns over angels, that shall sit in judgment upon all the world. It is a great indecency that the son of a king should bear water upon his head, and dress vineyards among the slaves; or to see a wise man, and the guide of his country, drink drunk among the meanest of his servants; but when members of Christ shall be made members of a harlot, and that which rides above a rainbow stoops to an imperious, whorish woman; when the soul, that is sister to the Lord of angels, shall degenerate into the foolishness or rage of a beast, being drowned with the blood of the grape, or made mad with passion, or ridiculous with weaker follies; we shall but strip ourselves of that robe of honour, with which Christ hath invested and adorned our nature; and carry that portion of humanity which is our own, and which God hath honoured in some capacities above angels, into a portion of an eternal shame, and become less in all senses, and equally disgraced with devils. The shame and sting of this change shall be, that we turned the glories of the Divine mercy into the baseness of ingratitude, and the amazement of suffering the Divine vengeance. But I pass on.

5. The next order of Divine mercies that

I shall remark, is also an improvement of our nature, or an appendage to it. For, whereas our constitution is weak, our souls apt to diminution and impetite faculties, our bodies to mutilation and imperfection, to blindness and crookedness, to stammering and sorrows, to baldness and deformity, to evil conditions and accidents of body, and to passions and sadness of spirit; God hath, in his infinite mercy, provided for every condition rare suppletories of comfort and usefulness, to make recompence, and sometimes with an overrunning proportion, for those natural defects, which were apt to make our persons otherwise contemptible, and our conditions intolerable. God gives to blind men better memories. For upon this account it is that Ruffinus makes mention of Didymus of Alexandria, who, being blind, was blest with a rare attention and singular memory, and by prayer, and hearing, and discoursing, came to be one of the most excellent divines of that whole age. And it was more remarkable in Nicasius Mechliniensis, who, being blockish at his book, in his first childhood fell into accidental blindness, and from thence continually grew to so quick an apprehension and so tenacious a memory, that he became the wonder of his contemporaries, and was chosen rector of the college at Mechlin, and was made licentiate of theology at Louvain, and doctor of both the laws at Cologne, living and dying in great reputation for his rare parts and excellent learning. At the same rate also God deals with men in other instances; want of children he recompences with freedom from care; and whatsoever evil happens to the body is therefore most commonly single and unaccompanied, because God accepts that evil as the punishment of the sin of the man, or the instrument of his virtue or his security, and it is reckoned as a sufficient antidote. God hath laid a severe law upon all women, that "in sorrow they shall bring forth children:" yet God hath so attempted that sorrow, that they think themselves more accursed if they want that sorrow; and they have reason to rejoice in that state, the trouble of which is alleviated by a promise, that "they shall be saved in bearing children." He that wants one eye, hath the force and vigorousness of both united in that which is left him: and whenever any man is afflicted with sorrow, his reason and his religion, himself and all his friends, persons that are civil and per-

* 1 Cor. vi. 3.

† De Cult. Fœmin.

sons that are obliged, run in to comfort him; and he may, if he will observe wisely, find so many circumstances of ease and remission, so many designs of providence and studied favours, such contrivances of collateral advantage, and certain reserves of substantial and proper comfort, that in the whole sum of affairs, it often happens, that a single cross is a double blessing, and that even in a temporal sense "it is better to go to the house of mourning" than of joys and festival egressions. Is not the affliction of poverty better than the prosperity of a great and tempting fortune? Does not wisdom dwell in a mean estate and low spirit, retired thoughts, and under a sad roof! And is it not generally true, that sickness itself is appayed with religion and holy thoughts, with pious resolutions and penitential prayers, with returns to God and to sober counsels? And if this be true, that God sends sorrow to cure sin, and affliction be the handmaid to grace; it is also certain that every sad contingency in nature is doubly recompensed with the advantages of religion, besides those intervening refreshments which support the spirit, and refresh its instruments. I shall need to instance but once more in this particular.

God hath sent no greater evil into the world, than that "in the sweat of our brows we shall eat our bread;" and in the difficulty and agony, in the sorrows and contention of our souls, we shall "work out our salvation." But see how in the first of these God hath outdone his own anger, and defeated the purposes of his wrath, by the inundation of his mercy; for this labour and sweat of our brows is so far from being a curse, that without it our very bread would not be so great a blessing. Is it not labour that makes the garlick and the pulse, the sycamore and the cresses, the cheese of the goats and the butter of the sheep, to be savoury and pleasant as the flesh of the roebuck, or the milk of the kine, the marrow of oxen, or the thighs of birds? If it were not for labour, men neither could eat so much, nor relish so pleasantly, nor sleep so soundly, nor be so healthful nor so useful, so strong nor so patient, so noble nor so untempted. And as God hath made us beholden to labour for the purchase of many good things, so the thing itself owes to labour many degrees of its worth and value. And, therefore, I need not reckon, that, besides these advantages, the mercies of God have found out proper and natural

remedies for labour; nights to cure the sweat of the day,—sleep to ease our watchfulness,—rest to alleviate our burdens,—and days of religion to procure our rest: and things are so ordered, that labour is become a duty, and an act of many virtues, and is not so apt to turn into a sin as its contrary; and is therefore necessary, not only because we need it for making provisions for our life, but even to ease the labour of our rest; there being no greater tediousness of spirit in the world than want of employment, and an inactive life: and the lazy man is not only unprofitable, but also accursed, and he groans under the load of his time; which yet passes over the active man light as a dream, or the feathers of a bird; while the unemployed is a disease, and like a long sleepless night to himself, and a load unto his country. And therefore, although, in this particular, God hath been so merciful in this infliction, that from the sharpness of the curse a very great part of mankind are freed, and there are myriads of people, good and bad, who do not "eat their bread in the sweat of their brows;" yet this is but an overrunning and an excess of the Divine mercy; God did more for us than we did absolutely need: for he hath so disposed of the circumstances of this curse, that man's affections are so reconciled to it, that they desire it, and are delighted in it; and so the anger of God is ended in loving-kindness, and the drop of water is lost in the full chalice of the wine, and the curse is gone out into a multiplied blessing.

But then for the other part of the severe law and laborious imposition, that we must work out our spiritual interest with the labours of our spirit, seems to most men to be so intolerable, that, rather than pass under it, they quit their hopes of heaven, and pass into the portion of devils. And what can there be to alleviate this sorrow, that a man shall be perpetually solicited with an impure tempter, and shall carry a flame within him, and all the world is on fire round about him, and every thing brings fuel to the flame, and full tables are a snare, and empty tables are collateral servants to a lust, and help to blow the fire and kindle the heap of prepared temptations; and yet a man must not at all taste of the forbidden fruit, and he must not desire what he cannot choose but desire, and he must not enjoy whatsoever he does violently covet, and must never satisfy his appetite in the most violent im-

portunities, but must therefore deny himself, because to do so is extremely troublesome? This seems to be an art of torture, and a device to punish man with the spirit of agony, and a restless vexation. But this also hath in it a great ingredient of mercy, or rather is nothing else but a heap of mercy in its entire constitution. For, if it were not for this, we had nothing of our own to present God, nothing proportionable to the great rewards of heaven, but either all men, or no man, must go thither; for nothing can distinguish man from man, in order to beatitude, but choice and election; and nothing can ennoble the choice but love, and nothing can exercise love but difficulty, and nothing can make that difficulty but the contradiction of our appetite, and the crossing of our natural affections. And therefore, whenever any of you are tempted violently, or grow weary in your spirits with resisting the petulance of temptation, you may be cured, if you will please but to remember and rejoice, that now you have something of your own to give to God, something that he will be pleased to accept, something that he hath given thee that thou mayest give it him; for our money and our time, our days of feasting and our days of sorrow, our discourse and our acts of praise, our prayers and our songs, our vows and our offerings, our worshippings and protestations, and whatsoever else can be accounted in the sum of our religion, are only accepted according as they bear along with them portions of our will, and choice of love, and appendant difficulty.

Lætius est quoties magno tibi constat honestum.

So that whoever can complain that he serves God with pains and mortifications, he is troubled because there is a distinction of things such as we call virtue and vice, reward and punishment; and, if we will not suffer God to distinguish the first, he will certainly confound the latter; and his portion shall be blackness without variety, and punishment shall be his reward.

6. As an appendage to this instance of Divine mercy, we are to account that, not only in nature, but in contingency and emergent events of providence, God makes compensation to us for all the evils of chance and hostilities of accident, and brings good out of evil; which is that solemn triumph which mercy makes over justice, when it rides upon a cloud, and crowns its darkness with a robe of glorious light. God indeed

suffered Joseph to be sold a bond-slave into Egypt, but then it was that God intended to crown and reward his chastity; for by that means he brought him to a fair condition of dwelling, and there gave him a noble trial; he had a brave contention, and he was a conqueror. Then God sent him to prison; but still that was mercy; it was to make way to bring him to Pharaoh's court. And God brought famine upon Canaan, and troubled all the souls of Jacob's family; and there was a plot laid for another mercy; this was to bring them to see and partake of Joseph's glory. And then God brought a great evil upon their posterity, and they groaned under task-masters; but this God changed into the miracles of his mercy, and suffered them to be afflicted that he might do ten miracles for their sakes, and proclaim to all the world how dear they were to God. And was not the greatest good to mankind brought forth from the greatest treason that ever was committed,—the redemption of the world, from the fact of Judas? God loving to defeat the malice of man and the arts of the devil by rare emergencies and stratagems of mercy. It is a sad calamity to see a kingdom spoiled, and a church afflicted; the priests slain with the sword, and the blood of nobles mingled with cheaper sand; religion made a cause of trouble, and the best men most cruelly persecuted; government confounded, and laws ashamed; judges decreeing causes in fear and covetousness, and the ministers of holy things setting themselves against all that is sacred, and setting fire upon the fields, and turning in "little foxes" on purpose to "destroy the vineyards." And what shall make recompence for this heap of sorrows, whenever God shall send such swords of fire? Even the mercies of God, which then will be made public, when we shall hear such afflicted people sing, "In convertendo captivitatem Sion," with the voice of joy and festival eucharist, "among such as keep holy day;" and when peace shall become sweeter, and dwell the longer. And in the meantime it serves religion, and the affliction shall try the children of God, and God shall crown them, and men shall grow wiser and more holy, and leave their petty interests, and take sanctuary in holy living, and be taught temperance by their want, and patience by their suffering, and charity by their persecution, and shall better understand the duty of their relations; and, at last, the secret worm that lay at the root

of the plant, shall be drawn forth and quite extinguished. For so have I known a luxuriant vine swell into irregular twigs and bold excrescences, and spend itself in leaves and little rings, and afford but trifling clusters to the wine-press, and a faint return to his heart, which longed to be refreshed with a full vintage; but when the lord of the vine had caused the dressers to cut the wilder plant, and made it bleed, it grew temperate in its vain expense of useless leaves, and knotted into fair and juicy bunches, and made accounts of that loss of blood by the return of fruit. So is an afflicted province cured of its surfeits, and punished for its sins, and bleeds for its long riot, and is left ungoverned for its disobedience, and chastised for its wantonness; and when the sword hath let forth the corrupted blood, and the fire hath purged the rest, then it enters into the double joys of restitution, and gives God thanks for his rod, and confesses the mercies of the Lord in making the smoke to be changed into fire, and the cloud into a perfume, the sword into a staff, and his anger into mercy.

Had not David suffered more, if he had suffered less? and had he not been miserable, unless he had been afflicted? He understood it well, when he said, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." He that was rival to Crassus when he stood candidate to command the legions in the Parthian war, was much troubled that he missed the dignity; but he saw himself blest that he escaped the death, and the dishonour of the overthrow, by that time the sad news arrived at Rome. The gentleman at Marseilles cursed his stars, that he was absent when the ship set sail to sea, having long waited for a wind, and missed it; but he gave thanks to the Providence that blessed him with the cross, when he knew that the ship perished in the voyage, and all the men were drowned. And even those virgins and barren women in Jerusalem that longed to become glad mothers, and for want of children would not be comforted, yet, when Titus sacked the city, found the words of Jesus true, "Blessed is the womb that never bare, and the paps that never gave suck." And the world being governed with a rare variety, and changes of accidents and providence; that which is a misfortune in the particular, in the whole order of things becomes a bless-

ing bigger than we hoped for, then when we were angry with God for hindering us to perish in pleasant ways, or when he was contriving to pour upon thy head a mighty blessing. Do not think the judge condemns you, when he chides you; nor think to read thy own final sentence by the first half of his words. Stand still, and see how it will be in the whole event of things: let God speak his mind out; for it may be this sad beginning is but an art to bring in, or to make thee to esteem, and entertain, and understand the blessing.

They that love to talk of the mercies of the Lord, and to recount his good things, cannot but have observed that God delights to be called by such appellatives, which relate to miserable and afflicted persons: he is "the Father of the fatherless," and an "Avenger of the widow's cause;" he standeth at the right hand of the poor, to save his soul from unrighteous judges;" and "he is with us in tribulation." And upon this ground let us account whether mercy be not the greater ingredient in that death and deprivation, when I lose a man, and get God to be my Father; and when my weak arm of flesh is cut from my shoulder, and God makes me to lean upon him, and becomes my Patron and my Guide, my Advocate and Defender. And if, in our greatest misery, God's mercy is so conspicuous, what can we suppose him to be in the endearment of his loving-kindness? If his evil be so transparent, well may we know that upon his face dwells glory, and from his eyes light and perpetual comforts run in channels larger than the returns of the sea, when it is driven and forced faster into its natural course by the violence of a tempest from the north. The sum is this: God intends every accident should minister to virtue, and every virtue is the mother and the nurse of joy, and both of them daughters of the Divine goodness; and therefore, if our sorrows do not pass into comforts, it is beside God's intention; it is because we will not comply with the act of that mercy, which would save us by all means and all varieties, by health and by sickness, by the life and by the death of our dearest friends, by what we choose, and by what we fear; that as God's providence rules over all chances of things and all designs of men, so his mercy may rule over all his providence.

SERMON LI.

PART II.

7. GOD having, by these means, secured us from the evils of nature and contingencies, and represented himself to be our Father, which is the great endearment and tie, and expression of a natural, unalterable, and essential kindness; he next makes provisions for us to supply all those necessities which himself hath made. For even to make necessities was a great circumstance of the mercy; and all the relishes of wine, and the savouriness of meat, the sweet and the fat, the pleasure and the satisfaction, the restitution of spirits and the strengthening of the heart, are not owing to the liver of the vine or the kidneys of wheat, to the blood of the grape or the strength of the corn, but to the appetite or the necessity: and therefore it is, that he,—that sits at a full table, and does not recreate his stomach with fasting, and let his digestion rest, and place himself in the advantages of nature's intervals;—he loses the blessing of his daily bread, and leans upon his table as a sick man upon his bed, or the lion in the grass, which he cannot feed on: but he that wants it, and sits down when nature gives the sign, rejoices in the health of his hunger, and the taste of his meat, and the strengthening of his spirit, and gives God thanks, while his bones and his flesh rejoice in the provisions of nature and the blessing of God. Are not the imperfections of infancy and the decays of old age the evils of our nature, because respectively they want desire, and they want gust and relish, and reflections upon their acts of sense? and “when desire fails, presently the mourners go about the streets.”* But then, that those desires are so provided for by nature and art, by ordinary and extraordinary, by foresight and contingency, according to necessity and up unto convenience, until we arrive at abundance, is a chain of mercies larger than the bow in the clouds, and richer than the trees of Eden, which were permitted to feed our miserable father. Is not all the earth our orchard and our granary, our vineyard and our garden of pleasure? and the face of the sea is our traffic, and the bowels of the sea is our vivarium, a place for fish to feed us, and to serve some other collateral appendant needs; and all the face

of heaven is a repository for influences and breath, fruitful showers and fair refreshments. And when God made provision for his other creatures, he gave it of one kind, and with variety no greater than the changes of day and night, one devouring the other, or sitting down with his draught of blood, or walking upon his portion of grass: but man hath all the food of beasts, and all the beasts themselves that are fit for food, and the food of angels, and the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth: and every part of his body hath a provision made for it: and the smoothness of the olive and the juice of the vine refresh the heart and make the face cheerful, and serve the ends of joy and the festivity of man; and are not only to cure hunger or to allay thirst, but to appease a passion and allay a sorrow. It is an infinite variety of meat with which God furnishes out the table of mankind. And in the covering our sin, and clothing our nakedness, God passed from fig-leaves to the skins of beasts, from aprons to long robes, from leather to wool, and from thence to the warmth of furs and the coolness of silks; he hath dressed not only our needs, but hath fitted the several portions of the year, and made us to go dressed like our mother, leaving off the winter-sables when the florid spring appears; and as soon as the tulip fades, we put on the robe of summer, and then shear our sheep for winter: and God uses us as Joseph did his brother Benjamin; we have many changes of raiment, and our mess is five times bigger than the provision made for our brothers of the creation. But the providence and mercies of God are to be estimated also according as these provisions are dispensed to every single person. For that I may not remark the bounties of God running over the tables of the rich, God hath also made provisions for the poorest person; so that if they can but rule their desires, they shall have their tables furnished. And this secured and provided for by one promise and two duties, by our own labour and our brother's charity: and our faith in this affair is confirmed by all our own, and by all the experience of other men. Are not all the men and the women in the world provided for, and fed, and clothed, till they die? And was it not always so from the first morning of the creatures? And that a man is starved to death, is a violence and a rare contingency, happening almost as seldom as for a man to have but one eye: and if our

* Eccles. xii.

being provided for be as certain as for a man to have two eyes, we have reason to adore the wisdom and admire the mercies of our almighty Father. But these things are evident. Is it not a great thing that God hath made such strange provisions for our health—such infinite differences of plants—and hath discovered the secrets of their nature by mere chance, or by inspiration? Either of which is the miracle of Providence secret to us, but ordered by certain and regular decrees of Heaven. It was a huge diligence and care of the Divine mercy that discovered to man the secrets of spagyric medicines, of stones, of spirits, and the results of seven or eight decoctions, and the strange effects of accidental mixtures, which the art of man could not suspect, being bound up in the secret sanctuary of hidden causes and secret natures, and being laid open by the concurrence of twenty or thirty little accidents, all which were ordered by God as certainly as are the first principles of nature, or the descent of sons from the fathers in the most noble families.

But that which I shall observe in this whole affair is, that there are, both for the provision of our tables and the relief of our sicknesses, so many miracles of Providence, that they give plain demonstration what relation we bear to heaven: and the poor man need not be troubled that he is to expect his daily portion after the sun is up; for he hath found to this day he was not deceived; and then he may rejoice, because he sees, by an effective probation, that in heaven a decree was made, every day to send him provisions of meat and drink. And that is a mighty mercy, when the circles of heaven are bowed down to wrap us in a bosom of care and nourishment, and the wisdom of God is daily busied to serve his mercy, as his mercy serves our necessities. Does not God plant remedies there, where the diseases are most popular? and every country is best provided against its own evils. Is not the rhubarb found, where the sun most corrupts the liver; and the scabious by the shore of the sea, that God might cure as soon as he wounds? and the inhabitants may see their remedy against the leprosy and the scurvy, before they feel their sickness. And then to this we may add nature's commons and open fields, the shores of rivers and the strand of the sea, the unconfined air, the wilderness that hath no hedge; and that in these every man may hunt, and fowl, and fish, respectively;

and that God sends some miracles and extraordinary blessings so for the public good, that he will not endure they should be enclosed and made several. Thus he is pleased to dispense the manna of Calabria, the medicinal waters of Germany, the muscles at Sluys at this day, and the Egyptian beans in the marshes of Albania, and the salt at Troas of old; which God, to defeat the covetousness of man, and to spread his mercy over the face of the indigent, as the sun scatters his beams over the bosom of the whole earth, did so order, that as long as every man was permitted to partake, the bosom of heaven was open; but when man gathered them into single handfuls, and made them inappropriate, God gathered his hand into his bosom, and bound the heavens with ribs of brass, and the earth with decrees of iron; and the blessing reverted to him that gave it, since *they* might not receive it to whom it was sent. And in general, this is the excellency of his mercy, that all our needs are certainly supplied and secured by a promise which God cannot break: but he that cannot break the laws of his own promises, can break the laws of nature, that he may perform his promise, and he will do a miracle rather than forsake thee in thy needs: so that our security and the relative mercy is bound upon us by all the power and the truth of God.

8. But because such is the bounty of God, that he hath provided a better life for the inheritance of man, if God is so merciful in making fair provisions for our less noble part, in order to the transition toward our country, we may expect that the mercies of God have rare arts to secure to us his designed bounty in order to our inheritance, to that which ought to be our portion for ever. And here I consider, that it is an infinite mercy of the almighty Father of mercies, that he hath appointed to us such a religion, that leads us to a huge felicity through pleasant ways. For the felicity that is designed to us, is so above our present capacities and conceptions, that while we are so ignorant as not to understand it, we are also so foolish as not to desire it with passions great enough to perform the little conditions of its purchase. God, therefore, knowing how great an interest it is, and how apt we should be to neglect it, hath found out such conditions of acquiring it, which are eases and satisfaction to our present appetites. God hath bound our salvation upon us by the endearment of tem-

poral prosperities; and because we love this world so well, God hath so ordered it, that even this world may secure the other. And of this, God in old time made open profession; for when he had secretly designed to bring his people to a glorious immortality in another world, he told them nothing of that, it being a thing bigger than the capacity of their thoughts, or of their theology; but told them that which would tempt them most, and endear obedience: "If you will obey, ye shall eat the good things of the land;" ye shall possess a rich country, ye shall triumph over your enemies, ye shall have numerous families, blessed children, rich granaries, overrunning wine-presses. For God knew the cognation of most of them was so dear between their affections and the good things of this world, that if they did not obey in hope of that they did need, and fancy, and love, and see, and feel—it was not to be expected they should quit their affections for a secret in another world, whither before they come they must die, and lose all desire, and all capacities of enjoyment. But this design of God, which was barefaced in the days of the law, is now in the gospel interwoven secretly (but yet plain enough to be discovered by an eye of faith and reason) into every virtue; and temporal advantage is a great ingredient in the constitution of every Christian grace. For so the richest tissue dazzles the beholder's eye, when the sun reflects upon the metal, the silver and the gold weaved into fantastic imagery, or a wealthy plainness; but the rich wire and shining filaments are wrought upon cheaper silk, the spoil of worms and flies; so is the embroidery of our virtue. The glories of the Spirit dwell upon the face and vestment, upon the fringes and the borders, and there we see the beryl and the onyx, the jasper and the sardonyx, order and perfection, love and peace, and joy, mortification of the passions and ravishment of the will, adherences to God and imitation of Christ, reception and entertainment of the Holy Ghost, and longings after heaven, humility and chastity, temperance and sobriety; these make the frame of the garment, the clothes of the soul, that it may not be found naked in the day of the Lord's visitation; but through these rich materials a thread of silk is drawn, some compliance with worms and weaker creatures, something that shall please our bowels, and make the lower man to rejoice; they are wrought upon secular content and

material satisfactions; and now we cannot be happy unless we be pious, and the religion of a Christian is the greatest security, and the most certain instrument of making a man rich, and pleasing, and healthful, and wise, and beloved, in the whole world. I shall now remark only two or three instances; for the main body of this truth I have elsewhere represented."*

1. The whole religion of a Christian, as it relates to others, is nothing but justice and mercy, certain parents of peace and benefit; and upon this supposition, what evil can come to a just and a merciful, to a necessary and useful person? For the first permission of evil was upon the stock of injustice. He that kills may be killed, and he that does injury may be mischieved; he that invades another man's right, must venture the loss of his own; and when I put my brother to his defence, he may chance drive the evil so far from himself, that it may reach me. Laws and judges, private and public judicatures, wars and tribunals, axes and wheels, were made, not for the righteous, but for the unjust; and all that whole order of things and persons would be useless, if men did do as they would willingly suffer.

2. And because there is no evil that can befall a just man, unless it comes by injury and violence, our religion hath also made as good provisions against that too, as the nature of the thing will suffer. For by patience we are reconciled to the sufferance, and by hope and faith we see a certain consequent reward; and by praying for the persecuting man we are cured of all the evil of the mind, the envy and the fretfulness that uses to gall the troubled and resisting man; and when we turn all the passion into charity, and God turns all the suffering into reward, there remains nothing that is very formidable. So that our religion obliges us to such duties which prevent all evils that happen justly to men; and in our religion no man can suffer as a malefactor, if he follows the religion truly; and for the evils that are unavoidable and come by violence, the graces of this discipline turn them into virtues and rewards, and make them that in their event they are desirable, and in the suffering they are very tolerable.

3. But then when we consider that the religion of a Christian consists in doing good to all men; that it is made up of mercies and friendships, of friendly conventions

* Life of Holy Jesus, Part ii. Disc. 14.

and assemblies of saints; that all are to do public works for necessary uses, that is, to be able to be beneficial to the public, and not to be burdensome to any, where it can be avoided; what can be wished to men in relation to others, and what can be more beneficial to themselves, than that they be such whom other men will value for their interest, such whom the public does need, such whom princes and nobles ought to esteem, and all men can make use of according to their several conditions; that they are so well provided for, that, unless a persecution disables them, they cannot only maintain themselves, but oblige others to their charity? This is a temporal good, which all wise men reckon as a part of that felicity which recompenses all the labours of their day, and sweetens the sleep of their night, and places them in that circle of neighbourhood and amity, where men are most valued and most secure.

4. To this we may add this material consideration: That all those graces, which oblige us to do good to others, are nothing else but certain instruments of doing advantage to ourselves. It is a huge nobleness of charity to give alms, not only to our brother, but for him. It is the Christian sacrifice, like that of Job, who made oblations for his sons when they feasted each other, fearing lest they had sinned against God. And if I give alms, and fast, and pray, in behalf of my prince or my patron, my friend or my children, I do a combination of holy actions; which are, of all things that I can do, the most effectual intercession for him whom I so recommend. But then observe the art of this, and what a plot is laid by the Divine mercy, to secure blessing to ourselves. That I am a person fit to intercede and pray for him, must suppose me a gracious person, one whom God rather will accept; so that, before I be fit to pray and interpose for him, I must first become dear to God; and my charity can do him no good, for whose interest I gave it, but by making me first acceptable to God, that so he may the rather hear me. And when I fast, it is first an act of repentance for myself, before it can be an instrument of impetration for him. And thus I do my brother a single benefit, by doing myself a double one. And it is also so ordered, that when I pray for a person for whom God will not hear me, yet then he will hear me for myself, though I say nothing in my own behalf: and our prayers are like Jonathan's arrows; if

they fall short, yet they return my friend or my friendship to me; or if they go home, they secure him whom they pray for; and I have not only the comfort of rejoicing with him, but the honour and the reward of procuring him a joy. And certain it is, that the charitable prayer for another can never want what it asks, or, instead of it, a greater blessing. The good man,—that saw his poor brother troubled, because he had nothing to present for an offering at the holy communion, (when all knew themselves obliged to do kindness for Christ's poor members, with which themselves were incorporated with so mysterious a union,) and gave him money, that he might present for the good of his soul, as other Christians did,—had not only the reward of alms, but of religion too; and that offering was well husbanded, for it did benefit to two souls. For as I sin when I make another sin; so if I help to do a good, I am a sharer in the gains of that talent; and he shall not have the less, but I shall be rewarded upon his stock. And this was it which David rejoiced in: "Particeps sum omnium timentium te:" "I am a partner, a companion, of all them that fear thee;" I share in their profits. If I do but rejoice at every grace of God which I see in my brother, I shall be rewarded for that grace. And we need not envy the excellency of another; it becomes mine as well as his; and if I do rejoice, I shall have cause to rejoice. So excellent, so full, so artificial is the mercy of God, in making, and seeking, and finding all occasions to do us good.

5. The very, charity, and love, and mercy, that is commanded in our religion, is in itself a great excellency; not only in order to heaven, but to the comforts of the earth too; and such, without which a man is not capable of a blessing or a comfort. And he that sent charity and friendships into the world, intended charity to be as relative as justice, and to do its effect both upon the loving and the beloved person. It is a reward and a blessing to a kind father, when his children do well; and every degree of prudent love which he bears to them, is an endearment of his joy; and he that loves them not, but looks upon them as burdens of necessity and loads to his fortune, loses those many rejoicings, and the pleasures of kindness which they feast withal, who love to divide their fortunes amongst them, because they have already divided large and equal portions of their heart. I have instanced in

this relation; but it is true in all the excellency of friendship: and every man rejoices twice, when he hath a partner of his joy. A friend shares my sorrow, and makes it but a moiety; but he swells my joy, and makes it double. For so two channels divide the river, and lessen it into rivulets, and make it fordable, and apt to be drunk up at the first revels of the Syrian star; but two torches do not divide, but increase the flame. And though my tears are the sooner dried up, when they run upon my friend's cheeks in the furrows of compassion; yet when my flame hath kindled his lamp, we unite the glories, and make them radiant, like the golden candlesticks that burn before the throne of God; because they shine by numbers, by unions, and confederations of light and joy.

And now, upon this account, which is already so great, I need not reckon concerning the collateral issues and little streams of comfort, which God hath made to issue from that religion to which God hath obliged us; such as are mutual comforts,—visiting sick people,—instructing the ignorant,—and so becoming better instructed, and fortified, and comforted ourselves, by the instruments of our brother's ease and advantages;—the glories of converting souls, of rescuing a sinner from hell, of a miserable man from the grave,—the honour and nobleness of being a good man,—the noble confidence and the bravery of innocence,—the ease of patience,—the quiet of contentedness,—the rest of peacefulness,—the worthiness of forgiving others,—the greatness of spirit that is in despising riches,—and the sweetness of spirit that is in meekness and humility;—these are Christian graces in every sense; favours of God, and issues of his bounty and his mercy. But all that I shall now observe further concerning them is this: That God hath made these necessary; he hath obliged us to have them, under pain of damnation; he hath made it so sure to us to become happy even in this world, that if we will not, he hath threatened to destroy us; which is not a desire or aptness to do us an evil, but an art to make it impossible that we should. For God hath so ordered it, that we cannot perish, unless we desire it ourselves; and unless we will do ourselves a mischief on purpose to get hell, we are secured of heaven; and there is not in the nature of things any way that can more infallibly do the work of felicity upon creatures that can choose, than to make that

which they should naturally choose be spiritually their duty: and then he will make them happy hereafter, if they will suffer him to make them happy here. But hard by stand another throng of mercies, that must be considered by us, and God must be glorified in them; for they are such as are intended to preserve to us all this felicity.

9. God, that he might secure our duty and our present and consequent felicity, hath tied us with golden chains, and bound us, not only with the bracelets of love and the deliciousness of hope, but with the ruder cords of fear and reverence; even with all the innumerable parts of a restraining grace. For it is a huge aggravation of human calamity to consider, that after a man hath been instructed in the love and advantages of his religion, and knows it to be the way of honour and felicity, and that to prevaricate his holy sanctions is certain death and disgrace to eternal ages; yet that some men shall despise their religion, others shall be very wary of its laws, and call the commandments a burden; and too many, with a perfect choice, shall delight in death, and the ways that lead thither; and they choose money infinitely, and to rule over their brother by all means, and to be revenged extremely, and to prevail by wrong, and to do all that they can, and please themselves in all that they desire, and love it fondly, and be restless in all things but where they perish. If God should not interpose by the arts of a miraculous and merciful grace, and put a bridle in the mouth of our lusts, and chastise the sea of our follies by some heaps of sand or the walls of a rock, we should perish in the deluge of sin universally; as the old world did in that storm of the Divine anger, "the flood of waters." But thus God suffers but few adulteries in the world, in respect of what would be, if all men that desire to be adulterers had power and opportunity. And yet some men, and very many women, are, by modesty and natural shamefacedness, chastised in their too forward appetites; or the laws of man, or public reputation, or the indecency and unhandsome circumstances of sin, check the desire, and make it that it cannot arrive at act. For so have I seen a busy flame sitting upon a sullen coal, turn its point to all the angles and portions of its neighbourhood, and reach at a heap of prepared straw, which, like a bold temptation, called it to a restless motion and activity; but either it was at too big a distance, or a gentle

breath from heaven diverted the sphere and the ray of the fire to the other side, and so prevented the violence of the burning; till the flame expired in a weak consumption, and died, turning into smoke, and the coolness of death, and the harmlessness of a cinder. And when a man's desires are winged with sails and a lusty wind of passion, and pass on in a smooth channel of opportunity, God oftentimes hinders the lust and the impatient desire from passing on to its port, and entering into action, by a sudden thought, by a little remembrance of a word, by a fancy, by a sudden disability, by unreasonable and unlikely fears, by the sudden intervening of company, by the very weariness of the passion, by curiosity, by want of health, by the too great violence of the desire, bursting itself with its fulness into dissolution and a remiss easiness, by a sentence of Scripture, by the reverence of a good man, or else by the proper interventions of the Spirit of grace, chastising the crime, and representing its appendant mischiefs, and its constituent disorder and irregularity; and after all this, the very anguish and trouble of being defeated in the purpose, hath rolled itself into so much uneasiness and unquiet reflections, that the man is grown ashamed, and vexed into more sober counsels.

And the mercy of God is not less than infinite, in separating men from the occasions of their sin, from the neighbourhood and temptation. For if the hyæna and a dog should be thrust into the same kennel, one of them would soon find a grave, and it may be, both of them their death. So infallible is the ruin of most men, if they be showed a temptation. Nitre and resin, naphtha and bitumen, sulphur and pitch, are their constitution; and the fire passes upon them infinitely, and there is none to secure them. But God, by removing our sins far from us, "as far as the east is from the west," not only putting away the guilt, but setting the occasion far from us, extremely far,—so far that sometimes we cannot sin, and many times not easily,—hath magnified his mercy, by giving us safety in all those measures in which we are untempted. It would be the matter of new discourses, if I should consider concerning the variety of God's grace; his preventing and accompanying, his inviting and corroborating grace; his assisting us to will, his enabling us to do; his sending angels to watch us, to remove us from evil company,

to drive us with swords of fire from forbidden instances, to carry us by unobserved opportunities into holy company, to minister occasions of holy discourses, to make it by some means or other necessary to do a holy action, to make us in love with virtue, because they have mingled that virtue with a just and a fair interest; to some men, by making religion that thing they live upon; to others, the means of their reputation and the securities of their honour, and thousands of ways more, which every prudent man that watches the ways of God, cannot but have observed. But I must also observe other great conjugations of mercy; for he that is to pass through an infinite, must not dwell upon every little line of life.

10. The next order of mercies is such which is of so pure and unmingled constitution, that it hath at first no regard to the capacities and dispositions of the receivers; and afterwards, when it hath, it relates only to such conditions which itself creates and produces in the suscipient; I mean, the mercies of the Divine predestination. For was it not an infinite mercy, that God should predestinate all mankind to salvation by Jesus Christ, even when he had no other reason to move him to do it, but because man was miserable, and needed his pity? But I shall instance only in the intermedial part of this mysterious mercy. Why should God cause us to be born of Christian parents, and not to be circumcised by the impure hands of a Turkish priest? What distinguished me from another, that my father was severe in his discipline, and careful to "bring me up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" and I was not exposed to the carelessness of an irreligious guardian, and taught to steal and lie, and to make sport with my infant vices and beginnings of iniquity? Who was it that discerned our persons from the lot of dying chrysons, whose portion must be among those who never glorified God with a free obedience? What had you done of good, or towards it, that you were not condemned to that stupid ignorance, which makes the souls of most men to be little higher than beasts; and who understand nothing of religion and noble principles, of parables and wise sayings of old men? And not only in our cradles, but in our schools and our colleges, in our friendships and in our marriages, in our enmities and in all our conversation, in our virtues and in our vices, where all things in us were equal, or else we were the inferior,

there is none of us but have felt the mercies of many differences. Or it may be, my brother and I were intemperate, and drunk, and quarrelsome, and he killed a man: but God did not suffer me to do so: he fell down and died with a little disorder; I was a beast, and yet was permitted to live, and not yet to die in my sins: he did amiss once, and was surprised in that disadvantage; I sin daily, and am still invited to repentance: he would fain have lived and amended; I neglect the grace, but am allowed the time. And when God sends the angel of his wrath to execute his anger upon a sinful people, we are encompassed with funerals, and yet the angel hath not smitten us. What or who makes the difference? We shall then see, when, in the separations of eternity, we, sitting in glory, shall see some of the partners of our sins carried into despair and the portions of the left hand, and roaring in the seats of the reprobate; we shall then perceive that it is even that mercy which hath no cause but itself, no measure of its emanation but our misery, no natural limit but eternity, no beginning but God, no object but man, no reason but an essential and an unalterable goodness, no variety but our necessity and capacity, no change but new instances of its own nature, no ending or repentance, but our absolute and obstinate refusal to entertain it.

11. Lastly: All the mercies of God are centred in that which is all the felicity of man; and God is so great a lover of souls, that he provides securities and fair conditions for them, even against all our reason and hopes, our expectations and weak discouragements. The particulars I shall remark are these: 1. God's mercy prevails over the malice and ignorances, the weaknesses and follies of men; so that in the conventions and assemblies of *heretics*, (as the word is usually understood, for erring and mistaken people,) although their doctrines are such, that, if men should live according to their proper and natural consequences, they would live impiously, yet in every one of these there are persons so innocently and invincibly mistaken, and who mean nothing but truth, while in the simplicity of their heart they talk nothing but error, that, in the defiance and contradiction of their own doctrines, they live according to its contradictory. He that believes contrition alone, with confession to a priest, is enough to expiate ten thousand sins, is furnished with an excuse easy enough to quit himself from

the troubles of a holy life; and he that hath a great many cheap ways of buying off his penances for a little money, even for the greatest sins, is taught a way not to fear the doing of an act, for which he must repent, since repentance is a duty so soon, so certainly, and so easily performed. But these are notorious doctrines of the Roman church; and yet God so loves the souls of his creatures, that many men, who trust to these doctrines in their discourses, dare not rely upon them in their lives. But while they talk as if they did not need to live strictly, many of them live so strictly as if they did not believe so foolishly. He that tells that, antecedently, God hath, to all human choice, decreed men to heaven or to hell, takes away from men all care of the way, because they believe that he that infallibly decreed that end, hath unalterably appointed the means; and some men that talk thus wildly, live soberly, and are overwrought in their understanding by some secret art of God, that man may not perish in his ignorance, but be assisted in his choice, and saved by the Divine mercies. And there is no sect of men but are furnished with antidotes and little excuses to cure the venom of their doctrine; and therefore, although the adherent and constituent poison is notorious, and therefore to be declined, yet, because it is collaterally cured and overpowered by the torrent and wisdom of God's mercies, the men are to be taken into the quire, that we may all join, giving God praise for the operation of his hands.—2. I said formerly, that there are many secret and undiscerned mercies by which men live, and of which men can give no account, till they come to give God thanks at their publication; and of this sort is that mercy which God reserves for the souls of many millions of men and women, concerning whom we have no hopes, if we account concerning them by the usual proportions of revelation and Christian commandments; and yet we are taught to hope some strange good things concerning them, by the analogy and general rules of the Divine mercy. For what shall become of ignorant Christians, people that live in wildernesses, and places more desert than a primitive hermitage? people that are baptized, and taught to go to church, it may be, once a year? people that can get no more knowledge; they know not where to have it, nor how to desire it? And yet that an eternity of pains shall be consequent to such an ignorance, is unlike the mercy of

God; and yet that they shall be in any disposition towards an eternity of intellectual joys, is no where set down in the leaves of revelation. And when the Jews grew rebellious, or a silly woman of the daughters of Abraham was tempted, and sinned, and punished with death, we usually talk as if that death passed on to a worse; but yet we may arrest our thoughts upon the Divine mercies, and consider that it is reasonable to expect from the Divine goodness, that no greater forfeiture be taken upon a law than was expressed in its sanction and publication. He that makes a law, and binds it with the penalty of stripes, we say, he intends not to afflict the disobedient with scorpions and axes: and it had been hugely necessary that God had scared the Jews from their sins by threatening the pains of hell to them that disobeyed, if he intended to inflict it; for although many men would have ventured the future, since they are not affrightened with the present and visible evil, yet some persons would have had more philosophical and spiritual apprehensions than others, and have been infallibly cured, in all their temptations, with the fear of an eternal pain; and, however, whether they had or no, yet since it cannot be understood how it consists with the Divine justice to exact a pain bigger than he threatened, greater than he gave warning of, we are sure it is a great way off from God's mercy to do so. He that usually imposes less, and is loth to inflict any, and very often forgives it all, is hugely distant from exacting an eternal punishment, when the most that he threatened, and gave notice of, was but a temporal. The effect of this consideration I would have to be this: That we may publicly worship this mercy of God, which is kept in secret, and that we be not too forward in sentencing all heathens, and prevaricating Jews, to the eternal pains of hell; but to hope that they have a portion in the secrets of the Divine mercy, where also, unless many of us have some little portions deposited, our condition will be very uncertain, and sometimes most miserable. God knows best how intolerably accused a thing it is to perish in the eternal flames of hell, and therefore he is not easy to inflict it; and if the joys of heaven be too great to be expected upon too easy terms, certainly the pains of the damned are infinitely too big to pass lightly upon persons who cannot help themselves, and who, if they were helped with clearer revelations, would have avoided

them. But as in these things we must not pry into the secrets of the Divine economy, being sure, whether it be so or not, it is most just, even as it is; so we may expect to see the glories of the Divine mercy made public, in unexpected instances, at the great day of manifestation. And, indeed, our dead many times go forth from our hands very strangely and carelessly, without prayers, without sacraments, without consideration, without counsel, and without comfort; and to dress the souls of our dear people at so sad a parting, is an employment we therefore omit, not always because we are negligent, but because the work is sad, and allays the affections of the world with those melancholic circumstances; but if God did not in his mercies make secret and equivalent provisions for them, and take care of his redeemed ones, we might unhappily meet them in a sad eternity, and, without remedy, weep together and groan for ever! But "God hath provided better things for them, that they, without us," that is, without our assistances, "shall be made perfect."

SERMON LII.

PART III.

THERE are very many more orders and conjugations of mercies; but because the numbers of them naturally tend to their own greatness, that is, to have no measure, I must reckon but a few more, and them also without order: for that they do descend upon us, we see and feel, but by what order of things or causes, is as undiscerned as the head of Nilus, or a sudden remembrance of a long-neglected and forgotten proposition.

1. But upon this account it is that good men have observed, that the providence of God is so great a provider for holy living, and does so certainly minister to religion, that nature and chance, the order of the world and the influences of Heaven, are taught to serve the ends of the Spirit of God and the spirit of a man. I do not speak of the miracles that God hath in the several periods of the world wrought for the establishing his laws, and confirming his promises, and securing our obedience; though that was, all the way, the overflowings and miracles of mercy, as well as power: but that which I consider is, that besides the

extraordinary emanations of the Divine power upon the first and most solemn occasions of an institution, and the first beginnings of a religion, (such as were the wonders God did in Egypt and in the wilderness, preparatory to the sanction of that law and the first covenant, and the miracles wrought by Christ and his apostles, for the founding and the building up the religion of the gospel and the new covenant), God does also do things wonderful and miraculous, for the promoting the ordinary and less solemn actions of our piety, and to assist and accompany them in a constant and regular succession. It was a strange variety of natural efficacies, that manna should stink in twenty-four hours, if gathered upon Wednesday and Thursday, and that it should last till forty-eight hours, if gathered upon the even of the Sabbath; and that it should last many hundreds of years, when placed in the sanctuary by the ministry of the high priest. But so it was in the Jews' religion: and manna pleased every palate, and it filled all appetites, and the same measure was a different proportion, it was much and it was little; as if nature that it might serve religion, had been taught some measures of infinity, which is every where and no where, filling all things and circumscribed with nothing, measured by one omer and doing the work of two; like the crowns of kings, fitting the brows of Nimrod and the most mighty warrior, and yet not too large for the temples of an infant prince. And not only is it thus in nature, but in contingencies and acts depending upon the choice of men; for God having commanded the sons of Israel to go up to Jerusalem to worship thrice every year, and to leave their borders to be guarded by women and children, and sick persons, in the neighbourhood of diligent and spiteful enemies, yet God so disposed of their hearts and opportunities, that they never entered the land when the people were at their solemnity, until they desecrated their rites, by doing at their passover the greatest sin and treason in the world. Till at Easter they crucified the Lord of life and glory, they were secure in Jerusalem and in their borders; but when they had destroyed religion by this act, God took away their security, and Titus besieged the city at the feast of Easter, that the more might perish in the deluge of the Divine indignation.

To this observation the Jews add, that in Jerusalem no man ever had a fall that

came thither to worship; that at their solemn festivals there was reception in the town for all the inhabitants of the land; concerning which, although I cannot affirm any thing, yet this is certain, that no godly person, among all the tribes of Israel, was ever a beggar; but all the variety of human chances were overruled to the purposes of providence, and providence was measured by the ends of the religion, and the religion which promised them plenty, performed the promise, till the nation and the religion too began to decline, that it might give place to a better ministry, and a more excellent dispensation of the things of the world.

But when Christian religion was planted, and had taken root, and had filled all lands, then all the nature of things, the whole creation, became servant to the kingdom of grace; and the head of the religion is also the head of the creatures, and ministers all the things of the world in order to the Spirit of grace: and now "angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for the good of them that fear the Lord;" and all the violences of men, and things of nature and choice, are forced into subjection and lowest ministries, and to co-operate, as with an united design, to verify all the promises of the gospel, and to secure and advantage all the children of the kingdom; and now he that is made poor by chance or persecution, is made rich by religion; and he that hath nothing, yet possesses all things: and sorrow itself is the greatest comfort, not only because it ministers to virtue, but because itself is one, as in the case of repentance; and death ministers to life, and bondage is freedom, and loss is gain, and our enemies are our friends, and every thing turns into religion, and religion turns into felicity and all manner of advantages. But that I may not need to enumerate any more particulars in this observation, certain it is, that angels of light and darkness, all the influences of heaven, and the fruits and productions of the earth, the stars and the elements, the secret things that lie in the bowels of the sea and the entrails of the earth, the single effects of all efficient, and the conjunction of all causes, all events foreseen, and all rare contingencies, every thing of chance and every thing of choice, is so much a servant to him whose greatest desire and great interest is, by all means, to save our souls, that we are thereby made sure, that all the whole creation shall be made to bend, in all the flexures of its nature and accidents, that

it may minister to religion, to the good of the Catholic church, and every person within its bosom, who are the body of him that rules over all the world, and commands them as he chooses.

2. But that which is next to this, and not much unlike the design of this wonderful mercy, is, that all the actions of religion, though mingled with circumstances of differing, and sometimes of contradictory, relations, are so concentrated in God their proper centre, and conducted in such certain and pure channels of reason and rule, that no one duty does contradict another; and it can never be necessary for any man in any case to sin. They that bound themselves by an oath to kill Paul, were not environed with the sad necessities of murder on one side, and vow-breach on the other, so that if they did murder him, they were manslaughterers; if they did not, they were perjured; for God had made provision for this case, that no unlawful oath should pass an obligation. He that hath given his faith in unlawful confederation against his prince, is not girded with a fatal necessity of breach of trust on one side, or breach of allegiance on the other; for in this also God hath secured the case of conscience, by forbidding any man to make an unlawful promise; and, upon a stronger degree of the same reason, by forbidding him to keep it, in case he hath made it. He that doubts whether it be lawful to keep the Sunday holy, must not do it during that doubt, because "whatsoever is not of faith, is sin." But yet God's mercy hath taken care to break this snare in sunder, so that he may neither sin against the commandment, nor against his conscience; for he is bound to lay aside his error, and be better instructed, till when, the scene of his sin lies in something that hath influence upon his understanding, not in the omission of the fact. "No man can serve two masters," but therefore "he must hate the one, and cleave to the other." But then if we consider what infinite contradiction there is in sin, and that the great long-suffering of God is expressed in this, that God "suffered the contradiction of sinners," we shall feel the mercy of God in the peace of our consciences and the unity of religion, so long as we do the work of God. It is a huge affront to a covetous man, that he is the further off from fulness by having great heaps and vast revenues; and that his thirst increases by having that which should quench it; and that the more he shall need

to be satisfied, the less he shall dare to do it; and that he shall refuse to drink because he is dry; that he dies if he tastes, and languishes if he does not; and at the same time he is full and empty, bursting with a plethory, and consumed with hunger, drowned with rivers of oil and wine, and yet dry as the Arabian sands. But then the contradiction is multiplied, and the labyrinths more amazed, when prodigality waits upon another curse, and covetousness heaps up, that prodigality may scatter abroad; then distractions are infinite, and a man hath two devils to serve of contradictory designs, and both of them exacting obedience more unreasonably than the Egyptian taskmasters; then there is no rest, no end of labours, no satisfaction of purposes, no method of things; but they begin where they should end, and begin again; and never pass forth to content, or reason, or quietness, or possession. But the duty of a Christian is easy in a persecution, it is clear under a tyranny, it is evident in despite of heresy, it is one in the midst of schism, it is determined amongst infinite disputes; being like a rock in the sea, which is beaten with the tide, and washed with retiring waters, and encompassed with mists, and appears in several figures, but it always dips its foot in the same bottom, and remains the same in calms and storms, and survives the revolution of ten thousand tides, and there shall dwell till time and tides shall be no more. So is our duty, uniform and constant, open and notorious, variously represented, but in the same manner exacted; and in the interest of our souls God hath not exposed us to uncertainty, or the variety of any thing that can change; and it is by the grace and mercy of God, put into the power of every Christian, to do that which God, through Jesus Christ, will accept to salvation; and neither men nor devils shall hinder it, unless we list ourselves.

3. After all this, we may sit down and reckon up great sums and conjugations of his gracious gifts, and tell the minutes of eternity by the number of the Divine mercies. God hath given his laws to rule us, his word to instruct us, his Spirit to guide us, his angels to protect us, his ministers to exhort us: he revealed all our duty, and he hath concealed whatsoever can hinder us: he hath affrighted our follies with fear of death, and engaged our watchfulness by its secret coming: he hath exercised our faith

by keeping private the state of souls departed, and yet hath confirmed our faith by a promise of a resurrection, and entertained our hope by some general significations of the state of interval. His mercies make contemptible means instrumental to great purposes, and a small herb the remedy of the greatest diseases. He impedes the devil's rage, and infatuates his counsels; he diverts his malice, and defeats his purposes; he binds him in the chain of darkness, and gives him no power over the children of light; he suffers him to walk in solitary places, and yet fetters him that he cannot disturb the sleep of a child; he hath given him mighty power, and yet a young maiden that resists him shall make him flee away; he hath given him a vast knowledge, and yet an ignorant man can confute him with the twelve articles of his creed; he gave him power over the winds, and made him prince of the air, and yet the breath of a holy prayer can drive him as far as the utmost sea; and he hath so restrained him, that (except it be by faith) we know not whether there be any devil, yea or no; for we never heard his noises, nor have seen his affrighting shapes. This is that great principle of all the felicity we hope for, and of all the means thither, and of all the skill and all the strengths we have to use those means. He hath made great variety of conditions, and yet hath made all necessary, and all mutual helpers; and by some instruments, and in some respects, they are all equal in order to felicity, to content, and final and intermedial satisfactions. He gave us part of our reward in hand, that he might enable us to work for more; he taught the world arts for use, arts for entertainment of all our faculties and all our dispositions: he gives eternal gifts for temporal services, and gives us whatsoever we want for asking, and commands us to ask, and threatens us if we will not ask, and punishes us for refusing to be happy. This is that glorious attribute that hath made order and health, harmony and hope, restitutions and variety, the joys of direct possession, and the joys, the artificial joys of contrariety and comparison. He comforts the poor, and he brings down the rich, that they may be safe, in their humility and sorrow, from the transportations of an unhappy and uninstructed prosperity. He gives necessaries to all, and scatters the extraordinary provisions so, that every nation may traffic in charity, and commute for

pleasures. He was the Lord of hosts, and he is still what he was; but he loves to be called the God of peace, because he was terrible in that, but he is delighted in this. His mercy is his glory, and his glory is the light of heaven. His mercy is the life of the creation, and it fills all the earth; and his mercy is a sea too, and it fills all the abysses of the deep: it hath given us promises for supply of whatsoever we need, and believes us in all our fears, and in all the evils that we suffer. His mercies are more than we can tell, and they are more than we can feel; for all the world in the abyss of the Divine mercies is like a man diving into the bottom of the sea, over whose head the waters run insensibly and unperceived, and yet the weight is vast, and the sum of them is unmeasurable; and the man is not pressed with the burden, nor confounded with numbers: and no observation is able to recount, no sense sufficient to perceive, no memory large enough to retain, no understanding great enough to apprehend this infinity; but we must admire, and love, and worship, and magnify this mercy for ever and ever; that we may dwell in what we feel, and be comprehended by that which is equal to God, and the parent of all felicity.

And yet this is but the one half. The mercies of giving I have now told of; but those of forgiving are greater, though not more;—"He is ready to forgive."—And upon this stock strives the interest of our great hope, the hope of a blessed immortality. For if the mercies of giving have not made our expectation big enough to entertain the confidences of heaven; yet when we think of the graciousness and readiness of forgiving, we may with more readiness hope to escape hell, and then we cannot but be blessed by an eternal consequence. We have but small opinion of the Divine mercy, if we dare not believe concerning it, that it is desirous, and able, and watchful, and passionate, to keep us, or rescue us respectively from such a condemnation, the pain of which is insupportable, and the duration is eternal, and the extension is misery upon all our faculties, and the intention is great beyond patience, or natural or supernatural abilities, and the state is a state of darkness and despair, of confusion and amazement, of cursing and roaring, anguish of spirit and gnashing of teeth, misery universal, perfect, and irremediable. From this it is which God's mercies would so fain preserve us. This is a state that God provides for his enemies,

not for them that love him; that endeavour to obey, though they do it but in weakness; that weep truly for their sins, though but with a shower no bigger than the drops of pity; that wait for his coming with a holy and pure flame, though their lamps are no brighter than a poor man's candle, though their strengths are no greater than a contrite reed or a strained arm, and their fires have no more warmth than the smoke of kindling flax. If our faith be pure, and our love unfeigned; if the degrees of it be great, God will accept it into glory; if it be little he will accept it into grace and make it bigger. For that is the first instance of God's readiness to forgive: he will, upon any terms that are not unreasonable, and that do not suppose a remanent affection to sin, keep us from the intolerable pains of hell. And, indeed, if we consider the constitution of the conditions which God requires, we shall soon perceive God intends heaven to us a mere gift, and that the duties on our part are but little entertainments and exercises of our affections and our love, that the devil might not seize upon that portion which, to eternal ages, shall be the instrument of our happiness. For in all the parts of our duty, it may be, there is but one instance in which we are to do violence to our natural and first desires. For those men have very ill natures, to whom virtue is so contrary that they are inclined naturally to lust, to drunkenness and anger, to pride and covetousness, to unthankfulness and disobedience. Most men that are tempted with lust, could easily enough entertain the sobrieties of other counsels, as of temperance, and justice, or religion, if it would indulge to them but that one passion of lust; and persons that are greedy of money are not fond of amorous vanities, nor care they to sit long at the wine: and one vice destroys another: and when one vice is consequent to another, it is by way of punishment and dereliction of the man, unless where vices have cognation, and seem but like several degrees of one another. And it is evil custom and super-induced habits that make artificial appetites in most men to most sins: but many times their natural temper vexes them into uneasy dispositions, and aptness only to some one unhandsome sort of action. That one thing therefore is it, in which God demands of thee mortification and self-denial.

Certain it is, there are very many men in the world, that would fain commute their

severity in all other instances for a license in their one appetite; they would not refuse long prayers after a drunken meeting, or great alms together with one great lust. But then consider how easy it is for them to go to heaven. God demands of them, for his sake and their own, to crucify but one natural lust, or one evil habit, (for all the rest they are easy enough to do themselves,) and God will give them heaven, where the joy is more than one. And I said, it is but one mortification God requires of most men; for, if those persons would extirp but that one thing in which they are principally tempted, it is not easily imaginable that any less evil to which the temptation is trifling, should interpose between them and their great interest. If Saul had not spared Agag, the people could not have expected mercy: and our little and inferior appetites, that rather come to us by intimation and consequent adherences than by direct violence, must not dwell with him, who hath crossed the violence of his distempered nature in a beloved instance. Since, therefore, this is the state of most men, and God in effect demands of them but one thing, and in exchange for that, will give them all good things; it gives demonstration of his huge easiness to redeem us from that intolerable evil, that is equally consequent to the indulging to one or to twenty sinful habits.

2. God's readiness to pardon appears in this, that he pardons before we ask; for he that bids us ask for pardon, hath in design and purpose done the thing already: for, what is wanting on his part, in whose only power it is to give pardon, and in whose desire it is that we should be pardoned, and who commands us to lay hold upon the offer? He hath done all that belongs to God, that is, all that concerns the pardon; there it lies ready; it is recorded in the book of life; it wants nothing but being exemplified and taken forth, and the Holy Spirit stands ready to consign and pass the privy signet, that we may exhibit it to devils and evil men when they tempt us to despair or sin.

3. Nay, God is so ready in his mercy, that he did pardon us even before he redeemed us. For, what is the secret of the mystery, that the eternal Son of God should take upon him our nature, and die our death, and suffer for our sins, and do our work, and enable us to do our own? He that did this, is God; he who "thought it no robbery to be equal with God," he came

to satisfy himself, to pay to himself the price for his own creature. And when he did this for us that he might pardon us, was he at that instant angry with us? Was this an effect of his anger or of his love, that God sent his Son to work our pardon and salvation? Indeed, we were angry with God, at enmity with the Prince of life; but he was reconciled to us so far, as that he then did the greatest thing in the world for us: for nothing could be greater than that God, the Son of God, should die for us. Here was reconciliation before pardon: and God, that came to die for us, did love us first before he came. This was hasty love. But it went further yet.

4. God pardoned us before we sinned; and when he foresaw our sin, even mine and yours, he sent his Son to die for us: our pardon was wrought and effected by Christ's death above 1600 years ago; and for the sins of to-morrow, and the infirmities of the next day, Christ is already dead, already risen from the dead and does now make intercession and atonement. And this is not only a favour to us who were born in the due time of the gospel, but to all mankind since Adam: for God, who is infinitely patient in his justice, was not at all patient in his mercy; he forbears to strike and punish us, but he would not forbear to provide cure for us and remedy. For, as if God could not stay from redeeming us, he promised the Redeemer to Adam in the beginning of the world's sin; and Christ was "the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world;" and the covenant of the gospel, though it was not made with man, yet it was from the beginning performed by God as to his part, as to the ministration of pardon; the seed of the woman was set up against the dragon as soon as ever the tempter had won his first battle: and though God laid his hand, and drew a veil of types and secrecy before the manifestation of his mercies; yet he did the work of redemption, and saved us by the covenant of faith, and the righteousness of believing, and the mercies of repentance, the graces of pardon, and the blood of the slain Lamb, even from the fall of Adam to this very day, and will do till Christ's second coming.

Adam fell by his folly, and did not perform the covenant of one little work, a work of a single abstinence; but he was restored by faith in the seed of the woman. And of this righteousness Noah was a preacher, and "by faith Enoch was trans-

lated," and by faith a remnant was saved at the flood: and to "Abraham this was imputed for righteousness," and to all the patriarchs, and to all the righteous judges, and holy prophets, and saints of the Old Testament, even while they were obliged (so far as the words of their covenant were expressed) to the law of works: their pardon was sealed and kept within the curtains of the sanctuary; and they saw it not then, but they feel it ever since. And this was a great excellency of the Divine mercy unto them. God had mercy on all mankind before Christ's manifestation, even beyond the mercies of their covenant; and they were saved as we are, by "the seed of the woman," by "God incarnate," by "the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world:" not by works, for we all failed of them; that is, not by an exact obedience, but by faith working by love; by sincere, hearty endeavours, and believing God, and relying upon his infinite mercy, revealed in part, and now fully manifest by the great instrument and means of that mercy, Jesus Christ. So that here is pardon, before we asked it; pardon before Christ's coming, pardon before redemption, and pardon before we sinned. What greater readiness to forgive us can be imagined? Yes, there is one degree more yet, and that will prevent a mistake in this.

5. For God so pardoned us once, that we should need no more pardon: he pardons us "by turning every one of us away from our iniquities." That is the purpose of Christ; that he might safely pardon us before we sinned, and we might not sin upon the confidence of pardon. He pardoned us not only upon condition we would sin no more, but he took away our sin, cured our cursed inclinations, instructed our understanding, rectified our will, fortified us against temptation; and now every man whom he pardons, he also sanctifies; and he is born of God; and he must not, will not, cannot sin, so long as the seed of God remains with him, so long as his pardon continues. This is the consummation of pardon. For if God had so pardoned us, as only to take away our evils which are past, we should have needed a second Saviour, and a Redeemer for every month, and new pardons perpetually. But our blessed Redeemer hath taken away our sin, not only the guilt of our old, but our inclinations to new sins; he makes us like himself, and commands us to live so, that we shall not need a second pardon, that is, a

second state of pardon; for we are but once baptized into Christ's death, and that death was but one, and our redemption but one, and our covenant the same; and as long as we continue within the covenant, we are still within the power and comprehensions of the first pardon.

6. And yet there is a necessity of having one degree of pardon more beyond all this. For although we do not abjure our covenant, and renounce Christ, and extinguish the Spirit; yet we resist him, and we grieve him, and we go off from the holiness of the covenant, and return again, and very often step aside, and need this great pardon to be perpetually applied and renewed; and to this purpose, that we may not have a possible need without a certain remedy, the holy "Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith" and pardon, sits in heaven in a perpetual advocacy for us, that this pardon, once wrought, may be for ever applied to every emergent need, and every tumour of pride, and every broken heart, and every disturbed conscience, and upon every true and sincere return of a hearty repentance. And now upon this title no more degrees can be added; it is already greater, and was before all our needs, than the old covenant, and beyond the revelations, and did in Adam's youth antedate the gospel, turning the public miseries by secret grace into eternal glories. But now upon other circumstances it is remarkable and excellent, and swells like an hydropic cloud when it is fed with the breath of the morning tide, till it fills the bosom of heaven, and descends in dews and gentle showers, to water and refresh the earth.

7. God is so ready to forgive, that himself works our dispositions towards it, and either must, in some degree, pardon us before we are capable of pardon, by his grace making way for his mercy, or else we can never hope for pardon. For unless God, by his preventing grace, should first work the first part of our pardon, even without any dispositions of our own to receive it, we could not desire a pardon, nor hope for it, nor work towards it, nor ask it, nor receive it. This giving of preventing grace is a mercy of forgiveness contrary to that severity, by which some desperate persons are given over to a reprobate sense; that is, a leaving of men to themselves, so that they cannot pray effectually, nor desire holily, nor repent truly, nor receive any of those mercies which God designed so

plenteously, and the Son of God purchased so dearly for us. When God sends a plague of war upon a land, in all the accounts of religion and expectations of reason, the way to obtain our peace is, to leave our sins for which the war was sent upon us, as the messenger of wrath: and without this, we are like to perish in the judgment. But then consider what a sad condition we are in; war mends but few, but spoils multitudes; it legitimates rapine, and authorizes murder; and these crimes must be ministered to by their lesser relatives, by covetousness, and anger, and pride, and revenge, and heats of blood, and wilder liberty, and all the evil that can be supposed to come from, or run to, such cursed causes of mischief. But then if the punishment increases the sin, by what instrument can the punishment be removed? How shall we be pardoned and eased, when our remedies are converted into causes of the sickness, and our antidotes are poison? Here there is a plain necessity of God's preventing grace; and if there be but a necessity of it, that is enough to ascertain us we shall have it; but unless God should begin to pardon us first, for nothing, and against our own dispositions, we see there is no help in us, nor for us. If we be not smitten, we are undone; if we are smitten, we perish; and, as young Demarchus said of his love, when he was made master of his wish, "Salvus sum, quia pereo; si non peream, plane inteream;" we may say of some of God's judgments, "We perish when we are safe, because our sins are not smitten; and if they be, then we are worse undone:" because we grow worse for being miserable; but we can be relieved only by a free mercy. For pardon is the way to pardon: and when God gives us our penny, then we can work for another; and a gift is the way to a grace, and all that we can do towards it is but to take it in God's method. And this must needs be a great forwardness of forgiveness, when God's mercy gives the pardon, and the way to find it, and the hand to receive it, and the eye to search it, and the heart to desire it; being busy and effective as Elijah's fire, which, intending to convert the sacrifice into its own more spiritual nature of flames and purified substances, stood in the neighbourhood of the fuel, and called forth its enemies and licked up the hindering moisture, and the water of the trenches, and made the altar send forth a fantastic smoke be-

fore the sacrifice was enkindled. So is the preventing grace of God: it does all the work of our souls, and makes its own way, and invites itself, and prepares its own lodging, and makes its own entertainment; it gives us precepts, and makes us able to keep them; it enables our faculties, and excites our desires; it provokes us to pray, and sanctifies our heart in prayer, and makes our prayer go forth to act, and the act does make the desire valid, and the desire does make the act certain and persevering: and both of them are the works of God. For more is received into the soul from without the soul, than does proceed from within the soul: it is more for the soul to be moved and disposed, than to work when that is done; as the passage from death to life is greater than from life to action, especially since the action is owing to that cause that put in the first principle of life.

These are the great degrees of God's forwardness and readiness to forgive, for the expression of which no language is sufficient, but God's own words describing mercy in all those dimensions, which can signify to us its greatness and infinity. His mercy "is great," his mercies "are many," his mercy "reacheth unto the heavens," it "fills heaven and earth," it is "above all his works," "it endureth for ever." "God pitieth us as a father doth his children:" nay, he is "our Father," and the same also is "the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;" so that mercy and we have the same relation: and well it may be so, for we live and die together; for as to man only God shows the mercy of forgiveness, so if God takes away his mercy, man shall be no more; no more capable of felicity, or of any thing that is perfective of his condition or his person. But as God preserves man by his mercy, so his mercy hath all its operations upon man, and returns to its own centre, and incircumscription, and infinity, unless it issues forth upon us. And, therefore, besides the former great lines of the mercy of forgiveness, there is another chain, which but to produce, and tell its links, is to open a cabinet of jewels, where every stone is as bright as a star, and every star is great as the sun, and shines for ever, unless we shut our eyes, or draw the veil of obstinacy and final sins.

1. God is long-suffering, that is, long before he be angry; and yet God is provoked every day, by the obstinacy of the Jews, and

the folly of the heathens, and the rudeness and infidelity of the Mahometans, and the negligence and vices of Christians: and he that can behold no impurity, is received in all places with perfumes of mushrooms, and garments spotted with the flesh, and stained souls, and the actions and issues of misbelief, and an evil conscience, and with accursed sins that he hates, upon pretence of religion which he loves; and he is made a party against himself by our voluntary mistakes: and men continue ten years, and twenty, and thirty, and fifty, in a course of sinning, and they grow old with the vices of their youth; and yet God forbears to kill them, and to consign them over to an eternity of horrid pains, still expecting they should repent and be saved.

2. Besides this long-sufferance and forbearing with an unwearied patience, God also excuses a sinner oftentimes, and takes a little thing for an excuse, so far as to move him to intermedial favours first, and from thence to a final pardon. He passes by the sins of our youth with a huge easiness to pardon, if he be entreated and reconciled by the effective repentance of a vigorous manhood. He takes ignorance for an excuse; and in every degree of its being inevitable or innocent in its proper cause, it is also inculpable and innocent in its proper effects, though in their own natures criminal. "But I found mercy of the Lord, because I did it in ignorance," saith St. Paul. He pities our infirmities, and strikes off much of the account upon that stock: the violence of a temptation and restlessness of its motion, the perpetuity of its solicitation, the weariness of a man's spirit, the state of sickness, the necessity of secular affairs, the public customs of a people, have all of them a power of pleading and prevailing towards some degrees of pardon and diminution before the throne of God.

3. When God perceives himself forced to strike, yet then he takes off his hand, and repents him of the evil: it is as if it were against him, that any of his creatures should fall under the strokes of an exterminating fury.

4. When he is forced to proceed, he yet makes an end before he hath half done: and is as glad of a pretence to pardon us, or to strike less, as if he himself had the deliverance, and not we. When Ahab had but humbled himself at the word of the Lord, God was glad of it, and went with the message to the prophet himself, saying, "Seest thou not how Ahab humbles himself?"

What was the event of it? "I will not bring the evil in his days;" but in his son's days the evil shall come upon his house.

5. God forgets our sin, and puts it out of his remembrance; that is, he makes it as though it had never been, he makes penitence to be as pure as innocence to all the effects of pardon and glory: the memory of the sins shall not be upon record, to be used to any after-act of disadvantage, and never shall return, unless we force them out of their secret places by ingratitude and a new state of sinning.

6. God sometimes gives a pardon beyond all his revelations and declared will, and provides suppletories of repentances, even then when he cuts a man off from the time of repentance, accepting a temporal death instead of an eternal; that although the Divine anger might interrupt the growing of the fruits, yet in some cases, and to some persons, the death and the very cutting off shall go no further, but be instead of explicit and long repentances. Thus it happened to Uzzah, who was smitten for his zeal, and died in severity for prevaricating the letter, by earnestness of spirit to serve the whole religion. Thus it was also in the case of the Corinthians, that died a temporal death for their indecent circumstances in receiving the holy sacrament: St. Paul, who used it for an argument to threaten them into reverence, went no further, nor pressed the argument to a sadder issue, than to die temporally.

But these suppletories are but seldom, and they are also great troubles, and ever without comfort, and dispensed irregularly, and that not in the case of habitual sins, that we know of, or very great sins, but in single actions, or instances of a less malignity; and they are not to be relied upon, because there is no rule concerning them: but when they do happen, they magnify the infiniteness of God's mercy, which is commensurate to all our needs, and is not to be circumscribed by the limits of his own revelations.

7. God pardons the greatest sinners, and hath left them upon record: and there is no instance in the scripture of the Divine forgiveness, but in such instances, the misery of which was a fit instrument to speak aloud the glories of God's mercies, and gentleness, and readiness to forgive. Such were St. Paul, a persecutor,—and St. Peter, that swore his Master,—Mary Magdalene, with

seven devils,—the thief upon the cross,—Manasses, an idolater,—David, a murderer and adulterer,—the Corinthian, for incest,—the children of Israel, for ten times rebelling against the Lord in the wilderness, with murmuring, and infidelity, and rebellion, and schism, and a golden calf, and open disobedience: and above all, I shall instance in the Pharisees among the Jews, who had sinned against the Holy Ghost, as our blessed Saviour intimates, and tells the particular, viz. in saying that the Spirit of God, by which Christ did work, was an evil spirit; and afterward, they crucified Christ; so that two of the persons of the most holy Trinity were openly and solemnly defied, and God had sent out a decree that they should be cut off: yet forty years' time, after all this, was left for their repentance, and they were called upon by arguments more persuasive and more excellent in that forty years, than all the nation had heard from their prophets, even from Samuel to Zecharias. And Jonah thought he had reason on his side to refuse to go to threaten Nineveh; he knew God's tenderness in destroying his creatures, and that he should be thought to be but a false prophet; and so it came to pass according to his belief. "Jonah prayed unto the Lord, and said, I pray thee, Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled; for I knew thou wert a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil."* He told beforehand what the event would be, and he had reason to know it; God proclaimed it in a cloud before the face of all Israel, and made it to be his name: "Miserator et misericor Deus:" "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious,"† &c.

You see the largeness of this treasure; but we can see no end, and we have not yet looked upon the rare arts of conversion; nor that God leaves the natural habit of virtues, even after the acceptance is interrupted; nor his working extra-regular miracles, besides the sufficiency of Moses, and the prophets, and the New-Testament; and thousands more, which we cannot consider now.

But this we can: when God sent an angel to pour plagues upon the earth, there were in their hands "*phialæ aureæ*," "golden phials:" for the death of men is precious and costly, and it is an expense that God delights not in; but they were *phials*,

* Jonah iv. 2.

† Exod. xxxiv. 6.

that is, such vessels as out of them no great evil could come at once; but it comes out with difficulty, sobbing and troubled as it passes forth; it comes through a narrow neck, and the parts of it crowd at the port to get forth, and are stifled by each other's neighbourhood, and all strive to get out, but few can pass, as if God did nothing but threaten, and draw his judgments to the mouth of the phial with a full body, and there made it stop itself.

The result of this consideration is, that as we fear the Divine judgments, so we adore his love and goodness, and let the golden chains of the Divine mercy tie us to a noble prosecution of our duty and the interest of religion. For he is the worst of men whom kindness cannot soften, nor endearment oblige, whom gratitude cannot tie faster than the bands of life and death. He is an ill-natured sinner, if he will not comply with the sweetness of heaven, and be civil to his angel guardian, or observant of his patron God, who made him, and feeds him, and keeps all his faculties, and takes care of him, and endures his follies, and waits on him more tenderly than a nurse,

more diligently than a client, who hath greater care of him than his father, and whose bowels yearn over him with more compassion than a mother; who is bountiful beyond our need, and merciful beyond our hopes, and makes capacities in us to receive more. Fear is stronger than death, and love is more prevalent than fear, and kindness is the greatest endearment of love; and yet to an ingenuous person, gratitude is greater than all these, and obliges to solemn duty, when love fails, and fear is dull and inactive, and death itself is despised. But the man who is hardened against kindness, and whose duty is not made alive with gratitude, must be used like a slave, and driven like an ox, and enticed with goads and whips; but must never enter into the inheritance of sons. Let us take heed; for mercy is like a rainbow, which God set in the clouds to remember mankind: it shines here as long as it is not hindered; but we must never look for it after it is night, and it shines not in the other world. If we refuse mercy here, we shall have justice to eternity.



A SUPPLEMENT
CONTAINING
TWELVE SERMONS
ON
VARIOUS SUBJECTS AND OCCASIONS.



SERMONS,

EXPLAINING

THE NATURE OF FAITH, AND OBEDIENCE, IN RELATION TO GOD, AND THE ECCLESIASTICAL AND SECULAR POWERS, RESPECTIVELY.

SERMON I.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS EVANGELICAL DESCRIBED.

For I say unto you, that except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.—Matt. v. 20.

REWARDS and punishments are the best sanction of laws; and although the guardians of laws strike sometimes with the softest part of the hand in their executions of sad sentences, yet in the sanction they make no abatements, but so proportion the duty to the reward, and the punishment to the crime, that by these we can best tell what value the lawgiver puts upon the obedience. Joshua put a great rate upon the taking of Kiriath-Sepher, when the reward of the service was his daughter and a dower. But when the young men ventured to fetch David the waters of Beth-lehem, they had nothing but the praise of their boldness, because their service was no more than the satisfaction of a curiosity. But as lawgivers, by their rewards, declare the value of the obedience, so do subjects also, by the grandeur of what they expect, set a value on the law and the lawgiver, and do their services accordingly.

And, therefore, the law of Moses, whose endearment was nothing but temporal goods and transient evils, "could never make the comers thereunto perfect;" but the *ἐπιαναγωγὴ κρείττονος ἐλπίδος*, "the superinduction of a better hope,"* hath endeared a more perfect obedience. When Christ brought

life and immortality to light through the gospel, and hath promised to us things greater than all our explicit desires, bigger than the thoughts of our heart, then *ἐγγύζομεν τῷ Θεῷ*, saith the apostle, "then we draw near to God;" and by these we are enabled to do all that God requires, and then he requires all that we can do; more love and more obedience than he did of those who,—for want of these helps, and these revelations, and these promises, which we have, but they had not,—were but imperfect persons, and could do but little more than human services. Christ hath taught us more, and given us more, and promised us more, than ever was in the world known or believed before him; and by the strengths and confidence of these, thrusts us forward in a holy and wise economy; and plainly declares, that we must serve him by the measures of a new love, do him honour by wise and material glorifications, be united to God by a new nature, and made alive by a new birth, and fulfil all righteousness; to be humble and meek as Christ, to be merciful as our heavenly Father is, to be pure as God is pure, to be partakers of the Divine nature, to be wholly renewed in the frame and temper of our mind, to become people of a new heart, a direct new creation, new principles, and a new being, to do better than all the world before us ever did, to love God more perfectly, to despise the world more generously, to contend for the faith more earnestly; for all this is but a proper and a just consequent of the great promises, which our blessed Lawgiver came to publish and effect for all the world of believers and disciples.

The matter which is here required, is

* Heb. viii. 19.

certainly very great; for it is to be more righteous than the scribes and Pharisees; more holy than the doctors of the law, than the leaders of the synagogue, than the wise princes of the sanhedrim; more righteous than some that were prophets and high priests, than some that kept the ordinances of the law without blame; men that lay in sackcloth, and fasted much, and prayed more, and made religion and the study of the law the work of their lives: this was very much; but Christians must do more.

Nunc te marmoreum pro tempore fecimus; at tu Si factura grege[m] suppleverit, aureus esto.

They did well, and we must do better; their houses were marble, but our roofs must be gilded and fuller of glory. But as the matter is very great, so the necessity of it is the greatest in the world. It must be so, or it will be much worse: unless it be thus, we shall never see the glorious face of God. Here it concerns us to be wise and fearful; for the matter is not a question of an oaken garland, or a circle of bays, and a yellow riband: it is not a question of money or land; nor of the vainer rewards of popular noises, and the undiscerning suffrages of the people, who are contingent judges of good and evil: but it is the great stake of life eternal. We cannot be Christians, unless we be righteous by the new measures: the righteousness of the kingdom is now the only way to enter it; for the sentence is fixed, and the judgment is decretory, and the Judge infallible, and the decree irreversible: "For I say unto you," said Christ, "unless your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Here, then, we have two things to consider. 1. What was the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. 2. How far that is to be exceeded by the righteousness of Christians.

1. Concerning the first. I will not be so nice in the observation of these words, as to take notice that Christ does not name the Sadducees, but the scribes and Pharisees, though there may be something in it: the Sadducees were called "Caraim," from *cara*, "to read;" for they thought it religion to spend one third part of their day in reading their Scriptures, whose fulness they so admired, they would admit of no suppletory traditions: but the Pharisees were called

"Thanaim," that is, *δευτερώται*, they added to the word of God words of their own, as the church of Rome does at this day; they and these fell into an equal fate; while they "taught for doctrines the commandments of men," they prevaricated the righteousness of God: what the church of Rome, to evil purposes, hath done in this particular, may be demonstrated in due time and place; but what false and corrupt glosses, under the specious title of the tradition of their fathers, the Pharisees had introduced, our blessed Saviour reproveth, and are now to be represented as the *ἀντιπαράδειγμα*, that you may see that righteousness, beyond which all they must go, that intend that heaven should be their journey's end.

1. The Pharisees obeyed the commandments in the letter, not in the spirit: they minded what God spake, but not what he intended: they were busy in the outward work of the hand, but incurious of the affections and choice of the heart. *Ἐμίση πάντα σαρκικῶς νοσήκασι*, said Justin Martyr to Tryphon the Jew, "Ye understand all things carnally;" that is, they rested *ἐν κνώσματι εἰσεβείας*, as Nazianzen calls it, "in the outward work of piety," which not only Justin Martyr but St. Paul calls "carnality," not meaning a carnal appetite, but a carnal service.* Their error was plainly this: they never distinguished duties natural from duties relative; that is, whether it were commanded for itself, or in order to something that was better; whether it were a principal grave, or an instrumental action: so God was served in the letter, they did not much inquire into his purpose: and, therefore, they were curious to wash their hands, but cared not to purify their hearts; they would give alms, but hate him that received it; they would go to the temple, but did not revere the glory of God that dwelt there between the cherubims; they would fast, but not mortify their lusts; they would say good prayers, but not labour for the grace they prayed for. This was just as if a man should run on his master's errand, and do no business when he came there. They might easily have thought, that by the soul only a man approaches to God, and draws the body after it; but that no washing or corporal services could unite them and the shechinah together—no such thing could make them like to God, who

* Gal. iii. 3, and vi. 12, 13. Phil. iii. 34.

is the Prince of Spirits. They did as the dunces in Pythagoras' school, who,—when their master had said "*Fabis abstineto,*" by which he intended—"they should not ambitiously seek for magistracy,"—they thought themselves good Pythagoreans if they "*did not eat beans;*" and they would be sure to put their right foot first into the shoe, and their left foot into the water, and supposed they had done enough; though if they had not been fools, they would have understood their master's meaning to have been, that they should put more affections to labour and travel, and less to their pleasure and recreation; and so it was with the Pharisee: for as the Chaldees taught their morality by mystic words, and the Egyptians by hieroglyphics, and the Greeks by fables; so did God by rites and ceremonies external, leading them by the hand to the purities of the heart, and by the services of the body to the obedience of the spirit; which because they would not understand, they thought they had done enough in the observation of the letter.

2. In moral duties, where God expressed himself more plainly, they made no commentary of kindness, but regarded the prohibition so nakedly, and divested of all antecedents, consequents, similitudes, and proportions, that if they stood clear of that hated name which was set down in Moses' tables, they gave themselves liberty, in many instances, of the same kindred and alliance. If they abstained from murder, they thought it very well, though they made no scruple of murdering their brother's fame; they would not cut his throat, but they would call him fool, or invent lies in secret, and publish his disgrace openly: they would not dash out his brains, but they would be extremely and unreasonably angry with him: they would not steal their brother's money, but they would oppress him in crafty and cruel bargains. The commandment forbade them to commit adultery; but because fornication was not named, they made no scruple of that; and being commanded to honour their father and their mother, they would give them good words and fair observances; but because it was not named that they should maintain them in their need, they thought they did well enough to pretend "*corban,*" and let their father starve.

3. The scribes and Pharisees placed their righteousness in negatives: they would not commit what was forbidden, but they cared

but little for the included positive, and the omissions of good actions did not much trouble them; they would not hurt their brother in a forbidden instance, but neither would they do him good according to the intention of the commandment. It was a great innocence if they did not rob the poor,—then they were righteous men; but they thought themselves not much concerned to acquire that godlike excellency, a philanthropy and love to all mankind. Whosoever blasphemed God was to be put to death; but he that did not glorify God as he ought, they were unconcerned for him, and let him alone. He that spake against Moses, was to die without mercy; but against the ambitious and the covetous, against the proud man and the unmerciful they made no provisions.

Virtus est vitium fugere, et sapientia prima Stultitia caruisse.

HOR.

They accounted themselves good, not for doing good, but for doing no evil; that was the sum of their theology.

4. They had one thing more as bad as all this: they broke Moses' tables into pieces, and, gathering up the fragments, took to themselves what part of duty they pleased, and let the rest alone; for it was a proverb among the Jews, "*Qui operam dat præcepto, liber est à præcepto;*" that is, "if he chooses one positive commandment for his business, he may be less careful in any of the rest." Indeed, they said also, "*Quis multiplicat legem, multiplicat vitam;*" "He that multiplies the law, increases life;" that is, if he did intend to more good things, it was so much the better, but the other was well enough; but as for universal obedience, that was not the measure of their righteousness; for they taught that God would put our good works and bad into the balance, and according to the heavier scale, give a portion in the world to come; so that some evil they would allow to themselves and their disciples, always provided it was less than the good they did. They would devour widow's houses, and make it up by long prayers; they would love their nation, and hate their prince; offer sacrifice, and curse Cæsar in their heart; advance Judaism, and destroy humanity.

Lastly, St. Austin summed up the difference between the Pharisaical and evangelical righteousness in two words; "*Brevis differentia inter legem et evangelium; timor*

et amor." They served the God of their fathers "in the spirit of fear," and we worship the Father of our Lord Jesus "in the spirit of love," and by the spirit of adoption. And as this slavish principle of theirs was the cause of all their former imperfections, so it finally and chiefly expressed itself in these two particulars:—1. They would do all that they thought they lawfully could do. 2. They would do nothing but what was expressly commanded.

This was the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, and their disciples, the Jews;* which, because our blessed Saviour reproves, not only as imperfect then, but as criminal now, calling us on to a new righteousness, the righteousness of God, to the law of the Spirit of life, to the kingdom of God, and the proper righteousness thereof,—it concerns us in the next place to look after the measures of this, ever remembering that it is infinitely necessary that we should do so; and men do not generally know, or not consider, what it is to be a Christian; they understand not what the Christian law forbideth or commandeth. But as for this in my text, it is indeed our great measure; but it is not a question of good and better, but of good and evil, life and death, salvation and damnation; for unless our righteousness be weighed by new weights, we shall be found too light, when God comes to weigh the actions of all the world; and unless we be more righteous than they, we "shall in no wise," that is, upon no other terms in the world, "enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Now concerning this, we shall do very much amiss, if we take our measures by the manners and practices of the many who call themselves Christians; for there are, as Nazianzen expresses it, the *αἰ εἶς καὶ τῶν φαρισαίων*, "the old and the new Pharisees." I wish it were no worse amongst us; and that indeed all Christians were righteous as they were; "est aliquid prodire tenus:" it would not be just nothing. But I am sure that to bid defiance to the laws of Christ, to laugh at religion, to make a merriment at the debauchery and damnation of our brother, is a state of evil worse than that of the scribes and Pharisees; and yet, even among such men, how impatient would they be, and how unreasonable would they think you to be, if you should tell them, that there are no

present hopes or possibility, that, in this state they are in, they can be saved!

*Omnes videmur nobis esse belluli
Et festivi saperdæ, cū simus carpi.* VAR.

But the world is too full of Christians, whose righteousness is very little, and their iniquities very great; and now-a-days, a Christian is a man that comes to church on Sundays, and on the week following will do shameful things;

*Passim corvos sequitur, testæque lutoque
Securus quo pes ferat, atque ex tempore vivit;*

being, according to the Jewish proverbial reproof, as so many Mephibosheths: "discipuli sapientum, qui incessu pudefaciant præceptorem suum;" "their master teaches them to go uprightly, but they still show their lame leg, and shame their master;" as if a man might be a Christian, and yet be the vilest person in the world, doing such things for which the laws of men have provided smart and shame, and the laws of God have threatened the intolerable pains of an insufferable and never-ending damnation. Example here cannot be our rule, unless men were much better; and as long as men live at the rate they do, it will be to little purpose to talk of exceeding the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees; but because it must be much better with us all, or it will be very much worse with us at the latter end, I shall leave complaining, and go to the rule, and describe the necessary and unavoidable measures of the righteousness evangelical, without which we can never be saved.

1. Therefore, when it is said our "righteousness must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees," let us first take notice, by way of precognition, that it must at least be so much; we must keep the letter of the whole moral law; we must do all that lies before us, all that is in our hand: and therefore *ἀρχαίεσθαι*, which signifies "to be religious," the grammarians derive *ἀπὸ τοῦ χειρᾶς ἀρέγεσθαι*, "from reaching forth the hand:" the outward work must be done; and it is not enough to say, "My heart is right, but my hand went aside." Prudentius saith, that St. Peter wept so bitterly, because he did not confess Christ openly, whom he loved secretly.

*Flevit negator denique
Ex ore prolapsum nefas
Cū mens maneret innocens,
Animusque servavit fidem.*

* Sed Beelzebulis callida commenta Christus destruit.

A right heart alone will not do it; or rather, the heart is not right, when the hand is wrong. "If a man strikes his neighbour, and says, Am not I in jest? it is folly and shame to him," said Solomon. For, once for all, let us remember this, that Christianity is the most profitable, the most useful, and the most bountiful institution in the whole world; and the best definition I can give of it is this;—It is the wisdom of God brought down among us, to do good to men, and therefore we must not do less than the Pharisees, who did the outward work; at least, let us be sure to do all the work that is laid before us in the commandments. And it is strange that this should be needful to be pressed amongst Christians, whose religion requires so very much more. But so it is, upon a pretence that we must serve God with the mind, some are such fools as to think that it is enough to have a good meaning. "Iniquum perpol verbum est, bene vult, nisi qui bene facit." And because we must serve God in the spirit, therefore they will not serve God with their bodies; and because they are called upon to have the power and the life of godliness, they abominate all external works as mere forms; and because the true fast is to abstain from sin, therefore they will not abstain from meat and drink, even when they are commanded; which is just as if a Pharisee, being taught the circumcision of the heart, should refuse to circumcise his flesh; and as if a Christian, being instructed in the excellencies of spiritual communion, should wholly neglect the sacramental; that is, because the soul is the life of man, therefore it is fitting to die in a humour, and lay aside the body. This is a taking away the subject of the question; for our inquiry is,—how we should keep the commandments? how we are to do the work that lies before us? by what principles, with what intention, in what degrees, after what manner, "ut bonum bene fiat," "that the good thing be done well?" This, therefore, must be presupposed: we must take care that even our bodies bear a part in our spiritual services. Our voice and tongue, our hands and our feet, and our very bowels must be servants of God, and do the work of the commandments.

This being ever supposed, our question is, how much more we must do? and the first measure is this,—whatsoever can be signified and ministered to by the body, the heart and the spirit of a man must be the

principal actor. We must not give alms without a charitable soul, nor suffer martyrdom, but in love and in obedience; and when we say our prayers, we do but mispend our time, unless our mind ascend up to God upon the wings of desire.

Desire is the life of prayer; and if you indeed desire what you pray for, you will also labour for what you desire; and if you find it otherwise with yourselves, your coming to church is but like the Pharisees going up to the temple to pray. If your heart be not present, neither will God; and then there is a sound of men and women between a pair of dead walls, from whence, because neither God nor your souls are present, you must needs go home without a blessing.

But this measure of evangelical righteousness is of principal remark in all the rites and solemnities of religion; and intends to say this, that Christian religion is something that is not seen, it is the hidden man of the heart; *ἰσὶ τὸς θεὸς ἰδόν*, "it is God that dwells within;" and true Christians are men, who, as the Chaldee oracle said, are *πολὴν ἰσοάμενοι νοῦν*, "clothed with a great deal of mind." And, therefore, those words of the prophet Hosea, "Et loquar ad cor ejus," "I will speak unto his heart," is a proverbial expression, signifying to speak spiritual comforts, and, in the mystical sense, signifies *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι*, "to preach the gospel:" where the Spirit is the preacher, and the heart is the disciple, and the sermon is of righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Our service to God must not be in outward works and scenes of religion, it must be something by which we become like to God; the Divine prerogative must extend beyond the outward man, nay, even beyond the mortification of corporal vices; the Spirit of God must go "in trabis crassitudinem," and mollify all our secret pride, and ingenerate in us a true humility, and a Christian meekness of spirit, and a Divine charity. For in the gospel, when God enjoins any external rite or ceremony, the outward work is always the less principal. For there is a bodily and a carnal part, an outside, and a cabinet of religion in Christianity itself. When we are baptized, the purpose of God is, that we cleanse ourselves from all pollution of the flesh and spirit, and then we are, indeed, *καθαροὶ ὅλοι*, "clean all over." And when we communicate, the commandment means that we should be made one spirit, with Christ, and should live on him, be-

lieving his word, praying for his Spirit, supported with his hope, refreshed by his promises, recreated by his comforts, and wholly, and in all things, conformable to his life; that is the true communion. The sacraments are not made for sinners, until they do repent; they are the food of our souls, but our souls must be alive unto God, or else they cannot eat. It is good to "confess our sins," as St. James says, and to open our wounds to the ministers of religion; but they absolve none but such as are truly penitent.

Solemn prayers, and the sacraments, and the assemblies of the faithful, and fasting days, and acts of external worship, are the solemnities and rites of religion: but the religion of a Christian is in the heart and spirit. And this is that by which Clemens Alexandrinus defined the righteousness of a Christian, *Δικαιοσύνη συμφορία τῶν τῆς ψυχῆς μερῶν* "all the parts and faculties that make up a man, must make up our religion;" but the heart is "domus principalis," it is "the court" of the great King; and he is properly served with interior graces and moral virtues, with a humble and a good mind, with a bountiful heart, and a willing soul, and these will command the eye, and give laws to the hand, and make the shoulders stoop; but "anima cujusque est quisque;" "a man's soul is the man," and so is his religion; and so you are bound to understand it.

True it is, God works in us his graces by the sacrament; but we must dispose ourselves to a reception of the Divine blessing by moral instruments. The soul is *συνεργός τῷ Θεῷ*, "it must work together with God;" and the body works together with the soul: but no external action can purify the soul, because, its nature and operations being spiritual, it can no more be changed by a ceremony or an external solemnity, than an angel can be caressed with sweetmeats, or a man's belly with music or long orations. The sum is this: no Christian does his duty to God but he that serves him with all his heart: and although it becomes us to fulfil all righteousness, even the external also; yet that which makes us gracious in his eyes, is not the external, it is the love of the heart and the real change of the mind and obedience of the spirit; that is the first great measure of the righteousness evangelical.

2. The righteousness evangelical must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees by

extension of our obedience to things of the same signification: "Leges non ex verbis, sed ex mente intelligendas," says the law.* There must be a commentary of kindness in the understanding the laws of Christ. We must understand all God's meaning; we must secure his service, we must be far removed from the dangers of his displeasure. And, therefore, our righteousness must be the purification and the perfection of the spirit. So that it will be nothing for us not to commit adultery, unless our eyes and hands be chaste, and the desires be clean. A Christian must not look upon a woman to lust after her. He must hate sin in all dimensions, and in all instances, and in every angle of its reception. A Christian must not sin, and he must not be willing to sin if he durst. He must not be lustful, and therefore he must not feed high, nor drink deep, for these make provisions for lust: and, amongst Christians, great eatings and drinkings are acts of uncleanness as well as of intemperance, and whatever ministers to sin, and is the way of it; it partakes of its nature and its curse.

For it is remarkable that in good and evil the case is greatly different. Mortification (e. g.) is a duty of Christianity; but there is no law concerning the instruments of it. We are not commanded to roll ourselves on thorns, as St. Benedict did; or to burn our flesh, like St. Martinian; or to tumble in snows, with St. Francis; or in pools of water with St. Bernard. A man may chew aloes, or lie upon the ground, or wear sackcloth, if he have a mind to it, and if he finds it good in its circumstances and to his purposes of mortification; but, it may be, he may do it alone by the instrumentalities of fear and love; and so the thing be done, no special instrument is under a command. But although the instruments of virtue are free, yet the instruments and ministries of vice are not. Not only the sin is forbidden, but all the ways that lead to it. The instruments of virtue are of themselves indifferent, that is, not naturally, but good only for their relation's sake, and in order to their end. But the instruments of vice are of themselves vicious; they are part of the sin, they have a share in the fantastic pleasure, and they begin to estrange a man's heart from God, and are directly in the prohibition. For we are commanded to fly from temptation, to pray against it, "to abstain

* De Legibus l. scire.

from all appearances of evil," "to make a covenant with our eyes," "to pluck them out" if there be need. And if Christians do not understand the commandments to this extension of signification, they will be innocent only by the measures of human laws, but not by the righteousness of God.

3. Of the same consideration it is also that we understand Christ's commandments to extend our duty, not only to what is named, and what is not named of the same nature and design; but that we abstain from all such things as are like to sins. Of this nature there are many. All violences of passion, irregularities in gaming, prodigality of our time, indecency of action, doing things unworthy of our birth or our profession, aptness to go to law; "ambitus," or a fierce prosecution even of honourable employments; misconstruction of the words and actions of our brother; easiness to believe evil of others, willingness to report the evil which we hear; curiosity of diet, peevishness towards servants, indiscreet and importune standing for place, and all excess in ornaments; for even this little instance is directly prohibited by the Christian and royal law of charity. For *ἀγάπη οὐ περπερεύεται*, saith St. Paul; the word is a word hard to be understood; we render it well enough, "charity vaunteth not itself;" and upon this St. Basil says, that an ecclesiastic person (and so every Christian in his proportion) ought not to go in splendid and vain ornaments; Πάν γὰρ ὁ μὴ διὰ χρείαν, ἀλλὰ διὰ καλλωπισμὸν παραλαμβάνεται περπερείας ἔχει κατηγορίαν. "Every thing that is not wisely useful or proportioned to the state of the Christian, but ministers only to vanity, is a part of this *περπερεύεσθαι*," it is a "vaunting," which the charity and the grace of a Christian does not well endure. These things are like to sins; they are of a suspicious nature, and not easily to be reconciled to the righteousness evangelical. It is no wonder if Christianity be nice and curious; it is the cleanness and the purification of the soul, and Christ intends to present his church to God ἄσπιλον καὶ ἀμώμητον, "without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." N. B. or any such thing. If there be any irregularity that is less than a wrinkle, the evangelical righteousness does not allow it. These are such things which if men will stand to defend, possibly a modest reprover may be more ashamed than an impudent offender. If I see a person apt to quarrel, to take every thing in an ill sense, to resent

an error deeply, to reprove it bitterly, to remember it tenaciously, to repeat it frequently, to upbraid it unhandsomely, I think I have great reason to say, that this person does not do what becomes the sweetness of a Christian spirit. If it be replied, It is no where forbidden to chide an offending person, and that it cannot be a fault to understand when a thing is said or done amiss; I cannot return an answer, but by saying, that suppose nothing of it were sin, yet that every thing of it is so like a sin, that it is the worse for it; and that it were better not to do so; at least I think so, and so ought you too, if you be curious of your eternal interest: a little more tenderness here would do well. I cannot say that this dress, or this garment, or this standing for place, is the direct sin of pride; but I am sure it looks like it in some persons; at least the letting it alone is much better, and is very like humility. And certain it is, that he is dull of hearing who understands not the voice of God, unless it be clamorous in an express and a loud commandment, proclaimed with trumpets and clarions upon mount Sinai; but a willing and an obedient ear understands the still voice of Christ, and is ready to obey his meaning at half a word; and that is the righteousness evangelical. It not only abstains from sins named, and sins implied, but from the beginnings and instruments of sin; and from whatsoever is like it. The Jews were so great haters of swine upon pretensions of the Mosaic rites, that they would not so much as name a swine, but called it *אֲחֵר אֲחֵר* daber acher, another thing. And thus the Romans, in their auguries, used "alterum" for "non bonum." The simile of this St. Paul translates to a Christian duty: "Let not fornication be so much as named amongst you, ὡς ἔρεσκον ἐν τοῖς ἀγίοις, as is comely amongst Christians;" that is, come not near a foul thing; speak not of it, let it be wholly banished from all your conversation; for this niceness and curiosity of duty "becometh saints," and is an instance of the righteousness evangelical.

I have now done with the first sort of measures of the Christian righteousness; these which are the matter of our negative duty; these are the measures of our caution and our first innocence. But there are greater things behind, which, although I must crowd up into a narrow room, yet I must not wholly omit them: therefore,

4. The fourth thing I shall note to you is, that whereas the righteousness of the Pha-

rise was but a fragrant of the broken tables of Moses; the pursuance of some one grace, "lacina sanctitatis," "a piece of the robe of righteousness;" the righteousness evangelical must be like Christ's seamless coat, all of a piece from the top to the bottom; it must invest the whole soul: Misma, Dumah, Massah, said the proverb of the Rabbin; it is this, and it is the other, and it must be all, it must be a universal righteousness;* not a little knot of holy actions scattered in our lives, and drawn into a sum at the day of judgment, but it must be a state of holiness. It was said of the Paphlagonian pigeons, *διπλὴν ὄρασαι τὴν καρδίαν*, "every one of them had two hearts;" but that in our mystical theology signifies a wicked man. So said Solomon, "the perverse or wicked man (derachaim) he is a man of two ways; *ὁ ἡδὲ ψυχὸς*, so St. James expresses an unbeliever; a man that will and will not; something he does for God, and something for the world; he hath two minds: and in a good fit, in his well days he is full of repentance, and overflows in piety; but the paroxysm will return in the day of temptation, and then he is gone infallibly. But know this, that in the righteousness evangelical, one duty cannot be exchanged for another, and three virtues will not make amends for one remaining vice. He that oppresses the poor cannot make amends by giving good counsel; and if a priest be simoniacal, he cannot be esteemed righteous before God by preaching well, and taking care of his charge. To be zealous for God and for religion is good, but that will not legitimate cruelty to our brother. It is not enough for a man to be a good citizen, unless he be also a good man; but some men build their houses with half a dozen cross sticks, and turf is the foundation, and straw is the covering, and they think they dwell securely; their religion is made up of two or three virtues, and they think to commute with God, some good for some bad, *πολλὰ μεμιγμένα, πολλὰ δὲ αἰσχρά*: as if one deadly wound were not enough to destroy the most healthful constitution in the world. Deceive not yourselves. It is all one on which hand we fall:

—Num operantur

Et calor et frigus, sic hoc, sic illud adurit;

Sic tenebræ visum, sic sol contrarius aufert.

The moon may burn us by night as well as the sun by day: and a man may be made

blind by the light of the sun as well as by the darkness of the evening, and any one great mischief is enough to destroy one man. Some men are very meek and gentle naturally, and that they serve God withal, they pursue the virtue of their nature: that is, they tie a stone at the bottom of the well, and that is more than needs; the stone will stay there without that trouble; and this good inclination will of itself easily proceed to issue; and, therefore, our care and caution should be more carefully employed in mortification of our natures, and acquit of such virtues to which we are more refractory, and then cherish the other too, even as much as we please: but, at the same time we are busy in this, it may be, we are secret adulterers, and that will spoil our confidences in the goodness of the other instance; others are greatly bountiful to the poor, and love all mankind, and hurt nobody but themselves; but it is a thousand pities to see such loving good-natured persons to perish infinitely by one crime, and to see such excellent good things thrown away to please an uncontrolled and a stubborn lust; but so do some escape out of a pit, and are taken in a trap at their going forth: and stepping aside to avoid the hoar-frost, fall into a valley full of snow. The righteousness evangelical is another kind of thing: it is a holy conversation, a godlike life, an universal obedience, a keeping nothing back from God, a sanctification of the whole man, and keeps not the body only, but the soul and the spirit, unblamable to the coming of the Lord Jesus.

5. And lastly: the pharisaical righteousness was the product of fear, and, therefore, what they must needs do, that they would do; but no more: but the righteousness evangelical is produced by love, it is managed by choice, and cherished by delight and fair experiences. Christians are a willing people; "homines bonæ voluntatis," "men of good will;" "arbores Domini:" so they are mystically represented in Scripture; "the trees of the Lord are full of sap;" among the Hebrews the trees of the Lord did signify such trees as grew of themselves; and all that are of God's planting, are such as have a vital principle within, and grow without constraint. *Πείθονται τοῖς ὑποτακτέοις νόμοις, καὶ τοῖς ἰδίοις βίαις κατὰ τοὺς νόμους*, one said it of Christians: "They obey the laws, and by the goodness of their lives exceed the laws;" and certain it is, no man hath the righteousness evangelical, if he re-

* Prov. xxviii. 14.

solves always to take all his liberty in every thing that is merely lawful; or if he purposes to do no more than he must needs, that is, no more than he is just commanded. For the reasons are plain.

1. The Christian that resolves to do every thing that is lawful, will many times run into danger and inconvenience; because the utmost extremity of lawful is so near to that which is unlawful, that he will often pass into unlawful undiscernibly. Virtues and vices have not, in all their instances, a great landmark set between them, like warlike nations separate by prodigious walls, vast seas, and portentous hills; but they are oftentimes like the bounds of a parish; men are fain to cut a cross upon the turf, and make little marks and annual perambulations for memorials: so it is in lawful and unlawful, by a little mistake a man may be greatly ruined. He that drinks till his tongue is as full as a sponge, and his speech a little stammering and tripping, hasty and disorderly, though he be not gone as far as drunkenness, yet he is gone beyond the severity of a Christian; and when he is just past into unlawful, if he disputes too curiously, he will certainly deceive himself for want of a wiser curiosity.

But, 2. He that will do all that he thinks he may lawfully, had need have an infallible guide always by him, who should, without error, be able to answer all cases of conscience, which will happen every day in a life so careless and insecure; for if he should be mistaken, his error is his crime, and not his excuse. A man in this case had need be very sure of his proposition; which because he cannot be, in charity to himself, he will quickly find that he is bound to abstain from all things that are uncertainly good, and from all disputable evils; from things which, although they may be in themselves lawful, yet accidentally, and that from a thousand causes, may become unlawful. "*Pavidus quippe et formidolosus est Christianus,*" saith Salvian, "*atque in tantum peccare metuens, ut interdum et non timenda formidet:*" "A Christian is afraid of every little thing; and he sometimes greatly fears that he hath sinned, even then when he hath no other reason to be afraid, but because he would not do so for all the world."

3. He that resolves to use all his liberty, cannot be innocent, so long as there are in the world so many bold temptations, and presumptuous actions; so many scandals,

and so much ignorance in the things of God; so many things that are suspicious, and so many things that are of evil report; so many ill customs and disguises in the world, with which if we resolve to comply in all that is supposed lawful, a man may be in the regions of death, before he perceive his head to ache; and, instead of a staff in his hand, may have a splinter in his elbow.

4. Besides all this: he that thus stands on his terms with God, and so carefully husbands his duty, and thinks to make so good a market of obedience, that he will quit nothing which he thinks he may lawfully keep, shall never be exemplar in his life, and shall never grow in grace, and therefore shall never enter into glory. He, therefore, that will be righteous by the measures evangelical, must consider not only what is lawful, but what is expedient; not only what is barely safe, but what is worthy; that which may secure, and that which may do advantage to that concern that is the greatest in the world.

And, 2. The case is very like with them that resolve to do no more good than is commanded them. For 1. It is infinitely unprofitable as to our eternal interest, because no man does do all that is commanded at all times; and, therefore, he that will not sometimes do more, besides that he hath no love, no zeal of duty, no holy fires in his soul; besides this, I say, he can never make any amends towards the reparation of his conscience. "Let him that stole, steal no more;" that is well; but that is not well enough; for he must, if he can, make restitution of what he stole, or he shall never be pardoned; and so it is in all our intercourse with God. To do what is commanded is the duty of the present; we are tied to this in every present, in every period of our lives; but, therefore, if we never do any more than just the present duty, who shall supply the deficiencies, and fill up the gaps, and redeem what is past? This is a material consideration in the righteousness evangelical.

But then, 2. We must know that in keeping of God's commandments, every degree of internal duty is under the commandments; and, therefore, whatever we do, we must do it as well as we can. Now he that does his duty with the biggest affection he can, will also do all that he can; and he can never know that he hath done what is commanded, unless he does all that is in his

power. For God hath put no limit but love and possibility; and therefore whoever says, Hither will I go, and no further; this I will do, and no more; thus much will I serve God, but that shall be all; he hath the affections of a slave, and the religion of a Pharisee, the craft of a merchant, and the falseness of a broker; but he hath not the proper measures of the righteousness evangelical. But so it happens in the mud and slime of the river Borborus, when the eye of the sun hath long dwelt upon it, and produces frogs and mice which begin to move a little under a thin cover of its own parental matter, and if they can get loose to live half a life, that is all; but the hinder parts, which are not formed before the setting of the sun, stuck fast in their beds of mud, and the little moiety of a creature dies before it could be well said to live; so it is with those Christians, who will do all that they think lawful, and will do no more than what they suppose necessary; they do but peep into the light of the Sun of righteousness; they have the beginnings of life; but their hinder parts, their passions and affections, and the desires of the lower man, are still unformed; and he that dwells in this state, is just so much of a Christian, as a sponge is of a plant, and a mushroom of a shrub; they may be as sensible as an oyster, and discourse at the rate of a child, but are greatly short of the righteousness evangelical.

I have now done with those parts of the Christian righteousness, which were not only an *ὑπεροχή*, or, "excess," but an *ἀπείροχοις* to the pharisaical: but because I ought not to conceal any thing from you that must integrate our duty, and secure our title to the kingdom of heaven; there is this to be added, that this precept of our blessed Saviour is to be extended to the direct degrees of our duty. We must do more duties, and we must do them better. And in this, although we can have no positive measures, because they are potentially infinite, yet therefore we ought to take the best, because we are sure the greatest is not too big; and we are not sure that God will accept a worse, when we can do a better. Now although this is to be understood of the internal affection only, because that must never be abated, but God is at all times to be loved and served with all our heart; yet concerning the degrees of external duty, as prayers, and alms, and the like, we are certainly tied to a greater excellency

in the degree, than was that of the scribes and Pharisees. I am obliged to speak one word for the determination of this inquiry, viz. to how much more of external duty Christians are obliged, than was in the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. In order to this, briefly thus.

I remember that Salvian, speaking of old men summing up their repentances, and making amends for the sins of their whole life, exhorts them to alms and works of piety; but inquiring how much they should do towards the redeeming of their souls, answers with a little sarcasm, but plainly enough to give a wise man an answer: "A man," says he, "is not bound to give away all his goods, unless, peradventure, he owes all to God; but, in that case, I cannot tell what to say; for then the case is altered. A man is not bound to part with all his estate; that is, unless his sins be greater than his estate; but if they be, then he may consider of it again, and consider better. And he need not part with it all, unless pardon be more precious to him than his money, and unless heaven be worth it all, and unless he knows justly how much less will do it. If he does, let him try his skill, and pay just so much and no more than he owes to God; but if he does not know, let him be sure to do enough." His meaning is this: not that a man is bound to give all he hath, and leave his children beggars; he is bound from that by another obligation. But as when we are tied to pray continually, the meaning is, we should consecrate all our time by taking good portions out of all our time for that duty; the devoutest person being like the waters of Siloam,* a perpetual spring, but not a perpetual current; that is always in readiness, but actually thrusting forth his waters at certain periods every day. So out of all our estate we must take for religion and repentance such portions as the whole estate can allow; so much as will consecrate the rest; so much as is fit to bring when we pray for a great pardon, and deprecate a mighty anger, and turn aside an intolerable fear, and will purchase an excellent peace, and will reconcile a sinner. Now in this case a Christian is to take his measures according to the rate of his contrition and his love, his religion and his fear, his danger and his expectation, and let him

* S. Hier. in Comment. Isa. viii. Isidor. lib. xiii. Orig. cap. 13.

measure his amends wisely; his sorrow pouring in, and his fear thrusting it down, and it were very well, if his love also would make it run over. For, deceive not yourselves, there is no other measure but this; so much good as a man does, or so much as he would do, if he could,—so much of religion, and so much of repentance he hath, and no more: and a man cannot ordinarily know that he is in a savable condition, but by the testimony which a divine philanthropy and a good mind always gives, which is to omit no opportunity of doing good in our several proportions and possibilities.

There was an alms which the scribes and Pharisees were obliged by the law to give, the tenth of every third year's increase; this they always paid, and this sort of alms is called *δικαιοσύνη*, "righteousness" or "justice;" but the alms which Christians ought to give is *χάρις*, and it is *ἀγάπη*, it is "grace," and it is "love," and it is abundance; and so the old rabbins told: "Justitia propriè dicitur in iis quæ jure facimus; benignitas in iis quæ præter jus." It is more than righteousness, it is bounty and benignity, for that is the Christian measure. And so it is in the other parts and instances of the righteousness evangelical. And, therefore, it is remarkable that the saints in the Old Testament were called *εὐθεῖς*, "right men;" and the book of Genesis, as we find it twice attested by St. Jerome, was called by the ancient Hellenists, *βιβλος εὐθείων*, "the book of right or just men," the book of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.* But the word for Christians is *χρηστοί*, "good" men, harmless, and profitable; men that are good, and men that do good. In pursuance of which it is further observed by learned men, that the word *ἀρετή*, or "virtue," is not in the four gospels; for the actions of Christ's disciples should not be in "gradu virtutis" only, virtuous and laudable; such as these Aristotle presses in his "Magna Moralia;" they must pass on to a further excellency than so: the same which he calls *πράξεις τῶν ἡρώων*, they must be sometimes, and as often as we can, in "gradu heroico;" or, that I may use the Christian style, they must be "actions of perfection." "Righteousness" was the *συνώνυμον* for "alms" in the Old Testament,—and *τελειότης*, or "perfection," was the word for "alms" in the

New; as appears by comparing the fifth of St. Matthew and the sixth of St. Luke together; and that is the full state of this difference in the inquiries of the righteousness pharisaical and evangelical.

I have many more things to say, but ye cannot hear them now, because the time is past. One thing indeed were fit to be spoken of, if I had any time left; but I can only name it, and desire your consideration to make it up. This great rule that Christ gives us, does also, and that principally too, concern churches and commonwealths, as well as every single Christian. Christian parliaments must exceed the religion and government of the sanhedrim. Your laws must be more holy, the condition of the subjects be made more tolerable, the laws of Christ must be strictly enforced; you must not suffer your great Master to be dishonoured, nor his religion dismembered by sects, or disgraced by impiety; you must give no impunity to vicious persons, and you must take care that no great example be greatly corrupted; you must make the better provisions for your poor than they did, and take more care even of the external advantages of Christ's religion and his ministers, than they did of the priests and Levites; that is, in all things you must be more zealous to promote the kingdom of Christ, than they were for the ministries of Moses.

The sum of all is this: the righteousness evangelical is the same with that, which the ancients called *ἀποστολικὴν διαίτην ποιεῖταιν*, "to live an apostolical life;" that was the measure of Christians; the *οἱ ἐναρέτως καὶ θεαρέστως βιοῦντες*, "men that desired to please God;" that is, as Apostolius most admirably describes it,* men who are curious of their very eyes, temperate in their tongue, of a mortified body, and an humble spirit, pure in their intentions, masters of their passions; men who, when they are injured, return honourable words; when they are lessened in their estates, increase in their charity; when they are abused, they yet are courteous, and give entreaties; when they are hated, they pay love; men that are dull

* Ἔστι δὲ αὐτῇ ὀφθαλμῶν ἀκρίβεια, γλώσσης ἐγκράτεια, σώματος δουλαγωγία, φρόνημα ταπεινόν, ἐννοίας καθαρότης, ὄργης ἀφανισμὸς ἀγαπητόμενος προτιθεῖ, ἀποστεροῦμενος μὴ δικάζου, μισουμένου ἀγάπη, βεβηλωμένου ἀνέχου, βλαφημούμενος παρακάλει, νεκρώθητι τῇ ἀμαρτίᾳ, συσταυρώθητι τῷ Χριστῷ, ὀλην τὴν ἀγάπην μετὰδεις ἐπὶ τὸν Κύριον.

* Comment. in Isa. xii. and lib. vi. in Ezek. xviii.

in contentions, and quick in loving-kindnesses, swift as the feet of Asahel,⁹ and ready as the chariots of Amminadib.† True Christians are such as are crucified with Christ, and dead unto all sin, and finally place their whole love on God, and, for his sake, upon all mankind: this is the description of a Christian, and the true state of the righteousness evangelical; so that it was well said of Athenagoras, Οὐδείς χριστιανὸς πονηρός, εἰ μὴ ὑποκρίνεται τὸν λόγον, "No Christian is a wicked man, unless his life be a continual lie,"‡ unless he be false to God and his religion. For the righteousness of the gospel is, in short, nothing else but a transcript of the life of Christ: "De mathana nahaliel; de nahaliel Bamoth," said R. Joshua; Christ is the image of God, and every Christian is the image of Christ, whose example is imitable; but it is the best, and his laws are the most perfect, but the most easy; and the promises by which he invites our greater services, are most excellent, but most true; and the rewards shall be hereafter, but they shall abide for ever; and, that I may take notice of the last words of my text, the threatenings to them that fall short of this righteousness, are most terrible, but most certainly shall come to pass; "they shall never enter into the kingdom of heaven;" that is, their portion shall be shame and an eternal prison, ἀσφαλιστῶδες ρεῖμα, "a flood of brimstone," and a cohabitation with devils to eternal ages; and if this consideration will not prevail, there is no place left for persuasion, and there is no use of reason, and the greatest hopes and the greatest fears can be no argument or sanction of laws; and the greatest good in the world is not considerable, and the greatest evil is not formidable: but if they be, there is no more to be said; if you would have your portion with Christ, you must be righteous by his measures: and these are they that I have told you of.

SERMON II.

THE CHRISTIAN'S CONQUEST OVER THE BODY OF SIN.

For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.—Rom. vii. 19.

WHAT the eunuch said to Philip, when he read the book of the prophet Isaiah,

* 2 Sam. ii. 18.

† Song of Sol. vi. 12.

‡ Legat. pro Christianis.

"Of whom speaketh the prophet this, of himself, or some other man?" the same question I am to ask concerning the words of my text: Does St. Paul mean this of himself, or of some other? It is hoped that he speaks it of himself; and means, that though his understanding is convinced that he ought to serve God, and that he hath some imperfect desires to do so, yet the law of God without is opposed by a law of sin within. We have a corrupted nature, and a body of infirmity, and our reason dwells in the dark, and we must go out of the world before we leave our sin. For besides that some sins are esteemed brave and honourable, and he is a baffled person that dares not kill his brother like a gentleman; our very tables are made a snare, and our civilities are direct treasons to the soul. You cannot entertain your friend, but excess is the measure; and that you may be very kind to your guest, you step aside, and lay away the Christian; your love cannot be expressed, unless you do him an ill turn, and civilly invite him to a fever. Justice is too often taught to bow to great interests, and men cannot live without flattery: and there are some trades that minister to sin, so that without a sin we cannot maintain our families; and if you mean to live, you must do as others do. Now so long as men see they are like to be undone by innocence, and that they can no way live but by compliance with the evil customs of the world, men conclude practically, because they must live, they must sin; they must live handsomely, and, therefore, must do some things unhandsomely, and so upon the whole matter sin is unavoidable. Fain they would, but cannot tell how to help it. But since it is no better, it is well it is no worse. For it is St. Paul's case, no worse man: he would and he would not, he did and he did not; he was willing, but he was not able; and, therefore, the case is clear, that if a man strives against sin, and falls unwillingly, it shall not be imputed to him; he may be a regenerate man for all that. A man must, indeed, wrangle against sin when it comes, and, like a peevish lover, resist and consent at the same time, and then all is well; for this not only consists with, but is a sign of the state of regeneration.

If this be true, God will be very ill served. If it be not true, most men will have but small hopes of being saved, because this is the condition of most men. What then is to be done? Truth can do us no hurt; and,

therefore, be willing to let this matter pass under examination; for if it trouble us now, it will bring comfort hereafter. And, therefore, before I enter into the main inquiry, I shall, by describing the state of the man of whom St. Paul speaks here, tell you plainly, who it is that is in this state of sad things; and then do ye make your resolutions, according as you shall find it necessary for the saving of your souls, which, I am sure, ought to be the end of all preaching.

1. The man St. Paul speaks of, is one that is "dead,"* one that was "deceived" and "slain,"† one in whom "sin was exceeding sinful,"‡ that is, highly imputed, greatly malicious, infinitely destructive: he is one who is "carnal, and sold under sin;"§ he is one that sins against his "conscience and his reason;"|| he is one in whom "sin dwells," but the Spirit of God does not dwell; for "no good thing dwells in him;"¶ he is one who is "brought into captivity to the law of sin;" he is a servant of uncleanness, with his "flesh and members serving the law of sin."** Now if this be a state of regeneration, I wonder what is, or can be, a state of reprobation! for though this be the state of nature, yet it cannot be the state of one redeemed by the Spirit of Christ; and, therefore, flatter not yourselves any more, that it is enough for you to have good desires and bad performances: never think that any sin can reign in you, and yet you be servants of God; that sin can dwell in you, and at the same time the Spirit of God can dwell in you too; or that life and death can abide together. The sum of affairs is this: "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live;"†† but not else upon any terms whatsoever.

My text is one of the hard places of St. Paul, which, as St. Peter says, "the ignorant and the unstable wrest to their own damnation." But because in this case the danger is so imminent, and the deception would be so intolerable, St. Paul, immediately after this chapter, (in which, under his own person, as was usual with him to do, he describes the state of a natural man advanced no further than Moses' law, and not redeemed by the blood of Christ, or enlightened by the Spirit of God, and taught by the wiser lessons and sermons of the gos-

pel,) immediately spends the next chapter in opposing the evangelical state to the legal, the spiritual to the carnal, the Christian to the natural; and tells us plainly, he that is redeemed by the blood of Christ, is redeemed from the power of sin: he that is Christ's freed-man, is not a slave of sin, not captive to the devil at his will: he that is in "the flesh, cannot please God," but every servant of Christ is freed from sin, and is a servant of righteousness, and redeemed from all his vain conversation: for this is the end of Christ's coming, and cannot be in vain, unless we make it so. He came to bless us by turning every one of us from our iniquities. Now concerning this, besides the evidence of the thing itself, that St. Paul does not speak these words of himself, but by a μετασχηματισμός, under his own borrowed person he describes the state of a carnal, unredeemed, unregenerate person, is expressly affirmed by St. Irenæus and Origen, by Tertullian and St. Basil, by Theodoret and St. Chrysostom, by St. Jerome, and sometimes by St. Austin, by St. Ambrose and St. Cyril, by Macarius and Theophylact; and is indeed that true sense and meaning of these words of St. Paul, which words none can abuse or misunderstand, but to the great prejudice of a holy life, and the patronage of all iniquity.

But for the stating of this great case of conscience, I shall first in short describe to you what are the proper causes, which place men and keep them in this state of a necessity of sinning; and, 2. I shall prove the absolute necessity of coming out of this condition, and quitting all our sin. 3. In what degree this is to be effected. 4. By what instruments this is to be done; and all these being practical, will, of themselves, be sufficient use to the doctrines, and need no other applicatory but a plain exhortation.

1. What are the causes of this evil, by which we are first placed, and so long kept, in a necessity of sinning, so that we cannot do what good we would, nor avoid the evil that we hate?

The first is the evil state of our nature. And, indeed, he that considers the daily experiment of his own weak nature, the ignorance and inconstancy of his soul, being like a sick man's legs, or the knees of infants, reeling and unstable by disease or by infirmity, and the perpetual leaven and germinations, the thrustings forth and swelling of his senses, running out like new wine into vapours and intoxicating activities, will

* Ver. 9. † Ver. 11. ‡ Ver. 13.
 § Ver. 14. || Ver. 16. ¶ Ver. 18.
 ** Ver. 25. †† Rom. viii. 13.

readily confess, that though even in nature there may be many good inclinations to many instances of the Divine commandments; yet it can go no further than this "velleity," this desiring to do good, but is not able. And it is upon this account that Lactantius brings in the pagan or natural man complaining, "Volo equidem non peccare, sed vincor, indutus enim sum carne fragili et imbecillâ." This is very true; and I add only this caution: there is not in the corruption of our nature so much as will save us harmless, or make us excusable, if we sin against God. Natural corruption can make us criminal, but not innocent; for though by him that willingly abides in the state of mere nature, sin cannot be avoided, yet no man is in that state longer than he loves to be so; for the grace of God came to rescue us from this evil portion, and is always present, to give us a new nature, and create us over again: and, therefore, though sin is made necessary to the natural man by his impotency and fond loves, that is, by his unregenerate nature; yet, in the whole constitution of affairs, God hath more than made it up by his grace, if we will make use of it. "In pueris elucet spes plurimorum, quæ ubi emoritur ætate, manifestum est, non defecisse naturam, sed curam," said Quintilian.* We cannot tell what we are, or what we think, in our infancy; and, when we can know our thoughts, we can easily observe that we have learned evil things by evil examples, and the corrupt manners of an evil conversation: "Et ubi per socordiam vires, tempus, ingenium defluxère, naturæ infirmitas accusatur;"† that, indeed, is too true: "We grow lazy, and wanton, and we lose our time, and abuse our parts, and do ugly things, and lay the fault wholly upon our natural infirmities:" but we must remember, that, by this time, it is a state of nature, a state of flesh and blood, which cannot enter into heaven. The natural man and the natural child are not the same thing in true divinity. The natural child indeed can do no good; but the natural man cannot choose but do evil; but it is because he will do so; he is not born in the second birth, and renewed in the baptism of the Spirit.

2. We have brought ourselves into an accidental necessity of sinning by the evil principles, which are sucked in by great parts of mankind. We are taught ways of

going to heaven without forsaking our sins; of repentance without restitution; of being in charity without hearty forgiveness and without love; of believing our sins to be pardoned before they are mortified; of trusting in Christ's death without conformity to his life; of being in God's favour upon the only account of being of such an opinion; and that when we are once in, we can never be out. We are taught to believe that the events of things do not depend upon our crucifying our evil and corrupt affections, but upon eternal and unalterable counsels; that the promises are not the rewards of obedience, but graces pertaining only to a few predestimates, and yet men are saints for all that; and that the laws of God are of the race of the giants, not to be observed by any grace or by any industry: this is the catechism of the ignorant and the profane: but, without all peradventure, the contrary propositions are the way to make the world better: but certainly they that believe these things, do not believe it necessary that we should eschew all evil: and no wonder, then, if when men upon these accounts slacken their industry and their care, they find sin still prevailing, still dwelling within them, and still unconquerable by so slight and disheartened labours. For Ἰδιώτης πᾶς καὶ ἀπαιδευτος τρόπον τινα πᾶς ἐστὶ. "Every fool and every ignorant person is a child still:" and it is no wonder that he who talks foolishly should do childishly and weakly.

3. To our weak and corrupted nature, and our foolish discourses, men do daily superinduce evil habits and customs of sinning. "Consuetudo mala tanquam hamus infixus animæ," said the father; "An evil custom is a hook in the soul," and draws it whither the devil pleases. When it comes to the καρδιά γεγυμνασμένη πλεονεξίας, as St. Peter's word is, "a heart exercised with covetous practices," then it is also ἀσθενής it is "weak" and unable to do the good it fain would, or to avoid the evil, which in a good fit, it pretends to hate. This is so known, I shall not insist upon it; but add this only, that wherever a habit is contracted, it is all one what the instance be; it is as easy as delicious, as unalterable in virtue as in vice; for what helps nature brings to a vicious habit, the same and much more the Spirit of God, by his power and by his comforts, can do in a virtuous; and then we are all well again. You see by this who are, and why they are, in this evil condition. The evil natures, and the evil principles, and the

* Gesner.

† Sall.

evil manners of the world, these are the causes of our imperfect willings and weaker actings in the things of God; and as long as men stay here, sin will be unavoidable. For even meat itself is loathsome to a sick stomach, and it is impossible for him that is heart-sick to eat the most wholesome diet; and yet he that shall say eating is impossible, will be best confuted by seeing all the healthful men in the world eat heartily every day.

2. But what then? Cannot sin be avoided? Cannot a Christian mortify the deeds of the body? Cannot Christ redeem us, and cleanse us from all our sins? Cannot the works of the devil be destroyed? That is the next particular to be inquired of: Whether or no it be not necessary, and, therefore, very possible, for a servant of God to pass from this evil state of things, and not only hate evil, but avoid it also?

"He that saith he hath not sinned, is a liar;" but what then? Because a man hath sinned, it does not follow he must do so always. "Hast thou sinned? do so no more," said the wise Bensirach; and so said Christ to the poor paralytic, "Go, and sin no more."—They were excellent words spoken by a holy prophet: "Let not the sinner say he hath not sinned; for God shall burn coals of fire upon his head, that saith before the Lord God and his glory, I have not sinned." Well! that case is confessed; "All men have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." But is there no remedy for this? Must it always be so? and must sin for ever have the upper hand, and for ever baffle our resolutions, and all our fierce and earnest promises of amendment? God forbid. There was a time then, to come, and, blessed be God, it hath been long come; "Yet a little while," saith that prophet, "and iniquity shall be taken out of the earth, and righteousness shall reign among you." For that is in the day of Christ's kingdom, the manifestation of the gospel. When Christ reigns in our hearts by his Spirit, Dagon and the ark cannot stand together; we cannot serve Christ and Belial. And as in the state of nature no good thing dwells within us; so when Christ rules in us, no evil thing can abide; "For every plant that my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up," and cast away into the fires of consumption or purification. But how shall this come to pass, since we all find ourselves so infinitely weak and foolish? I shall tell you. "It is

easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven," saith Christ. It is impossible to nature; it is impossible to them that are given to vanity; it is impossible for them that delight in the evil snare: but Christ adds, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." What we cannot do for ourselves, God can do for us, and with us. What nature cannot do, the grace of God can. So that the thing may be done; not indeed by ourselves, but "*gratia Dei mecum*," saith St. Paul; God and man together can do it. But if it can be done any way that God has put into our powers, the consequent is this; no man's good will shall be taken in exchange for the real and actual mortification of his sins. He that sins, and would fain not sin, but sin is present with him whether he will or no, let him take heed; for the same is "the law of sin," and "the law of death," saith the apostle; and that man's heart is not right with God. For it is impossible men should pray for deliverance, and not be heard; that they should labour, and not be prosperous; unless they pray amiss, and labour falsely. Let no man, therefore, please himself with talking of great things, with perpetual conversation in pious discourses, or with ineffective desires of serving God: he that does not practice as well as he talks, and do what he desires, and what he ought to do, confesses himself to sin greatly against his conscience; and it is a prodigious folly to think that he is a good man, because though he does sin, yet it was against his mind to do so. A man's conscience can never condemn him, if that be his excuse, to say that his conscience checked him: and that will be but a sad apology at the day of judgment. Some men talk like angels, and pray with fervour, and meditate with deep recesses, and speak to God with loving affections, and words of union, and adhere to him in silent devotion, and when they go abroad are as passionate as ever, peevish as a frightened fly, vexing themselves with their own reflections: they are cruel in their bargains, unmerciful to their tenants, and proud as a barbarian prince: they are, for all their fine words, impatient of reproof, scornful to their neighbours, lovers of money, supreme in their own thoughts, and submit to none; all their spiritual life they talk of, is nothing but spiritual fancy and illusion; they are still under power of their passions, and their sin rules them imperiously, and carries them

away infallibly. Let these men consider, there are some men think it impossible to do as much as they do: the common swearer cannot leave that vice, and talk well; and these men that talk thus well, think they cannot do as well as they talk; but both of them are equally under the power of their respective sins, and are equally deceived, and equally not the servants of God. This is true; but it is equally as true, that there is no necessity for all this; for it ought, and it may be otherwise if we please: for, I pray, be pleased to hear St. Paul; "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh;" there is your remedy: "For the Spirit lusteth against the flesh, and the flesh against the Spirit; there is the cause of it; *ὅνα μὴ ποιῆτε*, "so that ye may not, or cannot, do the things ye would;"* that is the blessed consequent and product of that cause. That is plainly,—As there is a state of carnality, of which St. Paul speaks in my text, so that in that state a man cannot but obey the flesh,—so there is also a state of spirituality, when sin is dead, and righteousness is alive; and, in this state, the flesh can no more prevail than the Spirit could do in the other.—Some men cannot choose but sin; "for the carnal mind is not subject to God, neither, indeed, can be,"† saith St. Paul; but there are, also, some men that cannot endure any thing that is not good. It is a great pain for a temperate man to suffer the disorders of drunkenness, and the shames of lust are intolerable to a chaste and modest person. This also is affirmed by St. John: "Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him."‡ So that, you see, it is possible for a good man not to commit the sin to which he is tempted. But the apostle says more: "He doth not commit sin, neither indeed can he, because he is born of God."

And this is agreeable to the words of our blessed Saviour: "A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit, and a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit;"§ that is, as the child of hell is carried to sin, "pleno impetu," he does not check at it, he does it, and is not troubled; so, on the other side, a child of God is as fully convinced of righteousness, and that which is unrighteous is as hateful to him as colocynths to the taste, or the sharpest punctures to the pupil of the eye. We may see something of this in

common experiences. What man of ordinary prudence and reputation can be tempted to steal? or, for what price would he be tempted to murder his friend? If we did hate all sins as we hate these, would it not be as easy to be as innocent in other instances, as most men are in these? and we should have as few drunkards as we have thieves. In such as these, we do not complain in the words of my text, "What I would not, that I do; and what I would, I do not." Does not every good man overcome all the power of great sins? and can he, by the Spirit of God and right reason, by fear and hope, conquer Goliath, and beat the sons of the giant; and can he not overcome the children of Gath? or is it harder to overcome a little sin than a great one? Are not the temptations to little sins very little? and yet are they greater and stronger than a mighty grace? Could the poor demoniac, that lived in the graves, by the power of the devil break his iron chains in pieces? and cannot he, who hath the Spirit of God, dissolve the chains of sin? "Through Christ that strengthens me, I can do all things," saith St. Paul; "Satis sibi copiarum cum Publio Decio, et nunquam nimium hostium fore," said one in Livy; which is best rendered by St. Paul—"If God be with us, who can be against us?" "Nay, there is an *ὑπερβικτώμεν* in St. Paul, "We are more than conquerors." For even amongst an army of conquerors there are degrees of exaltation; some serve God like the centurion, and some like St. Peter; some like Martha, and some like Mary; *μετ' εὐκολίας ἀπάσης, ἀνεν πόνων καὶ ἰδρώτων*, all good men conquer their temptations, but some with more ease, and some with a clearer victory; and more than thus,—"*Non solum viperam terimus, sed ex eâ antidotum conficimus*," "We kill the viper, and make treacle of him;" that is, not only escape from, but get advantages by temptations. But we, commonly, are more afraid than hurt: "Let us, therefore, lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us:"¶ so we read the words of the apostle; but St. Chrysostom's rendition of them is better; for the word *ὑπερβικτώμεν* is a perfect passive, and cannot signify the strength and irresistibility of sin upon us, but quite the contrary, *ὑπερβικτώμεν ἁμαρτία* signifies "the sin that is so easily avoided," as they that understand that language know very well. And if we were so wise and

* Gal. v. 16.

† Rom. viii. 7.

‡ 1 John iii. 9.

§ Matt. vii. 18.

¶ Heb. xii. 1.

valiant as not to affright ourselves with our own terrors, we should quickly find, that by the help of the Spirit of God, we can do more than we thought we could. It was said of Alexander, "Benè ausus est vana contemnere,"* he did no great matter in conquering the Persians, because they were a pitiful and a soft people; only he understood them to be so, and was wise and bold enough not to fear such images and men of clouds. But men, in the matter of great sins and little, do as the magicians of Egypt: when Moses turned his rod into a serpent, it moved them not; but when they saw the lice and the flies, then they were afraid. We see, that, by the grace of God, we can escape great sins; but we start at flies, and a bird out of a bush disorders us; the lion in the way troubles us not, but a frog or a worm affrights us. Remember the saying of St. Paul, "Christ came to redeem to himself a church, and to present it, pure and spotless, before the throne of grace;" and, if you mean to be of this number, you must endeavour to be under this qualification, that is, as Paul laboured to be, "void of offence, both towards God and towards man." And so I have done with the second proposition. It is necessary that all sin, great and little, should be mortified and dead in us, and that we no longer abide in that state of slavery, as to say, "The good that I would I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do."

3. In the next place we are to inquire in what degree this is to be effected; for though in negatives, properly, there are no degrees, yet, unless there be some allays in this doctrine, it will not be so well, and it may be, your experiences will for ever confute my arguments; for, "Who can say that he is clean from his sin?" said the wise man. And as our blessed Saviour said, "He that is innocent among you all, let him throw the first stone at the sinner," and spare not.

To this I answer, in the words of St. Gregory, All men's righteousness will be found to be unrighteousness, if God should severely enter into judgment; but, therefore, even after our innocence we must pray for pardon, "ut quæ succumbere discussa poterat, ex iudicis pietate convalescat," "that our innocence, which, in strictness of Divine judgment, would be found spotted and stained, by the mercy of our Saviour may be accepted." St. Bernard expresses this well:

"Nostra siqua est humilis justitia, recta forsitan, sed non pura;" "Our humble righteousness is, perhaps, right in the eyes of God, but not pure;" that is, accepted by his mercy, but it is such as dares not contend in judgment. For as no man is so much a sinner, but he sometimes speaks a good word, or does some things not ill, and yet that little good interrupts not that state of evil; so it is amongst very good men, from whom, sometimes, may pass something that is not commendable; and yet their heart is so habitually right towards God, that they will do nothing, I do not say which God in justice cannot, but which in mercy he will not, impute to eternal condemnation. It was the case of David; "he was a man after God's own heart; nay, it is said, "he was blameless, save in the matter of Uriah;" and yet we know he numbered the people, and God was angry with him, and punished him for it; but, because he was a good man, and served God heartily, that other fault of his was imputed to him no further. God set a fine upon his head for it; but it was "salvo contenemento," "the main stake was safe."

For concerning good men, the question is not, whether or no God could not, in the rigour of justice, blame their indiscretion, or impute a foolish word, or chide them for a hasty answer, or a careless action, for a less devout prayer, or weak hands, for a fearful heart, or a trembling faith. These are not the measures by which God judges his children; "for he knoweth whereof we are made, and he remembers that we are but dust."—But the question is, whether any man that is covetous and proud, false to his trust, or a drunkard, can, at the same time, be a child of God? No, certainly he cannot. But then we know that God judges us by Jesus Christ, that is, with the allays of mercy, with an eye of pardon, with the sentences of a father, by the measures of a man, and by analogy, to all our unavoidable abatements. God could enter with us into a more severe judgment, but he would not; and no justice tied him from exercising that mercy. But, according to the measures of the gospel, "he will judge every man according to his works."—Now what these measures are, is now the question. To which I answer, first, in general, and then more particularly.

1. In general, thus:—A Christian's innocence is always to be measured by the plain lines and measures of the commandments;

* Liv.

but is not to be taken into account by uncertain and fond opinions, and the scruples of zealous and timorous persons. My meaning is this: Some men tell us that every natural inclination to a forbidden object is a sin; which they that believe, finding them to be natural, do also confess that such sins are unavoidable. But if these natural and first motions be sins, then a man sins whether he resists them, or resists them not, whether he prevails, or prevails not; and there is no other difference but this,—he that fights not against, but always yields to his desires, sins greatest; and he that never yields, but fights always, sins oftenest. But then, by this reckoning, it will indeed be impossible to avoid millions of sins; because the very doing of our duty does suppose a sin. If God should impute such first desires to us as sins, we were all very miserable; but if he does not impute them, let us trouble ourselves no further about them, but to take care that they never prevail upon us. Thus men are taught, that they never say their prayers but they commit a sin. Indeed that is true but too often; but yet it is possible for us, by the grace of God, to please him in saying our prayers, and to be accepted of him. But, indeed, if God did proceed against us as we do against one another, no man could abide innocent for so much as one hour. But God's judgment is otherwise; he inquires if the heart be right, if our labour be true, if we love no sin, if we use prudent and efficacious instruments to mortify our sin, if we go about our religion as we go about the biggest concerns of our life, if we be sincere and real in our actions and intentions. For this is the ἀναμαρτησία that God requires of us all; this is that "sinless state," in which if God does not find us, we shall never see his glorious face; and if he does find us, we shall certainly be saved by the blood of Jesus. For, in the style of Scripture, to be εὐλαχρενὲς καὶ ἀπρόσκοποι is the same thing: "to be sincere and to be without offence," is all one. Thus David spake heartily, "I am utterly purposed that my mouth shall not offend; and thou shalt find no wickedness in me." He that endeavours this, and hopes this, and does actions and uses means accordingly, not being deceived by his own false heart, nor abused by evil propositions,—this man will stand upright in the congregations of the just; and, though he cannot challenge heaven by merit, yet he shall receive it as a gift by promise and by grace. "Lex nos inno-

centes esse jubet, non curiosos," said Seneca. For God takes no judgment of us by any measures, but of the commandment without, and the heart and the conscience within; but he never intended his laws to be a snare to us, or to entrap us with consequences and dark interpretations, by large deductions and witty similitudes of faults; but he requires of us a sincere heart, and a hearty labour in the work of his commandments; he calls upon us to avoid all that which his law plainly forbids, and which our consciences do condemn. This is the general measure. The particulars are briefly these.

1. Every Christian is bound to arrive at that state, that he have remaining in him no habit of any sin whatsoever. "Our old man must be crucified,"—"the body of sin must be destroyed,"—"he must no longer serve sin,"—"sin shall not have the dominion over you."—All these are the apostles words; that is, plainly, as I have already declared, you must not be at that pass, that though ye would avoid sin, ye cannot. For he that is so, is a most perfect slave, and Christ's freedman cannot be so. Nay, he that loves sin, and delights in it, hath no liberty indeed, but he hath more show of it than he that obeys it against his will.

—Libertatis servaveris umbram,
Si quidquid jubeare velis.

LUCAN.

He that loves to be in the place, is a less prisoner than he that is confined against his will.

2. He that commits any one sin by choice and deliberation, is an enemy to God, and is under the dominion of the flesh. In the case of deliberate sins, one act does give the denomination; he is an adulterer, that so much as once foully breaks the holy laws of marriage. "He that offends in one, is guilty of all," saith St. James. St. Peter's denial, and David's adultery, had passed on to a fatal issue, if the mercy of God, and a great repentance, had not interceded. But they did so no more, and so God restored them to grace and pardon. And in this sense are the words of St. John, Ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, "He that does a sin, is of the devil," and "he that is born of God," ἁμαρτίαν οὐ ποιεῖ, "does not commit a sin;"* he chooses none, he loves none, he endures none, "talía quæ non faciet bonæ fidei et spei Christianus;" they do no great sin, and love no little one.

* 1 John iii. 8.

A sin chosen and deliberately done, is, as Tertullian's expression is, "crimen devoratorium salutis;" "it devours salvation." For as there are some sins which can be done but once,—as a man can kill his father but once, or himself but once, so in those things which can be repeated, a perfect choice is equivalent to a habit; it is the same in principle, that a habit is in the product. In short, he is not a child of God, that, knowingly and deliberately, chooses any thing that God hates.

3. Every Christian ought to attain to such a state of life, as that he never sin, not only by a long deliberation, but also not by passion. I do not say that he is not a good Christian, who by passion is suddenly surprised, and falls into folly; but this I say, that no passion ought to make him choose a sin. For, let the sin enter by anger or by desire, it is all one, if the consent be gained. It is an ill sign, if a man, though on the sudden, consents to a base action. Thus far every good man is tied, not only to endeavour, but to prevail against his sin.

4. There is one step more, which, if it be not actually effected, it must, at least, be greatly endeavoured, and the event be left to God; and that is, that we strive for so great a dominion over our sins and lusts, as that we be not surprised on a sudden. This, indeed, is a work of time, and it is well if it be ever done; but it must always be endeavoured. But in this particular even good men are sometimes unprosperous. St. Epiphanius and St. Chrysostom grew once into choler, and they passed too far, and lost more than their argument; they lost their reason, and they lost their patience; and Epiphanius wished that Chrysostom might not die a bishop; and he in a peevish exchange, wished that Epiphanius might never return to his bishopric: when they had forgotten their foolish anger, God remembered it, and said "Amen" to both their cursed speakings. Nay, there is yet a greater example of human frailty; St. Paul and Barnabas were very holy persons; but once, in a heat, they were both to blame; they were peevish, and parted company. This was not very much; but God was so displeased, even for this little fly in their box of ointment, that their story says, they never saw one another's face again. These earnest emissions and transportations of passion do sometime declare the weakness of good men; but that, even here, we ought at least to endeavour to be more than conquer-

ors, appears in this,—because God allows it not, and by punishing such follies, does manifest that he intends that we should get victory over our sudden passions, as well as our natural lusts. And so I have done with the third inquiry, in what degree God expects our innocence; and now I briefly come to the last particular, which will make all the rest practicable. I am now to tell you how all this can be effected, and how we shall get free from the power and dominion of our sins.

4. The first great instrument is faith. He that hath faith like a grain of mustard seed, can remove mountains; the mountains of sin shall fall flat at the feet of the faithful man, and shall be removed into the sea, the sea of Christ's blood, and penitential waters. "Faith overcometh the world," saith St. John; and walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." There are two of our enemies gone,—the world and the flesh, by faith and the Spirit, by the spirit of faith; and, as for the devil, put on the shield of faith, and "resist the devil, and he will flee from you," saith the apostle; and the powers of sin seem insuperable to none, but to them that have not faith: we do not believe that God intends we should do what he seems to require of us; or else we think, that though God's grace abounds, yet sin must superabound, expressly against the saying of St. Paul; or else we think, that the evil spirit is stronger than the good Spirit of God. Hear what St. John saith: "My little children, ye are of God, and have overcome the evil one; for the Spirit that is in you, is greater than that which is in the world."* Believest thou this? If you do, I shall tell you what may be the event of it. When the father of the boy possessed with the devil told his sad story to Christ, he said, Master, if thou canst do any thing, I pray help me. Christ answered him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.† N. B. And therefore, if you do not believe this, go to your prayers, and go to your guards, and go to your labour, and try what God will do for you. "For whatsoever things ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye shall receive them, and ye shall have them." Now consider; Do we not every day pray, in the Divine hymn called "Te Deum," "Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin?" And in the collect

* 1 John iv. 4.

† Mark ix. 23.

at morning prayer,—“and grant that this day we fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger; but that all our doings may be ordered by thy governance, to do always that which is righteous in thy sight?” Have you any hope, or any faith, when you say that prayer? And if you do your duty as you can, do you think the failure will be on God’s part? Fear not that, if you can trust in God, and do accordingly; “though your sins were as scarlet, yet they shall be as white as snow,” and pure as the feet of the holy Lamb. Only let us forsake all those weak propositions, which cut the nerves of faith, and make it impossible for us to actuate all our good desires, or to come out from the power of sin.

2. He that would be free from the slavery of sin, and the necessity of sinning, must always watch. Aye, that is the point; but who can watch always? Why every good man can watch always; and, that we may not be deceived in this, let us know, that the running away from a temptation is a part of our watchfulness, and every good employment is another great part of it, and a laying in provisions of reason and religion beforehand, is yet a third part of this watchfulness; and the conversation of a Christian is a perpetual watchfulness; not a continual thinking of that one, or those many things, which may endanger us; but it is a continual doing something, directly or indirectly, against sin. He either prays to God for his Spirit, or relies upon the promises, or receives the sacrament, or goes to his bishop for counsel and a blessing, or to his priest for religious offices, or places himself at the feet of good men to hear their wise sayings, or calls for the Church’s prayers, or does the duty of his calling, or actually resists temptation, or frequently renews his holy purposes, or fortifies himself by vows, or searches into his danger by a daily examination; so that, in the whole, he is for ever upon his guards. This duty and caution of a Christian is like watching, lest a man cut his finger. Wise men do not often cut their fingers, and yet every day they use a knife; and a man’s eye is a tender thing, and every thing can do it wrong, and every thing can put it out; yet, because we love our eyes so well, in the midst of so many dangers, by God’s providence, and a prudent natural care, by winking when any thing comes against them, and by turning aside when a blow is offered, they are preserved so certainly, that not one man in

ten thousand does, by a stroke, lose one of his eyes in all his life-time. If we would transplant our natural care to a spiritual caution, we might, by God’s grace, be kept from losing our souls, as we are from losing our eyes; and, because a perpetual watchfulness is our great defence, and the perpetual presence of God’s grace is our great security, and that this grace never leaves us unless we leave it, and the precept of a daily watchfulness is a thing not only so reasonable, but so many easy ways to be performed,—we see upon what terms we may be quit our sins, and more than conquerors over all the enemies and impediments of salvation.

3. If you would be in the state of the liberty of the sons of God, that is, that you may not be servants of sin in any instance, be sure, in the mortifications of sin, willingly or carelessly to leave no remains of it, no nest-egg, no principles of it, no affections to it; if any thing remains, it will prove to us as manna to the sons of Israel on the second day; it will breed worms, and stink. Therefore, labour against every part of it, reject every proposition that gives it countenance, pray to God against it all. And what then? Why then, “ask, and you shall have,” said Christ. Nay, say some, it is true, you shall be heard, but in part only; for God will leave some remains of sin within us, lest we should become proud, by being innocent. So vainly do men argue against God’s goodness, and their own blessing and salvation; *μετὰ πλείονος τέχνης καὶ παρασκευῆς, καὶ πραγματείας ἀπόδυνται*, as St. Basil says; “they contrive witty arts to undo themselves,” being entangled in the periods of ignorant disputations. But as to the thing itself, if by the remains of sin, they mean the propensities and natural inclinations to forbidden objects, there is no question but they will remain in us, so long as we bear our flesh about us; and, surely, that is a great argument to make us humble. But these are not the sins which God charges on his people. But if, by remains, we mean any part of the habit of sin, any affection, any malice or perverseness of the will, then it is a contradiction to say that God leaves in us such remains of sin, lest, by innocence, we become proud; for how should pride spring in a man’s heart, if there be no remains of sin left? And is it not the best, the surest way, to cure the pride of our hearts, by taking out every root of bitterness, even the root of pride itself?

Will a physician purposely leave the relics of a disease, and pretend he does it to prevent a relapse? And is it not more likely he will relapse, if the sickness be not wholly cured? But besides this, if God leaves any remains of sin in us, what remains are they, and of what sins? Does he leave the remains of pride? If so, that were a strange cure, to leave the remains of pride is us, to keep us from being proud. But, if not so, but that all the remains of pride be taken away by the grace of God blessing our endeavours, what danger is there of being proud, the remains of which sin are, by the grace of God, wholly taken away? But then, if the pride of the heart be cured; which in the hardest to be removed, and commonly is done last of all,—who can distrust the power of the Spirit of God, or his goodness, or his promises, and say that God does not intend to cleanse his sons and servants from all unrighteousness; and according to St. Paul's prayer, "keep their bodies, and souls, and spirits, unblameable to the coming of the Lord Jesus?" But, however, let God leave what remains he please, all will be well enough on that side; but let us be careful, as far as we can, that *we* leave none; lest it be severely imputed to us, and the fire break out, and consume us.

4. Let us, without any further question, put this argument to a material issue; let us do all that we can do towards the destruction of the whole body of sin; but let us never say we cannot be quit of our sin, till we have done all that we can do towards the mortification of it. For till that be done, how can any man tell where the fault lies, or whether it can be done or no? If any man can say that he hath done all that he could do, and yet hath failed of his duty,—if he can say truly, that he hath endured as much as is possible to be endured,—that he hath watched always, and never nodded when he could avoid it,—that he hath loved as much as he could love,—that he hath waited till he can wait no longer;—then, indeed, if he says true, we must confess that it is not to be understood. But is there any man in the world that does all that he can do? If there be, that man is blameless; if there be not, then he cannot say but it is his own fault that his sin prevails against him. It is true, that no man is free from sin; but it is as true, that no man does as much as he can against it; and, therefore, no man must

go about to excuse himself by saying, No man is free from his sin; and, therefore, no man can be, no, not by the powers of grace: for he may as well argue thus,—No man does all that he can do against it, and, therefore, it is impossible he should do what he can do. The argument is apparently foolish, and the excuse is weak, and the deception visible, and sin prevails upon our weak arguings; but the consequence is plainly this,—when any man commits a sin, he is guilty before God, and he cannot say he could not help it; and God is just in punishing every sin, and very merciful when he forgives us any. But he that says he cannot avoid it, that he cannot overcome his lust,—confesses himself a servant of sin, and that he is not yet redeemed by the blood of the holy Lamb.

5. He that would be advanced beyond the power and necessity of sinning, must take great caution concerning his thoughts and secret desires; "for lust, when it is conceived, bringeth forth sin;" but, if it be suppressed in the conception, it comes to nothing; but we find it hard to destroy the serpent when the egg is hatched into a cockatrice. The thought is *ἀμάκρυτος ἀμαρτία*; no man takes notice of it, but lets it alone till the sin be too strong;* and then we complain we cannot help it. "Nolo sinas cogitationem crescere," "Suffer not your thoughts to grow up;" for they usually come *ἄφνω, ὠσαύτως, ἀπαραμεινώς*, as St. Basil says, "suddenly, and easily, and without business;" but take heed that you nurse them not; but, if you chance to stumble, mend your pace, and if you nod, let it awaken you; for he only can be a good man, that raises himself up at the first trip, that strangles his sin in the birth: *Τοιαῦτά τ' ὡς ἄγων ψυχαί, πρὶν ἔπεσας, ἀνίστασθαι*, "Good men rise up again, even before they fall," saith St. Chrysostom. Now, I pray consider, that when sin is but in the thought, it is easily suppressed, and, if it be stopped there, it can go no further; and what great mountain of labour is it, then, to abstain from our sin? Is not the adultery of the eye easily cured by shutting the eye-lid? and cannot the thoughts of the heart be turned aside by doing business, by going into company, by reading or by sleeping? A man may divert his thoughts by shaking of his head, by thinking any thing else,

* Ille laudatur, qui, ut cœperint, statim interficit cogitata, et allidit ad petram.

by thinking nothing. "Da mihi christianum," saith St. Austin, "et intelligit quod dico." Every man that loves God, understands this, and more than this, to be true. Now if things be thus, and that we may be safe in that which is supposed to be the hardest of all, we must needs condemn ourselves, and lay our faces in the dust, when we give up ourselves to any sin; we cannot be justified by saying we could not help it. For as it was decreed by the fathers of the second Arausican council, "Hoc etiam secundum fidem catholicam credimus," &c. "This we believe according to the catholic faith," that have received baptismal grace; all that are baptized by the aid and co-operation of Christ, must and can, if they will labour faithfully, perform and fulfil those things, which belong unto salvation.

6. And lastly: if sin hath gotten the power of any one of us, consider in what degree the sin hath prevailed: if but a little, the battle will be more easy, and the victory more certain; but then be sure to do it thoroughly, because there is not much to be done: but if sin hath prevailed greatly, then indeed you have very much to do; therefore begin betimes, and defer not this work, till old age shall make it extremely difficult, or death shall make it impossible.

Nam quamvis prope te, quamvis temone sub uno
Vertentem sese, frustra sectabere canthum,
Cum rota posterior curras, et in axe secundo.

PERS.

If thou beest cast behind; if thou hast neglected the duties of thy vigorous age, thou shalt never overtake that strength; "the hinder wheel, though bigger than the former, and measures more ground at every revolution, yet shall never overtake it;" and all the second counsels of thy old age, though undertaken with greater resolution, and acted with the strengths of fear and need, and pursued with more pertinacious purposes than the early repentances of young men, yet shall never overtake those advantages, which you lost when you gave your youth to folly, and the causes of a sad repentance.

However, if you find it so hard a thing to get from the power of one master-sin; if an old adulterer does dote,—if an old drunkard be further from remedy than a young sinner,—if covetousness grows with old age,—if ambition be still more hydropic and grows more thirsty for every draught of honour,—you may easily resolve that old age, or your

last sickness, is not so likely to be prosperous in the mortification of your long prevailing sins. Do not all men desire to end their days in religion, to die in the arms of the church, to expire under the conduct of a religious man? When ye are sick or dying, then nothing but prayers and sad complaints, and the groans of a tremulous repentance, and the faint labours of an almost impossible mortification: then the despised priest is sent for; then he is a good man, and his words are oracles, and religion is truth, and sin is a load, and the sinner is a fool; then we watch for a word of comfort from his mouth, as the fearful prisoner for his fate upon the judge's answer. That which is true then, is true now; and, therefore, to prevent so intolerable a danger, mortify your sin betime, for else you will hardly mortify it at all. Remember that the snail outwent the eagle, and won the goal, because she set out betimes.

To sum up all: every good man is a new creature, and Christianity is not so much a Divine institution, as a Divine frame and temper of spirit,—which if we heartily pray for, and endeavour to obtain, we shall find it as hard and as uneasy to sin against God, as now we think it impossible to abstain from our most pleasing sins. For as it is in the spermatric virtue of the heavens, which diffuses itself universally upon all sublunary bodies, and subtly insinuating itself into the most dull and inactive element, produces gold and pearls, life and motion, and brisk activities in all things that can receive the influence and heavenly blessing:—so it is in the Holy Spirit of God, and the word of God, and the grace of God, which St. John calls "the seed of God;" it is a law of righteousness, and it is a law of the Spirit of life, and changes nature into grace, and dullness into zeal, and fear into love, and sinful habits into innocence, and passes on from grace to grace, till we arrive at the full measures of the stature of Christ, and into the perfect liberty of the sons of God: so that we shall no more say, The evil that I would not, that I do;—but we shall hate what God hates, and the evil that is forbidden we shall not do; not because we are strong of ourselves, but because Christ is our strength, and he is in us; and Christ's strength shall be perfected in our weakness, and his grace shall be sufficient for us; and he will, of his own good pleasure, work in us, not only to will, but also to do, "velle

et perficere," saith the apostle, "to will and to do it thoroughly" and fully, being sanctified throughout, to the glory of his holy name, and the eternal salvation of our souls, through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom with the Father, &c.

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SERMON III.

FIDES FORMATA; OR, FAITH WORKING BY LOVE.

You see, then, how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.—James ii. 24.

THAT we are "justified by faith," St. Paul tells us;* that we are also "justified by works," we are told in my text; and both may be true. But that this justification is wrought by faith without works, "to him that worketh not, but believeth," saith St. Paul: that this is not wrought without works, St. James is as express for his negative as St. Paul was for his affirmative; and how both these should be true, is something harder to unriddle. But "affirmanti incumbit probatio," "he that affirms must prove;" and, therefore, St. Paul proves his doctrine by the example of Abraham, to whom faith was imputed for righteousness; and, therefore, not by works. And what can be answered to this? Nothing but this, that St. James uses the very same argument to prove that our justification is by works also; "For our father Abraham was justified by works, when he offered up his son Isaac."† Now which of these says true? Certainly both of them; but neither of them have been well understood; inso-much that they have not only made divisions of heart among the faithful, but one party relies on faith to the disparagement of good life, and the other makes works to be the main ground of our hope and confidence, and consequently to exclude the efficacy of faith: the one makes Christian religion a lazy and inactive institution; and the other, a bold presumption on ourselves; while the first tempts us to live like heathens, and the other recalls us to live the life of Jews; while one says "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of St. James," and both of them put in danger of evacuating the institution and the death of Christ; one looking on Christ only as a Lawgiver,

and the other only as a Saviour. The effects of these are very sad, and by all means to be diverted by all the wise considerations of the Spirit.

My purpose is not with subtle arts to reconcile them that never disagreed; the two apostles spake by the same Spirit, and to the same last design, though to differing intermedial purposes; but because the great end of faith, the design, the definition, the state, the economy of it, is that all believers should not live according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. Before I fall to the close handling of the text, I shall premise some preliminary considerations, to prepare the way of holiness, to explicate the differing senses of the apostles, to understand the question and the duty, by removing the causes of the vulgar mistakes of most men in this article; and then proceed to the main inquiry.

1. That no man may abuse himself or others by mistaking the hard words, spoken in mystery, with allegorical expressions to secret senses, wrapt up in a cloud; such as are, "faith, and justification, and imputation, and righteousness, and works," be pleased to consider, that the very word "faith" is, in Scripture, infinitely ambiguous, inso-much that in the Latin concordances of St. Jerome's Bible, published by Robert Stephens, you may see no less than twenty-two several senses and acceptations of the word "faith," set down with the several places of Scripture referring to them; to which if, out of my own observation, I could add no more, yet these are an abundant demonstration, that whatsoever is said of the efficacy of faith for justification, is not to be taken in such a sense as will weaken the necessity and our carefulness of good life, when the word may, in so many other senses, be taken to verify the affirmation of St. Paul, of "justification by faith," so as to reconcile it to "the necessity of obedience."

2. As it is in the word "faith," so it is in "works;" for by works is meant sometimes the thing done,—sometimes the labour of doing,—sometimes the good will;—it is sometimes taken for a state of good life,—sometimes for the covenant of works;—it sometimes means the works of the law,—sometimes the works of the gospel;—sometimes it is taken for a perfect, actual, un-sinning obedience,—sometimes for a sincere endeavour to please God;—sometimes they are meant to be such who can challenge

* Rom. iii. 28. iv. 5. v. 1. x. 10. Gal. ii. 16.

† James ii. 9.

the reward as of debt;—sometimes they mean only a disposition of the person to receive the favour and the grace of God. Now since our good works can be but of one kind, (for ours cannot be meritorious, ours cannot be without sin all our life, they cannot be such as need no repentance,) it is no wonder if we must be justified without works in this sense; for by such works no man living can be justified: and these St. Paul calls the “works of the law,” and sometimes he calls them “our righteousness;” and these are the covenant of works. But because we came into the world to serve God, and God will be obeyed, and Jesus Christ came into the world to save us from sin, and “to redeem to himself a people zealous of good works,” and hath, to this purpose, revealed to us all his Father’s will, and destroyed the words of the devil, and gives us his Holy Spirit, and by him we shall be justified in this obedience; therefore, when works signify a sincere, hearty endeavour to keep all God’s commands, out of a belief in Christ, that if we endeavour to do so we shall be helped by his grace, and if we really do so we shall be pardoned for what is past, and if we continue to do so we shall receive a crown of glory;—therefore, it is no wonder that it is said we are to be justified by works; always meaning, not the works of the law, that is, works that are meritorious, works that can challenge the reward, works that need no mercy, no repentance, no humiliation, and no appeal to grace and favour;—but always meaning works, that are an obedience to God by the measures of good will, and a sincere endeavour, and the faith of the Lord Jesus.

3. But thus also it is in the word “justification:” for God is justified, and wisdom is justified, and man is justified, and a sinner is not justified as long as he continues in sin; and a sinner is justified when he repents, and when he is pardoned; and an innocent person is justified when he is declared to be no criminal; and a righteous man is justified when he is saved; and a weak Christian is justified when his imperfect services are accepted for the present, and himself thrust forward to more grace; and he that is justified may be justified more; and every man that is justified to one purpose, is not so to all; and faith, in divers senses, gives justification in as many; and, therefore, though to every sense of faith there is not always a degree of justification in any, yet when the faith is such that justification

is the product and correspondent,—as that faith may be imperfect, so the justification is but begun, and either must proceed further, or else, as the faith will die, so the justification will come to nothing. The like observation might be made concerning imputation, and all the words used in this question; but these may suffice till I pass to other particulars.

4. Not only the word “faith,” but also “charity,” and “godliness,” and “religion,” signify sometimes particular graces; and sometimes they suppose universally, and mean conjugations and unions of graces, as is evident to them that read the Scriptures with observation. Now when justification is attributed to faith, or salvation to godliness, they are to be understood in the aggregate sense; for, that I may give but one instance of this, when St. Paul speaks of faith as it is a particular grace, and separate from the rest, he also does separate it from the possibility of bringing us to heaven: “Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing:”¹ when faith includes charity, it will bring us to heaven; when it is alone, when it is without charity, it will do nothing at all.

5. Neither can this *φανόμενον* be solved by saying, that faith alone does justify, yet when she does justify, she is not alone, but good works must follow; for this is said to no purpose:

1. Because if we be justified by faith alone, the work is done, whether charity does follow or not; and, therefore, that want of charity cannot hurt us.

2. There can be no imaginable cause why charity and obedience should be at all necessary, if the whole work can be done without it.

3. If obedience and charity be not a condition of our salvation, then it is not necessary to follow faith; but if it be, it does as much as faith, for that is but a part of the condition.

4. If we can be saved without charity and keeping the commandments, what need we trouble ourselves for them? If we cannot be saved without them, then either faith without them does not justify; or if it does, we are never the better, for we may be damned for all that justification.

The consequent of these observations is briefly this:—

¹ 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

I. That no man should fool himself by disputing about the philosophy of justification, and what causality faith hath in it, and whether it be the act of faith that justifies, or the habit? Whether faith as a good work, or faith as an instrument? Whether faith as it is obedience, or faith as it is an access to Christ? Whether as a hand, or as a heart? Whether by its own innate virtue, or by the efficacy of the object? Whether as a sign, or as a thing signified? Whether by introduction, or by perfection? Whether in the first beginnings, or in its last and best productions? Whether by inherent worthiness, or adventitious imputation? "Uberius ista, quæso, &c," (that I may use the words of Cicero,*) "hæc enim spinosiora, prius, ut confitear, me cogunt, quam ut assentiar:" these things are knotty, and too intricate to do any good; they may amuse us, but never instruct us; and they have already made men careless and confident, disputative and troublesome, proud and uncharitable, but neither wiser nor better. Let us, therefore, leave these weak ways of troubling ourselves or others, and directly look to the theology of it, the direct duty, the end of faith, and the work of faith, the conditions and the instruments of our salvation, the just foundation of our hopes, how our faith can destroy our sin, and how it can unite us unto God; how by it we can be made partakers of Christ's death, and imitators of his life. For since it is evident, by the premises, that this article is not to be determined or relied upon by arguing from words of many significations, we must walk by a clearer light, by such plain sayings and dogmatical propositions of Scripture, which evidently teach us our duty, and place our hopes upon that which cannot deceive us, that is, which require obedience, which call upon us to glorify God, and to do good to men, and to keep all God's commandments with diligence and sincerity.

For since the end of our faith is, that we may be disciples and servants of the Lord Jesus, advancing his kingdom here, and partaking of it hereafter; since we are commanded to believe what Christ taught, that it may appear as reasonable as it is necessary to do what he hath commanded; since faith and works are in order one to the other, it is impossible that evangelical faith and evangelical works should be opposed one to the other in the effecting of our salvation.

So that as it is to no purpose for Christians to dispute whether we are justified by faith or the works of the law, that is, the covenant of works, without the help of faith and the auxiliaries and allowances of mercy on God's part, and repentance on ours; because no Christian can pretend to this,—so it is perfectly foolish to dispute whether Christians are to be justified by faith, or the works of the gospel; for I shall make it appear that they are both the same thing. No man disparages faith but he that says, faith does not work righteousness; for he that says so, says indeed it cannot justify; for he says that faith is alone: it is "faith only," and the words of my text are plain: "You see," saith St. James, that is, it is evident to your sense, it is as clear as an ocular demonstration, "that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only."

My text hath in it these two propositions; a negative and an affirmative. The negative is this, 1. "By faith only" a man is not justified. The affirmative, 2. "By works also" a man is justified.

When I have briefly discoursed of these, I shall only add such practical considerations as shall make the doctrines useful, and tangible, and material.

I. By faith only a man is not justified. By *faith only*, here is meant, faith without obedience. For what do we think of those that detain the faith in unrighteousness? They have faith, they could not else keep it in so ill a cabinet: but yet the apostle reckons them amongst the reprobates; for the abominable, the reprobates, and the disobedient, are all one; and, therefore, such persons, for all their faith, shall have no part with faithful Abraham: for none are his children but they that do the works of Abraham. Abraham's faith, without Abraham's works, is nothing; for of him "that hath faith, and hath not works," St. James asks, "Can faith save him?"* meaning that it is impossible. For what think we of those, that did miracles in Christ's name, and in his name cast out devils? Have not they faith? Yes, "omnem fidem," "all faith," that is, alone, for "they could remove mountains:" but yet to many of them Christ will say, "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity; I know you not." Nay, at last, what think we of the devils themselves? Have not they faith? Yes; and this faith is not "fides miraculorum"

* Tuscul. i.
2 L

* Chap. ii. 14.
2 L

neither; but it is an operative faith, it works a little; for it makes them tremble; and it may be, that is more than thy faith does to thee: and yet dost thou hope to be saved by a faith that does less to thee than the devil's faith does to him? That is impossible. For "faith without works is dead," saith St. James. It is "manus arida," saith St. Austin; "it is a withered hand;"—and that which is dead cannot work the life of grace in us, much less obtain eternal life for us. In short, a man may have faith, and yet do the works of unrighteousness; he may have faith and be a devil; and then what can such a faith do to him or for him? It can do him no good in the present constitution of affairs. St. Paul, from whose mistaken words much noise hath been made in this question, is clear in this particular: "Nothing in Christ Jesus can avail, but faith working by charity;"* that is, as he expounds himself once and again, "nothing but a new creature, nothing but keeping the commandments of God."† If faith be defined to be any thing that does not change our natures, and make us to be a new creation unto God; if keeping the commandments be not in the definition of faith, it avails nothing at all. Therefore deceive not yourselves; they are the words of our blessed Lord himself: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord," that is, not every one that confesses Christ, and believes in him, calling Christ Master and Lord, shall be saved; "but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." These things are so plain, that they need no commentary; so evident, that they cannot be denied: and to these I add but this one truth; that faith alone without a good life is so far from justifying a sinner, that it is one of the greatest aggravations of his condemnation in the whole world. For no man can be so greatly damned as he that hath faith; for unless he knows his Master's will, that is, by faith be convinced, and assents to the revelations of the will of God, "he can be beaten but with few stripes:"‡ but he that believes, hath no excuse; he is *αυτοκατάκριτος*, "condemned by the sentence of his own heart," and therefore *πολλὰ πληγαί*, "many stripes," the greater condemnation shall be his portion. Natural reason is a light to the conscience, but faith is a greater; and therefore if it be not followed, it damns deeper than the hell of the infidels and uninstructed.

* Gal. v. 6. † Gal. vi. 15. ‡ 1 Cor. vii. 19.

And so I have done with the negative proposition of my text; a man is not justified by faith alone, that is, by faith which hath not in it charity and obedience.

2. If faith alone will not do it, what will? The affirmative part of the text answers; not faith alone; but works must be an ingredient: "a man is justified by works:" and that is now to be explicated and proved. It will be absolutely to no purpose to say that faith alone does justify, if, when a man is justified, he is never the nearer to be saved. Nor that without obedience no man can go to heaven, is so evident in Holy Scripture, that he that denies it, hath no faith. "There is no peace, saith my God, unto the wicked;"* and "I will not justify a sinner,"† saith God; unless faith purges away our sins, it can never justify. Let a man believe all the revelations of God; if that belief ends in itself, and goes no further, it is like physic taken to purge the stomach; if it do not work, it is so far from bringing health, that itself is a new sickness. Faith is a great purger and purifier of the soul; "purifying your hearts by faith," saith the apostle. It is the best physic in the world for a sinful soul; but if it does not work, it corrupts in the stomach, it makes us to rely upon weak propositions and trifling confidences, it is but a dreaming *μετά πολλῆς φαντασίας*, "a phantastic dream," and introduces pride or superstition, swelling thoughts and presumptions of the Divine favour: but what saith the apostle? "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man can see God:‡ mark that. If faith does not make you charitable and holy, talk no more of justification by it, for you shall never see the glorious face of God. Faith indeed is a title and relation to Christ; it is a naming of his names; but what then? Why then, saith the apostle, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

For let any man consider, can the faith of Christ and the hatred of God stand together? Can any man be justified that does not love God? Or can any man love God and sin at the same time? And does not he love sin, that falls under its temptation, and obeys it in the lusts thereof, and delights in the vanity, and makes excuses for it, and returns to it with passion, and abides with pleasure? This will not do it; such a man cannot be justified for all his believing. But,

* Isaiah lvii. 21.

† Heb. xii. 14.

‡ Exod. xxv. 7.

§ Titus. ii. 8.

therefore, the apostle shows us a more excellent way: "This is a true saying, and I will that thou affirm constantly, that they who have believed in God, be careful to maintain good works."* The apostle puts great force on this doctrine, he arms it with a double preface; the saying is "true," and it is to be "constantly affirmed;" that is, it is not only true, but necessary; it is like Pharaoh's dream, doubled, because it is bound upon us by the decree of God; and it is unalterably certain, that every believer must do good works, or his believing will signify little; nay more than so, every man must be careful to do good works; and more yet, he must carefully maintain them; that is, not do them by fits and interrupted returns, but *προστασθαι*, to be incumbent upon them, to dwell upon them, to maintain good works, that is, to persevere in them. But I am yet but in the general: be pleased to go along with me in these particular considerations.

1. No man's sins are pardoned, but in the same measure in which they are mortified, destroyed, and taken away; so that if faith does not cure our sinful natures, it never can justify, it never can procure our pardon. And therefore it is, that as soon as ever faith in the Lord Jesus was preached, at the same time also they preached repentance from dead works: insomuch that St. Paul reckons it among the fundamentals and first principles of Christianity; † nay, the Baptist preached repentance and amendment of life as a preparation to the faith of Christ. And I pray consider; can there be any forgiveness of sins without repentance? But if an apostle should preach forgiveness to all that believe, and this belief did not also mean that they should repent and forsake their sin,—the sermons of the apostle would make Christianity nothing else but the sanctuary of Romulus, a device to get together all the wicked people of the world, and to make them happy without any change of manners. Christ came to other purposes; he came "to sanctify us and to cleanse us by his word;" ‡ the word of faith was not for itself, but was a design of holiness, and the very "grace of God did appear" for this end; that "teaching us to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live holily, justly, and soberly in this present world:" § he came to gather a people

together; not like David's army, when Saul pursued him, but the armies of the Lord, "a faithful people, a chosen generation;" and what is that? The Spirit of God adds, "a people zealous of good works." Now as Christ proved his power to forgive sins, by curing the poor man's palsy, because a man is never pardoned but when the punishment is removed; so the great act of justification of a sinner, the pardoning of his sins, is then only effected, when the spiritual evil is taken away: that is the best indication of a real and an eternal pardon, when God takes away the hardness of the heart, the love of sin, the accursed habit, the evil inclination, the sin that doth so easily beset us: and when that is gone, what remains within us that God can hate? Nothing stays behind, but God's creation, the work of his own hands, the issues of his Holy Spirit. The faith of a Christian is *πάσης ἀμαρτίας ἀναρτητή*, "it destroys the whole body of sin;" and to suppose that Christ pardons a sinner, whom he doth not also purge and rescue from the dominion of sin, is to affirm that he justifies the wicked; that he calls good evil, and evil good; that he delights in a wicked person; that he makes a wicked man all one with himself; that he makes the members of a harlot at the same time also the members of Christ: but all this is impossible, and, therefore, ought not to be pretended to by any Christian. Severe are those words of our blessed Saviour, "Every plant in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away:"* faith ingrafts us into Christ; by faith we are inserted into the vine; but the plant that is engrafted, must also be parturient and fruitful, or else it shall be quite cut off from the root, and thrown into the everlasting burning: and this is the full and plain meaning of those words so often used in Scripture for the magnification of faith, "The just shall live by faith:" no man shall live by faith but the just man; he indeed is justified by faith, but no man else; the unjust and the unrighteous man hath no portion in this matter. That is the first great consideration in this affair; no man is justified in the least sense of justification, that is, when it means nothing but the pardon of sins, but when his sin is mortified and destroyed.

2. No man is actually justified, but he that is in some measure sanctified. For the understanding and clearing of which pro-

* Titus iii. 8. † Heb. vi. 1. † 1 John iii. 8.
§ Eph. v. 25. Tit. ii. 11.

* John xv. 2.

position we must know, that justification, when it is attributed to any cause, does not always signify justification actual. Thus, when it is said in Scripture, "We are justified by the death of Christ," it is but the same thing as to say, "Christ died for us;" and he rose again for us too, that we might indeed be justified in due time, and by just measures and dispositions; "he died for our sins, and rose again for our justification;" that is, by his death and resurrection he hath obtained this power and effected this mercy, that if we believe him and obey, we shall be justified and made capable of all the blessings of the kingdom. But that this is no more but a capacity of pardon, of grace, and of salvation, appears not only by God's requiring obedience as a condition on our parts, but by his expressly attributing this mercy to us at such times, and in such circumstances, in which it is certain and evident, that we could not actually be justified; for so saith the Scripture: "We, when we were enemies, were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; and while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us;"* that is, then was our justification wrought on God's part; that is, then he intended this mercy to us, then he resolved to show us favour, to give us promises, and laws, and conditions, and hopes, and an infallible economy of salvation; and when faith lays hold on this grace, and this justification, then we are to do the other part of it; that is, as God made it potential by the death and resurrection of Christ, so we, laying hold on these things by faith, and working the righteousness of faith, that is, performing what is required on our parts, we, I say, make it actual; and for this very reason it is, that the apostle puts more emphasis upon the resurrection of Christ than upon his death, "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again."† And "Christ was both delivered for our sins, and is risen again for our justification;"‡ implying to us, that as it is in the principal, so it is in the correspondent; our sins indeed are potentially pardoned, when they are marked out for death and crucifixion; when, by resolving and fighting against sin, we die to sin daily, and are so made conformable to his death; but we must partake of Christ's resurrection before this justification can be actual; when we are "dead to sin, and are

risen again unto righteousness," then, as we are "partakers of his death," so we shall "be partakers of his resurrection, saith St. Paul; that is, then we are truly, effectually, and indeed justified; till then we are not.

"He that loveth gold, shall not be justified," saith the wise Benirach:* he that is covetous, let his faith be what it will, shall not be accounted righteous before God, because he is not so in himself, and he is not so in Christ, for he is not in Christ at all; he hath no righteousness in himself, and he hath none in Christ; for if we be in Christ, or "if Christ be in us, the body is dead by reason of sin, and the spirit is life because of righteousness;"† for this is the *τὸ πιστὸν*, "that faithful thing," that is, the faithfulness is manifested; the "emunah," from whence comes "emunah," which is the Hebrew word for "faith," from whence "amen" is derived. "Fiat quod dictum est hinc inde; hoc fidum est;" when God and we both say amen to our promises and undertakings. "Fac fidelis sis fideli; cave fidem fluxam geras," said he in the comedy;‡ God is faithful, be thou so too; for if thou failest him, thy faith hath failed thee. "Fides sumitur pro eo, quod est inter utrumque placitum," says one; and then it is true which the prophet and the apostle said, "the just shall live by faith," in both senses: "ex fide meâ vivet, ex fide suâ:" "we live by God's faith, and by our own;" by his fidelity, and by ours. When the righteousness of God becomes "your righteousness, and exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees;" when the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, "by walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit;" then we are justified by God's truth and by ours, by his grace and our obedience. So that now we see that justification and sanctification cannot be distinguished but as words of art signifying the various steps of progression in the same course; they may be distinguished in notion and speculation, but never when they are to pass on to material events; for no man is justified but he that is also sanctified. They are the express words of St. Paul: "Whom he did foreknow, them he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son," to be like to Christ; and then it follows "whom he hath predestinated,"

* Rom. v. 8. 10.

† Rom. viii. 28.

* Eccles. xxxii.

† Rom. viii. 10.

‡ Rom. iv. 25.

‡ Plaut. Captiv.

so predestinated, "them he hath also called, and whom he hath called, them he hath also justified:" and then it follows, "Whom he hath justified, them he hath also glorified."* So that no man is justified, that is, so as to signify salvation, but sanctification must be precedent to it; and that was my second consideration *ὅτι ἐπεὶ εἶδε δεῖξαι*, "that which I was to prove."

3. I pray consider, that he that does not believe the promises of the gospel, cannot pretend to faith in Christ; but the promises are all made to us upon the conditions of obedience, and he that does not believe them as Christ made them, believes them not at all. "In well-doing commit yourselves to God as unto a faithful Creator;" there is no committing ourselves to God without well-doing: "For God will render to every man according to his deeds: to them that obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath; but to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, to them eternal life."† So that if faith apprehends any other promises, it is illusion, and not faith; God gave us none such, Christ purchased none such for us; search the Bible over, and you shall find none such. But if faith lays hold on these promises that are, and as they are, then it becomes an article of our faith, that without obedience and a sincere endeavour to keep God's commandments, no man living can be justified; and, therefore, let us take heed, when we magnify the free grace of God, we do not exclude the conditions, which this free grace hath set upon us. Christ freely died for us, God pardons us freely in our first access to him; we could never deserve pardon, because when we need pardon we are enemies, and have no good thing in us; and he freely gives us of his Spirit, and freely he enables us to obey him; and for our little imperfect services he freely and bountifully will give us eternal life; here is free grace all the way, and he overvalues his pitiful services, who thinks that he deserves heaven by them; and that if he does his duty tolerably, eternal life is not a free gift to him, but a deserved reward.

Conscius est animus meus, experientia testis,
Mystica quæ retuli dogmata vera scio,
Non tamen idcirco scio me fore glorificandum,
Spes mea crux Christi, gratia, non opera.

It was the meditation of the wise chancellor of Paris: "I know that without a

good life, and the fruits of repentance, a sinner cannot be justified; and, therefore, I must live well, or I must die for ever; but if I do live holily, I do not think that I deserve heaven, it is the cross of Christ that procures me grace; it is the Spirit of Christ that gives me grace; it is the mercy and the free gift of Christ that brings me unto glory." But yet he that shall exclude the works of faith from the justification of a sinner by the blood of Christ, may as well exclude faith itself; for faith itself is one of the works of God; it is a good work, so said Christ to them that asked him, "What shall we do to work the works of God? Jesus said, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."* Faith is not only the foundation of good works, but itself is a good work; it is not only the cause of obedience, but a part of it; it is not only, as the son of Sirach calls it, "initium adhærendi Deo," "a beginning of cleaving unto God," but it carries us on to the perfection of it. Christ is the author and finisher of our faith; and when faith is finished, a good life is made perfect in our kind: let no man therefore expect events, for which he hath no promise; nor call for God's fidelity without his own faithfulness; nor snatch at a promise without performing the condition; nor think faith to be a hand to apprehend Christ, and to do nothing else; for that will but deceive us, and turn religion into words, and holiness into hypocrisy, and the promises of God into a snare, and the truth of God into a lie. For when God made a covenant of faith, he made also the νόμος πίστεως, "the law of faith;" and when he admitted us to a covenant of more mercy than was in the covenant of works, or of the law, he did not admit us to a covenant of idleness, and an incurious walking in a state of disobedience; but the mercy of God leadeth us to repentance, and when he gives us better promises, he intends we should pay him a better obedience; when he forgives us what is past, he intends we should sin no more; when he offers us his graces, he would have us to make use of them: when he causes us to distrust ourselves, his meaning is we should rely upon him; when he enables us to do what he commands us, he commands us to do all that we can. And, therefore, this covenant of faith and mercy is also a covenant of holiness, and the grace that

* Rom. viii. 29.

† Rom. ii. 6, 7, 8.

* John vi. 28, 29.

pardons us does also purify us: for so saith the apostle, "He that hath this hope purifies himself, even as God is pure." And when we are so, then we are justified indeed; this is the νόμος πίστεως, "the law of faith;" and by works in this sense, that is, by the works of faith, by faith working by love, and producing fruits worthy of amendment of life, we are justified before God. And so I have done with the affirmative proposition of my text; you see that "a man is justified by works."

But there is more in it than this matter yet amounts to: for St. James does not say, "we are justified by works, and are not justified by faith;" that had been irreconcilable with St. Paul; but we are so justified by works, that it is not by faith alone; it is faith and works together: that is, it is by the ὑπακοή πίστεως, "by the obedience of faith," by the works of faith, by the law of faith, by righteousness evangelical, by the conditions of the gospel, and the measures of Christ. I have many things to say in this particular; but because I have but a little time left to say them in, I will sum it all up in this proposition, that in the question of justification and salvation, faith and good works are no part of a distinction, but members of one entire body. Faith and good works together work the righteousness of God: that is, that I may speak plainly, justifying faith contains in it obedience; and if this be made good, then the two apostles are reconciled to each other, and both of them to the necessity, the indispensable necessity of a good life.

Now that justifying and saving faith must be defined by something more than an act of understanding, appears not only in this, that St. Peter reckons faith as distinctly from knowledge as he does from patience, or strength, or brotherly kindness: saying, "Add to your faith, virtue; to virtue, knowledge;"* but in this also, because an error in life, and whatsoever is against holiness, is against faith: and, therefore, St. Paul reckons the lawless and the disobedient, murderers of parents, man-stealing, and such things, to be against sound doctrines; for the doctrine of faith is called ἡ κατ' ἐσοβειαν διδασκαλία, "the doctrine that is according to godliness." And when St. Paul prays against ungodly men, he adds this reason, οὐ γὰρ πάντων ἡ πίστις, "for all men have not faith:"† meaning that wicked men

are infidels and unbelievers; and particularly he affirms of him "that does not provide for his own, that he hath denied the faith."* Now from hence it follows that faith is godliness, because all wickedness is infidelity, it is an apostasy from the faith. "Ille erit, ille nocens qui me tibi fecerat hostem;" he that sins against God, he is the enemy to the faith of Jesus Christ; and therefore we deceive ourselves, if we place faith in the understanding only; it is not that, and it does not well there, but ἐν καθαρῷ συνειδήσει, saith the apostle; the mystery of faith is kept no where, it dwells no where but "in a pure conscience."

For I consider, that, since all mortal habits are best defined by their operation, we can best understand what faith is by seeing what it does. To this purpose hear St. Paul: "By faith, Abel offered up to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. By faith, Noah made an ark. By faith, Abraham left his country, and offered up his son. By faith, Moses chose to suffer affliction, and accounted the reproach of Christ greater than all the riches of Egypt."† In short, the children of God, "by faith, subdued kingdoms, and wrought righteousness." To work righteousness is as much the duty and work of faith as believing is. So that now we may quickly make an end of this great inquiry, whether a man is justified by faith, or by works, for he is so by both: if you take it alone, faith does not justify: but take it in the aggregate sense, as it is used in the question of justification by St. Paul, and then faith does not only justify, but it sanctifies too; and then you need to inquire no further; obedience is a part of the definition of faith, as much as it is of charity. This is love, saith St. John, "that we keep his commandments." And the very same is affirmed of faith too by Benserach, "He that believeth the Lord, will keep his commandments."‡

I have now done with all the propositions expressed and implied in the text. Give me leave to make some practical considerations; and so I shall dismiss you from this attention.

The rise I take from the words of St. Epiphanius,§ speaking in the praise of the apostolical and purest ages of the church. There was, at first, no distinction of sects or opinions in the church; she knew no dif-

* 2 Pet. i. 5.

† 2 Thess. iii. 2.

* 1 Tim. v. 8.

† Heb. xi.

‡ Eccles. xxxii. 24.

§ Panar. lib. i. edit. Basil. p. 8. l. 46.

ference of men, but good and bad; there was no separation made, but what was made by piety or impiety, or, says he, which is all one, by fidelity and infidelity; *πίστις μὴ ἐπιχουσα τοῦ Χριστιανισμοῦ εἰκόνα ἀπιστίας δι' ἐπιχουσα τὸν ἀσεβείας χαρακτήρα καὶ παρανομίας* "for faith hath in it the image of godliness engraven, and infidelity hath the character of wickedness and prevarication." A man was not then esteemed a saint, for disobeying his bishop or an apostle, nor for misunderstanding the hard sayings of St. Paul about predestination; to kick against the laudable customs of the church was not then accounted a note of the godly party; and to despise government was but an ill mark and weak indication of being a good Christian. The kingdom of God did not then consist in words, but in power, the power of godliness; though now we are fallen into another method; we have turned all religion into faith, and our faith is nothing but the productions of interest or disputing,—it is adhering to a party, and a wrangling against all the world beside; and when it is asked of what religion he is of, we understand the meaning to be, what faction does he follow: what are the articles of his sect, not what is the manner of his life: and if men be zealous for their party and that interest, then they are precious men, though otherwise they be covetous as the grave, factious as Dathan, schismatical as Corah, or proud as the fallen angels. Alas! these things will but deceive us: the faith of a Christian cannot consist in strifes about words, and perverse disputings of men. These things the apostle calls "profane and vain babblings;"* and, mark what he says of them, these things will increase *ἐπὶ πλεον ἄσεβείας*. They are, in themselves, ungodliness, and will produce more,—"they will increase unto more ungodliness." But the faith of a Christian had other measures; that was faith then which made men faithful to their vows in baptism. The faith of a Christian was the best security in contracts, and a Christian's word was as good as his bond, because he was faithful that promised, and a Christian would rather die than break his word, and was always true to his trust; he was faithful to his friend, and loved as Jonathan did David. This was the Christian faith then; their religion was, to hurt no man, and to do good to every man, and so it ought to be. "True religion is to visit the father-

less and widow, and to keep ourselves unspotted of the world." That is a good religion that is "pure and undefiled." So St. James: and St. Chrysostom defines *εὐσέβειαν*, "true religion," to be *πιστις καθαρὰν καὶ ὀρθὸν βίον*, "a pure faith and a godly life;" for they make up the whole mystery of godliness; and no man could then pretend to faith, but he that did do valiantly, and suffer patiently, and resist the devil, and overcome the world. These things are as properly the actions of faith, as alms is of charity; and therefore, they must enter into the moral definition of it. And this was truly understood by Salvian, that wise and godly priest of Massilia: what is faith, and what is believing, saith he; "hominem fideliter Christo credere est fidelem Deo esse, h. e. fideliter Dei mandata servare:" That man does faithfully believe in Christ, who is faithful unto God—who faithfully keeps God's commandments;" and, therefore, let us measure our faith here, by our faithfulness to God, and by our diligence to do our Master's commandments; for "Christianorum omnis religio sine scelere et maculâ vivere," said Lactantius; "The whole religion of a Christian is to live unblamably,"* that is, in all holiness and purity of conversation.

2. When our faith is spoken of as the great instrument of justification and salvation, take Abraham's faith as your best pattern, and that will end the dispute, because that he was justified by faith, when his faith was mighty in effect; when he trusted in God, when he believed the promises, when he expected a resurrection of the dead, when he was strong in faith, when he gave glory to God, when against hope he believed in hope; and when all this passed into an act of a most glorious obedience, even denying his greatest desires, contradicting his most passionate affections, offering to God the best thing he had, and exposing to death his beloved Isaac, his daughters, all his joy, at the command of God. By this faith he was justified, saith St. Paul; "by these works he was justified, saith St. James; that is, by this faith working this obedience. And then all the difficulty is over; only remember this, your faith is weak, and will do but little for you, if it be not stronger than all your secular desires and all your peevish angers. Thus we find, in the holy gospels, this conjunction declared necessary, "Whatsoever things ye

* 2 Tim. ii. 16.

* Instit. lib. v. c. 9.

desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them."* Here is as glorious an event promised to faith as can be expressed; faith shall obtain any thing of God. True; but it is not faith alone, but faith in prayer; faith praying, not faith simply believing. So St. James; the "prayer of faith shall save the sick;" but adds, it must be "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man;" so that faith shall prevail, but there must be prayer in faith, and fervour in prayer, and devotion in fervour, and righteousness in devotion; and then impute the effect to faith if you please, provided that it be declared, that effect cannot be wrought by faith unless it be so qualified. But Christ adds one thing more: "When ye stand praying, forgive; but if ye will not forgive, neither will your Father forgive you." So that it will be to no purpose to say a man is justified by faith, unless you mingle charity with it; for without the charity of forgiveness, there can be no pardon, and then justification is but a word, when it effects nothing.

3. Let every one take heed, that by an impertinent adhering to and relying upon a mistaken faith, he do not really make a shipwreck of a right faith. Hymenæus and Alexander lost their faith by putting away a good conscience; and what matter is it of what religion or faith a man be, if he be a villain and a cheat, a man of no truth, and of no trust, a lover of the world, and not a lover of God? But, I pray, consider, can any man have faith that denies God? That is not possible: and cannot a man as well deny God by an evil action, as by an heretical proposition? Cannot a man deny God by works, as much as by words? Hear what the apostle says: "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."† Disobedience is a denying God, "Nolumus hunc regnare," is as plain a renouncing of Christ, as "Nolumus huic credere." It is to no purpose to say we believe in Christ and have faith, unless Christ reign in our hearts by faith.

4. From these premises we may see but too evidently, that though a great part of mankind pretend to be saved by faith, yet they know not what it is, or else wilfully mistake it, and place their hopes upon sand, or the more unstable water. Believing is the least thing in a justifying faith; for faith is a conjugation of many ingredients,

and faith is a covenant, and faith is a law, and faith is obedience, and faith is a work, and indeed it is a sincere cleaving to and closing with the terms of the gospel in every instance, in every particular. Alas! the niceties of a spruce understanding, and the curious nothings of useless speculation, and all the opinions of men that make the divisions of heart, and do nothing else, cannot bring us one drop of comfort in the day of tribulation, and therefore are no parts of the strength of faith. Nay, when a man begins truly to fear God, and is in the agonies of mortification, all these new nothings and curiosities will lie neglected by, as baubles do by children when they are deadly sick. But that only is faith that makes us to love God, to do his will, to suffer his impositions, to trust his promises, to see through a cloud, to overcome the world, to resist the devil, to stand in the day of trial, and to be comforted in all our sorrows. This is that precious faith so mainly necessary to be insisted on, that by it we may be sons of the free woman, "liberi à vitibus ac ritibus;" that the true Isaac may be in us, which is Christ according to the Spirit, the wisdom and power of God, a divine vigour and life, whereby we are enabled, with joy and cheerfulness, to walk in the way of God. By this you may try your faith, if you please, and make an end of this question: Do you believe in the Lord Jesus, yea or no? God forbid else; but if your faith be good, it will abide the trial. There are but three things that make the integrity of Christian faith; believing the words of God, confidence in his goodness, and keeping his commandments.

For the first, it is evident that every man pretends to it; if he calls himself Christian, he believes all that is in the canon of the Scriptures; and if he did not, he were indeed no Christian. But now consider, what think we of this proposition? "All shall be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness."** Does not every man believe this? Is it possible they can believe there is any such thing as unrighteousness in the world, or any such thing as damnation, and yet commit that which the Scriptures call unrighteousness, and which all laws and all good men say is so? Consider how many unrighteous men there are in the world, and yet how few of them think they shall be damned. I know not how it comes to pass, but men go upon

* Mark xii. 24.

† Tit. i. 16.

** 2 Thess. ii. 12.

strange principles, and they have made Christianity to be a very odd institution, if it had not better measures than they are pleased to afford it. There are two great roots of all evil, covetousness and pride, and they have infected the greatest parts of mankind, and yet no man thinks himself to be either covetous or proud; and, therefore, whatever you discourse against these sins, it never hits any man, but, like Jonathan's arrows to David, they fall short, or they fly beyond. Salviañ complained of it in his time: "*Hoc ad crimina nostra addimus, ut cum in omnibus rei simus, etiam bonos nos et sanctos esse credamus:*" "This we add unto our crimes, we are the vilest persons in the world, and yet we think ourselves to be good people," and, when we die, make no question but we shall go to heaven.* There is no cause of this, but because we have not so much faith as believing comes to; and yet most men will pretend not only to believe, but to love Christ all this while. And how do they prove this? Truly they hate the memory of Judas, and curse the Jews that crucified Christ, and think Pilate a very miserable man, and that all the Turks are damned, and to be called Caiaphas is a word of reproach; and, indeed, there are many that do not much more for Christ than this comes to; things to as little purpose, and of as little signification. But so the Jews did hate the memory of Corah as we do of Caiaphas, and they built the sepulchre of the prophets; and we also are angry at them that killed the apostles and the martyrs; but, in the mean time, we neither love Christ nor his saints; for we neither obey him, nor imitate them. And yet we should think ourselves highly injured, if one should call us infidels, and haters of Christ. But, I pray, consider; what is hating of any man, but designing and doing him all the injury and spite we can? Does not he hate Christ that dishonours him, that makes Christ's members the members of a harlot, that doth not feed and clothe these members? If the Jews did hate Christ when they crucified him, then so does a Christian too, when he crucifies him again. Let us not deceive ourselves; a Christian may be damned as well as a Turk; and Christians may with as much malice crucify Christ, as the Jews did: and so does every man that sins wilfully; he spills the blood of Christ, making it to be spent in vain. "He

that hateth you, hateth me; he that receives you, receives me," said Christ to his apostles. I wish the world had so much faith as to believe that; and by this try whether we love Christ, and believe in him, or not. I shall, for the trial of our faith, ask one easy question: Do we believe that the story of David and Jonathan is true? Have we so much faith as to think it possible that two rivals of a crown should love so dearly? Can any man believe this, and not be infinitely ashamed to see Christians, almost all Christians, to be irreconcilably angry, and ready to pull their brother's heart out, when he offers to take our land or money from us? Why do almost all men that go to law for right, hate one another's persons? Why cannot men with patience hear their titles questioned? But, if Christianity be so excellent a religion, why are so very many Christians so very wicked? Certainly they do not so much as believe the propositions and principles of their own religion. For the body of Christians is so universally wicked, that it would be a greater change to see Christians generally live according to their profession, than it was at first from infidelity to see them turn believers. The conversion from Christian to Christian, from Christian in title to Christian in sincerity, would be a greater miracle than it was, when they were converted from heathen and Jew to Christian. What is the matter? Is not "repentance from dead works" reckoned by St. Paul* as one of the fundamental points of Christian religion? Is it not a piece of our catechism, the first thing we are taught, and is it not the last thing that we practise? We had better be without baptism than without repentance, and yet both are necessary; and, therefore, if we were not without faith, we should be without neither. Is not repentance a forsaking all sin, and an entire returning unto God? Who can deny this? And is it not plainly said in Scripture, "Unless ye repent, ye shall all perish?" But show me the man that believes these things heartily; that is, show me a true penitent, he only believes the doctrines of repentance.

If I had time, I should examine your faith by your confidence in God, and by your obedience. But, if we fall in the mere believing, it is not likely we should do better in the other. But because all the promises of God are conditional, and there can be no

* Lib. iii.

* Heb. vi.

confidence in the particular without a promise or revelation, it is not possible that any man that does not live well, should reasonably put his trust in God. To live a wicked life, and then to be confident that in the day of our death God will give us pardon, is not faith, but a direct want of faith. If we did believe the promises upon their proper conditions, or believe that God's commandments were righteous and true, or that the threatenings were as really intended as they are terribly spoken,—we should not dare to live at the rate we do. But “wicked men have not faith,” saith St. Paul; and then the wonder ceases.

But there are such palpable contradictions between men's practices and the fundamentals of our faith, that it was a material consideration of our blessed Saviour, “When the Son of man comes, shall he find faith upon earth?” meaning it should be very hard and scant: “Every man shall boast of his own goodness; ‘sed virum fidelem,’ (saith Solomon,) but ‘a faithful man,’ who can find?” Some men are very good when they are afflicted.

Hanc tibi virtutem fractâ facit urceus ansâ,
Et tristis nullo qui tepet igne focus;
Et teges et cimex, et nudi sponda grabati,
Fit brevis atque eadem nocte dieque toga.
MARTIAL.

When the gown of the day is the mantle of the night, and cannot at the same time cover the head and make the feet warm; when they have but one broken dish and no spoon, then they are humble and modest; then they can suffer an injury and bear contempt: but give them riches, and they grow insolent; fear and pusillanimity did their first work, and an opportunity to sin undoes it all. “Bonum militem perdidisti, imperatorem pessimum creâsti,” said Galba: “You have spoiled a good trooper, when you made me a bad commander.” Others can never serve God but when they are prosperous; if they lose their fortune, they lose their faith, and quit their charity: “Non rata fides, ubi jam melior fortuna ruit;” if they become poor, they become liars and deceivers of their trust, envious and greedy, restless and uncharitable; that is, one way or other they show that they love the world, and by all the faith they pretend to cannot overcome it.

Cast up, therefore, your reckonings impartially; see what is, what will be required at your hands; do not think you can be justified by faith, unless your faith be greater

than all your passions; you have not the learning, not so much as the common notices of faith, unless you can tell when you are covetous, and reprove yourself when you are proud; but he that is so, and knows it not, (and that is the case of most men,) hath no faith, and neither knows God nor knows himself.

To conclude. He that hath true justifying faith, believes the power of God to be above the powers of nature; the goodness of God above the merit and disposition of our persons; the bounty of God above the excellency of our works; the truth of God above the contradiction of our weak arguments and fears; the love of God above our cold experience and ineffectual reason; and the necessities of doing good works above the faint excuses and ignorant pretences of disputing sinners: but want of faith makes us so generally wicked as we are, so often running to despair, so often baffled in our resolutions of a good life; but he whose faith makes him more than conqueror over these difficulties, to him Isaac shall be born even in his old age; the life of God shall be perfectly wrought in him; and by this faith, so operative, so strong, so lasting, so obedient, he shall be justified, and he shall be saved.

SERMON IV.

PREACHED AT THE CONSECRATION OF TWO ARCHBISHOPS AND TEN BISHOPS, IN THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK, IN DUBLIN, JANUARY 27, 1660.

Sal liquefit, ut condiat.

And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?

Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.—Luke xii. 42, 43.

Τίς ἐστὶν ἄρα πιστὸς καὶ φρόνιμος οἰκονόμος.

THESE words are not properly a question, though they seem so; and the particle τίς is not interrogative, but hypothetical, and extends “who” to “whosoever;” plainly meaning, that whoever is a steward over Christ's household, of him God requires a great care, because he hath trusted him with a great employment. Every steward ὅς

καθίστήκεν ὁ Κύριος, so it is in St. Matthew;* ὁ καταστήσει ὁ Κύριος, so it is in my text; every steward whom the Lord hath or shall appoint over the family, to rule it and to feed it, now and in all generations of men, as long as this family shall abide on earth; that is, the apostles, and they who were to succeed the apostles in the stewardship, were to be furnished with the same power, and to undertake the same charge, and to give the same strict and severe accounts.

In these words there is something insinuated, and much expressed.

1. That which is insinuated only is, who these stewards are, whom Christ had, whom Christ would appoint over his family, the church: they are not here named, but we shall find them out by their proper direction and indigitation by and by.

2. But that which is expressed, is the office itself, in a double capacity. 1. In the dignity of it, it is a rule and a government; "whom the lord shall make ruler over his household." 2. In the care and duty of it, which determines the government to be paternal and profitable; it is a rule, but such a rule as shepherds have over their flocks, to lead them to good pastures, and to keep them within their appointed walks, and within their folds: *διδόναι αὐτομέτριον* that is the work, "to give them a measure and proportion of nourishment:" *τροφήν ἐν καιρῷ*, so St. Matthew calls it: "meat in the season;" that which is fit for them, and when it is fit; meat enough, and meat convenient; and both together mean that which the Greek poets call *ἀρμαλὴν ἔμμετρον*,† "the strong wholesome diet."

3. Lastly: Here is the reward of the faithful and wise dispensation. The steward that does so, and continues to do so, till his Lord find him so doing, this man shall be blessed in his deed. "Blessed is the servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing." Of these in order.

1. Who are these rulers of Christ's family? for though Christ knew it, and, therefore, needed not to ask; yet we have disputed it so much, and obeyed so little, that we have changed the plain hypothesis into an entangled question. The answer yet is easy as to some part of the inquiry: the apostles are the first meaning of the text; for they were our fathers in Christ, they begat sons and daughters unto God; and were a spiritual paternity, is evident: we need look no

further for spiritual government, because in the paternal rule all power is founded; they begat the family by the power of the word and the life of the Spirit, and they fed this family, and ruled it, by the word of their proper ministry: they had the keys of this house, the steward's ensign, and they had the ruler's place; "for they sat on twelve thrones, and judged the twelve tribes of Israel." But of this there is no question.

And as little of another proposition—that this stewardship was to last forever; for the power of ministering in this office and the office itself were to be perpetual: for the issues and powers of government are more necessary for the perpetuating the church, than for the first planting; and if it was necessary that the apostles should have a rod and a staff at first, it would be more necessary afterwards, when the family was more numerous, and their first zeal abated, and their native simplicity perverted into arts of hypocrisy and forms of godliness, when "heresies should arise, and the love of many should wax cold." The apostles had also a power of ordination: and that the very power itself does denote, for it makes perpetuity, that could not expire in the days of the apostles; for by it they themselves propagated a succession. And Christ, having promised his Spirit to abide with his church for ever, and made his apostles the channels, the ministers and conveyances of it, that it might descend as the inheritance and eternal portion of the family; it cannot be imagined, that when the first ministers were gone, there should not others rise up in the same places, some like to the first, in the same office and ministry of the Spirit. But the thing is plain and evident in the matter of fact also: "Quod in ecclesiâ nunc geritur, hoc olim fecerunt apostoli," said St. Cyprian: "What the apostles did at first, that the church does to this day,"* and shall do so for ever: for when St. Paul had given to the bishop of Ephesus rules of government in this family, he commands that they should be "observed till the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ;"† and, therefore, these authorities and charges are given to him and to his successors; it is the observation of St. Ambrose upon the warranty of that text, and is obvious and undeniable.

Well, then, the apostles were the first stewards; and this office dies not with them,

* Cap. xxiv. 25.

† Hesiod. *Erg.*

* Epist. 73, ad Jubai.

† 1 Tim. vi. 14.

but must for ever be succeeded in; and now begins the inquiry, Who are the successors of the apostles? for they are, they must evidently be, the stewards to feed and to rule this family. There are some that say, that all who have any portion of work in the family, all the ministers of the gospel, are these stewards, and so all will be rulers. The presbyters surely; for, say they, presbyter and bishop is the same thing, and have the same name in Scripture, and, therefore, the office cannot be distinguished. To this I shall very briefly say two things, which will quickly clear our way through this bush of thorns.

1. That the word "presbyter" is but an honourable appellative used amongst the Jews, as "alderman" amongst us; but it signifies no order at all, nor was ever used in Scripture to signify any distinct company or order of clergy: and this appears not only by an induction in all the enumerations of the offices ministerial in the New Testament,* where to be a presbyter is never reckoned either as a distinct office, or a distinct order; but by its being indifferently communicated to all the superior clergy, and all the princes of the people.

2. The second thing I intended to say, is this: that although all the superior clergy had not only one, but divers common appellatives, all being called *πρεσβύτεροι* and *διάκονοι*, even the apostolate itself being called a deaconship;† yet it is evident, that before the common appellatives were fixed into names of propriety, they were as evidently distinguished in their offices and powers, as they are at this day in their names and titles.

To this purpose St. Paul gave to Titus, the bishop of Crete, a special commission, command, and power, to make ordinations; and in him, and in the person of Timothy, he did erect a court of judicature even over some of the clergy, who yet were called presbyters; "Against a presbyter receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses:"‡ there is the measure and the warranty of the "*audientia episcopalis*," "the bishops' audience court;" and when the accused were found guilty, he gives in charge to proceed to censures: *ἔλεγχε ἀποτόμως*, and *δεῖ ἰπιστομῆζειν* "You must rebuke them sharply, and you must silence them, stop their mouths,"§ that is St. Paul's

word; that they may no more scatter their venom in the ears and hearts of the people. These bishops were commaaded "to set in order things that were wanting" in the churches, the same with that power of St. Paul;—"Other things will I set in order when I come," said he to the Corinthian churches; in which there were many who were called presbyters, who, nevertheless, for all that name, had not that power. To the same purpose it is plain in Scripture, that some would have been apostles that were not; such were those whom the Spirit of God notes in the Revelation;* and some "did "love pre-eminence" that had it not, for so did Diotrephes; and some were judges of questions, and all were not, for therefore, they appealed to the apostles at Jerusalem; and St. Philip, though he was an evangelist, yet he could not give confirmation to the Samaritans whom he had baptized, but the apostles were sent for; for that was part of the power reserved to the episcopal or apostolic order.

Now from these premises, the conclusion is plain and easy. 1. Christ left a government in his church, and founded it in the persons of the apostles. 2. The apostles received this power for the perpetual use and benefit, for the comfort and edification of the church for ever. 3. The apostles had this government; but all that were taken into the ministry, and all that were called presbyters, had it not. If, therefore, this government in which there is so much disparity in the very nature, and exercise, and first original of it, must abide for ever; then so must that disparity. If the apostolate, in the first stabiliment, was this eminency of power, then it must be so; that is, it must be the same in the succession that it was in the foundation. For after the church is founded upon its governors, we are to expect no change of government. If Christ was the author of it, then, as Christ left it, so it must abide for ever: these must be the governing and the governed, the superior and the subordinate, the ordainer and the ordained, the confirmer and the confirmed.

Thus far the way is straight, and the path is plain. The apostles were the stewards and the ordinary rulers of Christ's family, by virtue of the order and office apostolical; and although this be succeeded to for ever, yet no man, for his now or at any time being called a presbyter or elder, can pre-

* Rom. xiii. 6. Eph. iv. 11. 1 Cor. xii. 28.

† Acts i. 25.

‡ 1 Tim. v. 19.

§ Tit. i. 11. and Tit. ii. 15.

* Cap. ii. ver. 2.

tend to it; for, besides his being a presbyter, he must be an apostle too; else, though he be called "in partem sollicitudinis," and may do the office of assistance and under-stewardship, yet the *κῆρος*, "the government," and rule of the family, belongs not to him.

But then *τίς ἄρα καὶ σήμερον*, "who are these stewards and rulers over the household now?" To this the answer is also certain and easy. Christ hath made the same governors to day as heretofore; "apostles still." For though the twelve apostles are dead, yet the apostolical order is not: it is *τάξις γεννητική*, "a generative order," and begets more apostles. Now who these "minores apostoli" are, the successors of the apostles in that office apostolical and supreme regiment of souls, we are sufficiently taught in holy Scriptures; which when I have clearly shown to you, I shall pass on to some more practical considerations.

1. Therefore, certain and known it is, that Christ appointed two sorts of ecclesiastic persons,—twelve apostles, and the seventy-two disciples; to these he gave a limited commission; to those a fulness of power; to these a temporary employment; to those a perpetual and everlasting; from these two societies, founded by Christ, the whole church of God derives the two superior orders in the sacred hierarchy: and, as bishops do not claim a Divine right but by a succession from the apostles, so the presbyters cannot pretend to have been instituted by Christ, but by claiming a succession to the seventy-two. And then consider the difference, compare the tables, and all the world will see the advantages of argument we have; for since the seventy-two had nothing but a mission on a temporary errand; and more than that, we hear nothing of them in Scripture; but upon the apostles Christ poured all the ecclesiastical power, and made them the ordinary ministers of the Spirit, which was to abide with the church for ever: the Divine institution of bishops, that is, of successors to the apostles, is much more clear than that Christ appointed presbyters, or successors of the seventy-two. And yet, if from hence they do not derive it, they can never prove their order to be of Divine institution at all, much less to be so alone.

But we may see the very thing itself—the very matter of fact. St. James, the bishop of Jerusalem, is by St. Paul called an apos-

tle: "Other apostles saw I none, save James, the Lord's brother."* For there were some whom the Scriptures call "the apostles of our Lord;" that is, such which Christ made by his word immediately, or by his Spirit extraordinarily; and even into this number and title, Matthias, and St. Paul, and Barnabas, were accounted.† But the church also made apostles;‡ and these were called by St. Paul, *ἀποστόλοι ἐκκλησιῶν*, "apostles of the churches;" and particularly Epaphroditus was the "apostle of the Philippians;"—"properly so, saith Primasius; and "what is this else but the bishop," saith Theodoret; for *τοὺς νῦν καλουμένους ἐπισκόπους ἀνόμαζον ἀποστόλους*, "those who are now called bishops, were then called apostles," saith the same father. The sense and full meaning of which argument is a perfect commentary upon that famous prophecy of the church, "instead of thy fathers thou shalt have children, whom thou mayest make princes in all lands;§ that is, not only the twelve apostles, our fathers in Christ, who first begat us, were to rule Christ's family, but when they were gone, their children and successors should arise in their stead: "Et nati natorum, et qui nascentur ab illis:" their direct successors to all generations shall be "principes populi," that is, "rulers and governors of the whole catholic church."—"De prole enim ecclesiæ crevit eadem paternitas, id est, episcopi quos illa genuit, et patres appellat, et constituit in sedibus patrum," saith St. Austin: "The children of the church become fathers of the faithful; that is, the church begets bishops, and places them in the seat of fathers, the first apostles."

After these plain and evident testimonies of Scripture, it will not be amiss to say, that this great affair, relying not only upon the words of institution, but on matter of fact, passed forth into a demonstration and greatest notoriety by the doctrine and practice of the whole catholic church: for so St. Irenæus, who was one of the most ancient fathers of the church, and might easily make good his affirmative: "We can," says he, "reckon the men, who by the apostles were appointed bishops in churches to be their successors unto us; leaving to them the same power and authority which they had." Thus St. Polycarp was by the apostles made bishop of Smyrna;

* Gal. i. 19.

† 1 Cor. viii. 23.

‡ Philip. ii. 25.

§ Psal. xlv. 16.

St. Clement, bishop of Rome, by St. Peter; "and divers others by the apostles," saith Tertullian; saying also, that the Asian bishops were consecrated by St. John. And to be short, that bishops are the successors of the apostles in the stewardship and rule of the church, is expressly taught by St. Cyprian* and St. Jerome,† St. Ambrose and St. Austin,‡ by Euthymius and Pacianus, by St. Gregory and St. John Damascenus, by Clarius à Muscula and St. Sixtus, by Anacletus and St. Isidore; by the Roman council under St. Sylvester, and the council of Carthage; and the διαδοχή, or "succession" of bishops from the apostles' hands in all the churches apostolical, was as certainly known as in our chronicles we find the succession of our English kings, and one can no more be denied than the other. The conclusion from these premises I give you in the words of St. Cyprian: "Cogitent diaconi, quod apostolos, id est, episcopos, Dominus ipse elegerit:" "Let the ministers know, that apostles, that is, the bishops, were chosen by our blessed Lord himself:"§ and this was so evident, and so believed, that St. Austin affirms it with a "Nemo ignorat," "No man is so ignorant but he knows this, that our blessed Saviour appointed bishops over churches."||

Indeed the Gnostics spake evil of this order; for they are noted by three apostles, St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. Jude, to be "despisers of government, and to speak evil of dignities;" and what government it was they did so despise, we may understand by the words of St. Jude; they were ἐν τῇ ἀντίλογίᾳ τοῦ Κορῆ, "in the contradiction or gain-saying of Corah," who with his company rose up against Aaron the high priest; and excepting these, who are the vilest of men, no man, within the first three hundred years after Christ, opposed episcopacy. But when Constantine received the church into his arms, he found it universally governed by bishops; and, therefore, no wise or good man professing to be a Christian, that is, to believe the holy catholic church, can be content to quit the apostolical government, (that by which the whole family of God was fed, and taught, and ruled,) and beget to himself new fathers and new apostles, who, by wanting succession from the apostles of our

Lord, have no ecclesiastical and derivative communion with these fountains of our Saviour.

If ever Vincentius Lirinensis' rule could be used in any question, it is in this: "Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus;" that bishops are the successors of the apostles in this stewardship, and that they did always rule the family, was taught and acknowledged "always, and every where, and by all men" that were of the church of God: and if these evidences be not sufficient to convince modest and sober persons in this question, we shall find our faith to fail in many other articles, of which we yet are very confident: for the observation of the Lord's day, the consecration of the holy eucharist by the priests, the baptizing infants, the communicating of women, and the very canon of the Scripture itself, rely but upon the same probation; and, therefore, the denying articles thus proved, is a way, I do not say, to bring in all sects and heresies,—that is but little;—but a plain path and inlet to atheism and irreligion; for by this means it will not only be impossible to agree concerning the meaning of Scripture, but the Scripture itself, and all the records of religion, will become useless, and of no efficacy or persuasion.

I am entered into a sea of matter; but I will break it off abruptly, and sum up this inquiry with the words of the council of Chalcedon, which is one of the four generals, by our laws made the measures of judging heresies: Ἐπίσκοπον εἰς πρεσβυτέρου βαθμὸν ἀναφέρειν, ἱεροσολία ἐστίν, "It is sacrilege to bring back a bishop to the degree and order of a presbyter." It is indeed a rifling the order, and entangling the gifts, and confounding the method of the Holy Ghost; it is a dishonouring them whom God would honour, and a robbing them of those spiritual eminences with which the Spirit of God does anoint the consecrated heads of bishops. And I shall say one thing more, which indeed is a great truth, that the diminution of episcopacy was first introduced by popery: and the popes of Rome by communicating to abbots, and other mere priests, special graces to exercise some essential offices of episcopacy, have made this sacred order to be cheap, and apt to be invaded. But then add this: if Simon Magus was in so damnable a condition for offering to buy the gifts and powers of the apostolical order, what shall we think of them that snatch them away, and pretend to wear them, whether

* In 1 Cor. xii.

† In Psal. xlv.

‡ Epist. 1. Simpronianum.

§ Epist. 65. ad Rogat.

|| Quæst. V. et N. T. p. 197.

the apostles and their successors will or not? This is *ἀπειθεῖν τὸ ἅγιον Πνεῦμα*, “to belie the Holy Ghost;” that is the least of it: it is rapine and sacrilege, besides the heresy and schism, and the spiritual lie. For the government episcopal, as it was exemplified in the synagogue, and practised by the same measures in the temple, so it was transcribed by the eternal Son of God, who translated it into a gospel ordinance: it was sanctified by the Holy Spirit, who named some of the persons, and gave to them all power and graces from above: it was subjected in the apostles first, and by them transmitted to a distinct order of ecclesiastics: it was received into all churches, consigned in the records of the Holy Scriptures, preached by the universal voice of all the Christian world, delivered by notorious and uninterrupted practice, and derived to further and unquestionable issue by perpetual succession.

I have done with the hardest part of the text, by finding out the persons intrusted, “the stewards of Christ’s family;” which though Christ only intimated in this place, yet he plainly enough manifested in others: the apostles, and their successors the bishops, are the men intrusted with this great charge; God grant they may all discharge it well. And so I pass from the officers to a consideration of the office itself, in the next words; “whom the Lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their meat in due season.”

2. The office itself the stewardship, that is episcopacy, the office of the bishop: the name signifies an office of the ruler indefinitely, but the word was chosen, and by the church appropriated to those whom it now signifies, both because the word itself is a notation of duty, and also because the faithful were used to it in the days of Moses and the prophets. The word is in the prophecy of the church: “I will give to thee princes in peace, καὶ ἐπισκόπους ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, and bishops in righteousness;” upon which place St. Jerome says, “Principes ecclesie vocat futuros episcopos;”† “The spirit of God calls them who were to be Christian bishops, ‘principes,’ or ‘chief rulers;’” and this was no new thing; for the chief of the priests who were set over the rest, are called bishops by all the Hellenist Jews. Thus Joel is called *ἐπίσκοπος ἐπὶ τῶν ἱερέων*, “the bishop over the priests;”‡ and

the son of Bani, *ἐπίσκοπος Λευιτῶν*, the bishop and visiter over the Levites;” and we find at the purging of the land from idolatry, the high priest placed *ἐπίσκοπος εἰς οἶκον Κυρίου*, “bishops over the house of God.”* Nay it was the appellative of the high priest himself, *ἐπίσκοπος Ἐλεάζαρ*, “bishop Eleazar”† the son of Aaron the priest, to whom is committed the care of lamps, and the daily sacrifice, and the holy unction.

Now this word the church retained, choosing the same name to her superior ministers, because of the likeness of the ecclesiastical government between the Old and New Testament.

For Christ made no change but what was necessary: baptism was a rite among the Jews, and the Lord’s supper was but the “post-cænum” of the Hebrews changed into a mystery, from a type to a more real exhibition; and the Lord’s Prayer was a collection of the most eminent devotions of the prophets and holy men before Christ, who prayed by the same Spirit; and the censures ecclesiastical were but an imitation of the proceedings of the Judaical tribunals; and the whole religion was but the law of Moses drawn out of its veil into clarity and manifestation; and to conclude in order to the present affair, the government which Christ left, was the same as he found it; for what Aaron and his sons, and the Levites, were in the temple,—that bishops, priests, and deacons, are in the church: it is affirmed by St. Jerome more than once; and the use he makes of it is this, “*Esto subjectus pontifici tuo, et quasi animæ parentem suscipe;*” “Obey your bishop, and receive him as the nursing-father of your soul.”‡ But above all, this appellation is made honourable by being taken by our blessed Lord himself; for he is called in Scripture the “great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls.”

But our inquiry is not after the name, but the office, and the dignity and duty of it: “*Ecclesie gubernandæ sublimis ac Divina potestas,*” so St. Cyprian calls it; “A high and a Divine power from God of governing the church;” “*rem magnam et pretiosam in conspectu Domini,*” so St. Cyril; “a great and precious thing in the sight of God;”—*τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἐκτεταίων ὄρον*, by Isidore Pelusiot; “the utmost limit of what is desirable among men;”—but the account upon which it is so desirable, is the same also that makes it formidable. They who have tried it, and

* Isa. lx. 17.

† Hunc locum etiam citat S. Clement. Ep. ad Cor. † Neh. xi. 9.

* 2 Kings xi. 18.

† Numb. iv. 16.

‡ Epist. 2 ad Nepot. Epistol. ad Evagrium.

did it conscientiously, have found the burden so great, as to make them stoop with care and labour; and they who did it ignorantly or carelessly, will find it will break their bones: for the bishop's office is all that duty which can be signified by those excellent words of St. Cyprian: "He is a bishop or overseer of the brotherhood, the ruler of the people, the shepherd of the flock, the governor of the church, the minister of Christ, and the priest of God." These are great titles, and yet less than what is said of them in Scripture, which calls them "salt of the earth,—lights upon a candlestick,—stars and angels,—fathers of our faith,—embassadors of God,—dispensers of the mysteries of God,—the apostles of the churches,—and the glory of Christ:"—but then they are great burdens too; for the bishop is *πεπιστευμένος τὸν λαὸν τοῦ Κυρίου*, "intrusted with the Lord's people;" that is a great charge, but there is a worse matter that follows, *καὶ τὸν ἐπὶ τῶν ψυχῶν αὐτῶν λόγον ἀπατηθῆσόμενος*: the bishop is he, of whom God will require "an account for all their souls:" they are the words of St. Paul,* and transcribed into the fortieth canon of the apostles, and the twenty-fourth canon of the council of Antioch.

And now I hope the envy is taken off; for the honour does not pay for the burden; and we can no sooner consider episcopacy in its dignity, as it is a rule; but the very nature of that rule does imply so severe a duty, that as the load of it is almost insufferable, so the event of it is very formidable, if we take not great care. For this stewardship is *κυριότης καὶ διακονία*, "a principality and a ministry." So it was in Christ; he is Lord of all, and yet he was the Servant of all. so it was in the apostles; it was *πλῆθος διακονίας καὶ ἀποστολῆς*, "their lot was to be apostles, and yet to serve and minister;"† and it is remarkable, that, in Isaiah, the Seventy use the word *ἐπίσκοπος*, or "bishop;"‡ but there they use it for the Hebrew word "nechosheth," which the Greeks usually render by *ἐργοδιώκτης*, *φορολόγος*, *πράκτωρ*, and the interlineary translation by "exactores." Bishops are only God's ministers and tribute-gatherers, requiring and overseeing them that do their duty: and, therefore, here the case is so, and the burden so great, and the dignity so allayed, that the envious man hath no reason to be troubled that his brother hath so great a load, nor the proud man plainly to

be delighted with so honourable a danger. It is indeed a rule, but it is paternal; it is a government, but it must be neither *ἀναγκαστικὸν* nor *ἀσχηροκερδῆς*, it is neither a "power to constrain" nor "a commission to get wealth,"* for it must be without necessity, and not for filthy lucre sake; but it is a rule, *ὡς διακονοῦντος*, so St. Luke, "as of him that ministers;"† *ὡς πάντων δούλου*, so St. Mark, "as of him that is servant of all;"‡ *ὡς πόδας ἵππουτος*, so St. John;§ such a principality as he hath "that washes the feet" of the weary traveller; or, if you please, take it in the words of our blessed Lord himself, that "He that will be chief among you, let him be your minister;" meaning, that if under Christ's kingdom you desire rule, possibly you may have it; but all that rule under him are servants to them that are ruled; and, therefore, you get nothing by it, but a great labour and a busy employment, a careful life and a necessity of making severe accounts. But all this is nothing but the general measures; I cannot be useful or understood unless I be more particular. The particulars we shall best enumerate by recounting those great conjugations of worthy offices and actions, by which Christian bishops have blessed and built up Christendom; for because we must be followers of them, as they were of Christ, the recounting what they did worthily in their generations, will not only demonstrate how useful, how profitable, how necessary episcopacy is to the Christian church, but it will, at the same time, teach us our duty, by what services we are to benefit the church, in what works we are to be employed, and how to give an account of our stewardship with joy.

1. The Christian church was founded by bishops, not only because the apostles, who were bishops, were the first preachers of the gospel, and planters of the churches,—but because the apostolical men, whom the apostles used in planting and disseminating religion, were, by all antiquity, affirmed to have been diocesan bishops; insomuch that, as St. Epiphanius|| witnesses, there were, at the first disseminations of the faith of Christ, many churches, who had in them no other clergy, but a bishop and his deacons: and the presbyters were brought in afterwards, as the harvest grew greater: but the bishops' names are known, they are "recorded in the book of life," and "their

* I Peter v. 1, 5.

† Luke xxii. 27.

‡ Mark x. 43.

§ John xiii. 13.

|| Lib. iii. tit. 1.

* Heb. xiii. 17. † Acts i. 25. ‡ Isaiah lx. 17.

praise is in the gospel;" such were Timothy and Titus, Clemens and Linus, Marcus and Dionysius, Onesimus and Caius, Epaphroditus and St. James, our Lord's brother.—Evodius and Simeon; all which, if there be any faith in Christians that gave their lives for a testimony to the faith, and any truth in their stories; and unless we, who believe Thucydides and Plutarch, Livy and Tacitus, think that all church-story is a perpetual romance, and that all the brave men, the martyrs and the doctors of the primitive church, did conspire, as one man, to abuse all Christendom for ever; I say, unless all these impossible suppositions be admitted,—all these, whom I have now reckoned, were bishops fixed in several churches, and had diocesses for their charges.

The consequent of this consideration is this: If bishops were those upon whose ministry Christ founded and built his church, let us consider what great wisdom is required of them that seem to be pillars: the stewards of Christ's family must be wise; that Christ requires: and if the order be necessary to the church, wisdom cannot but be necessary to the order; for it is a shame if they, who by their office are fathers in Christ, shall by their unskillfulness be but babes themselves, understanding not the secrets of religion, the mysteries of godliness, the perfections of the evangelical law, all the advantages and disadvantages in the spiritual life. A bishop must be exercised in godliness, a man of great experience in the secret conduct of souls, not satisfied with an ordinary skill in making homilies to the people, and speaking common exhortations in ordinary cases; but ready to answer in all secret inquiries, and able to convince the gainsayers, and to speak wisdom amongst them that are perfect.

If the first bishops laid the foundation, their successors must not only preserve whatsoever is fundamental, but build up the church in a most holy faith, taking care that no heresy sap the foundation, and that no hay or rotten wood be built upon it; and above all things, that a most holy life be superstructed upon a holy and unreprouable faith. So the apostles laid the foundation, and built the walls of the church, and their successors must raise up the roof as high as heaven. For let us talk and dispute eternally, we shall never compose the controversies in religion, and establish truth upon unalterable foundations, as long as men handle the word of God deceitfully, that is,

with designs and little artifices, and secular partialities; and they will for ever do so, as long as they are proud or covetous. It is not the difficulty of our questions, or the subtlety of our adversaries, that makes disputes interminable; but we shall never cure the itch of disputing, or establish unity, unless we apply ourselves to humility and contempt of riches. If we will be contending, let us contend like the olive and the vine, who shall produce best and most fruit; not like the aspen and the elm, which shall make most noise in a wind. And all other methods are a beginning at a wrong end. And as for the people, the way to make them conformable to the wise and holy rules of faith and government, is by reducing them to live good lives. When the children of Israel gave themselves to gluttony, and drunkenness, and filthy lusts, they quickly fell into abominable idolatries; and St. Paul says, "that men make shipwreck of their faith by putting away a good conscience;"* for the mystery of faith is best preserved *ἐν καθαρᾷ συνειδήσει*, "in a pure conscience," saith the same apostle;† secure but that, and we shall quickly end our disputes, and have an obedient and conformable people; but else never.

2. As bishops were the first fathers of churches, and gave them being, so they preserve them in being; for without sacraments there is no church, or it will be starved, and die; and without bishops there can be no priests, and consequently no sacraments; and that must needs be a supreme order, from whence ordination itself proceeds. For it is evident and notorious, that in Scripture there is no record of ordination, but an apostolical hand was in it; one of the *ἄνδρες ἡγουμένοι*, one of the chief, one of the superior and "ruling" clergy; and it is as certain in the descending ages of the church, the bishop always had that power: it was never denied to him, and it was never imputed to presbyters: and St. Jerome himself, when, out of his anger against John, bishop of Jerusalem, he endeavoured to equal the presbyter with the bishop, though in very many places he spake otherwise, yet even then also, and in that heat, he excepted ordination, acknowledging that to be the bishop's peculiar. And, therefore, they who go about to extinguish episcopacy, do as Julian did; they destroy the presbytery, and starve the flock, and take away their shep-

* 1 Tim. i. 19.

† 1 Tim. iii. 9.

herds, and dispart their pastures, and tempt God's providence to extraordinaries, and put the people to hard shifts, and turn the channels of salvation quite another way, and leave the church to a perpetual uncertainty, whether she be alive or dead, and the people destitute of the life of their souls, and their daily bread, and their spiritual comforts, and holy blessings.

The consequent of this is: if sacraments depend upon bishops, then let us take care that we convey to the people holy and pure materials, sanctified with a holy ministry, and ministered by holy persons: for although it be true that the efficacy of the sacraments does not depend wholly upon the worthiness of him that ministers; yet it is as true, that it does not wholly rely upon the worthiness of the receiver; but both together, relying upon the goodness of God, produce all those blessings which are designed. The minister hath an influence into the effect, and does very much towards it; and if there be a failure there, it is a defect in one of the concurring causes; and therefore an unholy bishop is a great diminution to the people's blessing. St. Jerome presses this severely: "Impiè faciunt," &c. "They do wickedly who affirm, that the holy eucharist is consecrated by the words (alone) and solemn prayer of the consecrator, and not also by his life and holiness:"* and therefore St. Cyprian affirms, that "none but holy and upright men are to be chosen, who, offering their sacrifices worthily to God, may be heard in their prayers for the Lord's people:"† but for others, "Sacrificia eorum, panis luctus," saith the prophet Hosea: "Their sacrifices are like the bread of sorrow; whoever eats thereof, shall be defiled."

This discourse is not mine, but St. Cyprian's; and although his words are not to be understood dogmatically, but in the case of duty and caution, yet we may lay our hands upon our hearts, and consider how we shall give an account of our stewardship, if we shall offer to the people the bread of God with impure hands; it is of itself a pure nourishment; but if it passes through an unclean vessel, it loses much of its excellency.

3. The like also is to be said concerning prayer; for the episcopal order is appointed by God to be the great ministers of Christ's priesthood, that is, to stand between Christ

and the people in the intercourse of prayer and blessing. "We will give ourselves continually to prayer," said the apostles; that was the one-half of their employment;—and indeed a bishop should spend very much of his time in holy prayer, and in diverting God's judgments, and procuring blessings to the people; for in all times, the chief of the religion was ever the chief minister of blessing. Thus Abraham blessed Abimelech, and Melchisedeck blessed Abraham, and Aaron blessed the people; and "without all controversy," saith the apostle, "the less is blessed of the greater." But then "we know that God heareth not sinners;" and it must be "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man that shall prevail."

And, therefore, we may easily consider, that a vicious prelate is a great calamity to that flock, which he is appointed to bless and pray for. How shall he reconcile the penitents, who is himself at enmity with God? How shall the Holy Spirit of God descend upon the symbols at his prayer, who does perpetually grieve him, and quench his holy fires, and drive him quite away? How shall he that hath not tasted of the Spirit by contemplation, stir up others to earnest desires of celestial things? Or what good shall the people receive, when the bishop lays upon their head a covetous or a cruel, an unjust or an impure hand? But, therefore, that I may use the words of St. Jerome, "Cum ab episcopo gratia in populum transfundatur, et mundi totius et ecclesie totius condimentum sit episcopus," &c.* Since it is intended that from the bishop grace should be diffused amongst all the people, there is not in the world a greater indecency than a holy office ministered by an unholy person, and no greater injury to the people, than that of the blessings which God sends to them by the ministries evangelical, they should be cheated and defrauded by a wicked steward. And, therefore, it was an excellent prayer, which to this very purpose was, by the son of Sirach, made in behalf of the high priests, the sons of Aaron: "God give you wisdom in your heart, to judge his people in righteousness, that their good things be not abolished, and that their glory may endure for ever."†

4. All the offices ecclesiastical always were, and ought to be, conducted by the episcopal order, as is evident in the univer-

* In cap. 2. Zeph.

† Lib. i. Ep. 4.

* Dial. adv. Lucifer.

† Eccclus. xlv. 26.

sal doctrine and practice of the primitive church: *Οἱ πρεσβύτεροι καὶ διάκονοι ἀνε γνώμης τοῦ ἐπισκόπου μηδὲν ἐπιτελείτωσαν.* It is the fortieth canon of the apostles, "Let the presbyters and deacons do nothing without leave of the bishop;"* but that case is known.

The consequent of this consideration is no other than the admonition in my text: "We are stewards of the manifold grace of God," and dispensers of the mysteries of the kingdom; and "it is required of stewards that they be found faithful;"† "that we preach the word of God in season and out of season,—that we rebuke and exhort, admonish and correct;"—for these God calls "*pastores secundum cor meum,*" "pastors according to his own heart, which feed the people with knowledge and understanding;"‡ but they must also "comfort the afflicted, and bind up the broken heart;" minister the sacraments with great diligence, and righteous measures, and abundant charity, always having in mind those passionate words of Christ to St. Peter: "If thou lovest me, feed my sheep; if thou hast any love to me, feed my lambs."

And let us remember this also, that nothing can enforce the people to obey their bishops as they ought, but our doing that duty and charity to them which God requires. There is reason in these words of St. Chrysostom: "It is necessary that the church should adhere to their bishop, as the body to the head, as plants to their roots, as rivers to their springs, as children to their fathers, as disciples to their masters." These similitudes express not only the relation and dependence, but they tell us the reason of the duty: the head gives light and reason to conduct the body; the roots give nourishment to the plants; and the springs, perpetual emanation of waters to the channels; fathers teach and feed their children; and disciples receive wise instructions from their masters: and if we be all this to the people, they will be all that to us; and wisdom will compel them to submit, and our humility will teach them obedience, and our charity will invite their compliance; our good example will provoke them to good works, and our meekness will melt them into softness and flexibility: for all the Lord's people are "*populus voluntarius,*" "a free and willing people;" and we, who cannot compel their bodies, must thus constrain their

souls, by inviting their wills, by convincing their understandings, by the beauty of fair example, the efficacy and holiness, and the demonstrations of the Spirit.

This is "*experimentum ejus, qui in nobis loquitur Christus,*" "the experiment of Christ that speaketh in us:" for to this purpose those are excellent words which St. Paul spake: "Remember them who have the rule over you: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation."* There lies the demonstration; and those prelates who teach good life, whose sermons are the measures of Christ, and whose life is a copy of their sermons, these must be followed, and surely these will; for these are burning and shining lights: but if we hold forth false fires, and by the amusement of evil examples, call the vessels that sail upon a dangerous sea, to come upon a rock or an iron shore instead of a safe harbour, we cause them to make shipwreck of their precious faith, and to perish in the deceitful and unstable waters: "*Vox operum fortius sonat quam verborum:*" "a good life is the strongest argument that your faith is good," and a gentle voice will be sooner entertained than a voice of thunder; but the greatest eloquence in the world is a meek spirit and a liberal hand; these are the two pastoral staves the prophet speaks of, "*nognam et hovelim,*" "beauty and bands;"† he that hath the staff of the beauty of holiness, the ornament of fair example, he hath also the staff of bands; "*Atque in funiculis Adam trahet eos, in vineculis charitatis,*" as the prophet Hosea's expression is, "He shall draw the people after him by the cords of a man, by the bands of a holy charity."‡ But if, against all these demonstrations, any man will be refractory, we have, instead of a staff, an apostolical rod, which is the last and latest remedy, and either brings to repentance, or consigns to ruin and reprobation.

If there were any time remaining, I could reckon that the episcopal order is the principle of unity in the Church; and we see it is so, by the innumerable sects that sprang up, when episcopacy was persecuted. I could add, how that bishops were the cause that St. John wrote his gospel; that the Christian faith was, for three hundred years together, bravely defended by the sufferings, the prisons and flames, the life and the death

* Et 24. C. Concil. Antioch.

† 1 Cor. iv. 1. 2. 3.

‡ Jer. iii. 15.

* Heb. xiii. 7.

† Cap. xi. 4.

‡ Zech. xi. 7.

of bishops, as the principal combatants; that the fathers of the church, whose writings are held in so great veneration in all the Christian world, were almost all of them bishops. I could add, that the reformation of religion in England was principally by the preachings, and the disputings, the writings and the martyrdom of bishops; that bishops have ever since been the greatest defensatives against popery; that England and Ireland were governed by bishops ever since they were Christian, and under their conduct have, for so many ages, enjoyed all the blessings of the gospel. I could add also, that episcopacy is the great stabiliment of monarchy; but of this we are convinced by a sad and too dear-bought experience; I could therefore instead of it say, that episcopacy is the great ornament of religion; that as it rescues the clergy from contempt, so it is the greatest preservative of the people's liberty from ecclesiastic tyranny on one hand, (the gentry being little better than servants, while they live under the presbytery,) and anarchy and licentiousness on the other; that it endears obedience, and is subject to the laws of princes, and is wholly ordained for the good of mankind and the benefit of souls. But I cannot stay to number all the blessings which have entered into the world at this door; I only remark these, because they describe unto us the bishop's employment, which is, to be busy in the service of souls,—to do good in all capacities,—to serve every man's need,—to promote all public benefits,—to cement governments,—to establish peace, to propagate the kingdom of Christ,—to do hurt to no man,—to do good to every man;—that is, so to minister, that religion and charity, public peace and private blessings, may be in their exaltation.

As long as it was thus done by the primitive bishops, the princes and the people gave them all honour; insomuch, that by a decree of Constantine the Great, the bishop had power given to him to retract the sentences made by the presidents of provinces; and we find, in the acts of St. Nicholas, that he rescued some innocent persons from death, when the executioner was ready to strike the fatal blow; which thing, even when it fell into inconvenience, was indeed forbidden by Arcadius and Honorius; but the confidence and honour was only changed, it was not taken away; for the condemned criminal had leave to appeal to

the "Audientia Episcopalis," to "the Bishops' Court." This was not any right which the bishops could challenge, but a reward of their piety; and so long as the holy office was holily administered, the world found so much comfort and security, so much justice and mercy, so many temporal and spiritual blessings, consequent to the ministries of that order, that, as the Galatians to St. Paul, "men have plucked out their eyes" to do them service, and to do them honour. For then episcopacy did that good that God intended by it; it was a spiritual government, by spiritual persons, for spiritual ends. Then the princes and the people gave them honours, because they deserved, and sought them not; then they gave them wealth, because they would dispend it wisely, frugally, and charitably; then they gave them power, because it was sure to be used for the defence of the innocent, for the relief of the oppressed, for the punishment of evil-doers, and the reward of the virtuous. Then they desired to be judged by them, because their audiences, or courts, did *ἠσυχάζειν τὸ βαρβαρικόν*, "they appeased all furious sentences," and taught gentle principles, and gave merciful measures, and in their courts were all equity and piety, and Christian determinations.

But afterwards, when they did fall *εἰς δυναστείαν*, "into secular methods," and made their counsels vain by pride, and dirtied their sentences with money, then they became like other men; and so it will be, unless the bishop be more holy than other men; but when our sanctity and severity shall be as eminent as the calling is, then we shall be called to councils, and sit in public meetings, and bring comfort to private families, and rule in the hearts of men by a "jus relationis," such as was between the Roman emperors and the senate; they courted one another into power, and, in giving honour, strove to outdo each other; for from an humble wise man no man will snatch an employment that is honourable; but from the proud and from the covetous every man endeavours to wrest it, and thinks it lawful prize.

My time is now done; and, therefore, I cannot speak to the third part of my text, the reward of the good steward and of the bad; I shall only mention it to you in a short exhortation, and so conclude. In the primitive church, a bishop was never admitted to public penance; not only because in them every crime is ten, and he that

could not discern a public shame, could not deserve a public honour; nor yet only because every such punishment was scandalous, and did more evil by the example of the crime, than it could do good by the example of the punishment; but also because no spiritual power is higher than the episcopal, and therefore they were to be referred to the Divine judgment, which was likely to fall on them very heavily: *δεχομένης ἀρχιερέων ὁ Κύριος*, “the Lord will cut the evil stewards asunder;” he will suffer schisms and divisions to enter in upon us, and that will sadly cut us asunder; but the evil also shall fall upon their persons, like the punishment of quartering traitors, *ὡς καὶ σε διαμενέοσι τμήσῃ*, punishment with the circumstances of detestation and exemplarity. Consider, therefore, what is your great duty. Consider what is your great danger. The lines of duty I have already described; only remember how dear and precious souls are to God, since for their salvation Christ gave his blood; and therefore will not easily lose them, whom, though they had sinned against him, yet he so highly valued: remember that you are Christ’s deputies in the care of souls, and that you succeed in the place of the apostles. “*Non est facile stare loco Pauli, et tenere gradum Petri* :” you have undertaken the work of St. Paul, and the office of St. Peter; and what, think you, upon this account, will be required of us? St. Jerome expresses it thus: the wisdom and skill of a bishop ought to be so great, that his countenance, his gesture, his motion, every thing should be vocal, “*ut quicquid agit, quicquid loquitur, doctrina sit apostolorum* :” “that whatever he does or speaks, be doctrinal or apostolical.” The ancient fathers had a pious opinion, that besides the angel-guardian which is appointed to the guard of every man, there is to every bishop a second angel appointed to him at the consecration; and to this Origen alludes, saying that every bishopric hath two angels, the one visible and the other invisible. This is a great matter, and shows what a precious thing that order and those persons are in the eyes of God; but then this also means, that we should live angelic lives, which the church rarely well expresses by saying, that episcopal dignity is the ecclesiastic state of perfection, and supposes the persons to be so far advanced in holiness, as to be in the state of confirmation in grace. But I shall say nothing of these things, because it may

be they press too hard; ^{consolation} shall be made of it, upon occasion of “He shall be of the good and bad steward, is to What is you of your great danger. For if it be that he required of bishops to be so wise and so holy; so industrious and so careful, so busy and so good, up to the height of best examples; if they be anointed of the Lord, and are the husbands of the churches; if they be the shepherds of the flock, and stewards of the household; it is very fit they consider their danger, that they may be careful to do their duty. St. Bernard considers it well in his epistle to Henry, archbishop of Sens:— If I, lying in my cell, and smoking under a bushel, not shining, yet cannot avoid the breath of the winds, but that my light is almost blown out; what will become of my candle, if it were placed on a candlestick, and set upon a hill? I am to look to myself alone, and provide for my own salvation; and yet I offend myself, I am weary of myself, I am my own scandal and my own danger; my own eye, and my own belly, and my own appetite, find me work enough; and therefore God help them, who, besides themselves, are answerable for many others. Jacob kept the sheep of Laban, and we keep the sheep of Christ; and Jacob was to answer for every sheep that was stolen, and every lamb that was torn by the wild beast; and so shall we too, if by our fault one of Christ’s sheep perish; and yet it may be, there are one hundred thousand souls committed to the care and conduct of some one shepherd, who yet will find his own soul work enough for all his care and watchfulness. If any man should desire me to carry a frigate into the Indies, in which one hundred men were embarked, I were a madman to undertake the charge without proportionable skill; and, therefore, when there is more danger, and more souls, and rougher seas, and more secret rocks, and horrible storms, and the shipwreck is an eternal loss, the matter will then require great consideration in the undertaking, and greatest care in the conduct.

Upon this account we find many brave persons, in the first and in the middle ages of the church, with great resolution refusing episcopacy. I will not speak of those, who, for fear of martyrdom, declined it, but those who, for fear of damnation, did refuse. St. Bernard was by three rich cities severally called to be their bishop, and by two to be their archbishop, and he refused them; St. Dominic refused four successively; St. Thomas

Aquinas refused the archbishopric of Naples; and Vincentius Ferrarius would not accept of Valentia or Ilerda; and Bernardinus Senensis refused the bishoprics of Sens, Urbin, and Ferrara. They had reason; and yet, if they had done amiss in that office which they declined, it had been something more excusable; but if they that seek it, be as careless in the office as they are greedy of the honour, that will be found intolerable. "Electus episcopus ambulat in disco, recusans volvitur in areâ," said the hermit in St. Jerome; "The bishop walks upon round and trundling stones; but he that refuses it, stands upon a floor." But I shall say no more of it; because I suppose you have read it, and considered it, in St. Chrysostom's six books, "de Sacerdotio;" in the Apologetic of St. Gregory of Nazianzus: in the pastoral of St. Gregory of Rome; in St. Dionysius' eighth epistle to Demophilus; in the letters of Epiphanius to St. Jerome; in St. Austin's epistle to Bishop Valerius; in St. Bernard's life of St. Malachy; in St. Jerome's one hundred and thirty-eighth epistle to Fabiola. These things, I am sure, you could not read without trembling; and certainly, if it can belong to any Christian, then "work out your salvation with fear and trembling;" that is the bishop's burden. For the bishop is like a man that is surety for his friend; he is bound for many, and for great sums; what is to be done in this case, Solomon's answer is the way: "Do this now, my son, deliver thyself, make sure thy friend, give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids:"* that is, be sedulous to discharge thy trust, to perform thy charge; be zealous for souls, and careless of money: and remember this, that even in Christ's family there was one sad example of an apostate apostle; and he fell into that fearful estate merely by the desire and greediness of money. Be warm in zeal, and indifferent in thy temporalities: for he that is zealous in temporals, and cold in the spiritual; he that doeth the accessories of his calling by himself, and the principal by his deputies; he that is present at the feast of sheep-shearing, and puts others to feed the flock; hath no sign at all upon him of a good shepherd. "It is not fit for us to leave the word of God, and to serve tables," said the apostles. And if it be a less worthy office to serve the tables even of the poor, to the diminution

of our care in the dispensation of God's word,—it must needs be an unworthy employment to leave the word of God, and to attend the rich and superfluous furniture of our own tables. Remember the quality of your charges: "Civitas est, vigilate ad custodiam et concordiam; sponsa est, studete amari; oves sunt, intendite pastui."† "The church is a spouse;" the universal church is Christ's spouse, but your own diocese is yours; "behave yourselves so that ye be beloved. Your people are as sheep," and they must be fed, and guided, and preserved, and healed, and brought home. "The church is a city," and you are the watchmen; "take care that the city be kept at unity in itself;" be sure to make peace amongst your people; suffer no hatreds, no quarrels, no suits at law amongst the citizens, which you can avoid; make peace in your dioceses by all the ways of prudence, piety, and authority, that you can; and let not your own corrections of criminals be to any purpose but for their amendment, for the cure of offenders as long as there is hope, and for the security of those who are sound and whole. Preach often, and pray continually; let your discipline be with charity, and your censures slow; let not excommunications pass for trifles, and drive not away the fly from your brother's forehead with a hatchet; give counsel frequently, and dispensations seldom, but never without necessity or great charity; let every place in your diocese say, "Invenerunt me vigiles," "The watchmen have found me out," "hassovelim;" they that walk the city round have sought me out, and found me. "Let every one of us," as St. Paul's‡ expression is, "show himself a workman that shall not be ashamed;" "operarium inconfusibilem," mark that; "such a labourer as shall not be put to shame" for his illness or his unskilfulness, his falseness and unfaithfulness, in that day when the great Bishop of souls shall make his last and dreadful visitation; for, be sure, there is not a carcass, nor a skin, nor a lock of wool, nor a drop of milk of the whole flock, but God shall for it call the idle shepherd to a severe account. And how, think you, will his anger burn, when he shall see so many goats standing at his left hand, and so few sheep at his right? and upon inquiry, shall find that his ministering shep-

* Prov. vi. 3, 4.

* S. Bernard. ad Henr. Episc. Senensem.

† 2 Tim. ii.

herds were wolves in sheep's clothing? and that, by their ill example or pernicious doctrines, their care of money and carelessness of their flocks, so many souls perish, who, if they had been carefully and tenderly, wisely and conscientiously handled, might have shined as bright as angels? And it is a sad consideration to remember, how many souls are pitifully handled in this world, and carelessly dismissed out of this world; they are left to live at their own rate, and when they are sick they are bidden to be of good comfort, and then all is well; who, when they are dead, find themselves cheated of their precious and invaluable eternity. Oh, how will those souls, in their eternal prisons, for ever curse those evil and false guides! And how will those evil guides themselves abide in judgment, when the angels of wrath snatch their abused people into everlasting torments? For will God bless them, or pardon them, by whom so many souls perish? Shall they reign with Christ, who evacuate the death of Christ, and make it useless to dear souls? Shall they partake of Christ's glories, by whom it comes to pass that there is less joy in heaven itself, even because sinners are not converted, and God is not glorified and the people is not instructed, and the kingdom of God is not filled? Oh no; the curses of a false prophet will fall upon them, and the reward of the evil steward will be their portion; and they who destroyed the sheep, or neglected them, shall have their portion with goats for ever and ever, in everlasting burnings, in which it is impossible for a man to dwell.

Can any thing be beyond this? beyond damnation? Surely a man would think not: and yet I remember a severe saying of St. Gregory, "*Scire debent praelati, quod tot mortibus digni sunt, quot perditionis exempla ad subditos extenderunt:*" "One damnation is not enough for an evil shepherd; but for every soul who dies by his evil example or pernicious carelessness, he deserves a new death, a new damnation."—Let us, therefore, be wise and faithful, walk warily, and watch carefully, and rule diligently, and pray assiduously; for God is more propense to rewards than to punishments; and the good steward, that is wise

and faithful in his dispensation, shall be greatly blessed. But how? "He shall be made ruler over the household." What is that? for he is so already. True: but he shall be much more: "*Ex dispensatore faciet procuratorem;*" God will treat him as Joseph was treated by his master; "he was first a steward, and then a procurator;" one that ruled his goods without account and without restraint. Our ministry shall pass into empire, our labour into rest, our watchfulness into fruition, and our bishopric to a kingdom. In the mean time, our bishoprics are a great and weighty care, and, in a spiritual sense, our dominion is founded in grace, and our rule is in the hearts of the people, and our strengths are the powers of the Holy Ghost, and the weapons of our warfare are spiritual; and the eye of God watches over us curiously, to see if we watch over our flocks by day and by night. And though the primitive church, as the ecclesiastic histories observe, when they deposed a bishop from his office, ever concealed his crime, and made no record of it, yet remember this, that God does and will call us to a strict and severe account. Take heed that you may never hear that fearful sentence, "I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat." If you suffer Christ's little ones to starve, it will be required severely at your hands. And know this, that the time will quickly come, in which God shall say unto thee, in the words of the prophet, "Where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock? What wilt thou say when he shall visit thee?"*

God, of his mercy, grant unto us all to be so faithful and so wise as to convert souls, and to be so blessed and so assisted, that we may give an account of our charges with joy, to the glory of God, to the edification and security of our flocks, and the salvation of our own souls, in that day when the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls shall come to judgment, even our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, love and obedience, now and for ever more. Amen.

* Jer. xiii. 20, 21.

SERMON V.

PREACHED AT THE OPENING OF THE PARLIAMENT OF IRELAND, MAY 8, 1661.

Salus in multitudine consulentium.

Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.—1 Sam. xv. latter part of verse 22.

For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.—First part of verse 23.

IN the world, nothing is more easy than to say our prayers, and to obey our superiors; and yet in the world there is nothing to which we are so unwilling as to prayer, and nothing seems so intolerable as obedience; for men esteem all laws to be fetters, and their superiors are their enemies: and when a command is given, we turn into all shapes of excuse, to escape from the imposition: for either the authority is incompetent, or the law itself is "statutum non bonum;" or it is impossible to be kept, or at least very inconvenient, and we are to be relieved in equity; or there is a secret dispensation, and it does not bind in my particular case, or not now; or it is but the law of a man, and was made for a certain end; or it does not bind the conscience, but it was only for political regards; or, if the worst happen, I will obey passively, and then I am innocent. Thus every man snuffs up the wind like "the wild asses in the wilderness," and thinks that authority is an encroachment upon a man's birth-right; and in the mean time never considers, that Christ took upon him our nature, that he might learn us obedience, and in that also make us become like unto God. In his justice and in his mercy he was inimitable before; but before the incarnation of Christ we could not, in passive graces, imitate God, who was impassible: but he was pleased, at a great rate, to set forward his duty; and when himself became obedient in the hardest point, "obediens usque ad mortem," and is now become to us "the Author and Finisher of our obedience," as well as of our faith,—"*admonetur omnis ætas fieri posse quod aliquando factum est.*" We must needs confess it very possible to obey the severest of the Divine laws, even to die if God commands, because it was already done by a man; and we must needs confess it excellent, because it was done by God himself.

But this great example is of universal influence in the whole matter of obedience:

for, that I may speak of that part of this duty, which can be useful and concerns us; men do not deny but they must obey in all civil things; but in religion they have a supreme God only, and conscience is his interpreter; and, in effect, every man must be the judge, whether he shall obey or no. Therefore it is that I say, the example of our Lord is the great determination of this inquiry; for he did obey and suffer, according to the commands of his superiors, under whose government he was placed; "he gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to the nippers;" he kept the orders of the rulers, and the customs of the synagogues, the law of Moses and the rites of the temple; and by so doing "he fulfilled all righteousness." Christ made no distinctions in his obedience; but obeyed God "in all things," and those that God set over him, "in all things according to God," and in things of religion most of all; because to obey was of itself a great instance of religion; and if ever religion comes to be pretended against obedience, in any thing where our superior can command, it is imposture: for that is the purpose of my text, "obedience is better than sacrifice." Our own judgment, our own opinion, is the sacrifice seldom fit to be offered to God, but most commonly deserving to be consumed by fire: but, take it at the best, it is not half so good as obedience; for that was indeed Christ's sacrifice; and, as David said of Goliath's sword, "*Non est alter talis,*" there is no other sacrifice that can be half so good: and when Abraham had lifted up his sacrificing knife to slay his son, and so expressed his obedience, God would have no more; he had the obedience, and he cared not for the sacrifice.

By sacrifice here, then, is meant the external and contingent actions of religion; by obedience, is meant submission to authority, and observing the command. Obedience is a not choosing our duty, a not disputing with our betters, not to argue, not to delay, not to murmur; it is not only this, but it is much better; for it is love,—and simplicity,—and humility,—and usefulness; and I think these do reductively contain all that is excellent in the whole conjugation of Christian graces.

My text is a perfect proposition, and hath no special remark in the words of it; but is only a great representation of the most useful truth to all kingdoms and parliaments, and councils and authorities, in the whole

world: it is your charter, and the sanction of your authority, and the stabiliment of your peace, and the honour of your laws, and the great defence of your religion, and the building up and the guarding of the king's throne. It is that by which all the societies in heaven and earth are firm: without this you cannot have a village prosperous, or a ship arrive in harbour: it is that which God hath bound upon us by hope and fear, by wrath and conscience, by duty and necessity. Obedience is the formality of all virtues, and every sin is disobedience: there can no greater thing be said, unless you please to add, that we never read that the earth opened and swallowed up any man alive but a company of rebellious, disobedient people, who rose up against Moses and Aaron, the prince of the people, and the priest of God. For obedience is the most necessary thing in the world, and "*corruptio optimi est pessima*:" disobedience is the greatest evil in the world, and that alone which can destroy it.*

My text is instanced in the matter of obedience to God; but yet the case is so, that though I shall, in the first place, discourse of our obedience to man, I shall not set one foot aside from the main intention of it; because obedience to our superiors is really, and is accounted to be, obedience to God; for they are sent by God; they are his vicegerents, his ministers, and his ambassadors." "*Apostolus cujusque est quisque*," say the Jews; "Every man's apostle is himself;" and "he that heareth or despiseth you," said Christ, "heareth or despiseth me:" and the reason is very evident,—because it is not to be expected that God should speak to us by himself, but sometimes by angels, sometimes by prophets, once by his Son, and always by his servants.

Now I desire two things to be observed:—

First: We may as well perceive that God speaks to us, when he uses the ministry of men, as when he uses the ministry of angels: one is as much declared and as certain as the other. And if it be said, a man may pretend to come from God, and yet deliver nothing but his own errand, that is no strange thing: but remember also that St. Paul puts this supposition in the case of an angel, "If an angel preach any other gospel;" and we know that many angels come like angels of light, who yet teach nothing

but the ways of darkness. So that we are still as much bound to obey our superior as to obey an angel: a man is "paulò minor angelis," "a little lower than the angels;" but we are much lower than the king. Consider, then, with what fear and love we should receive an angel; and so let us receive all those whom God hath sent to us, and set over us; for they are no less; less, indeed, in their persons, but not in their authorities. Nay, the case is nearer yet; for we are not only bound to receive God's deputies as God's angels, but as God himself: for it is the power of God in the hand of a man, and "he that resists, resists God's ordinance." And I pray remember, that there is not only no power greater than God's, but there is no other; for all power is his. The consequent of this is plain enough; I need say no more of it: it is all one to us who commands, God, or God's vicegerent. This was the first thing to be observed.

Secondly: There can be but two things in the world required to make obedience necessary; the greatness of the authority, and the worthiness of the thing. In the first you see the case can have no difference, because the thing itself is but one: there is but one authority in the world, and that is God's; as there is but one sun, whose light is diffused into all kingdoms. But is there not great difference in the thing commanded? Yes, certainly there is some; but nothing to warrant disobedience: for, whatever the thing be, it may be commanded by man, if it be not countermanded by God. For,

1. It is not required that every thing commanded should of itself be necessary;—for God himself oftentimes commands things, which have in them no other excellency than that of obedience. What made Abraham "the friend of God?" and what made his offer to kill his son to be so pleasing to God? It had been naturally no very great good to cut the throat of a little child; but only that it was obedience. What excellency was there in the journeys of the patriarchs from Mesopotamia to Syria, from the land of Canaan into Egypt? and what thanks could the sons of Israel deserve, that they sat still upon the seventh day of the week? and how can a man be dearer unto God by keeping of a feast, or building of a booth, or going to Jerusalem, or cutting off the foreskin of a boy, or washing their hands and garments in fair water? There was nothing in these things but the obedience. And when our blessed Lord himself came

* *Nullum malum majus aut infelicitur feracius quam inobedientia.*—SENECA.

to his servant, to take of him the baptism of repentance, alas! he could take nothing but the water and the ceremony; for, as Tertullian observes, he was "nullius pœnitentiæ debitor;" he was, indeed, "a just person, and needed no repentance;" but even so it "became him to fulfil all righteousness:" but yet even then it was that the Holy Spirit did descend upon his holy head, and crowned that obedience, though it were but a ceremony. Obedience, you see, may be necessary, when the law is not so: for in these cases, God's Son and God's servants did obey in things, which were made good only by the commandment: and if we do so in the instances of human laws, there is nothing to be said against it, but that what was not of itself necessary, is made so by the authority of the commander, and the force of the commandment: but there is no more in it than so. For,

2. We pretend to be willing to obey, even in things naturally not necessary, if a Divine command does interpose; but if it be only a commandment of man, and the thing be not necessary of itself, then we desire to be excused. But will we do nothing else? We ourselves will do many things that God hath not commanded; and may not our superiors command us, in many cases, to do what we may lawfully do without a commandment? Can we become a law unto ourselves, and cannot the word and power of our superiors also become a law unto us? hath God given more to a private than to a public hand? But consider the ill consequents of this fond opinion. Are all the practices of Geneva or Scotland recorded in the word of God? are the trifling ceremonies of their public penance recorded in the four Gospels? are all the rules of decency, and all "things that are of good report," and all the measures of prudence, and the laws of peace and war, and the customs of the churches of God, and the lines of public honesty, are all these described to us by the laws of God? If they be, let us see and read them, that we may have an end to all questions and minute cases of conscience: but if they be not, and yet by the word of God these are bound upon us in general, and no otherwise; then it follows, that the particulars of all these, which may be infinite, and are innumerable, yet may be the matter of human laws; and then are bound upon us by the power of God, put into the hands of man. The consequent is this, that whatsoever is commanded by our superiors,

according to the will of God, or whatsoever is not against it, is, of necessity, to be obeyed.

3. But what if our princes or our prelates command things against the word of God? What then? Why nothing then, but that we must obey God, and not man; there is no dispute of that. But what then again? Why, therefore, says the papist, "I will not obey the protestant kings, because, against the word of God, they command me to come to church, where heresy is preached;"—"and I will not acknowledge the bishops," saith the presbyterian, "because they are against the discipline and sceptre of Jesus Christ;" and the independent hates parochial meetings, and is wholly for a gathered church, and supposes this to be the practice apostolical; and "I will not bring my child to baptism," saith the anabaptist, "because God calls none but believers to that sacrament;" and "I will acknowledge no clergy, no lord, no master," saith the quaker, "because Christ commands us to 'call no man master on the earth, and be not called of men rabbi.'" And if you call upon these men to obey the authority God hath set over them, they tell you with one voice, with all their hearts, as far as the word of God will give them leave; but God is to be obeyed, and not man; and, therefore, if you put the laws in execution against them, they will obey you passively, because you are stronger; and so long as they know it, they will not stir against you; but they, in the mean time, are little less than martyrs, and you no better than persecutors.

What shall we do now? for here is evidently a great heap of disorder: they all confess that authority must be obeyed, but when you come to the trial, none of them all will do it, and they think they are not bound: but because their opinions, being contrary, cannot all be right, and, it may be, none of them are,—it is certain, that all this while authority is infinitely wronged and prejudiced amongst them, when all fantastic opinions shall be accounted a sufficient reason to despise it. I hope the presbyterian will join with the protestant, and say, that the papist, and the Socinian, and the independent, and the anabaptist, and the quaker, are guilty of rebellion and disobedience, for all their pretence of the word of God to be on their side: and I am more sure that all these will join with the protestant, and say, that the presbyterian hath no reason to disobey authority upon pretence of their new

government, concerning which they do but dream dreams, when they think they see visions. Certain it is that the biggest part of dissenters in the whole world are criminally disobedient; and it is a thousand to one but that authority is in the right against them, and ought to be obeyed. It remains now, in the next place, that we inquire what authority is to do in this case, and what these sectaries and recusants are to do; for these are two things worth inquiry.

1. Concerning authority. All disagreeing persons, to cover their foul shame of rebellion or disobedience, pretend conscience for their judge, and the Scripture for their law. Now if these men think, that, by this means, they proceed safely, upon the same ground the superior may do what he thinks to be his duty, and be at least as safe as they. If the rebellious subject can think, that, by God's law, he ought not to obey, the prince may, at the same time, think, that, by God's law, he ought to punish him: and it is as certain that he is justly punished, as he thinks it certain he reasonably disobeys. Or is the conscience of the superior bound to relax his laws, if the inferior tells him so? Can the prince give laws to the people's will, and can the people give measures to the prince's understanding? If any one of the people can prescribe or make it necessary to change the law, then every one can; and by this time every new opinion will introduce a new law, and that law shall be obeyed by him only that hath a mind to it, and that will be a strange law, that binds a man only to do his own pleasure. But because the king's conscience is to him as sure a rule, as the conscience of any disobedient subject can be to himself, the prince is as much bound to do his duty in government, as the other can be to follow his conscience in disagreeing; and the consequent will be, that whether the subject be right or wrong in the disputation, it is certain he hath the just reward of disobedience in the conclusion. If one man's conscience can be the measure of another man's action, why shall not the prince's conscience be the subject's measure? But if it cannot, then the prince is not to depart from his own conscience, but proceed according to the laws which he judges just and reasonable.

2. The superior is tied, by the laws of Christian charity, so far to bend in the ministration of his laws, as to pity the invincible ignorance and weakness of his abused people, "*qui devoratur à malis pastoribus,*"

as St. Jerome's expression is, "that are devoured by their evil shepherds;" but this is to last no longer than till the ignorance can be cured, and the man be taught his duty; for whatsoever comes after this, looks so like obstinacy, that no laws in the world judge it to be any thing else. And then, secondly, this also is to be understood to be the duty of superiors only in matters of mere opinion, not relating to practice. For no man's opinion must be suffered to do mischief, to disturb the peace, to dishonour the government; not only because every disagreeing person can, to serve his end, pretend his conscience, and so claim impunity for his villany; but also because those things, which concern the good of mankind and the peace of kingdoms, are so plainly taught, that no man who thinks himself so wise as to be fit to oppose authority, can be so foolish as in these things not to know his duty. In other things, if the opinion does neither bite nor scratch, if it dwells at home in the house of understanding, and wanders not in the outhouses of passion and popular orations, the superior imposes no laws, and exacts no obedience, and destroys no liberty, and gives no restraint: this is the part of authority.

2. The next inquiry is, What must the disagreeing subject do, when he supposes the superior's command is against the law of God? I answer, that if he thinks so, and thinks true, he must not obey his superior in that: but because most men that think so, think amiss,—there are many particulars fit, by such persons, to be considered.

1. Let such men think charitably of others, and that all are not fools or madmen, who are not of the same opinion with themselves or their own little party. 2. Let him think himself as fallible and subject to mistake as other men are. 3. But let him by no means think, that every opinion of his is an inspiration from God; for that is the pride and madness of a pretended religion: such a man is to be cured by physic; for he could not enter into that persuasion by reason or experience, and therefore it must enter into him by folly or the anger of God. 4. From whence it will naturally follow, that he ought to think his opinion to be uncertain, and that he ought not to behave himself like the man that is too confident; but because his obedience is duty, and his duty certain, he will find it more wise, and safe, and holy, to leave that which is disputable,

and pursue that which is demonstrable; to change his uncertain opinion for his certain duty: for it is twenty to one but he is deceived in his opinion; but if he be, it is certain that whatsoever his conscience be, yet, in his separation from authority, he is a sinner.

2. Every man who, by his opinion, is engaged against authority, should do well to study his doubtful opinion less, and humility and obedience more. But you say, that this concerns not me; for my disagreeing is not in a doubtful matter, but I am sure I am in the right; there are no *ifs* and *ands* in my case. Well, it may be so: but were it not better that you did doubt? "A wise man feareth," saith Solomon, "and departeth from evil; but a fool rageth and is confident:" and the difference between a learned man and a novice is this, that the young fellow crieth out, "I am sure it is so;" the better learned answers, *ίσως καὶ τὸ ἄλλα*, "Possibly it may, and peradventure it is so, but I pray inquire:" and he is the best diviner, *μάντις ἀριστος ὅστις εἰκάζει καλῶς*, "he is the best judge that conjectures best," not he that is most confident; for, as Xenophanes said wisely, "Man does but conjecture, but God only knows;" and it is no disparagement to a wise man to learn, and,—by suspecting the fallibility of things, and his own aptness to mistake,—to walk prudently and safely, with an eye to God, and an ear open to his superior. Some men are drunk with fancy, and mad with opinion. Who believe more strongly than boys and women? who are so hard to be persuaded as fools? and who so readily suspect their teachers as they who are governed by chance, and know not the intrinsic measures of good and evil? "Qui pauca considerat, de facili pronunciat;" "it is a little learning, and not enough, that makes men conclude hastily," and clap fast hold on the conclusion, before they have well weighed the premises; but experience and humility would teach us modesty and fear.

3. In all disputes, he that obeys his superior can never be a heretic in the estimate of law, and he can never be a schismatic in the point of conscience; so that he certainly avoids one great death, and very probably the other. "Res judicata pro veritate accipitur," saith the law: "If the judge have given sentence, that sentence is supposed a truth:" and Cassiodorus said, according to the sentence of the law, "Nimis iniquum est, ut ille patiatur dispendium, qui impe-

rium fecit alienum." Our obedience secures us from the imputation of evil, and error does but seldom go in company with obedience. But, however, there is this advantage to be gotten by obedience; that he who prefers the sentence of the law before his own opinion, does do an act of great humility, and exercises the grace of modesty, and takes the best way to secure his conscience and the public peace, and pleases the government which he is bound to please, and pursues the excellencies of unity, and promotes charity and godly love; whereas, on the other side, he that goes by himself, apart from his superior, is always materially a schismatic, and is more likely to be deceived by his own singularity, and prejudice, and weakness, than by following the guides God hath set over him. And if he loses truth, certainly he will get nothing else: for by so doing we lose our peace too, and give public offence, and arm authority against us, and are scandalous in law, and pull evil upon our heads; and all this for a proud singularity, or a trifling opinion, in which we are not so likely to be deceived, if we trust ourselves less, and the public more. "In omnibus falli possum, in obedientiâ non possum," said St. Teresa; "I can in every thing else, but in obedience I can never be deceived." And it is very remarkable in my text, that "rebellion" or "disobedience" is compared to "the sin of witchcraft." Indeed, it seems strange; for the meaning of it is not only that a rebel is as much hated by God as a witch, but it means that the sins are alike in their very natures. "Quasi peccatum divinationis," saith the Vulgar Latin; they that disobey authority, trusting in their own opinions, are but like witches or diviners; that is, they are led by an evil spirit; pride and a lying and deceiving spirit is their teacher, and their answers are seldom true; for though they pretend the truth of God for their disobedience, yet they "fall into the deception of the devil;" and that is the end of their soothsaying. And let me add this, that when a man distrusts his superior, and trusts himself, if he misses truth, it will be greatly imputed to him; he shall feel the evil of his error and the shame of his pride, the reproach of his folly and the punishment of his disobedience, the dishonour of singularity, and the restlessness of schism, and the scorn of the multitude. But, on the other side, if he obey authority, and yet be deceived, he is greatly excused; he erred

on the safer side, he is defended by the hands of many virtues, and gets peace and love of the congregation.

You see the blessings of obedience, even in the questions and matters of religion; but I have something more to say, and it is not only of great use to appease the tumultuary disputations and arguings of religion, which have lately disturbed these nations, but is proper to be spoken to, and to be reduced to practice, by this honourable and high court of parliament.

That which I am to say, is this:—You have no other way of peace, no better way to appease and quiet the quarrels in religion which have been too long among us, but by reducing all men to obedience, and all questions to the measures of the laws; for they on both sides pretend Scripture, but one side only can pretend to the laws; and they that do admit no authority above their own to expound Scripture, cannot deny but kings and parliaments are the makers and proper expounders of our laws; and if ever you mean to have “truth and peace kiss each other,” let no man dispute against your laws. For did not our blessed Saviour say, that an oath is the end of all questions, and, after depositions are taken, all judges go to sentence? What oaths are to private questions, that laws are to public. And if it be said that laws may be mistaken, it is true; but may not an oath also be a perjury? and yet, because, in human affairs, we have no greater certainty, and greater than God gives we may not look for,—let the laws be the last determination; and, in wise and religious governments, no disputation is to go beyond them.

2. But this is not only true in religious prudence and plain necessity, but this is the way that God hath appointed, and that he hath blessed, and that he hath intended to be the means of ending all questions. This we learn from St. Paul,* “I exhort that first of all, prayers, and supplications, and intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and all that are in authority.” For all; for parliaments and for councils, for bishops and for magistrates; it is for all, and for kings above all. Well; to what purpose is all this? “That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty.” Mark that; “kings and all that are in authority,” are by God appointed to be the means of obtaining unity

and peace in godliness, *ἐν εὐσεβείαις*, “in all the true and godly worshippings” of God; no unity in religion without kings and bishops, and those that are in authority.

3. And, indeed, because this is God’s way of ending our controversies, the matter of authority is highly to be regarded. If you suffer the authority of the king to be lessened, to be scrupled, to be denied in ecclesiastical affairs, you have no way left to silence the tongues and hands of gain-saying people. But so it is; the king’s authority is appointed and enabled by God to end our questions of religion: “Divinatio in labiis regis” (saith Solomon *) “in iudicio non errabit os ejus:” “Divination and a wise sentence in the lips of the king, and his mouth shall not err in judgment.” In all Scripture there is not so much for the pope’s infallibility, but by this, it appears there is divinity in the king’s sentence; for God gives to kings, who are his vicegerents, a peculiar spirit. And when Justinian had, out of the sense of Julian the lawyer, observed that there were many cases, for which law made no provision, he adds: “If any such shall happen,” † “Augustum imploretur remedium,” “run to the king for remedy;” for therefore God hath set the imperial fortune over human affairs, “ut possit omnia quæ noviter contingunt, et emendare et componere, et modis ac regulis competentibus tradere,” “that the king may amend and rule and compose every new and arising question.” And it is not to be despised, but is a great indication of this truth, that the answers of the Roman princes and judges recorded in the civil law are such, that all nations of the world do approve them, and are a great testimony how the sentences of kings ought to be valued, even in matters of religion, and questions of greatest doubt. “Bona conscientia scyphus est Josephi,” said the old abbot of Kells; ‡ “A good conscience is like Joseph’s cup,” in which our lord the king divines. And since God hath blessed us with so good, so just, so religious, and so wise a prince, let the sentence of his laws be our last resort, and no questions be permitted after his judgment and legal determination; for wisdom saith, “By me princes rule, by me they decree justice;” and therefore the spirit of the king is a divine eminency, and is as the Spirit of the most high God.

* Prov. xvi. 10.

† Lib. viii. cod. de Veteri Jure enucleando.

‡ Petrus Cellensis, lib. de Conscientiâ.

* 1 Tim. ii. 1.

4. Let no man be too busy in disputing the laws of his superiors; for a man by that seldom gets good to himself, but seldom misses to do mischief unto others: *Μὴ ἐπιζέγων ἔσσι πᾶν δίκαια λέγῃς*, said one in Laertius. Will a son contend with his father? that is not decent, though the son speak that which is right; he may, possibly, say well enough, but he does do very ill; not only because he does not pay his duty and reverential fear, but because it is in itself very often unreasonable to dispute concerning the command of our superior, whether it be good or not; for the very commandment can make it not only good, but a necessary good. "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay on you no greater burden than these necessary things," said the council of Jerusalem; and yet these things were not necessary, but as they were commanded: to abstain from a strangled hen or a bloody pudding, could not of themselves be necessary; but the commandment came, authority did interpose, and then they were made so.

5. But then besides the advantages, both of the spirit and the authority of kings, in matter of questions, the laws and decrees of a national church ought, upon the account of their own advantages, to be esteemed as a final sentence in all things disputed. The thing is a plain command: "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God."* This tells what rulers he means; rulers ecclesiastical; and what of them? "whose faith follow," they must "præire in articulis;" they are not masters of your faith, but guides of it; and "they that sit in Moses' chair" must be heard and obeyed, said our blessed Saviour. These words were not said for nothing; and they were nothing, if their authority were nothing.

For between the laws of a church and the opinion of a subject, the comparison is the same as between a public spirit and a private. The public is far the better; the daughter of God, and the mother of a blessing, and always dwells in light. The public spirit hath already passed the trial, it hath been "subjected to the prophets," tried and searched and approved: the private is yet to be examined. The public spirit is uniform and apt to be followed; the private is various and multiform as chance, and no man can follow him that hath it; for if he follows one, he is reproved by a thousand;

* Heb. xiii. 7.

and if he changes, he may get a shame but no truth; and he can never rest but in the arms and conduct of his superior. When Aaron and Miriam murmured against Moses, God told them they were prophets of an inferior rank than Moses was. God communicated himself to them in dreams and visions; but the ruach hakkodesh *רוח הקודש* "the public spirit of Moses" their prince, that was higher: and what then? "Wherefore, then," (God said,*) "were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?" plainly teaching us, that where there is a more excellent spirit, they that have a spirit less excellent, ought to be afraid to speak against it. And this is the full case of the private and public spirit; that is, of a subject speaking against the spirit and the laws of the church. In heaven, and in the air, and in all the regions of spirits, the spirit of a lower order dares not speak against the spirit of a higher; and, therefore, for a private spirit to oppose the public, is a disorder greater than is in hell itself.

To conclude this point: let us consider whether it were not an intolerable mischief, if the judges should give sentence in causes of instance by the measures of their own fancy, and not by the laws; who would endure them? and yet why may they not do that as well any ecclesiastic person preach religion, not which the laws allow, but what is taught him by his own private opinion? but he that hath the laws on his side, hath ever something of true religion to warrant him, and can never want a great measure of justification: *νόμος και χώρα*, "the laws and the customs of the country," are the results of wise counsels or long experience; they ever comply with peace and public benefit; and nothing of this can be said of private religions; for they break the peace, and trouble the conscience, and undo government, and despise the laws, and offend princes, and dishonour the wisdom of parliaments, and destroy obedience.

Well; but in the last place: but if we cannot do what the laws command, we will suffer what they impose; and then all is well again. But, first, who ever did so that could help it? And, secondly, this talking of passive obedience is but a mockery; for what man did ever say the laws were not good, but he also said the punishment was unjust? And, thirdly, which of all the recusants did not endeavour to get ground

* Numb. xii. 6, 7, 8.

upon the laws, and secretly or openly asperse the authority that put him to pain for doing that which he calls his duty? and can any man boast of his passive obedience that calls it persecution? He may think to please himself, but he neither does nor says any thing that is for the reputation of the laws: such men are like them that sail in a storm; they may possibly be thrown into a harbour, but they are very sick all the way.

But after all this, I have one thing to observe to such persons, that such a passive obedience as this does not acquit a man before God; and he that suffers what the law inflicts, is not discharged in the court of conscience, but there is still a sinner and a debtor: for "the law is not made for the righteous, but for sinners;" that is, the punishment appointed by the law falls on him only that hath sinned; but an offending subject cannot, "with the fruit of his body, pay for the sin of his soul:" when he does evil, he must suffer evil; but if he does not repent besides, a worse thing will happen to him; for we are not tied to obey only for wrath, but also for conscience. Passive obedience is only the correspondent of wrath, but it is the active obedience that is required by conscience; and whatever the subject suffers for his own fault, it matters nothing as to his duty; but this also God will exact at the hands of every man, that is placed under authority.

I have now told you the sum of what I had to say concerning obedience to laws and to your own government; and it will be to little purpose to make laws in matter of religion, or in any thing else, if the end of it be, that every man shall choose whether he will obey or not: and if it be questioned whether you be deceived or not, though the suffering such a question is a great diminution to your authority, yet it is infinitely more probable that you are in the right than that the disobedient subject is; because you are conducted with a public spirit, you have a special title and peculiar portions of the promise of God's assistance,—you have all the helps of counsel and the advantages of deliberation,—you have the Scriptures and the laws,—you are as much concerned to judge according to truth as any man,—you have the principal of all capacities and states of men to assist your consultations,—you are the most concerned for peace,—and to please God also is your biggest interest: and, therefore, it cannot be denied to be the most reasonable thing in the world which is set

down in the law, "*Præsumptio est pro auctoritate imponentis,*" the presumption of truth ought to be on your side; and since this is the most likely way for truth, and the most certain way for peace, you are to insist in this, and it is not possible to find a better.

I have another part or sense of my text yet to handle; but because I have no more time of my own, and I will not take any of yours, I shall only do it in a short exhortation to this honourable auditory, and so conclude.

God hath put a royal mantle, and fastened it with a golden clasp upon the shoulder of the king, and he hath given you the judge's robe; the king holds the sceptre, and he hath now permitted you to touch the golden ball, and to take it awhile into your handling, and make obedience to your laws to be duty and religion: but then remember that the first in every kind is to be the measure of the rest; you cannot reasonably expect that the subjects should obey you, unless you obey God. I do not speak this only in relation to your personal duty; though in that also it would be considered, that all the bishops and ministers of religion are bound to teach the same doctrines by their lives as they do by their sermons; and what we are to do in the matters of doctrine, you are also to do in matter of laws; what is reasonable for the advantages of religion, is also the best method for the advantages of government; we must preach by our good example, and you must govern by it; and your good example in observing the laws of religion, will strangely endear them to the affections of the people. But I shall rather speak to you as you are in a capacity of union and government; for as now you have a new power, so there is incumbent upon you a special duty.

1. Take care that all your power and your counsels be employed in doing honour and advantages to piety and holiness. Then you obey God in your public capacity, when by holy laws, and wise administrations, you take care that all the land be an obedient and a religious people. For then you are princely rulers indeed, when you take care of the salvation of a whole nation. "*Nihil aliud est imperium nisi cura salutis alienæ,*" said Ammianus; "Government is nothing but a care that all men be saved." And, therefore, take care that men do not destroy their souls by the abominations of an evil life: see that God be obeyed; take

care that the breach of the laws of God may not be unpunished. The best way to make men to be good subjects to the king, is to make them good servants of God. Suffer not drunkenness to pass with impunity; let lust find a public shame; let the sons of the nobility and gentry no more dare to dishonour God, than the meanest of the people shall; let baseness be basely esteemed; that is, put such characters of shame upon dishonourable crimes, that it be esteemed more against the honour of a gentleman to be drunk than to be kicked—more shame to fornicate than to be caned: and for honour's sake, and the reputation of Christianity, take some course, that the most unworthy sins of the world have not reputation added to them, by being the practice of gentlemen and persons of good birth and fortunes. Let not them who should be examples of holiness, have an impunity and a license to provoke God to anger; lest it be said, that in Ireland it is not lawful for any man to sin, unless he be a person of quality. "Optimus est reipublicæ status, ubi nihil deest nisi licentia pereundi:" "In a commonwealth, that is the best state of things where every thing can be had but a leave to sin, a license to be undone."*

2. As God is thus to be obeyed, and you are to take care that he be, so God also must be honoured, by paying that reverence and religious obedience which is due to those persons, whom he hath been pleased to honour, by admitting them to the dispensation of his blessings, and the ministries of your religion. For certain it is, this is a right way of giving honour and obedience to God. The church is, in some very peculiar manner, the "portion," and the "called," the "care" of God; and it will concern you, in pursuance of your obedience to God, to take care that they, in whose hands religion is to be ministered and conducted, be not discouraged. For what your judges are to the ministry of laws, that your bishops are in the ministries of religion; and it concerns you that the hands of neither of them be made weak: and so long as you make religion your care, and holiness your measure, you will not think that authority is the more to be despised, because it is in the hands of the church; or that it is a sin to "speak evil of dignities," unless they be ecclesiastical; but that they may be reviled, and that though nothing is

baser than for a man to be a thief, yet sacrilege is no dishonour; and, indeed, to be an oppressor is a great and crying sin, yet to oppress the church, to diminish her rents, to make her beggarly and contemptible, that is no offence; and that though it is not lawful "to despise government," yet if it be church-government, that then the case is altered. Take heed of that; for then God is dishonoured, when any thing is the more despised by how much it relates nearer unto God. No religion ever did despise their chiefest ministers; and the Christian religion gives them the greatest honour. For honourable priesthood is like a shower from heaven—it causes blessings every where; but a pitiful, a disheartened, a discouraged clergy, waters the ground with a water-pot, here and there a little good, and for a little while. But every evil man can destroy all that work, whenever he pleases. Take heed; in the world there is not a greater misery can happen to any man, than to be an enemy to God's church. All histories of Christendom and the whole book of God have sad records, and sad threatenings, and sad stories of Korah, and Doeg, and Balaam, and Jeroboam, and Uzzah, and Ananias, and Sapphira, and Julian, and of heretics and schismatics, and sacrilegious; and after all, these men could not prevail finally, but paid for the mischief they did, and ended their days in dishonour, and left nothing behind them but the memory of their sin, and the record of their curse.

3. In the same proportion, you are to take care of all inferior relatives of God and of religion. Find out methods to relieve the poor, to accommodate and well dispose of the cures of souls; let not the churches lie waste and in ruinous heaps, to the diminution of religion, and the reproach of the nation, lest the nations abroad say, that the Britons are a kind of Christians that have no churches; for churches, and courts of judicature, and the public defences of an imperial city, are "res sacræ;" they are venerable in law, and honourable in religion.

But that which concerns us most is, that we all keep close to our religion. "Ad magnas reipublicæ utilitates retinetur religio in civitatibus," said Cicero; by religion, and the strict preserving of it, ye shall best preserve the interests of the nation: and according to the precept of the apostle, "Mark them which cause divisions amongst you, contrary to the doctrine that ye have re-

* Seneca.

ceived, and avoid them.* For I beseech you to consider, all you that are true protestants; do you not think that your religion is holy, and apostolical, and taught by Christ, and pleasing unto God? If you do not think so, why do you not leave it? but if you do think so, why are ye not zealous for it? Is not the government a part of it? It is that which immures, and adorns, and conducts all the rest, and is established in the thirty-sixth article of the church, in the public service-book, and in the book of consecration: it is, therefore, a part of our religion, and is not all of it worth preserving? If it be, then they which make schisms against this doctrine, by the rule of the apostle, are to be avoided. "Beatus qui prædicat verbum inauditum;" "Blessed is he that preaches a word that was never heard before;" so said the Spanish Jesuit: but Christ said otherwise: "No man having drunk old wine straight desires new, for he saith the old is better." And so it is in religion, "Quod primum verum," "truth is always first;" and since episcopacy hath been of so lasting an abode, of so long a blessing, since it hath ever combined with government, and hath been taught by that Spirit that hath so long dwelt in God's church, and hath now, according to the promise of Jesus, that says "The gates of hell shall not prevail against the church," been restored amongst us by a heap of miracles; and as it went away, so it returned again in the hand of monarchy, and in the bosom of our fundamental laws. Suffer no evil tongue to speak against this truth, which hath had so long a testimony from God, and from experience, and from the wisdom of so many ages, of all your ancestors and all your laws, lest ye be found to speak against God, and neglect the things that belong unto your peace, and get nothing by it but news and danger, and what other effects ye know not. But Leontinus, bishop of Antioch, stroked his old white beard, and said, "When this snow is dissolved, a great deal of dirty weather will follow:" meaning, that when the old religion should be questioned and discountenanced, the new religion would bring nothing but trouble and inquietness: and we have found it so by a sad experience.

4. Ye cannot obey God unless ye do justice: for this also is "better than sacrifice," said Solomon.† For Christ, who is

"the Sun of righteousness," is a Sun and Shield to them that do righteously. The Indian was not immured sufficiently by the Atlantic sea, nor the Bosphoran by the walls of ice, nor the Arabian by his meridian sun; the Christian justice of the Roman princes brake through all enclosures, and, by justice, set up Christ's standard, and gave to all the world a testimony how much could be done by prudence and valour, when they were conducted by the hands of justice. And now you will have a great trial of this part of your obedience to God.

For you are to give sentence in the causes of half a nation: and he had need be a wise and a good man, that divides the inheritance amongst brethren; that he may not be abused by contrary pretences,—nor biassed by the interest of friends,—nor transported with the unjust thoughts even of a just revenge,—nor allured by the opportunities of spoil,—nor turned aside by partiality in his own concerns,—nor blinded by gold, which puts out the eyes of wise men,—nor cozened by pretended zeal,—nor wearied with the difficulty of questions,—nor directed by a general measure in cases not measurable by it—nor borne down by prejudice,—nor abused by resolutions taken before the cause be heard,—nor overruled by national interests. For justice ought to be the simplest thing in the world, and is to be measured by nothing but by truth and by laws, and by the decrees of princes. But whatever you do, let not the pretence of a different religion make you think it lawful to oppress any man in his just rights: for opinions are not, but laws only, and "doing as we would be done to," are the measures of justice: and though justice does alike to all men, Jew and Christian, Lutheran and Calvinist; yet to do right to them that are of another opinion, is the way to win them; but if you, for conscience sake, do them wrong, they will hate you and your religion.

Lastly: As "obedience is better than sacrifice," so God also said, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice;" meaning, that mercy is the best obedience. "Perierat totum quod Deus fecerat, nisi misericordia subvenisset," said Chrysologus: "All the creatures both of heaven and earth would perish, if mercy did not relieve us all." Other good things, more or less, every man expects according to the portion of his fortune: "Ex clementia* omnes idem spe-

* Rom. xvi. 17.

† Prov. xxi. 3.

* Seneca.

rant;" but from mercy and clemency all the world alike do expect advantages. And which of us all stands here this day, that does not need God's pardon and the king's? Surely no man is so much pleased with his own innocence, as that he will be willing to quit his claim to mercy: and if we all need it, let us all show it.

Naturæ imperio gemimus, cum funus adultæ
Virginis occurrit, vel terra clauditur infans,
Et minor igne rogi ———

JUVEN.

"If you do but see a maiden carried to her grave a little before her intended marriage, or an infant die before the birth of reason, nature hath taught us to pay a tributary tear." Alas! your eyes will behold the ruin of many families, which though they sadly have deserved, yet mercy is not delighted with the spectacle; and therefore God places a watery cloud in the eye, that when the light of heaven shines upon it, it may produce a rainbow to be a sacrament, and a memorial, that God and the sons of God do not love to see a man perish. God never rejoices "in the death of him that dies;" and we also esteem it indecent to have music at a funeral. And as religion teaches us to pity a condemned criminal, so mercy intercedes for the most benign interpretation of the laws. You must, indeed, be as just as the laws; and you must be as merciful as your religion: and you have no way to tie these together, but to follow the pattern in the Mount; do as God does, who "in judgment remembers mercy."

To conclude: If every one in this honourable assembly would join together to promote Christian religion, in its true notion, that is, peace and holiness, the love of God and the love of our brother, Christianity in all its proper usefulness, and would not endure in the nation any thing against the laws of the holy Jesus; if they were all zealous for the doctrines of righteousness, and impatient of sin, in yourselves and in the people, it is not to be imagined what a happy nation we should be. But if ye divide into parties, and keep up useless differences of names or interests; if ye do not join in the bands of peace, that is, the king and the church, religion and the good of the nation, you can never hope to see a blessing to be the end of your labours. Remember the words of Solomon, "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a re-

proach to any people:"* but when righteousness is advanced in the hearts and lives of the nation, who shall dare to reprove your faith? who can find fault with your religion?

God, of his mercy, grant, that in all your consultations the word of God may be your measure, the Spirit of God may be your guide, and the glory of God may be your end. He, of his mercy, grant, that moderation may be your limit, and peace may be within your walls, as long as you are there, and in all the land for ever after. But remember, that since the honour and service of his majesty, and the peace and prosperity of the church, the perpetuity of our fundamental laws, public justice, and the honour of all legal authority, the advancement of trade, and the wealth of the nation, is your design;—remember, I pray, what warranty you have to expect all this; no less than the words of our blessed Saviour; but it is upon these terms: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, and all these things shall be added to you." Amen.

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Thursday, May 9.

ORDERED, That the Speaker do give the Reverend Father in God, the Lord Bishop of Down, the thanks of this house for his yesterday's pains; and that he desires him to print his Sermon.

JOHN KEATING, Cler. Parl.

11 die Maii, 1661.

ORDERED, That Sir Theophilus Jones, Knight, Marcus Trever, Esq., Sir William Domvile, Knight, his Majesty's attorney-general, and Richard Kirle, Esq., be and are hereby appointed a committee to return thanks unto the Lord Bishop of Down for his Sermon preached on Wednesday last unto the Lords Justices, and Lords Spiritual and Temporal, whereunto the House of Commons were invited; and that they desire his Lordship from this house to cause the same to be forthwith printed and published.

Ex. per PHILIP FERNELY,
Cler. Dom. Com.

Copia vera.

* Prov. xxiv. 34.

SERMON VI.

VIA INTELLIGENTLE: PREACHED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN, SHOWING BY WHAT MEANS THE SCHOLARS SHALL BECOME MOST LEARNED AND MOST USEFUL. PUBLISHED AT THEIR DESIRE.

Ad majorem Dei gloriam.

If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.—John vii. 17.

THE ancients, in their mythological learning, tell us, that when Jupiter espied the men of the world striving for Truth, and pulling her in pieces to secure her to themselves, he sent Mercury down amongst them; and he, with his usual arts, dressed Error up in the imagery of Truth, and thrust her into the crowd, and so left them to contend still: and though then, by contention, men were sure to get but little truth, yet they were as earnest as ever, and lost peace too, in their importune contentions for the very image of truth. And this, indeed, is no wonder; but when truth and peace are brought into the world together, and bound up in the same bundle of life; when we are taught a religion by the Prince of peace, who is the truth itself; to see men contending for this truth, to the breach of that peace; and when men fall out, to see that they should make Christianity their theme, that is one of the greatest wonders in the world. For Christianity is *ἡμερος καὶ φιλάθρωπος νομοθεσία* “a soft and gentle institution;” *ἰγρὸν καὶ μείλιχον ἦθος* it was brought into the world to soften the asperities of human nature, and to cure the barbarities of evil men, and the contentions of the passionate. The eagle, seeing her breast wounded, and espying the arrow that hurt her to be feathered, cried out, *Πτερόν με τὸν πτερωτὸν ὀλλίει*, “The feathered nation is destroyed by their own feathers;” that is, a Christian fighting and wrangling with a Christian; and, indeed, that is very sad; but wrangling about peace too, that peace itself should be the argument of a war, that is unnatural; and if it were not that there are many, who are “*homines multæ religionis, nullius penè pietatis*,” “men of much religion and little godliness,”—it would not be that there should be so many quarrels in and concerning that religion, which is wholly made up of truth and peace, and was sent amongst us to reconcile the hearts of men, when they were tempted to uncharitableness by any other unhappy argument. Disputation cures no vice, but

kindles a great many, and makes passion evaporate into sin: and though men esteem it learning, yet it is the most useless learning in the world. When Eudamidas, the son of Archidamus, heard old Xenocrates disputing about wisdom, he asked very soberly, “If the old man be yet disputing and inquiring concerning wisdom, what time will he have to make use of it?” Christianity is all for practice; and so much time as is spent in quarrels about it, is a diminution to its interest. Men inquire so much what it is, that they have but little time left to be Christians. I remember a saying of Erasmus, “that when he first read the New Testament, with fear and a good mind, with a purpose to understand it and obey it, he found it very useful and very pleasant; but when, afterwards, he fell on reading the vast differences of commentaries, then he understood it less than he did before, then he began not to understand it:” for, indeed, the truths of God are best dressed in the plain culture and simplicity of the Spirit; but the truths that men commonly teach, are like the reflections of a multiplying-glass; for one piece of good money, you shall have forty that are fantastical; and it is forty to one if your finger hit upon the right. Men have wearied themselves in the dark, having been amused with false fires; and, instead of going home, have wandered all night *ἐν ὁδοῖς ἀβάταις*, “in untrodden, unsafe, uneasy ways;” but have not found out what their soul desires. But, therefore, since we are so miserable, and are in error, and have wandered very far, we must do as wandering travellers used to do—go back just to that place from whence they wandered, and begin upon a new account. Let us go to the truth itself, to Christ; and he will tell us an easy way of ending all our quarrels; for we shall find Christianity to be the easiest and the hardest thing in the world: it is like a secret in arithmetic, infinitely hard till it be found out by a right operation, and then it is so plain, we wonder we did not understand it earlier.

Christ's way of finding out of truth, is by “doing the will of God.” We will try that by and by, if possibly we may find that easy and certain: in the mean time, let us consider what ways men have propounded to find out truth, and upon the foundation of that to establish peace in Christendom.

1. That there is but one true way, is agreed upon; and therefore almost every church of one denomination that lives un-

der government, propounds to you a system or collective body of articles, and tells you that is the true religion, and they are the church, and the peculiar people of God: like Brutus and Cassius, of whom one says, "Ubique ipsi essent, prætexebant esse rempublicam," "They supposed themselves were the commonwealth;" and these are the church, and out of this church they will hardly allow salvation: but of this there can be no end; for divide the church into twenty parts, and in what part soever your lot falls, you and your party are damned by the other nineteen; and men on all hands almost keep their own proselytes by affrighting them with the fearful sermons of damnation: but, in the mean time, here is no security to them, that are not able to judge for themselves, and no peace for them that are.

2. Others cast about to cure this, and conclude, that it must be done by submission to an infallible guide; this must do it or nothing; and this is the way of the church of Rome: follow but the pope and his clergy, and you are safe, at least as safe as their warrant can make you. Indeed, this were a very good way, if it were a way at all; but it is none; for this can never end our controversies: not only because the greatest controversies are about this infallible guide; but also because, 1. We cannot find, that there is upon earth, any such guide at all. 2. We do not find it necessary that there should. 3. We find that they who pretend to be this infallible guide, are themselves infinitely deceived. 4. That they do not believe themselves to be infallible, whatever they say to us; because they do not put an end to all their own questions that trouble them. 5. Because they have no peace, but what is constrained by force and government. 6. And lastly: Because if there were such a guide, we should fail of truth by many other causes: for, it may be, that guide would not do his duty; or we are fallible followers of this infallible leader; or we should not understand his meaning at all times; or we should be perverse at some times, or something as bad; because we all confess, that God is an infallible guide, and that some way or other he does teach us sufficiently, and yet it does come to pass, by our faults, that we are as far to seek for peace and truth as ever.

3. Some very wise men, finding this to fail, have undertaken to reconcile the differences of Christendom, by a way of modera-

tion. Thus they have projected to reconcile the papists and the Lutherans and the Calvinists, the remonstrants and contra-remonstrants, and project, that each side should abate of their asperities, and pare away something of their propositions, and join in common terms and phrases of accommodation,—each of them sparing something, and promising they shall have a great deal of peace for the exchange of a little of their opinion. This was the way of Cassander, Modrevius, Andreas Frisius, Erasmus, Spalato, Grotius, and, indeed, of Charles the Fifth, in part, but something more heartily of Ferdinand the Second. This device produced the conferences at Poissy, at Montpelier, at Ratisbon, at the Hague, at many places more: and what was the event of these? Their parties, when their delegates returned, either disclaimed their moderation,—or their respective princes had some other ends to serve,—or they permitted the meetings upon uncertain hopes, and a trial if any good might come; or, it may be, they were both in the wrong, and their mutual abatement was nothing but a mutual quitting of what they could not get, and the shaking hands of false friends; or, it may be, it was all of it nothing but hypocrisy and arts of craftiness, and, like Lucian's man, every one could be a man and a peddle when he pleased. And the council of Trent, though under another cover, made use of the artifice, but made the secret manifest and common: for at this day the Jesuits, in the questions "*de auxiliis Divinæ gratiæ*," have prevailed with the Dominicans to use their expressions, and yet they think they still keep the sentence of their own order. From hence can succeed nothing but folly and a fantastic peace: this is but the skinning of an old sore; it will break out upon all occasions.

4. Others, who understand things beyond the common rate, observing that many of our controversies and peevish wranglings are kept up by the ill stating of the question, endeavour to declare things wisely, and make the matter intelligible, and the words clear; hoping by this means to cut off all disputes. Indeed, this is a very good way, so far as it can go; and would prevail very much, if all men were wise, and would consent to those statings, and would not fall out upon the main inquiry, when it were well stated; but we find, by a sad experience, that few questions are well stated; and when they are, they are not consented

to; and when they are agreed on by both sides that they are well stated, it is nothing else but a drawing up the armies in battalia with great skill and discipline; the next thing they do is, they thrust their swords into one another's sides.

5. What remedy after all this? Some other good men have propounded one way yet; but that is a way of peace, rather than truth; and that is, that all opinions should be tolerated, and none persecuted, and then all the world will be at peace. Indeed, this relies upon a great reasonableness: not only because opinions cannot be forced, but because if men receive no hurt, it is to be hoped they will do none. But we find that this alone will not do it; for besides that all men are not so just as not to do any injury,—for some men begin the evil; besides this, I say, there are very many men amongst us, who are not content that you permit them; for they will not permit you, but “rule over your faith,” and say that their way is not only true, but necessary; and therefore the truth of God is at stake, and all indifference and moderation is carnal wisdom, and want of zeal for God; nay, more than so, they preach for toleration when themselves are under the rod, who, when they got the rod into their own hands, thought toleration itself to be intolerable. Thus do the papists, and thus the Calvinists; and, for their cruelty, they pretend charity. They will, indeed, force you to come in, but it is in true zeal for your soul; and if they do you violence, it is no more than if they pull your arm out of joint, when, to save you from drowning, they draw you out of a river; and if you complain, it is no more to be regarded than the outcries of children against their rulers, or sick men against physicians. But as to the thing itself, the truth is, it is better in contemplation than practice; for reckon all that is got by it when you come to handle it, and it can never satisfy for the infinite disorders happening in the government; the scandal to religion, the secret dangers to public societies, the growth of heresy, the nursing up of parties to a grandeur so considerable, as to be able, in their own time, to change the laws and the government. So that if the question be, whether mere opinions are to be persecuted,—it is certainly true, they ought not. But if it be considered how, by opinions, men rifle the affairs of kingdoms, it is also as certain, they ought not to be made public and permitted. And

what is now to be done? Must truth be for ever in the dark, and the world for ever be divided, and societies disturbed, and governments weakened, and our spirits debauched with error, and the uncertain opinions and the pedantry of talking men? Certainly there is a way to cure all this evil; and the wise Governor of all the world hath not been wanting in so necessary a matter as to lead us into all truth. But the way hath not yet been hit upon, and yet I have told you all the ways of man, and his imaginations, in order to truth and peace; and you see these will not do; we can find no rest for the soles of our feet, amidst all the waters of contention and disputations, and little artifices of divided schools. “Every man is a liar,” and his understanding is weak, and his propositions uncertain, and his contrivances imperfect, and neither truth nor peace does come from man. I know I am in an auditory of inquisitive persons, whose business is to study for truth, that they may find it for themselves, and teach it unto others. I am in a school of prophets and prophets' sons, who all ask Pilate's question, “What is truth?” You look for it in your books, and you tug hard for it in your disputations, and you derive it from the cisterns of the fathers, and you inquire after the old ways, and sometimes are taken with new appearances, and you rejoice in false lights, or are delighted with little umbrages and peep of day. But where is there a man, or a society of men, that can be at rest in his inquiry, and is sure he understands all the truths of God? Where is there a man, but the more he studies and inquires, still he discovers nothing so clearly as his own ignorance? This is a demonstration that we are not in the right way, that we do inquire wisely, that our method is not artificial. If men did fall upon the right way, it were impossible so many learned men should be engaged in contrary parties and opinions. We have examined all ways but one, all but God's way. Let us, having missed in all the other, try this; let us go to God for truth; for truth comes from God only, and his ways are plain, and his sayings are true, and his promises “Yea and Amen;” and if we miss the truth, it is because we will not find it; for certain it is, that all that truth which God hath made necessary, he hath also made legible and plain: and if we will open our eyes, we shall see the sun, and if “we will walk in the light, we shall rejoice in the

light;" only let us withdraw the curtains, let us remove the "impediments, and the sin that doth so easily beset us;" that is God's way. Every man must, in his station, do that portion of duty which God requires of him, and then he shall be taught of God all that is fit for him to learn. There is no other way for him but this. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and a good understanding have all they that do thereafter."* And so said David of himself, "I have more understanding than my teachers; because I keep thy commandments."† And this is the only way which Christ hath taught us. If you ask "What is truth?" you must not do as Pilate did—ask the question, and then go away from him that only can give you an answer; for as God is the author of truth, so he is the teacher of it; and the way to learn it is this of my text; for so saith our blessed Lord, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or no."

My text is simple as truth itself, but greatly comprehensive, and contains a truth that alone will enable you to understand all mysteries, and to expound all prophecies, and to interpret all scriptures, and to search into all secrets; all, I mean, which concern our happiness and our duty; and, it being an affirmative hypothetical, is plainly to be resolved into this proposition,—“The way to judge of religion is by doing of our duty; and theology is rather a Divine life than a Divine knowledge.” In heaven, indeed, we shall first see, and then love: but here on earth, we must first love, and love will open our eyes as well as our hearts; and we shall then see, and perceive, and understand.

In the handling of which proposition, I shall first represent to you, that—the certain causes of our errors are nothing but direct sin,—nothing makes us fools and ignorants but living vicious lives; and then I shall proceed to the direct demonstration of the article in question, that—holiness is the only way of truth and understanding.

1. No man understands the word of God, as it ought to be understood, unless he lays aside all affections to sin; of which because we have taken very little care, the product hath been, that we have had very little wisdom, and very little knowledge, in the ways of God. *Kaxia esti φθαρτικη της αληθειας*, said Aristotle; “Wickedness does corrupt a

man's reasoning;” it gives him false principles and evil measure of things; the sweet wine that Ulysses gave to the Cyclops, put his eye out; and a man that hath contracted evil affections, and made a league with sin, sees only by those measures. A covetous man understands nothing to be good that is not profitable; and a voluptuous man likes your reasoning well enough, if you discourse of “*bonum jucundum*,” the pleasures of the sense, the ravishments of lust, the noises and inadvertencies, the mirth and songs of merry company; but if you talk to him of the melancholy lectures of the cross, the content of resignation, the peace of meekness, and the joys of the Holy Ghost, and of rest in God, after your long discourse, and his great silence, he cries out, “What is the matter?” He knows not what you mean. Either you must fit his humour, or change your discourse.

I remember that Arrian tells of a gentleman that was banished from Rome, and in his sorrow visited the philosopher, and he heard him talk wisely, and believed him, and promised him to leave all the thoughts of Rome, and splendours of the court, and retire to the course of a severe philosophy; but before the good man's lectures were done, there came *πικραιδες απο του Καισαρος*, “letters from Cæsar,” to recall him home, to give him pardon, and promise him great employment. He presently grew weary of the good man's sermon, and wished he would make an end, thought his discourse was dull and flat; for his head and heart were full of another story and new principles; and by these measures he could hear only, and he could understand.

Every man understands by his affections more than by his reason: and when the wolf in the fable went to school to learn to spell, whatever letters were told him, he could never make any thing of them but “agnus;” he thought of nothing but his belly: and if a man be very hungry, you must give him meat, before you give him counsel. A man's mind must be like your proposition, before it can be entertained; for whatever you put into a man, it will smell of the vessel; it is a man's mind that gives the emphasis, and makes your argument to prevail.

And upon this account it is, that there are so many false doctrines in the only article of repentance. Men know they must repent, but the definition of repentance they take from the convenience of their own

* Psal. cxi. 10.

† Psal. cxix.

affairs: what they will not part with, that is not necessary to be parted with; and they will repent, but not restore: they will say, "Nollem factum," "they wish they had never done it;" but since it is done, you must give them leave to rejoice in their purchase: they will ask forgiveness of God; but they sooner forgive themselves, and suppose that God is of their mind: if you tie them to hard terms, your doctrine is not to be understood, or it is but one doctor's opinion,—and therefore they will fairly take their leave, and get them another teacher.

What makes these evil, these dangerous and desperate doctrines? Not the obscurity of the thing, but the cloud upon the heart; for say you what you will, he that hears must be the expounder, and we can never suppose but a man will give sentence in behalf of what he passionately loves. And so it comes to pass, that, as Rabbi Moses observed, as God for the greatest sin imposed the least oblation, as a she-goat for the sin of idolatry; for a woman accused of adultery, a barley cake: so do most men; they think to expiate the worst of their sins with a trifling, with a pretended, little, insignificant repentance. God, indeed, did so, that the cheapness of the oblation might teach them to hope for pardon, not from the ceremony, but from a severe internal repentance: but men take any argument to lessen their pleasures or their estates,—and that repentance may be nothing but a word,—and mortification signify nothing against their repentance, that they may not lessen their pleasures, but be a term of art only, fitted for the schools or for the pulpit,—but nothing relative to practice, or to the extermination of their sin. So that it is no wonder we understand so little of religion: it is because we are in love with that which destroys it; and as a man does not care to hear what does not please him, so neither does he believe it; he cannot, he will not understand it.

And the same is the case in the matter of pride; the church hath extremely suffered by it in many ages. Arius missed a bishopric, and therefore turned heretic; *εἰς ἄρασσε τὴν ἐκκλησίαν*, saith the story; "he disturbed and shook the church;" for he did not understand this truth,—that the peace of the church was better than the satisfaction of his person, or the promoting his foolish opinion. And do not we see and feel, that at this very day, the pride of men makes it seem impossible for many persons to obey

their superiors? and they do not see what they can read every day, that it is a sin "to speak evil of dignities."

A man would think it a very easy thing to understand the thirteenth chapter to the Romans, "Whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God:" and yet we know a generation of men to whom these words were so obscure, that they thought it lawful to fight against their king. A man would think it easy to believe, that those who were "in the gainsaying of Korah," who rose up against the high priest, were in a very sad condition: and yet there are too many amongst us, who are in the gainsaying of Korah, and think they do very well; that they are the godly party, and the good people of God? Why? What is the matter? In the world there can be nothing plainer than these words, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers;" and that you need not make a scruple who are these higher powers, it is as plainly said, "There is no power but of God;" all that are set over you by the laws of your nation, these "are over you in the Lord:" and yet men will not understand these plain things; they deny to do their notorious duty, and yet believe they are in the right; and if they sometimes obey "for wrath," they oftener disobey for "conscience sake." Where is the fault? The words are plain, the duty is certain, the book lies open; but, alas! "it is sealed within," that is, "men have eyes and will not see, ears and will not hear." But the wonder is the less; for we know when God said to Jonah, "Doest thou well to be angry? he answered God to his face, "I do well to be angry even unto the death." Let God declare his mind never so plainly, if men will not lay aside the evil principle that is within, their open love to their secret sin, they may kill an apostle, and yet be so ignorant as to "think they do God good service;" they may disturb kingdoms, and break the peace of a well-ordered church, and rise up against their fathers, and be cruel to their brethren, and stir up the people to sedition; and all this with a cold stomach and a hot liver, with a hard heart and a tender conscience, with humble carriage and a proud spirit. For thus men hate repentance, because they scorn to confess an error; they will not return to peace and truth, because they fear to lose the good opinion of the people, whom themselves have cozened; they are afraid to be

good, lest they should confess they have formerly done amiss: and he,—that observes how much evil is done, and how many heresies are risen, and how much obstinacy and unreasonable perseverance in folly dwells in the world upon the stock of pride,—may easily conclude, that no learning is sufficient to make a proud man understand the truth of God, unless he first learn to be humble. But “*Obedite et intelligetis,*” saith the prophet; “*Obey,*” and be humble, leave the foolish affections of sin, “and then ye shall understand.” That is the first particular: all remaining affections to sin hinder the learning and understanding of the things of God.

2. He that means to understand the will of God and the truth of religion, must lay aside all inordinate affections to the world. St. Paul complained that there was at “that day a veil upon the hearts of the Jews, in the reading of the Old Testament;”^{*} they looked for a temporal prince to be their Messias, and their affections and hopes dwelt in secular advantages; and so long as that veil was there, they could not see, and they would not accept the poor despised Jesus.

For the things of the world, besides that they entangle one another, and make much business, and spend much time, they also take up the attentions of a man’s mind, and spend his faculties, and make them trifling and secular with the very handling and conversation. And, therefore, the Pythagoreans, taught their disciples *χωρισμόν ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος, εἰς τὸ καλῶς φιλοσοφεῖν*, “a separation from the things of the body, if they would purely find out truth and the excellencies of wisdom.” Had not he lost his labour, that would have discoursed wisely to Apicius, and told him of the books of fate and the secrets of the other world, the abstractions of the soul, and its brisker immortality, that saints and angels eat not, and that the spirit of a man lives for ever upon wisdom, and holiness, and contemplation? The fat glutton would have stared awhile upon the preacher, and then have fallen asleep. But if you had discoursed well and knowingly of a lamprey, a large mullet, or a boar, “*animal propter convivia natum,*” and have sent him a cook from Asia to make new sauces, he would have attended carefully, and taken in your discourses greedily. And so it is in the questions and secrets of Christianity: which made St. Paul, when he in-

tended to convert Felix, discourse first with him about “temperance, righteousness, and judgment to come.” He began in the right point; he knew it was to no purpose to preach Jesus Christ crucified to an imperate person, to a usurper of other men’s rights, to one whose soul dwelt in the world, and cared not for the sentence of the last day. The philosophers began their wisdom with the meditation of death, and St. Paul his with the discourse of the day of judgment: to take the heart off from this world and the amabilities of it, which dishonour and baffle the understanding, and made Solomon himself become a child, and fooled into idolatry, by the prettiness of a talking woman. Men, now-a-days, love not a religion that will cost them dear. If your doctrine calls upon men to part with any considerable part of their estates, you must pardon them if they cannot believe you; they understand it not. I shall give you one great instance of it.

When we consider the infinite unreasonableness that is in the popish religion, how against common sense their doctrine of transubstantiation is, how against the common experience of human nature is the doctrine of the pope’s infallibility, how against Scripture is the doctrine of indulgences and purgatory; we may well think it a wonder, that no more men are persuaded to leave such unlearned follies. But then, on the other side, the wonder will cease, if we mark how many temporal ends are served by these doctrines. If you destroy the doctrine of purgatory and indulgences, you take away the priest’s income, and make the see apostolic to be poor; if you deny the pope’s infallibility, you will despise his authority, and examine his propositions, and discover his failings, and put him to answer hard arguments, and lessen his power: and, indeed, when we run through all the propositions of difference between them and us, and see that, in every one of them, they serve an end of money or of power; it will be very visible that the way to confute them is not by learned disputations,—for we see they have been too long without effect, and without prosperity: the men must be cured of their affections to the world, “*ut nudi nudum sequantur crucifixum,*” “that with naked and divested affections they might follow the naked crucified Jesus;” and then they would soon learn the truths of God, which, till then, will be impossible to be apprehended. ^{Es}

* 2 Cor. iii. 14.

προσποιεῖται ἐξηγήσεως τὰ ἑαυτῶν παρεισάγουσιν, "Men," as St. Basil says, "when they expound Scripture, always bring in something of themselves:" but till there be, as one said, ἀνάσσει ἐκ τοῦ σπηλαίου, "a rising out" from their own seats, until they go out "from their dark dungeons," they can never see the light of heaven. And how many men are there amongst us, who are, therefore, enemies to the religion, because it seems to be against their profit? The argument of Demetrius is unanswerable: "By this craft they get their livings:" leave them in their livings, and they will let your religion alone; if not, they think they have reason to speak against it. When men's souls are possessed with the world, their souls cannot be invested with holy truths. Χρὴ ἀπὸ τούτων αὐτὴν ψυχὴν ψυχουῖσθαι, as St. Isidore said: "the soul must be" informed, "ensouled," or animated with the propositions that you put in; or you shall never do any good, or get disciples to Christ. Now because a man cannot serve two masters; because he cannot vigorously attend two objects: because there can be but one soul in any living creature; if the world have got possession, talk no more of your questions, shut your Bibles, and read no more of the words of God to them, for they cannot tell of "the doctrine, whether it be of God, or of the world." That is the second particular: worldly affections hinder true understandings in religion.

3. No man, how learned soever, can understand the word of God, or be at peace in the questions of religion, unless he be a master over his passions:

Tu quoque si vis lumine claro
Cernere verum, gaudia pelle,
Pelle timorem; nubila mens est
Vinctaque frænis, hæc ubi regnant:

said the wise Boethius; a man must first learn himself before he can learn God. "Tua te fallit imago;" nothing deceives a man so soon as a man's self; when a man is (that I may use Plato's expression) συμπεφυρμένος τῇ γενέσει, "mingled with his nature," and his congenial infirmities of anger and desire, he can never have any thing but ἀμυδρὸν δόξαν, "a knowledge partly moral and partly natural:" his whole life is but imagination; his knowledge is inclination and opinion; he judges of heavenly things by the measures of his fears and his desires, and his reason is half of it sense, and determinable by the principles of sense. Εἶγε ὅτι φιλοσοφείεις ἐν πάθει, then "a man learns well, when

he is a philosopher in his passions." Passionate men are to be taught the first elements of religion; and let men pretend to as much learning as they please, they must begin again at Christ's cross; they must learn true mortification and crucifixion of their anger and desires, before they can be good scholars in Christ's school,—or be admitted into the more secret inquiries of religion,—or profit in spiritual understanding. It was an excellent proverb of the Jews, "In passionibus Spiritus Sanctus non habitat," "The Holy Ghost never dwells in the house of passion." Truth enters into the heart of man, when it is empty, and clean, and still; but when the mind is shaken with passion as with a storm, you can never hear the "voice of the charmer, though he charm very wisely;" and you will very hardly sheath a sword, when it is held by a loose and a paralytic arm. He that means to learn the secrets of God's wisdom, must be, as Plato says, τὴν λογικὴν ζωὴν οὔσιωμένος, "his soul must be constabuntiated with reason," not invested with passion: to him that is otherwise, things are but in the dark, his notion is obscure, and his sight troubled; and, therefore, though we often meet with passionate fools, yet we seldom or never hear of a very passionate wise man.

I have now done with the first part of my undertaking, and proved to you that our evil life is the cause of our controversies and ignorances in religion and of the things of God. You see what hinders us from becoming good divines. But all this while, we are but in the preparation to the mysteries of godliness: when we have thrown off all affections to sin, when we have stripped ourselves from all fond adherences to the things of the world, and have broken the chains and dominion of our passions; then we may say with David, "Ecce paratum est cor meum, Deus;" "My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready:" then we may say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth:" but we are not yet instructed. It remains, therefore, that we inquire what is that immediate principle or means, by which we shall certainly and infallibly be led into all truth, and be taught the mind of God, and understand all his secrets; and this is worth our knowledge. I cannot say that this will end your labours, and put a period to your studies, and make your learning easy; it may possibly increase your labour, but it will make it profitable; it will not end

* Nazianz. ad Philagrium.

your studies, but it will direct them; it will not make human learning easy, but it will make it "wise unto salvation," and conduct it into true notices and ways of wisdom.

I am now to describe to you the right way of knowledge: "Qui facit voluntatem Patris mei," saith Christ; that is the way; do God's will, and you shall understand God's word. And it was an excellent saying of St. Peter, "Add to your faith virtue,"* &c. "If these things be in you and abound, ye shall not be unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." For in this case, it is not enough that our hinderances of knowledge are removed; for that is but the opening of the covering of the book of God; but when it is opened, it is written with a hand that every eye cannot read. Though the windows of the east be open, yet every eye cannot behold the glories of the sun: 'Οφθαλμός μή ἡλιουδής γινόμενος ἥλιον οὐ βλέπει, saith Plotinus: "The eye that is not made solar, cannot see the sun;"—the eye must be fitted to the splendour; and it is not the wit of the man, but the spirit of the man; not so much his head as his heart, that learns the Divine philosophy.

1. Now, in this inquiry, I must take one thing for a "præcognitum," that every good man is θεοδιδάκτος, he is "taught of God:" and, indeed, unless he teach us, we shall make but ill scholars ourselves, and worse guides to others. "Nemo potest Deum scire, nisi à Deo doceatur," said St. Irenæus.† If God teaches us, then all is well; but if we do not learn wisdom at his feet, from whence should we have it? it can come from no other spring. And, therefore, it naturally follows, that by how much nearer we are to God, by so much better we are like to be instructed.

But this being supposed, as being most evident, we can easily proceed, by wonderful degrees and steps of progression, in the economy of this divine philosophy: For,

2. There is, in every righteous man, a new vital principle; the Spirit of grace is the Spirit of wisdom, and teaches us by secret inspirations, by proper arguments, by actual persuasions, by personal applications, by effects and energies: and as the soul of a man is the cause of all his vital operations, so is the Spirit of God the life of that life, and the cause of all actions and productions spiritual: and the consequence of this is what St. John tells us of, "Ye have received the unction from above, and that

anointing teacheth you all things:"* *All things* of some one kind; that is, certainly,—all things that pertain to life and godliness;—all that by which a man is wise and happy. We see this by common experience. Unless the soul have a new life put into it, unless there be a vital principle within, unless the Spirit of life be the informer of the spirit of the man,—the word of God will be as dead in the operation, as the body in its powers and possibilities. "Sol et homo generant hominem," saith our philosophy; "A man alone does not beget a man, but a man and the sun;" for without the influence of the celestial bodies, all natural actions are ineffective: and so it is in the operations of the soul.

Which principle divers fanatics, both among us and in the church of Rome, misunderstanding, look for new revelations, and expect to be conducted by ecstasy, and will not pray but in a transfiguration, and live upon raptures and extravagant expectations, and separate themselves from the conversation of men, by affections, by new measures and singularities, and destroy order, and despise government, and live upon illiterate phantasms and ignorant discourses. These men do ψεύδονται τὸ ἅγιον Πνεῦμα, "they belie the Holy Ghost:" for the Spirit of God makes men wise: it is an evil spirit that makes them fools. The Spirit of God makes us "wise unto salvation;" it does not spend its holy influences in disguises and convulsions of the understanding: God's Spirit does not destroy reason, but heightens it; he never disorders the beauties of government, but is a God of order; it is the Spirit of humility, and teaches no pride; he is to be found in churches and pulpits, upon altars, and in the doctors' chairs; not in conventicles, and mutinous corners of a house: he goes in company with his own ordinances, and makes progressions by the measures of life; his infusions are just as our acquisitions, and his graces pursue the methods of nature: that which was imperfect, he leads on to perfection, and that which was weak, he makes strong: he opens the heart, not to receive murmurs, or to attend to secret whispers, but to hear the word of God; and then he opens the heart, and creates a new one; and without this new creation, this new principle of life, we may hear the word of God, but we can never understand it; we hear the sound, but are never the better; unless there be in our hearts a secret

* 2 Pet. i. 5.

† Lib. vi. cap. 13.

* 1 John ii. 27.

conviction by the Spirit of God, the gospel itself is a dead letter, and worketh not in us the light and righteousness of God.

Do not we see this by daily experience? Even those things which a good man and an evil man know, they do not know them both alike. A wicked man does know that good is lovely, and sin is of an evil and destructive nature; and when he is reproved, he is convinced; and when he is observed, he is ashamed; and when he has done, he is unsatisfied; and when he pursues his sin, he does it in the dark: tell him he shall die, and he sighs deeply, but he knows it as well as you: proceed, and say, that after death comes judgment, and the poor man believes and trembles; he knows that God is angry with him; and if you tell him, that for aught he knows he may be in hell to-morrow, he knows that it is an intolerable truth, but it is also undeniable: and yet, after all this, he runs to commit his sin with as certain an event and resolution as if he knew no argument against it: these notices of things terrible and true pass through his understanding, as an eagle through the air; as long as her flight lasted, the air was shaken, but there remains no path behind her.

Now, since, at the same time, we see other persons, not so learned, it may be, not so much versed in Scripture,—yet they say a thing is good and lay hold of it; they believe glorious things of heaven, and they live accordingly, as men that believe themselves; half a word is enough to make them understand; a nod is a sufficient reproof; the crowing of a cock, the singing of a lark, the dawning of the day, and the washing their hands, are to them competent memorials of religion, and warnings of their duty. What is the reason of this difference? They both read the Scriptures, they read and hear the same sermons, they have capable understandings, they both believe what they hear and what they read, and yet the event is vastly different. The reason is that which I am now speaking of; the one understands by one principle, the other by another; the one understands by nature, and the other by grace; the one by human learning, and the other by Divine; the one reads the Scriptures without, and the other within; the one understands as a son of man, the other as a son of God; the one perceives by the proportions of the world, and the other by the measures of the Spirit; the one understands by reason, and the other by love;

and, therefore, he does not only understand the sermons of the Spirit, and perceives their meaning, but he pierces deeper, and knows the meaning of that meaning; that is, the secret of the Spirit, that which is spiritually discerned, that which gives life to the proposition, and activity to the soul. And the reason is, because he hath a divine principle within him, and a new understanding; that is, plainly, he hath love, and that is more than knowledge; as was rarely well observed by St. Paul, “Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth;” that is, charity makes the best scholars. No sermons can edify you, no Scriptures can build you up a holy building to God, unless the love of God be in your hearts, and “purify your souls from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit.”

But so it is in the regions of stars, where a vast body of fire is so divided by eccentric motions, that it looks as if Nature had parted them into orbs and round shells of plain and purest materials: but where the cause is simple, and the matter without variety, the motions must be uniform; and in heaven we should either espy no motion, or no variety. But God, who designed the heavens to be the causes of all changes and motions here below, hath placed his angels in their houses of light, and given to every one of his appointed officers a portion of the fiery matter to circumagate and roll; and now the wonder ceases: for if it be inquired why this part of the fire runs eastward, and the other to the south, they being both indifferent to either,—it is because an angel of God sits in the centre, and makes the same matter turn, not by the bent of its own mobility and inclination, but in order to the needs of man, and the great purposes of God: and so it is in the understandings of men; when they all receive the same notions, and are taught by the same master, and give full consent to all the propositions, and can, of themselves, have nothing to distinguish them in the events, it is because God has sent his Divine Spirit, and kindles a new fire, and creates a braver capacity, and applies the actives to the passives, and blesses their operation; for there is, in the heart of man, such a dead sea, and an indisposition to holy flames, like as in the cold rivers of the north, so as the fires will not burn them, and the sun itself will never warm them, till God’s Holy Spirit does, from the temple of the New Jerusalem, bring a holy flame, and make it shine and burn.

“The natural man,” saith the holy apostle, “cannot perceive the things of the Spirit; they are foolishness unto him; for they are spiritually discerned:” * for he that discourses of things by the measures of sense, thinks nothing good but that which is delicious to the palate, or pleases the brutish part of man; and therefore, while he estimates the secrets of religion by such measures, they must needs seem as insipid as cork, or the unconditid mushroom; for they have nothing at all of that in their constitution. A voluptuous person is like the dogs of Sicily, so filled with the deliciousness of plants that grow in every furrow and hedge, that they can never keep the scent of their game. Ἀδύνατον ἀνάμικται ἴδαρι πῦρ· οὕτως ὁ μαιε τρυφήν καὶ καράνξιν, said St. Chrysostom: “The fire and water can never mingle; so neither can sensuality and the watchfulness and wise discerning of the spirit.”—“Pilato interroganti de veritate, Christus non respondit;” “When the wicked governor asked of Christ concerning truth, Christ gave him no answer.” He was not fit to hear it.

He, therefore, who so understands the words of God, that he not only believes, but loves the proposition; he who consents with all his heart, and, being convinced of the truth, does also apprehend the necessity, and obeys the precept, and delights in the discovery, and lays his hand upon his heart, and reduces the notices of things to the practice of duty; he who dares trust his proposition, and drives it on to the utmost issue, resolving to go after it whithersoever it can invite him; this man walks in the Spirit; at least thus far he is gone towards it; his understanding is brought “in obsequium Christi,” “into the obedience of Christ.” This is a “loving God with all our mind;” and whatever goes less than this, is but memory, and not understanding; or else such notice of things, by which a man is neither the wiser nor the better.

3. Sometimes God gives to his choicest, his most elect and precious servants, a knowledge even of secret things, which he communicates not to others. We find it greatly remarked in the case of Abraham, “And the Lord said, shall I hide from Abraham that thing that I do?” † Why not from Abraham?—God tells us: “For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judg-

ment.” * And, though this be irregular and infrequent, yet it is a reward of their piety, and the proper increase also of the spiritual man. We find this spoken by God to Daniel, and promised to be the lot of the righteous man in the days of the Messias: † “Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly:”—and what then?—“None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.” Where, besides that the wise man and the wicked are opposed, plainly signifying that the wicked man is a fool and an ignorant; it is plainly said, that “None of the wicked shall understand” the wisdom and mysteriousness of the kingdom of the Messias.

4. A good life is the best way to understand wisdom and religion, because, by the experiences and relishes of religion, there is conveyed to them such a sweetness, to which all wicked men are strangers: there is in the things of God, to them which practise them, a deliciousness that makes us love them, and that love admits us into God’s cabinet, and strangely clarifies the understanding, by the purification of the heart. For when our reason is raised up by the Spirit of Christ, it is turned quickly into experience; when our faith relies upon the principles of Christ, it is changed into vision; and so long as we know God only in the ways of man, by contentious learning, by arguing and dispute,—we see nothing but the shadow of him; and in that shadow we meet with many dark appearances, little certainty, and much conjecture: but when we know him λόγῳ ἀποφαντικῶ γαλήνην νοσηρῶν, with the eyes of holiness, and the intuition of gracious experiences, with a quiet spirit and the peace of enjoyment; then we shall hear what we never heard, and see what our eyes never saw; then the mysteries of godliness shall be opened unto us, and clear as the windows of the morning: and this is really well expressed by the apostle, “If we stand up from the dead, and wake from sleep, then Christ shall give us light.” ‡

For although the Scriptures themselves are written by the Spirit of God, yet they are written within and without; and besides the light that shines upon the face of them, unless there be a light shining within our hearts, unfolding the leaves, and interpreting the mysterious sense of the Spirit, convincing our consciences and preaching to our hearts, to look for Christ in the leaves of the gospel, is to “look for the living amongst the

* 1 Cor. ii. 14.

† Gen. xviii. 17.

* Ver. 19.

† Dan. xii. 10.

‡ Eph. v. 14.

dead." There is a life in them, but that life is, according to St. Paul's expression, "hid with Christ in God:" and, unless the Spirit of God be the "promo-condus," we shall never draw it forth.

Human learning brings excellent ministries towards this; it is admirably useful for the reproof of heresies, for the detection of fallacies, for the letter of the Scripture, for collateral testimonies, for exterior advantages; but there is something beyond this, that human learning, without the addition of Divine, can never reach. Moses was learned in all the learning of the Egyptians; and the holy men of God contemplated the glories of God in the admirable order, motion, and influences of the heavens; but besides all this, they were taught of God something far beyond these prettinesses. Pythagoras read Moses' books, and so did Plato; and yet they became not proselytes of the religion, though they were learned scholars of such a master. The reason is, because that which they drew forth from thence, was not the life and secret of it.

Tradidit arcano quodcumque volumine Moses.
JUV.

There is a secret in these books, which few men, none but the godly, did understand; and though much of this secret is made manifest in the gospel, yet even here, also there is a letter, and there is a spirit; still there is a reserve for God's secret ones, even all those deep mysteries which the Old Testament covered in figures, and stories, and names, and prophecies, and which Christ hath, and by his Spirit will yet reveal more plainly to all that will understand them by their proper measures. For, although the gospel is infinitely more legible and plain than the obscurer leaves of the law, yet there is a seal upon them also; "which seal no man shall open, but he that is worthy." We may understand something of it by the three children of the captivity; they were all skilled in all the wisdom of the Chaldees, and so was Daniel: but there was something beyond that in him; "the wisdom of the most high God was in him;" and that taught him a learning beyond his learning.

In all Scripture there is a spiritual sense, a spiritual cabala, which, as it tends directly to holiness, so it is best and truest understood by the sons of the Spirit, who love God, and therefore know him. Γνώσις ἐκαστων δε' ὁμοίωσιν γίνεται, "Every thing is best known by its own similitudes and analogies."

But I must take some other time to speak fully of these things: I have but one thing more to say, and then I shall make my applications of this doctrine, and so conclude.

5. Lastly: there is a sort of God's dear servants who walk in perfectness, who "perfect holiness in the fear of God;" and they have a degree of clarity and Divine knowledge more than we can discourse of, and more certain than the demonstrations of geometry, brighter than the sun, and indeficient as the light of heaven. This is called by the apostle the ἀπαύγασμα τοῦ Θεοῦ. Christ is this "brightness of God," manifested in the hearts of his dearest servants.

Ἄλλ' ἐγὼ ἐς καθαρῶν μερόπων φρένα πυρσὸν ἀνάπτω
Εὐμαθίης.

But I shall say no more of this at this time, for this is to be felt, and not to be talked of; and they that never touched it with their finger, may secretly, perhaps, laugh at it in their heart, and be never the wiser. All that I shall now say of it is, that a good man is united unto God, κίτρον κίτρον συναψας, as a flame touches a flame, and combines into splendour and to glory: so is the spirit of a man united unto Christ by the Spirit of God. These are the friends of God, and they best know God's mind, and they only that are so, know how much such men do know. They have a special unction from above: so that now you are come to the top of all; this is the highest round of the ladder, and the angels stand upon it: they dwell in love and contemplation, they worship and obey, but dispute not: and our quarrels and impertinent wranglings about religion are nothing else but the want of the measures of this state. Our light is like a candle; every wind of vain doctrine blows it out, or spends the wax, and makes the light tremulous; but the lights of heaven are fixed and bright, and shine for ever.

But that we may speak not only things mysterious, but things intelligible; how does it come to pass, by what means and what economy is it effected, that a holy life is the best determination of all questions, and the surest way of knowledge? Is it to be supposed, that a godly man is better enabled to determine the questions of purgatory or transubstantiation? is the gift of chastity the best way to reconcile Thomas and Scotus? and is a temperate man always

a better scholar than a drunkard? To this I answer, that in all things in which true wisdom consists, holiness, which is the best wisdom, is the surest way of understanding them. And this,

1. Is effected by holiness as a proper and natural instrument: for naturally every thing is best discerned by its proper light and congenial instrument.

Γαῖη μὲν γὰρ γαῖαν δῶπαμεν, ὕδατι δ' ἴδωρ.

For as the eye sees visible objects, and the understanding perceives the intellectual; so does the Spirit the things of the Spirit. "The natural man," saith St. Paul, "knows not the things of God, for they are spiritually discerned:" that is, they are discovered by a proper light, and concerning these things an unsanctified man discourses pitifully, with an imperfect idea, as a blind man does of light and colours, which he never saw.

A good man, though unlearned in secular notices, is like the windows of the temple, narrow without and broad within: he sees not so much of what profits not abroad, but whatsoever is within, and concerns religion and the glorifications of God, that he sees with a broad inspection: but all human learning, without God, is but blindness and ignorant folly.

But when it is δικαιοσύνη βεβαμμένη εἰς βάθος τῆς ἀληθείας, "righteousness dipped in the wells of truth;" it is like an eye of gold in a rich garment, or like the light of heaven, it shows itself by its own splendour. What learning is it to discourse of the philosophy of the sacrament, if you do not feel the virtue of it? and the man that can with eloquence and subtilty discourse of the instrumental efficacy of baptismal waters, talks ignorantly in respect of him who hath "the answer of a good conscience" within, and is cleansed by the purifications of the Spirit. If the question concern any thing that can perfect a man and make him happy, all that is the proper knowledge and notice of the good man. How can a wicked man understand the purities of the heart? and how can an evil and unworthy communicant tell what it is to have received Christ by faith, to dwell with him, to be united to him, to receive him in his heart? The good man only understands that: the one sees the colour, and the other feels the substance; the one discourses of the sacrament, and the other receives Christ; the one discourses for or against transubstantiation, but the good man feels himself to be changed,

and so joined to Christ, that he only understands the true sense of transubstantiation, while he becomes to Christ bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh, and of the same spirit with his Lord.

We talk much of reformation, and (blessed be God) once we have felt the good of it; but of late we have smarted under the name and pretension: the woman that lost her groat, "everrit domum," not "evertit;" "she swept the house, she did not turn the house out of doors." That was but an ill reformation, that untiled the roof and broke the walls, and was digging down the foundation.

Now among all the pretensions of reformation, who can tell better what is, and what is not, true reformation, than he that is truly reformed himself? He knows what pleases God, and can best tell by what instruments he is reconciled. "The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom; and the lips of the righteous know what is acceptable," saith Solomon.* He cannot be cozened by names of things, and feels that reformation to be imposture that is sacrilegious: himself is humble and obedient, and therefore knows that is not truth that persuades to schism and disobedience: and most of the questions of Christendom are such which either are good for nothing, and therefore to be laid aside; or if they be complicated with action, and are ministries of practice, no man can judge them so well as the spiritual man. That which best pleases God, that which does good to our neighbour, that which teaches sobriety, that which combines with government, that which speaks honour of God, and does him honour,—that only is truth. Holiness, therefore, is a proper and natural instrument of Divine knowledge, and must needs be the best way of instruction in the questions of Christendom, because in the most of them, a duty is complicated with the proposition.

No man that intends to live holily, can ever suffer any pretences of religion to be made to teach him to fight against his king. And when the men of Geneva turned their bishop out of doors, they might easily have considered, that the same person was their prince too; and that must needs be a strange religion, that rose up against Moses and Aaron at the same time: but that hath been the method ever since. There was no

* Prov. x. 31, 32.

church till then ever governed without an apostle or a bishop; and since then, they who go from their bishop, have said very often to their king too, "Nolumus hunc regnare:" and when we see men pretending religion, and yet refuse to own the king's supremacy, they may, upon the stock of holiness, easily reprove their own folly, by considering that such recusancy does introduce into our churches the very worst, the most intolerable parts of popery: for perfect submission to kings is the glory of the protestant cause: and really the reprobable doctrines of the church of Rome are by nothing so much confuted, as that they destroy good life by consequent and evident deduction; as by an induction of particulars were easy to make apparent, if this were the proper season for it.

2. Holiness is not only an advantage to the learning all wisdom and holiness, but for the discerning that which is wise and holy from what is trifling, and useless, and contentious; and to one of these heads all questions will return: and therefore, in all, from holiness we have the best instructions. And this brings me to the next particle of the general consideration. For that which we are taught by the Holy Spirit of God, this new nature, this vital principle within us, it is that which is worth our learning; not vain and empty, idle and insignificant notions, in which when you have laboured till your eyes are fixed in their orbs, and your flesh unfixed from its bones, you are no better and no wiser. If the Spirit of God be your teacher, he will teach you such truths as will make you know and love God, and become like to him, and enjoy him for ever, by passing from similitude to union and eternal fruition. But what are you the better, if any man should pretend to teach you whether every angel makes a species? and what is the individuation of the soul in the state of separation? what are you the wiser, if you should study and find out what place Adam should for ever have lived in, if he had not fallen? and what is any man the more learned, if he hears the disputes, whether Adam should have multiplied children in the state of innocence, and what would have been the event of things, if one child had been born before his father's sin?

Too many scholars have lived upon air and empty notions for many ages past, and troubled themselves with tying and untying knots, like hypochondriacs in a fit of melan-

choly, thinking of nothing, and troubling themselves with nothing, and falling out about nothings, and being very wise and very learned in things that are not, and work not, and were never planted in paradise by the finger of God. Men's notions are too often like the mules, begotten by equivocal and unnatural generations; but they make no species; they are begotten, but they can beget nothing; they are the effects of long study, but they can do no good when they are produced; they are not that which Solomon calls "viam intelligentiæ," "the way of understanding." If the Spirit of God be our teacher, we shall learn to avoid evil, and to do good, to be wise and to be holy, to be profitable and careful; and they that walk in this way, shall find more peace in their consciences, more skill in the Scriptures, more satisfaction in their doubts, than can be obtained by all the polemical and impertinent disputations of the world. And if the Holy Spirit can teach us how vain a thing it is to do foolish things, he also will teach us how vain a thing it is to trouble the world with foolish questions, to disturb the church for interest or pride, to resist government in things indifferent, to spend the people's zeal in things unprofitable, to make religion to consist in out-sides, and opposition to circumstances, and trifling regards. No, no; the man that is wise, he that is conducted by the Spirit of God,—knows better in what Christ's kingdom does consist, than to throw away his time and interest, and peace and safety—for what? for religion? no: for the body of religion? not so much: for the garment of the body of religion? no, not for so much; but for the fringes of the garment of the body of religion; for such, and no better, are the disputes that trouble our discontented brethren; they are things, or rather circumstances and manners of things, in which the soul and spirit is not at all concerned.

3. Holiness of life is the best way of finding out truth and understanding; not only as a natural medium, nor only as a prudent medium, but as a means by way of Divine blessing. "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."* Here we have a promise for it; and upon that we may rely.

* John xiv. 21.

The old man that confuted the Arian priest by a plain recital of his creed, found a mighty power of God effecting his own work by a strange manner, and by a very plain instrument; it wrought a Divine blessing just as sacraments use to do; and this lightening sometimes comes in a strange manner, as a peculiar blessing to good men. For God kept the secrets of his kingdom from the wise heathens and the learned Jews, revealing them to babes; not because they had less learning, but because they had more love; they were children and babes in malice; they loved Christ, and so he became to them a light and a glory. St. Paul had more learning than they all; and Moses was instructed in all the learning of the Egyptians; yet because he was the meekest man upon earth, he was also the wisest; and to his human learning, in which he was excellent, he had a Divine light and excellent wisdom superadded to him, by way of spiritual blessings. And St. Paul, though he went very far to the knowledge of many great and excellent truths by the force of human learning, yet he was far short of perfective truth and true wisdom, till he learned a new lesson in a new school, at the feet of one greater than his Gamaliel: his learning grew much greater, his notions brighter, his skill deeper,—by the love of Christ, and his desires, his passionate desires after Jesus.

The force and use of human learning, and of this Divine learning I am now speaking of, are both well expressed by the prophet Isaiah; “And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed. And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee; and he saith, I am not learned.”* He that is no learned man, who is not bred up in the schools of the prophets, cannot read God’s book for want of learning. For human learning is the gate and first entrance of Divine vision; not the only one indeed, but the common gate. But beyond this, there must be another learning; for he that is learned, bring the book to him, and you are not much the better as to the secret part of it, if the book be sealed, if his eyes be closed, if his heart be not opened, if God does not speak to him in the secret way of discipline.

Human learning is an excellent foundation; but the top-stone is laid by love and conformity to the will of God. For we may further observe, that blindness, error, and ignorance, are the punishments which God sends upon wicked and ungodly men. “Etiamsi propter nostræ intelligentiæ tarditatem et vitæ demeritum, veritas nondum se apertissime ostenderit,” was St. Austin’s expression: “The truth hath not yet been manifested fully to us, by reason of our demerits:” our sins have hindered the brightness of the truth from shining upon us. And St. Paul observes, that when the heathens gave themselves “over to lusts, God gave them over to strong delusions, and to believe a lie.”† But “God giveth to a man that is good in his sight, wisdom, and knowledge, and joy,” said the wise preacher.‡ But this is most expressly promised in the New Testament, and particularly in that admirable sermon, which our blessed Saviour preached a little before his death: “The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things.”‡ Well, there is our teacher told of plainly: but how shall we obtain this teacher, and how shall we be taught? Christ will pray for us that we may have this Spirit.§ That is well: but shall all Christians have the Spirit? Yes, all that will live like Christians: for so said Christ, “If ye love me, keep my commandments; and I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him.” Mark these things. The Spirit of God is our teacher:—he will abide with us for ever to be our teacher:—he will teach us all things;—but how? “If ye love Christ,” if ye keep his commandments, but not else: if ye be of the world, that is, of worldly affections, ye cannot see him, ye cannot know him. And this is the particular I am now to speak to; the way by which the Spirit of God teaches us in all the ways and secrets of God, is love and holiness.

“Secreta Dei Deo nostro et filiis domus ejus,” “God’s secrets are to himself and the sons of his house,” saith the Jewish proverb. Love is the great instrument of Divine knowledge, that is the ἕψωμα τῶν διδασκαλιῶν, “the height of all that is to be

* Isa. xxix. 11, 12.

• Rom. i. 25, 26.

† Eccl. ii. 26.

‡ John xiv. 26.

§ Ib. 15, 16, 17.

taught or learned." Love is obedience, and we learn his words best when we practise them; "Α γὰρ διὲ μανθάνοντες ποιεῖν, ταῦτα ποιοῦντες μανθάνομεν, said Aristotle;* "those things which they that learn ought to practise,—even while they practise they will best learn."—"Quisquis non venit, profectò nec didicit: ita enim Dominus docet per Spiritùs gratiam, ut quod quisque didicerit, non tantum cognoscendo videat, sed etiam volendo appetat et agendo perficiat;" St. Austin: † "Unless we come to Christ, we shall never learn: for so our blessed Lord teaches us by the grace of his Spirit, that what any one learns, he not only sees it by knowledge, but desires it by choice, and perfects it by practice."

4. When this is reduced to practice and experience, we find not only in things of practice, but even in deepest mysteries, not only the choicest and most eminent saints, but even every good man can best tell what is true, and best reprove an error.

He that goes about to speak of and to understand the mysterious Trinity, and does it by words and names of man's invention, or by such which signify contingently, if he reckons this mystery by the mythology of numbers, by the cabala of letters, by the distinctions of the school, and by the weak inventions of disputing people; if he only talks of essences and existences, hypostasies and personalities, distinctions without difference, and priority in coequalities, and unity in pluralities, and of superior predicates of no larger extent than the inferior subjects;—he may amuse himself, and find his understanding will be like St. Peter's upon the mount of Tabor at the transfiguration: he may build three tabernacles in his head, and talk something, but he knows not what. But the good man that feels the "power of the Father," and he to whom "the Son" is become "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption;" he in "whose heart the love of the Spirit of God is spread;" to whom God hath communicated the "Holy Ghost, the Comforter;"—this man, though he understands nothing of that which is unintelligible, yet he only understands the mysteriousness of the holy Trinity. No man can be convinced well and wisely of the article of the holy, blessed, and undivided Trinity, but he that feels the mighti-

ness of "the Father begetting him to a new life," the wisdom of "the Son building him up in a most holy faith," and the "love of the Spirit of God making him to become like unto God."

He that hath passed from his childhood in grace, under the spiritual generation of the Father, and is gone forward to be a young man in Christ, strong and vigorous in holy actions and holy undertakings, and from thence is become an old disciple, and strong and grown old in religion, and the conversation of the Spirit; this man best understands the secret and undiscernible economy, he feels this unintelligible mystery, and sees with his heart what his tongue can never express, and his metaphysics can never prove. In these cases faith and love are the best knowledge, and Jesus Christ is best known by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; and if the kingdom of God be in us, then we know God, and are known of him; and when we communicate of the Spirit of God, when we pray for him, and have received him, and entertained him, and dwelt with him, and warmed ourselves by his holy fires,—then we know him too: but there is no other satisfactory knowledge of the blessed Trinity but this: and, therefore, whatever thing is spoken of God metaphysically, there is no knowing of God theologically, and as he ought to be known, but by the measures of holiness, and the proper light of the Spirit of God.

But in this case experience is the best learning, and Christianity is the best institution, and the Spirit of God is the best teacher, and holiness is the greatest wisdom; and he that sins most, is the most ignorant,—and the humble and obedient man is the best scholar: "For the Spirit of God is a loving Spirit, and will not enter into a polluted soul: but he that keepeth the law, getteth the understanding thereof; and the perfection of the fear of the Lord is wisdom," said the wise Ben-Sirach.* And now give me leave to apply the doctrine to you, and so I shall dismiss you from this attention.

Many ways have been attempted to reconcile the differences of the church in matters of religion, and all the counsels of man have yet proved ineffective: let us now try God's method, let us betake ourselves to live holly, and then the Spirit of God will lead us into all truth. And indeed—it mat-

* Lib. ii. Ethic. c. 1.

† De Gratiâ Christi, lib. i. c. 14. Nullum bonum perfectè noscitur quod non perfectè amatur. Aug. lib. lxxxiii. Qu. de Gratiâ Christi.

* Ecclus. xxi. 11.

ters not what religion any man is of, if he be a villain;—the opinion of his sect, as it will not save his soul, so neither will it do good to the public: but this is a sure rule, if the holy man best understands wisdom and religion, then by the proportions of holiness we shall best measure the doctrines, that are obtruded to the disturbance of our peace, and the dishonour of the gospel. And, therefore,

1. That is no good religion, whose principles destroy any duty of religion. He that shall maintain it to be lawful to make a war for the defence of his opinion, be it what it will, his doctrine is against godliness. Any thing that is proud, any thing that is peevish and scornful, any thing that is uncharitable, is against the *ὀρθαίνοσα διδασκαλία*, that “form of sound doctrine” which the apostle speaks of. And I remember that Ammianus Marcellinus, telling of George, a proud and factious minister, that he was an informer against his brethren, he says, he did it “oblitus professionis suæ, quæ nil nisi justum suadet et lenè;” “He forgot his profession, which teaches nothing but justice and meekness, kindnesses and charity.”—And however Bellarmine and others are pleased to take but indirect and imperfect notice of it, yet goodness is the best note of the church.

2. It is but an ill sign of holiness when a man is busy in troubling himself and his superior in little scruples and fantastic opinions, about things not concerning the life of religion, or the pleasure of God, or the excellencies of the Spirit. A good man knows how to please God, how to converse with him, how to advance the kingdom of the Lord Jesus, to set forward holiness, and the love of God and of his brother; and he knows also that there is no godliness in spending our time and our talk, our heart and our spirits, about the garments and out-sides of religion: and they can ill teach others, that do not know that religion does not consist in these things; but obedience may, and reductively that is religion: and he that, for that which is no part of religion, destroys religion directly, by neglecting that duty that is adopted into religion,—is a man of fancy and of the world; but he gives but an ill account, that he is a man of God and a son of the Spirit.

Spend not your time in that which profits not; for your labour and your health, your time and your studies are very valuable; and it is a thousand pities to see a diligent

and a hopeful person spend himself in gathering cockle-shells and little pebbles, in telling sands upon the shores, and making garlands of useless daisies. Study that which is profitable, that which will make you useful to churches and commonwealths, that which will make you desirable and wise. Only I shall add this to you, that in learning there are variety of things, as well as in religion: there is mint and cummin, and there are the weighty things of the law: so there are studies more and less useful, and every thing that is useful will be required in its time: and I may in this also use the words of our blessed Saviour, “These things ought you to look after, and not to leave the other unregarded.” But your great care is to be in the things of God and of religion, in holiness and true wisdom, remembering the saying of Origen, “That the knowledge that arises from goodness is *δειοτερόν τι πάσης ἀποδείξεως*, ‘something that is more certain and more divine than all demonstration,’ than all other learnings of the word.”

3. That is no good religion that disturbs government, or shakes a foundation of public peace. Kings and bishops are the foundations and the great principles of unity, of peace, and government; like Rachel and Leah, they build up the house of Israel: and those blind Samsons that shake these pillars, intend to pull the house down. “My son, fear God and the king,” saith Solomon: “and meddle not with them that are given to change.” That is not truth that loves changes; and the new nothings of heretical and schismatical preachers are infinitely far from the blessings of truth.

In the holy language, truth hath a mysterious name, אמת “emet;” it consists of three letters, the first and the last and the middlemost of the Hebrew letters; implying to us, that truth is first, and will be last, and it is the same all the way, and combines and unites all extremes; it ties all ends together.—“Truth is lasting, and ever full of blessing.”—For the Jews observe that those letters which signify truth, are both in the figure and the number quadrate, firm, and cubical; these signify a foundation, and an abode for ever. Whereas, on the other side, the word which in Hebrew signifies a lie, שקר “secher,” is made of letters whose numbers are imperfect, and their figure pointed and voluble; to signify that a lie hath no foundation.

And this very observation will give good

light in our questions and disputes: and I give my instance in episcopal government, which hath been of so lasting an abode, of so long a blessing, hath its firmament by the principles of Christianity, hath been blessed by the issues of that stabiliment; it hath for sixteen hundred years combined with monarchy, and hath been taught by the Spirit which hath so long dwelt in God's church, and hath now—according to the promise of Jesus, that says, “the gates of hell shall never prevail against the church”—been restored amongst us by a heap of miracles; and as it went away, so now it is returned again in the hand of monarchy, and in the bosom of our fundamental laws. Now that doctrine must needs be suspected of error, and an intolerable lie, that speaks against this truth, which hath had so long a testimony from God, and from the wisdom and experience of so many ages, of all our ancestors, and all our laws.

When the Spirit of God wrote in Greek, Christ is called A and \Omega ; if he had spoken Hebrew, he had been called א and ו , that is, אמת “emet;” he is “truth,” “the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever:” and whoever opposes this holy sanction, which Christ's Spirit hath sanctified, his word hath warranted, his blessings have endeared, his promises have ratified, and his church hath always kept; he fights against this אמת “emet,” and “secher” is his portion; his lot is a “lie;” his portion is there, where holiness can never dwell.

And now to conclude: to you, fathers and brethren, you who are or intend to be of the clergy; you see here the best compendium of your studies, the best abbreviation of your labours, the truest method of wisdom, and the infallible, the only way of judging concerning the disputes and questions in Christendom. It is not by reading multitudes of books, but by studying the truth of God: it is not by laborious commentaries of the doctors that you can finish your work, but by the expositions of the Spirit of God: it is not by the rules of metaphysics, but by the proportions of holiness: and when all books are read, and all arguments examined, and all authorities alleged, nothing can be found to be true that is unholy. “Give yourselves to reading, to exhortation, and to doctrine,” saith St. Paul. Read all good books you can; but exhortation unto good life is the best instrument, and the best teacher of true doctrine, of that which is “according to godliness.”

And let me tell you this, the great learning of the fathers was more owing to their piety than to their skill; more to God than to themselves: and to this purpose is that excellent ejaculation of St. Chrysostom,* with which I will conclude: “O blessed and happy men, whose names are in the book of life, from whom the devils fled, and heretics did fear them, who (by holiness) have stopped the mouths of them that spake perverse things! But I, like David, will cry out, ‘Where are thy loving-kindnesses which have been ever of old?’ Where is the blessed quire of bishops and doctors, who shined like lights in the world, and contained the word of life? ‘Dulce est meminisse;’ ‘their very memory is pleasant.’ Where is that Evodias, the sweet savour of the church, the successor and imitator of the holy apostles? Where is Ignatius, in whom God dwelt? Where is St. Dionysius the Areopagite, that bird of Paradise, that celestial eagle? Where is Hippolytus, that good man, *ἀνὴρ χρηστός*, ‘that gentle sweet person?’ Where is great St. Basil, a man almost equal to the apostles? Where is Athanasius, rich in virtue? Where is Gregory Nyssen, that great divine? And Ephrem the great Syrian, that stirred up the sluggish, and awakened the sleepers, and comforted the afflicted, and brought the young men to discipline; the looking-glass of the religious, the captain of the penitents, the destruction of heresies, the receptacle of graces, the habitation of the Holy Ghost?” These were the men that prevailed against error, because they lived according to truth: and whoever shall oppose you, and the truth you walk by, may better be confuted by your lives than by your disputations. Let your adversaries have no evil thing to say of you, and then you will best silence them: for all heresies and false doctrines are but like Myron's counterfeit cow, it deceived none but beasts; and these can cozen none but the wicked and the negligent, them that love a lie, and live according to it. But if ye become burning and shining lights; if ye do not detain the truth in unrighteousness; if ye walk in light, and live in the Spirit; your doctrines will be true, and that truth will prevail. But if ye live wickedly and scandalously, every little schismatic shall put you to shame, and draw disciples after him, and abuse your flocks, and feed

* Lib. de Consummat. Seculi, inter opera Ephrem Syri.

them with colocynths and hemlock, and place heresy in the chairs appointed for your religion.

I pray God give you all grace to follow this wisdom, to study this learning, to labour for the understanding of godliness; so your time and your studies, your persons and your labours, will be holy and useful, sanctified and blessed, beneficial to men and pleasing to God, through him who is the wisdom of the Father, who is made to all that love him wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: "To whom with the Father," &c.

SERMON VII.

PREACHED IN CHRIST'S CHURCH, DUBLIN, AT THE FUNERAL OF THE MOST REVEREND FATHER IN GOD, JOHN, LATE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH, AND PRIMATE OF ALL IRELAND. JULY 16. 1663: WITH A SUCCINCT NARRATIVE OF HIS WHOLE LIFE.

But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.—1 Cor. xv. 23.

THE condition of man, in this world, is so limited and depressed, so relative and imperfect, that the best things he does, he does weakly,—and the best things he hath, are imperfections in their very constitution. I need not tell how little it is that we know: the greatest indication of this is, that we can never tell how many things we know not; and we may soon span our own knowledge, but our ignorance we can never fathom. Our very will, in which mankind pretends to be most noble and imperial, is a direct state of imperfection; and our very liberty of choosing good and evil is permitted to us, not to make us proud, but to make us humble; for it supposes weakness of reason and weakness of love. For if we understood all the degrees of amiability in the service of God, or if we had such love to God as he deserves, and so perfect a conviction as were fit for his services, we could no more deliberate: for liberty of will is like the motion of a magnetic needle toward the north, full of trembling and uncertainty till it were fixed in the beloved point; it wavers as long as it is free, and is at rest when it can choose no more. And truly what is the hope of man? It is indeed the resurrection of the soul in this world from sorrow and her saddest pressures, and like the twilight

to the day, and the harbinger of joy; but still it is but a conjugation of infirmities, and proclaims our present calamity, only because it is uneasy here, it thrusts us forward toward the light and glories of the resurrection.

For as a worm creeping with her belly on the ground, with her portion and share of Adam's curse, lifts up its head to partake a little of the blessings of the air, and opens the junctures of her imperfect body, and curls her little rings into knots and combinations, drawing up her tail to a neighbourhood of the head's pleasure and motion; but still it must return to abide the fate of its own nature, and dwell and sleep upon the dust: so are the hopes of a mortal man; he opens his eyes, and looks upon fine things at distance, and shuts them again with weakness, because they are too glorious to behold; and the man rejoices because he hopes fine things are staying for him; but his heart aches, because he knows there are a thousand ways to fail and miss of those glories; and though he hopes, yet he enjoys not; he longs, but he possesses not, and must be content with his portion of dust; and being "a worm, and no man," must lie down in this portion, before he can receive the end of his hopes, the salvation of his soul in the resurrection of the dead. For as death is the end of our lives, so is the resurrection the end of our hopes; and as we die daily, so we daily hope: but death, which is the end of our life, is the enlargement of our spirits from hope to certainty, from uncertain fears to certain expectations, from the death of the body to the life of the soul; that is, to partake of the light and life of Christ, to rise to life as he did; for his resurrection is the beginning of ours: he died for us alone, not for himself; but he rose again for himself and us too. So that if he did rise, so shall we; the resurrection shall be universal; good and bad, all shall rise, but not altogether: first Christ, then we that are Christ's; and yet there is a third resurrection, though not spoken of here; but thus it shall be, "The dead of Christ shall rise first;" that is, next to Christ; and after them, the wicked shall rise to condemnation.

So that you see here is the sum of affairs treated of in my text: not whether it be lawful to eat a tortoise or a mushroom, or to tread with the foot bare upon the ground within the octaves of Easter. It is not here inquired, whether angels be material or im-

material; or whether the dwellings of dead infants be within the air or in the regions of the earth? the inquiry here is, whether we are to be Christians or not? whether we are to live good lives or not? or whether it be permitted to us to live with lust or covetousness, acted with all the daughters of rapine and ambition? whether there be any such thing as sin, any judicatory for consciences, any rewards of piety, any difference of good and bad, any rewards after this life? This is the design of these words by proper interpretation: for if men shall die like dogs and sheep, they will certainly live like wolves and foxes; but he that believes the article of the resurrection, hath entertained the greatest demonstration in the world, that nothing can make us happy but the knowledge of God, and conformity to the life and death of the holy Jesus. Here, therefore, are the great hinges of all religion: 1. Christ is already risen from the dead. 2. We also shall rise in God's time and our order. Christ is the first-fruits. But there shall be a full harvest of the resurrection, and all shall rise. My text speaks only of the resurrection of the just, of them that belong to Christ: explicitly, I say, of these; and, therefore, directly of resurrection to life eternal. But because he also says there shall be an order for every man; and yet every man does not belong to Christ; therefore, indirectly also, he implies the more universal resurrection unto judgment: but this shall be the last thing that shall be done; for, according to the proverb of the Jews, Michael flies but with one wing, and Gabriel with two: God is quick in sending angels of peace, and they fly apace; but the messengers of wrath come slowly; God is more hasty to glorify his servants than to condemn the wicked. And, therefore, in the story of Dives and Lazarus, we find that the beggar died first; the good man, Lazarus, was first taken away from his misery to his comfort, and afterwards the rich man died; and as the good, many times, die first, so all of them rise first, as if it were a matter of haste; and as the mother's breasts swell and shoot, and long to give food to her babe, so God's bowels did yearn over his banished children, and he longs to cause them to eat and drink in his kingdom. And at last the wicked shall rise unto condemnation, for that must be done too; every man in his own order: first Christ, then Christ's servants, and, at last, Christ's enemies. The first of these is

the great ground of our faith; the second is the consummation of all our hopes: the first is the foundation of God, that stands sure: the second is that superstructure that shall never perish: by the first we believe in God unto righteousness; by the second we live in God unto salvation: but the third, for that also is true, and must be considered, is the great affrightment of all them that live ungodly. But in the whole, Christ's resurrection and ours is the A and Ω of a Christian; that as "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to day, and the same for ever," so may we in Christ become the morrow of the resurrection, the same or better than yesterday in our natural life; the same body and the same soul, tied together in the same essential union, with this only difference, that not nature, but grace and glory, with an hermetic seal, give us a new signature, whereby we shall be no more changed, but like unto Christ our Head, we shall become the same for ever. Of these I shall discourse in order. 1. That Christ, who is "the first-fruits," is the first in this order; he is already risen from the dead. 2. We shall all take our turns, we shall die, and as sure as death, we shall all rise again. And, 3. This very order is effective of the thing itself. That Christ is first risen is the demonstration and certainty of ours; for because there is an order in this economy, the first in the kind is the measure of the rest. If Christ be the first-fruits, we are the whole vintage; and we shall all die in the order of nature, and shall rise again in the order of Christ: "They that are Christ's," and are found so "at his coming," shall partake of his resurrection. But Christ first, then they that are Christ's: that is the order.

1. Christ is the first-fruits; he is already risen from the dead: for he alone could not be held by death. "Free among the dead."

Φρίξεν σε γέρον τότε
 Λίδας ὁ παλαιγενής
 Καὶ λαοβόρος κίων
 Ἄνεχάσατο βηροῦ.

SYNES. 6. Hym.

Death was sin's eldest daughter, and the grave-clothes were her first mantle; but Christ was Conqueror over both, and came to take that away, and to disarm this. This was a glory fit for the Head of mankind, but it was too great and too good to be easily believed by incredulous and weak-hearted man. It was at first doubted by all that

were concerned; but they that saw it had no reason to doubt any longer. But what is that to us, who saw it not? Yes, very much: "Valde dubitatum est ab illis, ne dubitaretur à nobis," saith St. Austin; "They doubted very much, that, by their confirmation, we might be established, and doubt no more." Mary Magdelene saw him first, and she ran with joy, and said "she had seen the Lord, and that he was risen from the dead; but they believed her not. After that, divers women together saw him," and they told it, but had no thanks for their pains, and obtained no credit among the disciples: the two disciples that went to Emmaus, saw him, talked with him, ate with him, and they ran and told it: they told true, but nobody believed them: then St. Peter saw him, but he was not yet got into the chair of the catholic church, they did not think him infallible, and so they believed him not at all. Five times in one day he appeared; for after all this, he appeared to the eleven; they were indeed transported with joy and wonder; but they would scarce believe their own eyes, and though they saw him, they doubted. Well, all this was not enough; he was seen also of James, and suffered Thomas to thrust his hand into his side, and appeared to St. Paul, and was seen by "five hundred brethren at once." So that there is no capacity of mankind, no time, no place, but had an ocular demonstration of his resurrection. He appeared to men and women, to the clergy and the laity, to sinners of both sexes: to weak men and to criminals, to doubters and deniers at home and abroad, in public and in private, in their houses and their journeys, unexpected and by appointment, betimes in the morning and late at night, to them in conjunction and to them in dispersion, when they did look for him and when they did not; he appeared upon earth to many, and to St. Paul and to St. Stephen from heaven; so that we can require no greater testimony than all these are able to give us; and they saw for themselves and for us too, that the faith and certainty of the resurrection of Jesus might be conveyed to all that shall die, and follow Christ in their own order.

Now this being matter of fact, cannot be supposed infinite, but limited to time and place, and, therefore, to be proved by them who, at that time, were upon the place; good men and true, simple and yet losers by the bargain, many and united, confident and

constant, preaching it all their life, and stoutly maintaining it at their death; men that would not deceive others, and men that could not be deceived themselves, in a matter so notorious, and so proved, and so seen: and if this be not sufficient credibility in a matter of fact, as this was, then we can have no story credibly transmitted to us, no records kept, no acts of courts, no narratives of the days of old, no traditions of our fathers, no memorials of them in the third generation. Nay, if from these we have not sufficient causes and arguments of faith, how shall we be able to know the will of Heaven upon earth? unless God do not only tell it once, but always, and not only always to some men, but always to all men: for if some men must believe others, they can never do it in any thing more reasonably than in this; and if we may not trust them in this, then, without a perpetual miracle, no man could have faith; for faith could never come by hearing, by nothing but by seeing. But if there be any use of history, any faith in men, any honesty in manners, any truth in human intercourse; if there be any use of apostles or teachers, of ambassadors or letters, of ears or hearing; if there be any such thing as the grace of faith, that is less than demonstration or intuition; then we may be as sure that Christ, the first-fruits, is already risen, as all these credibilities can make us. But let us take heed; as God hates a lie, so he hates incredulity; an obstinate, a foolish, and pertinacious understanding. What we do every minute of our lives, in matters of little and great concernment, if we refuse to do it in religion, which yet is to be conducted, as all human affairs are, by human instruments, and arguments of persuasion proper to the nature of the thing, it is an obstinacy as cross to human reason, as it to Divine faith.

But this article was so clearly proved, that presently it came to pass that men were no longer ashamed of the cross, but it was worn upon breasts, printed in the air, drawn upon foreheads, carried upon banners, put upon crowns imperial; presently it came to pass that the religion of the despised Jesus did infinitely prevail; a religion that taught men to be meek and humble, apt to receive injuries, but unapt to do any; a religion that gave countenance to the poor and pitiful, in a time when riches were adored, and ambition and pleasure had possessed the heart of all mankind; a religion that would change the face of things, and the hearts of

men, and break vile habits into gentleness and counsel; that such a religion, in such a time, by the sermons and conduct of fishermen, men of mean breeding and illiberal arts, should so speedily triumph over the philosophy of the world, and the arguments of the subtle, and the sermons of the eloquent; the power of princes and the interests of states, the inclinations of nature and the blindness of zeal, the force of custom and the solicitation of passion, the pleasures of sin and the busy arts of the devil; that is, against wit and power, superstition and wilfulness, fame and money, nature and empire, which are all the causes in this world that can make a thing impossible; this, this is to be ascribed to the power of God, and is the great demonstration of the resurrection of Jesus. Every thing was an argument for it, and improved it; no objection could hinder it, no enemies destroy it; whatsoever was for them, it made the religion to increase; whatsoever was against them, made it to increase; sunshine and storms, fair weather or foul, it was all one as to the event of things: for they were instruments in the hands of God, who could make what himself should choose to be the product of any cause; so that if the Christians had peace, they went abroad and brought in converts: if they had no peace but persecution, the converts came in to them. In prosperity, they allured and enticed the world by the beauty of holiness; in affliction and trouble, they amazed all men with the splendour of their innocence and the glories of their patience; and quickly it was that the world became disciple to the glorious Nazarene, and men could no longer doubt of the resurrection of Jesus, when it became so demonstrated by the certainty of them that saw it, and the courage of them that died for it, and the multitude of them that believed it; who, by their sermons and their actions, by their public offices and discourses, by festivals and eucharists, by arguments of experience and sense, by reason and religion, by persuading rational men, and establishing believing Christians, by their living in the obedience of Jesus, and dying for the testimony of Jesus, have greatly advanced his kingdom, and his power, and his glory, into which he entered after his resurrection from the dead. For he is the first-fruits; and if we hope to rise through him, we must confess that himself is first risen from the dead. That is the first particular.

2. There is an order for us also: we also shall rise again:

*Combustusque senex tumulo procedit adustus;
Consumens dat membra rogas;*

The ashes of old Camillus shall stand up spritely from his urn; and the funeral fires shall produce a new warmth to the dead bones of all those, who died under the arms of all the enemies of the Roman greatness. This is a less wonder than the former; for "admonetur omnis ætas jam fieri posse quod aliquando factum est." If it was done once, it may be done again: for since it could never have been done but by a Power that is infinite, that infinite must also be eternal and indeficient. By the same almighty Power, which restored life to the dead body of our living Lord, we may all be restored to a new life in the resurrection of the dead.

When man was not, what power, what causes made him to be? Whatsoever it was, it did then as great a work as to raise his body to the same being again; and because we know not the method of nature's secret changes, and how we can be fashioned beneath "in secreto terræ," and cannot handle and discern the possibilities and seminal powers in the ashes of dissolved bones, must our ignorance in philosophy be put in balance against the articles of religion, the hopes of mankind, the faith of nations, and the truth of God? And are our opinions of the power of God so low, that our understanding must be his measure; and he shall be confessed to do nothing, unless it be made plain in our philosophy? Certainly we have a low opinion of God, unless we believe he can do more things than we can understand; but let us hear St. Paul's demonstration; if the corn dies and lives again; if it lays its body down, suffers alteration, dissolution, and death,—but at the spring, rises again in the verdure of a leaf, in the fulness of the ear, in the kidneys of wheat; if it proceeds from little to great, from nakedness to ornament, from emptiness to plenty, from unity to multitude, from death to life: be a Sadducee no more, shame not thy understanding, and reproach not the weakness of thy faith, by thinking that corn can be restored to life, and man cannot; especially since in every creature, the obediential capacity is infinite, and cannot admit degrees; for every creature can be any thing under the power of God, which cannot be less than infinite.

But we find no obscure footsteps of this mystery even amongst the heathens: Pliny reports that Apion the grammarian, by the use of the plant osiris, called Homer from his grave; and in Valerius Maximus we find that Ælius Tubero returned to life, when he was seated in his funeral pile; and in Plutarch, that Soleus, after three days' burial, did live; and in Valerius, that Eris Pamphilius did so after ten days.* And it was so commonly believed that Glaucus, who was choked in a vessel of honey, did rise again, that it grew to a proverb: "Glaucus, *poto melle, surrexit*;" "Glaucus, having tasted honey, died and lived again." I pretend not to believe these stories to be true; but from these instances it may be concluded, that they believed it possible that there should be a resurrection from the dead; and natural reason, and their philosophy, did not wholly destroy their hopes and expectation to have a portion in this article.

For God, knowing that the great hopes of man, that the biggest endearment of religion, the sanction of private justice, the band of piety and holy courage,—does wholly derive from the article of the resurrection,—was pleased not only to make it credible, but easy and familiar to us; and so we converse every night with the image of death, that every morning we find an argument of the resurrection. Sleep and death have but one mother, and they have one name in common.

*Soles occidere et redire possunt;
Nobis cum semel occidit brevis lux,
Nox est perpetua una dormienda.—CATULL.*

Charnel-houses are but *κοιμητήρια*, "cemetaries" or sleeping-places; and they that die, are fallen asleep, and the resurrection is but an awakening and standing up from sleep: but in sleep our senses are as fast bound by nature, as our joints are by the grave-clothes; and unless an angel of God awaken us every morning, we must confess ourselves as unable to converse with men, as we now are afraid to die and to converse with spirits. But, however, death itself is no more; it is but darkness and a shadow, a rest and a forgetfulness. What is there more in death? What is there less in sleep? For do we not see by experience that nothing of equal loudness does awaken us sooner than a man's voice, especially if he be called by name? and thus also it shall be

in the resurrection: we shall be awakened by the voice of a man, and he that called Lazarus by name from his grave, shall also call us: for although St. Paul affirms, "that the trumpet shall sound, and there shall be the voice of an archangel;" yet this is not a word of nature, but of office and ministry: Christ himself is that archangel, and he shall "descend with a mighty shout," saith the apostle;* "and all that are in the grave shall hear his voice," saith St. John:† so that we shall be awakened by the voice of a man, because we are only fallen asleep by the decree of God; and when the cock and the lark calls us up to prayer and labour, the first thing we see is an argument of our resurrection from the dead. And when we consider what the Greek church reports,—that amongst them the bodies of those that die excommunicate will not return to dust till the censure be taken off;—we may, with a little faith and reason, believe, that the same power that keeps them from their natural dissolution, can recall them to life and union. I will not now insist upon the story of the rising bones seen every year in Egypt, nor the pretences of the chemists, that they, from the ashes of flowers, can reproduce, from the same materials, the same beauties in colour and figure; for he that proves a certain truth from an uncertain argument, is like him that wears a wooden leg, when he hath two sound legs already; it hinders his going, but helps him not: the truth of God stands not in need of such supporters; nature alone is a sufficient preacher:

*Quæ nunc herba fuit, lignum jacet, herba futura,
Aeris nudantur aves cum penna vetusta,
Et nova subvestit reparatas pluma volucres.†*

Night and day; the sun returning to the same point of east; every change of species in the same matter; generation and corruption; the eagle renewing her youth, and the snake her skin; the silk-worm and the swallows; the care of posterity, and the care of an immortal name; winter and summer; the fall and spring; the Old Testament and the New; the words of Job; and the visions of the prophets; the prayer of Ezekiel for the resurrection of the men of Ephraim; and the return of Jonas from the whale's belly; the histories of the Jews and the narratives of Christians; the faith of believers

* Lib. i. c. 8.

* 1 Thes. iv. 16.

† John v. 28.

† Dracontius de Opere Dei.

and the philosophy of the reasonable;—all join in the verification of this mystery. And amongst these heaps, it is not of the least consideration, that there was never any good man, who having been taught this article, but if he served God, he also relied upon this. If he believed God, he believed this: and therefore St. Paul says, that they who were *ἐλπίδα μὴ ἔχοντες*, were also *ἄθεοι ἐν κόσμῳ*, “they who had no hope” (meaning of the resurrection) “were also atheists, and without God in the world.” And it is remarkable what St. Austin observes, that when the world saw the righteous Abel destroyed, and that the murderer outlived his crime, and built up a numerous family, and grew mighty upon earth,—they neglected the service of God upon that account, till God, in pity of their prejudice and foolish arguings, took Enoch up to heaven to recover them from their impieties, by showing them that their bodies and souls should be rewarded for ever in an eternal union. But Christ, the first-fruits, is gone before, and himself did promise, that when himself was lifted up, he would draw all men after him: “Every man in his own order; first Christ, then they that are Christ’s at his coming.”—And so I have done with the second particular; not Christ only, but we also shall rise in God’s time and our order.

But concerning this order I must speak a word or two, not only for the fuller handling the text, but because it will be matter of application of what hath been already spoken of the article of the resurrection.

3. First, Christ, and then we; and we, therefore, because Christ is already risen: but you must remember, that the resurrection and exaltation of Christ was the reward of his perfect obedience and purest holiness; and he calling us to an imitation of the same obedience, and the same perfect holiness, prepares a way for us to the same resurrection. If we, by holiness, become the sons of God, as Christ was, we shall also, as he was, become the sons of God in the resurrection: but upon no other terms. So said our blessed Lord himself: “Ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon thrones judging the tribes of Israel.”* For as it was with Christ the first-fruits, so it shall be with all Christians in their own order: as with the head, so it shall be with the

members. He was the Son of God by love and obedience, and then became the Son of God by resurrection from the dead to life eternal, and so shall we; but we cannot be so in any other way. To them that are Christ’s, and to none else, shall this be given: for we must know that God hath sent Christ into the world to be a great example and demonstration of the economy and dispensation of eternal life. As God brought Christ to glory, so he will bring us, but by no other method. He first obeyed the will of God, and patiently suffered the will of God; he died and rose again, and entered into glory; and so must we. Thus Christ is made “*via, veritas, et vita*,” “the way, the truth, and the life;” that is, the true way to eternal life: he first trod this winepress, and we must insist in the same steps, or we shall never partake of this blessed resurrection. He was made the Son of God in a most glorious manner, and we by him, by his merit, by his grace, and by his example; but other than this there is no way of salvation for us: that is the first and great effect of this glorious order.

4. But there is one thing more in it yet: “Every man in his own order; first Christ, and then they that are Christ’s:” but what shall become of them that are not Christ’s? why there is an order for them too: first, “they that are Christ’s; and then they that are not his:” “Blessed and holy is he that hath his part in the first resurrection:”* there is a first and a second resurrection even after this life; “The dead in Christ shall rise first:”† now blessed are they that have their portion here; “for upon these the second death shall have no power.” As for the recalling the wicked from their graves, it is no otherwise in the sense of the Spirit to be called a resurrection, than taking a criminal from the prison to the bar is a giving of liberty. When poor Attilius Aviola had been seized on by an apoplexy, his friends, supposing him dead, carried him to his funeral pile; but when the fire began to approach, and the heat to warm the body, he revived, and seeing himself encircled with funeral flames, called out aloud to his friends to rescue, not the dead, but the living Aviola from that horrid burning: but it could not be, he only was restored from his sickness to fall into death, and from his dull disease to a sharp and intolerable torment.‡ Just so shall the wicked live again; they

* Luke xiv. 14.

* Rev. xx. 6. † 1 Thess. iv. 16. ‡ Pliny.

shall receive their souls, that they may be a portion for devils; they shall receive their bodies, that they may feel the everlasting burning; they shall see Christ, that they may "look on him whom they have pierced;" and they shall hear the voice of God passing upon them the intolerable sentence; they shall come from their graves, that they may go into hell; and live again, that they may die for ever. So have we seen a poor condemned criminal, the weight of whose sorrows, sitting heavily upon his soul, hath benumbed him into a deep sleep, till he hath forgotten his groans, and laid aside his deep sighings; but, on a sudden, comes the messenger of death, and unbinds the poppy garland, scatters the heavy cloud that encircled his miserable head, and makes him return to acts of life, that he may quickly descend into death and be no more. So is every sinner that lies down in shame, and makes his grave with the wicked; he shall indeed rise again, and be called upon by the voice of the archangel; but then he shall descend into sorrows greater than the reason and the patience of a man, weeping and shrieking louder than the groans of the miserable children in the valley of Hinnom.

These, indeed, are sad stories, but true as the voice of God, and the sermons of the holy Jesus. They are God's words, and God's decrees; and I wish that all who profess the belief of these, would consider sadly what they mean. If ye believe the article of the resurrection, then you know, that, in your body, you shall receive what you did in the body, whether it be good or bad. It matters not now very much, whether our bodies be beauteous or deformed; for if we glorify God in our bodies, God shall make our bodies glorious. It matters not much, whether we live in ease and pleasure, or eat nothing but bitter herbs; the body that lies in dust and ashes, that goes stooping and feeble, that lodges at the foot of the cross, and dwells in discipline, shall be feasted at the eternal supper of the Lamb. And ever remember this, that beastly pleasures, and lying lips, and a deceitful tongue, and a heart that sendeth forth proud things, are no good dispositions to a blessed resurrection.

Ὁὐ καλὸν ἁρμονίῃ ἀναλόμεν ἀνθρώποις.

"It is not good, that in the body we live a life of dissolution, for that is no good harmony with that purpose of glory which God designs the body."

Καὶ τάχα δ' ἐκ γαίης ἐπιζόμεν εἰς φάος ἰθεὺν, Λείψαν' ἀποιχομένων ὀπίσω δὲ θεοῦ τελεθόνται, said Phocylides; "for we hope that from our beds of darkness we shall rise into regions of light, and shall become like unto God:" they shall partake of a resurrection to life; and what this can infer is very obvious: for if it be so hard to believe a resurrection from one death, let us not be dead in trespasses and sins; for a resurrection from two deaths will be harder to be believed, and harder to be effected. But if any of you have lost the life of grace, and so forfeited all your title to a life of glory, betake yourselves to an early and an entire piety, that when, by this first resurrection, you have made this way plain before your face, you may with confidence expect a happy resurrection from your graves: for if it be possible that the Spirit, when it is dead in sin, can arise to a life of righteousness; much more it is easy to suppose, that the body, after death, is capable of being restored again: and this is a consequent of St. Paul's argument: "If, when ye were enemies, ye were reconciled by his death, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life;"* plainly declaring, that it is a harder and more wonderful thing for a wicked man to become the friend of God, than for one that is so, to be carried up to heaven and partake of his glory. The first resurrection is certainly the greater miracle; but he that hath risen once, may rise again; and this is as sure as that he that dies once may die again, and die for ever. But he who partakes of the death of Christ by mortification, and of his resurrection by holiness of life and a holy faith, shall, according to the expression of the prophet Isaiah, "Enter into his chamber of death;"† when nature and God's decree "shall shut the doors upon him, and there he shall be hidden for a little moment;" but then shall they that dwell in dust awake and sing; with Christ's dead body shall they arise; all shall rise, but "every man in his own order; Christ, the first-fruits, then they that are Christ's at his coming." Amen.

I have now done with my meditation of the resurrection; but we have a new and a sadder subject to consider. It is glorious and brave when a Christian contemplates those glories, which stand at the foot of the account of all God's servants; but when we consider, that before all or any thing of this

* Rom. v. 10.

† Isai. xxvi. 20.

happens, every Christian must twice “*exuere hominem,*” “put off the old man,” and then lie down in dust and the dishonour of the grave; it is “*vinum myrrhatum,*” there is “myrrh put into our wine;” it is wholesome, but it will allay all our pleasures of that glorious expectation; but no man can escape it. After that the great Cyrus had ruled long in a mighty empire, yet there came a message from heaven, not so sad it may be, yet as decretory as the hand-writing on the wall that arrested his successor Darius, *Σὺ σκευάζου, ὦ Κύρη. ἤδη γὰρ εἰς θεοὺς ἄσπες,* “Prepare thyself, O Cyrus, and then go unto the gods;”* he laid aside his tire and his beauteous diadem, and covered his face with a cloth, and in a single linen laid his honoured head in a poor humble grave: and none of us all can avoid this sentence; for if wit and learning, great fame and great experience; if wise notices of things, and an honourable fortune; if courage and skill, if prelacy and an honourable age, if any thing that could give greatness and immunity to a wise and prudent man, could have been put in bar against a sad day, and have gone for good plea, this sad scene of sorrows had not been the entertainment of this assembly. But tell me, where are those great masters, who, while they lived, flourished in their studies? “*Jam eorum præbendas alii possident, et nescio utrum de iis cogitant;*” “other men have got their prebends and their dignities, and who knows whether ever they remember them or not?” While they lived, they seemed nothing; when they are dead, every man for a while speaks of them what they please; and afterwards they are as if they had not been. But the piety of the Christian church hath made some little provision towards an artificial immortality for brave and worthy persons; and the friendships which our dead contracted while they were alive, require us to continue a fair memory as long as we can; but they expire in monthly minds, or at most in a faint and declining anniversary;

— ἐπεὶ φίλος, ὅστις ἐταίρου
Μίμηται πταμένοιο καὶ ἀχνυται οὐκ ἔτ' ἔοικτος.

And we have great reason so to do in this present sad accident of the death of our late most reverend primate, whose death the church of Ireland hath very great reason to deplore; and we have great obligation to

remember his very many worthy deeds, done for this poor afflicted and despised church. St. Paul made an excellent funeral oration, as it were instituting a feast of all saints, who all died “having obtained a good report:” and that excellent preacher, in the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews, made a sermon of their commemoration. For since good men, while they are alive, have their conversation in heaven; when they are in heaven, it is also fit that they should, in their good names, live upon earth. And as their great examples are an excellent sermon to the living, and the praising them, when envy and flattery can have no interest to interpose, as it is the best and most vigorous sermon and incentive to great things; so to conceal what good God hath wrought by them, is great unthankfulness to God and to good men.

When Dorcas died, the apostle came to see the dead corpse, and the friends of the deceased expressed their grief and their love, by showing the coats that she, whilst she lived, wrought with her own hands; she was a good needle-woman and a good housewife, and did good to mankind in her little way, and that itself ought not to be forgotten; and the apostle himself was not displeased with their little sermons, and that *εὐφήμιμος* which the women made upon that sad interview. But if we may have the same liberty to record the worthy things of this our most venerable father and brother, and if there remains no more of that envy which usually obscures the splendour of living heroes; if you can with your charitable though weeping eyes behold the great gifts of God with which he adorned this great prelate, and not object the failings of humanity to the participation of the graces of the Spirit, or think that God's gifts are the less because they are born in earthen vessels, *πάντες γὰρ κλύτα δῶρα κερασάμενοι φορέομεν,* for all men bear mortality about them, and the cabinet is not so beauteous as the diamond that shines within its bosom; then we may, without interruption, pay this duty to piety, and friendship, and thankfulness; and deplore our sad loss by telling a true and sad story of this great man, whom God hath lately taken from our eyes.

He was bred in Cambridge, in Sidney College, under Mr. Hulet, a grave and a worthy man; and he showed himself not only a fruitful plant by his great progress in his studies, but made him another return of gratitude, taking care to provide a good

* Cyrop.

employment for him in Ireland, where he then began to be greatly interested. It was spoken as an honour to Augustus Cæsar, that he gave his tutor an honourable funeral; and Marcus Antoninus erected a statue unto his; and Gratian the emperor made his master Ausonius to be consul; and our worthy primate, knowing the obligation which they pass upon us, who do "obstetricare gravidæ animæ," "help the parturient soul" to bring forth fruits according to its seminal powers, was careful not only to reward the industry of such persons, so useful to the church in the cultivating "infantes palmarum," "young plants," whose joints are to be stretched and made straight; but to demonstrate that his scholar knew how to value learning, when he knew so well how to reward the teacher.

Having passed the course of his studies in the university, and done his exercise with that applause which is usually the reward of pregnant wit and hard study, he was removed into Yorkshire, where first, in the city of York, he was an assiduous preacher; but, by the disposition of the Divine Providence, he happened to be engaged at North-allerton in disputation with three pragmatical Romish priests of the Jesuits' order, whom he so much worsted in the conference, and so shamefully disadvantaged by the evidence of truth, represented wisely and learnedly, that the famous primate of York, Archbishop Matthews, a learned and an excellent prelate, and a most worthy preacher, hearing of that triumph, sent for him, and made him his chaplain; in whose service he continued till the death of the primate, but, in that time, had given so much testimony of his dexterity in the conduct of ecclesiastical and civil affairs, that he grew dear to his master. In that employment he was made prebendary of York, and then of Rippon, the dean of which church having made him his sub-dean, he managed the affairs of that church so well, that he soon acquired a greater fame, and entered into the possession of many hearts, and admiration to those many more that knew him. There and at his parsonage he continued long to do the duty of a learned and good preacher, and by his wisdom, eloquence, and deportment, so gained the affections of the nobility, gentry, and commons of that country, that at his return thither upon the blessed restoration of his most sacred majesty, he knew himself obliged enough, and was so kind as to give them a

visit; so they, by their coming in great numbers to meet him, their joyful reception of him, their great caressing of him when he was there, their forward hopes to enjoy him as their bishop, their trouble at his departure, their unwillingness to let him go away, gave signal testimonies that they were wise and kind enough to understand and value his great worth.

But while he lived there, he was like a diamond in the dust, or Lucius Quinctius at the plough; his low fortune covered a most valuable person, till he became observed by Sir Thomas Wentworth, lord president of York, whom we all knew for his great excellencies, and his great but glorious misfortunes. This rare person espied the great abilities of Doctor Bramhall, and made him his chaplain, and brought him into Ireland, as one who, he believed, would prove the most fit instrument to serve in that design, which, for two years before his arrival here, he had greatly meditated and resolved, the reformation of religion, and the reparation of the broken fortunes of the church. The complaints were many, the abuses great, the causes of the church vastly numerous; but as fast as they were brought in, so fast they were by the lord deputy referred back to Dr. Bramhall, who, by his indefatigable pains, great sagacity, perpetual watchfulness, daily and hourly consultations, reduced things to a more tolerable condition, than they had been left in by the schismatical principles of some, and the unjust prepossessions of others, for many years before: for at the reformation, the popish bishops and priests seemed to conform, and did so, that keeping their bishoprics they might enrich their kindred and dilapidate the revenues of the church, which by pretended offices, false informations, fees, farms at contemptible rents, and ungodly alienations, were made low as poverty itself, and unfit to minister to the needs of them that served the altar, or the noblest purposes of religion: for hospitality decayed, and the bishops were easy to be oppressed by those that would; and they complained, but for a long time had no helper, till God raised up that glorious instrument the Earl of Straford, who brought over with him as great affections to the church and to all public interests, and as admirable abilities, as ever before his time did invest and adorn any of the king's vicegerents; and God fitted his hand with an instrument good as his skill was great: for the first specimen of his abi-

lities and diligence in recovery of some lost tithes, being represented to his late majesty, of blessed and glorious memory, it pleased his majesty, upon the death of Bishop Downham, to advance the Doctor to the bishopric of Derry, which he not only adorned with an excellent spirit and a wise government, but did more than double the revenue, not by taking any thing from them to whom it was due, but by resuming something of the churches' patrimony, which by undue means was detained in unfitting hands.

But his care was beyond his diocess, and his zeal broke out to warm all his brethren; and, though by reason of the favour and piety of king James, the escheated counties were well provided for their tithes, yet the bishoprics were not so well, till the primate, then bishop of Derry, by the favour of the lord lieutenant and his own incessant and assiduous labour and wise conduct, brought in divers impropriations, cancelled many unjust alienations, and did restore them to a condition much more tolerable; I say much more tolerable; for though he raised them above contempt, yet they were not near to envy; but he knew there could not in all times be wanting too many, that envied to the church every degree of prosperity: so Judas did to Christ the expense of ointment; and so Dionysius told the priest, when himself stole the golden cloak from Apollo, and gave him one of Arcadian home-spun, that it was warmer for him in winter and cooler in summer. And for ever since, the church, by God's blessing and the favour of religious kings and princes, and pious nobility, hath been endowed with fair revenues, "inimicus homo," "the enemy" hath not been wanting, by pretences of religion, to take away God's portion from the church, as if his word were intended as an instrument to rob his houses. But when the Israelites were governed by a *θεοκρατία*, and "God was their king," and Moses his lieutenant, and things were of his management,—he was pleased, by making great provisions for them that ministered in the service of the tabernacle, to consign this truth for ever;—that men, as they love God, at the same rate are to make provisions for his priests. For when himself did it, he not only gave the forty-eight cities, with a mile of glebe round about their city every way, and yet the whole country was but a hundred and forty miles long, or thereabouts, from Dan to Beersheba; but besides this they had the tithe of all increase, the first-

fruits, offerings, vows, redemptions, and in short, they had twenty-four sorts of dues, as Buxtorf relates; and all this either brought to the barn home to them without trouble, or else, as the nature of the thing required, brought to the temple; the first to make it more profitable, and the second to declare that they received it not from the people, but from God, not the people's kindness, but the Lord's inheritance: insomuch that this small tribe of Levi, which was not the fortieth part of the people, as the Scripture computes them, had a revenue almost treble to any of the largest of the tribes.* I will not insist on what Villalpandus observes,† it may easily be read in the forty-fifth of Ezekiel, concerning that portion which God reserves for himself and his service; but whatsoever it be, this I shall say, that it is confessedly a prophecy of the gospel; but this I add, that they had as little to do, and much less than a Christian priest; and yet in all the twenty-four courses the poorest priest among them might be esteemed a rich man.‡ I speak not this to upbraid any man, or any thing but sacrilege and murmur, nor to any other end but to represent upon what great and religious grounds the then bishop of Derry did, with so much care and assiduous labour, endeavour to restore the church of Ireland to that splendour and fullness; which as it is much conducing to the honour of God and of religion, God himself being the judge, so it is much more necessary for you than it is for us; and so this wise prelate rarely well understood it; and having the same advantage and blessing as now we have, a gracious king, and a lieutenant patron of religion and the church, he improved the "deposita pietatis," as Origen§ calls them, "the gages of piety," which the religion of the ancient princes and nobles of this kingdom had bountifully given to such a comfortable competency, that though there be place left for present and future piety to enlarge itself, yet no man hath reason to be discouraged in his duty; insomuch that as I have heard from a most worthy hand, that at his going into England he gave account to the archbishop of Canterbury of 30,000*l.* a year, in the recovery of which he was greatly and principally instrumental. But the goods of this world are called "waters" by Solomon:

* Numb. i. 46. iii. 39.

† Seld. Hist. of Tithes, c. 2.

‡ See Philo. *πρὸς τὴν γίναν ἰσραὴλ*.

§ Tract 25. in St. Matthew.

stolen waters are sweet, and they are too unstable to be stopped: some of these waters did run back from their proper channel, and return to another course than God and the laws intended; yet his labours and pious counsels were not the less acceptable to God and good men, and therefore by a thankful and honourable recognition, the convocation of the church of Ireland has transmitted in record to posterity their deep resentment of his singular services and great abilities in this whole affair. And this honour will for ever remain to that bishop of Derry; he had a Zerubbabel who repaired the temple and restored its beauty; but he was the Joshua, the high priest, who under him ministered this blessing to the congregations of the Lord.

But his care was not determined in the exterior part only, and accessories of religion; he was careful, and he was prosperous in it, to reduce that divine and excellent service of our church to public and constant exercise, to unity and devotion; and to cause the articles of the church of England to be accepted as the rule of public confessions and persuasions here, that they and we might be "populus unius labii," "of one heart and one lip," building up our hopes of heaven on a most holy faith; and taking away that Shibboleth which made this church lisp too indecently, or rather, in some little degree, to speak the speech of Ashdod, and not the language of Canaan; and the excellent and wise pains he took in this particular, no man can dehonourate or reproach, but he that is not willing to confess, that the church of England is the best reformed church in the world. But when the brave Roman infantry, under the conduct of Manlius, ascended up to the capitol to defend religion and the altars from the fury of the Gauls, they all prayed to God, "Ut quemadmodum ipsi ad defendendum templum ejus concurrissent, ita ille virtutem eorum numine suo tueretur:" "That as they came to defend his temple by their arms, so he would defend their persons and that cause with his power and divinity. "And this excellent man in the cause of religion found the like blessing which they prayed for; God, by the prosperity of his labours and a blessed effect, gave testimony not only of the piety and wisdom of his purposes, but that he loves to bless a wise instrument, when it is vigorously employed in a wise and religious labour. He overcame the difficulty in defiance of all such

pretences, as were made even from religion itself, to obstruct the better procedure of real and material religion.

These were great things and a matter of great envy, and, like the fiery eruptions of Vesuvius, might, with the very ashes of consumption, have buried another man. At first indeed, as his blessed Master, the most holy Jesus, had, so he also had his "annum acceptabilem." At first the product was nothing but great admiration at his stupendous parts, and wonder at his mighty diligence and observation of his unusual zeal in so good and great things; but this quickly passed into the natural daughters of envy, suspicion, and detraction, the spirit of obloquy and slander. His zeal for recovery of the church-revenues was called oppression and rapine, covetousness and injustice; his care of reducing religion to wise and justifiable principles was called popery and Arminianism, and I know not what names, which signify what the authors are pleased to mean, and the people to construe and to hate. The intermedial prosperity of his person and fortune, which he had as an earnest of a greater reward to so well-meant labours, was supposed to be the production of illiberal arts and ways of getting; and the necessary refreshment of his wearied spirits, which did not always supply all his needs, and were sometimes less than the permissions even of prudent charity, they called intemperance: "Dederunt enim malum Metelli Nævio poetæ;" their own surmises were the bills of accusation; and the splendour of his great ἀγαθουργία, or "doing of good works," was the great probatation of all their calumnies. But if envy be the accuser, what can be the defences of innocence?

Saucior invidiæ morsu, querenda medela est;
Dic quibus in terris sentiet æger opem?

Our blessed Saviour, knowing the unsatisfiable angers of men if their money or estates were meddled with, refused to divide an inheritance amongst brethren: it was not to be imagined that this great person (invested, as all his brethren were, with the infirmities of mortality, and yet employed in dividing, and recovering, and apportioning of lands) should be able to bear all that reproach, which jealousy, and suspicion, and malicious envy could invent against him. But ἀπ' ἐχθρῶν πολλὰ μαθήσαντες οἱ σοφοί, said Sophocles: and so did he; the affrontments brought to his great fame and

reputation made him to walk more warily, and do justly, and act prudently, and conduct his affairs by the measures of laws, as far as he understood, and indeed that was a very great way: but there was "aperta justitia, clausa manus," "justice was open, but his hand was shut;" and, though every slanderer could tell a story, yet none could prove that ever he received "a bribe to blind his eyes, to the value of a pair of gloves:" it was his own expression, when he gave glory to God who had preserved him innocent. But, because every man's cause is right in his own eyes, it was hard for him so to acquit himself, that in the intrigues of law and difficult cases, some of his enemies should not seem (when they were heard alone) to speak reason against him. But see the greatness of truth and prudence, and how greatly God stood with him. When the numerous armies of vexed people,

Turba gravis paci, placidæque inimica quieti.

MART.

heaped up catalogues of accusations, when the parliament of Ireland, imitating the violent procedures of the then disordered English, when his glorious patron was taken from his head, and he was disrobed of his great defences; when petitions were invited and accusations furnished, and calumny was rewarded and managed with art and power, when there were above two hundred petitions put in against him, and himself denied leave to answer by word of mouth; when he was long imprisoned, and treated so that a guilty man would have been broken into affrightment and pitiful and low considerations; yet then he himself, standing almost alone, like Callimachus at Marathon, invested with enemies and covered with arrows, defended himself beyond all the powers of guiltiness, even with the defences of truth and the bravery of innocence, and answered the petitions in writing, sometimes twenty in a day, with so much clearness, evidence of truth, reality of fact, and testimony of law, that his very enemies were ashamed and convinced; they found they had done like Æsop's viper, they licked the file till their tongues bled; but himself was wholly invulnerable. They were therefore forced to leave their muster-rolls and decline the particulars, and fall to their *ἐν μέγα*, to accuse him for going about to subvert the fundamental laws: the way by which great Strafford and Canterbury fell; which was a device, when all reasons failed, to oppress the enemy by the

bold affirmation of a conclusion they could not prove: they did like those "gladiators" whom the Romans called "retiarii," when they could not stab their enemy with their daggers, they threw nets over him, and covered him with a general mischief. But the martyr King Charles the First, of most glorious and eternal memory, seeing so great a champion likely to be oppressed with numbers and despair, sent what rescue he could, his royal letter for his bail, which was hardly granted to him; and when it was, it was upon such hard terms, that his very delivery was a persecution. So necessary it was for them, who intended to do mischief to the public, to take away the strongest pillars of the house. This thing I remark to acquit this great man from the tongue of slander, which had so boldly spoken, that it was certain something would stick; yet was so impotent and unarmed, that it could not kill that great fame, which his greater worthiness had procured him. It was said of Hippasus the Pythagorean, that being asked how and what he had done, he answered, "Nondum nihil; neque enim adhuc mihi invidetur;" "I have done nothing yet, for no man envies me." He that does great things, cannot avoid the tongues and teeth of envy; but if calumnies must pass for evidences, the bravest heroes must always be the most reproached persons in the world.

*Nascitur Ætolicus, pravum ingeniosus ad omne;
Qui facere assuerat, patriæ non degener artis,
Candidate nigris, et de candentibus atra.*

Every thing can have an ill name and an ill sense put upon it; but God, who takes care of reputations as he does of lives, by the orders of his Providence confutes the slander, "ut memoria justorum sit in benedictionibus," "that the memory of the righteous man might be embalmed with honour:" and so it happened to this great man; for by a public warrant, by the concurrent consent of both houses of parliament, the libellous petitions against him, the false records and public monuments of injurious shame, were cancelled, and he was restored, "in integrum," to that fame where his great labours and just procedures had first estated him; which though it was but justice, yet it was also such honour, that it is greater than the virulence of tongues, which his worthiness and their envy had armed against him.

But yet the great scene of his troubles was but newly opened. I shall not refuse

to speak yet more of his troubles, as remembering that St. Paul, when he discourses of the glories of the saints departed, he tells more of their sufferings than of their prosperities, as being that laboratory and crucible, in which God makes his servants vessels of honour to his glory. The storm quickly grew high; "et transitum est à lingua ad gladius;" and that was indeed ἀδικία ἔχουσα ὄπλα, "Iniquity had put on arms;" when it is "armata nequitia," then a man is hard put to it. The rebellion breaking out, the bishop went to his charge at Derry; and because he was within the defence of walls, the execrable traitor, Sir Phelim O'Neale, laid a snare to bring him to a dishonourable death; for he wrote a letter to the bishop, pretending intelligence between them, desired that according to their former agreement such a gate might be delivered to him. The messenger was not advised to be cautious, nor at all instructed in the art of secrecy; for it was intended that he should be searched, intercepted, and hanged for aught they cared: but the arrow was shot against the bishop, that he might be accused for base conspiracy, and die with shame and sad dishonour. But here God manifested his mighty care of his servants; he was pleased to send into the heart of the messenger such an affrightment, that he directly ran away with the letter, and never durst come near the town to deliver it. This story was published by Sir Phelim himself, who added, that if he could have thus ensnared the bishop, he had good assurance the town should have been his own: "Sed bonitas Dei prævalitura est super omnem malitiam hominis;" "The goodness of God is greater than all the malice of men;" and nothing could so prove how dear that sacred life was to God, as his rescue from the dangers. "Stantia non poterant tecta probare Deos:"* "To have kept him in a warm house had been nothing, unless the roof had fallen upon his head; that rescue was a remark of Divine favour and providence." But it seems Sir Phelim's treason against the life of this worthy man had a correspondent in the town; and it broke out speedily; for what they could not effect by malicious stratagem, they did in part by open force; they turned the bishop out of the town, and upon trifling and unjust pretences searched his carriages, and took what they pleased, till they were

ashamed to take more; they did worse than divorce him from his church; for in all the Roman divorces they said, "Tuas tibi res habeto," "Take your goods and be gone;" but plunder was religion then. However, though the usage was sad, yet it was recompensed to him by his taking sanctuary in Oxford, where he was graciously received by that most incomparable and divine prince; but having served the king in Yorkshire, by his pen, and by his counsels, and by his interests, he returned back to Ireland, where, under the excellent conduct of his Grace the now lord lieutenant, he ran the risk and fortune of oppressed virtue.

But God having still resolved to afflict us, the good man was forced into the fortune of the patriarchs, to leave his country and his charges, and seek for safety and bread in a strange land; for so the prophets were used to do, wandering up and down in sheep's clothing; but poor as they were, the world was not worthy of them: and this worthy man, despising the shame, took up his cross and followed his Master.

Exilium causa ipsa jubet sibi dulce videri,
Et desiderium dulce levat patriæ.

He was not ashamed to suffer, where the cause was honourable and glorious; but so God provided for the needs of his banished, and sent a man who could minister comfort to the afflicted, and courage to the persecuted, and resolutions to the tempted, and strength to that religion for which they all suffered.

And here this great man was indeed triumphant; this was one of the last and best scenes of his life: *ἡμέραι γὰρ ἐπίλογοι μάρτυρες σοφώτατοι*, "The last days are the best witnesses of a man." But so it was, that he stood up in public and brave defence for the doctrine and discipline of the church of England; first, by his sufferings and great example; for, "Verbis tantum philosophari, non est doctoris, sed histrionis;" "To talk well and not to do bravely, is for a comedian, not a divine;" but this great man did both; he suffered his own calamity with great courage, and by his wise discourses strengthened the hearts of others.

For there wanted not diligent tempters in the church of Rome, who taking advantage of the afflictions of his sacred majesty, in which state men commonly suspect every thing, and like men in sickness are willing to change from side to side, hoping for ease and finding none, flew at royal game, and

* Mart.

hoped to draw away the king from that religion which his most royal father, the best man and the wisest prince in the world, had sealed with the best blood in Christendom, and which himself sucked in with his education, and had confirmed by choice and reason, and confessed publicly and bravely, and hath since restored prosperously. Mil-litiere was the man, witty and bold enough to attempt a zealous and a foolish undertaking, who addressed himself with ignoble, indeed, but witty arts, to persuade the king to leave what was dearer to him than his eyes. It is true, it was a wave dashed against a rock, and an arrow shot against the sun, it could not reach him; but the bishop of Derry turned it also, and made it fall upon the shooter's head; for he made so ingenious, so learned, and so acute reply to that book; he so discovered the errors of the Roman church, retorted the arguments, stated the questions, demonstrated the truth, and shamed their procedures, that nothing could be a greater argument of the bishop's learning, great parts, deep judgment, quickness of apprehension, and sincerity in the catholic and apostolic faith; or of the follies and prevarications of the church of Rome. He wrote no apologies for himself, though it were much to be wished that, as Junius wrote his own life, or Moses his own story, so we might have understood from himself how great things God had done for him and by him: but all that he permitted to God, and was silent in his own defences; "Gloriosius enim est injuriam tacendo fugere, quam respondendo superare:" but when the honour and conscience of his king, and the interest of a true religion was at stake, the fire burned within him, and at last he spake with his tongue; he cried out like the son of Cræsus: "Ἀνθρώπε, μὴ πτείνε Κροῖσον,* Take heed and meddle not with the king: his person is too sacred, and religion too dear to him to be assaulted by vulgar hands. In short, he acquitted himself in this affair with so much truth and piety, learning and judgment, that in those papers his memory will last until very late succeeding generations.

But this most reverend prelate found a nobler adversary, and a braver scene for his contention: he found that the Roman priests, being wearied and baffled by the wise discourses and pungent arguments of the English divines, had studiously declined

any more to dispute the particular questions against us, but fell at last upon a general charge, imputing to the church of England the great crime of schism; and by this they thought they might with most probability deceive unwary and unskilful readers; for they saw the schism, and they saw we had left them; and because they considered not the causes, they resolved to out-face us in the charge: but now it was that "dignum nactus argumentum," "having an argument fit" to employ his great abilities,

Consecrat hic pæsul calamum calamique labores,
Ante aras Domino læta trophæa suo;

"the bishop now dedicates his labours to the service of God" and of his church, undertook the question, and in a full discourse proves the church of Rome not only to be guilty of the schism, by making it necessary to depart from them; but they did actuate the schisms, and themselves made the first separation in the great point of the pope's supremacy, which was the palladium for which they principally contended. He made it appear that the popes of Rome were usurpers of the rights of kings and bishops; that they brought in new doctrines in every age; that they imposed their own devices upon Christendom as articles of faith, that they prevaricated the doctrines of the apostles, that the church of England only returned to her primitive purity, that she joined with Christ and his apostles, that she agreed in all the sentiments of the primitive church. He stated the questions so wisely, and conducted them so prudently, and handled them so learnedly, that I may truly say, they were never more materially confuted by any man, since the questions have so unhappily disturbed Christendom. "Verum hoc eos malè ussit:" and they finding themselves smitten under the fifth rib, set up an old champion of their own, a Goliath to fight against the armies of Israel: the old bishop of Chalcedon, known to many of us, replied to this excellent book; but was so answered by a rejoinder made by the lord bishop of Derry, in which he so pressed the former arguments, refuted the cavils, brought in so many impregnable authorities and probations, and added so many moments and weights to his discourse, that the pleasures of reading the book would be the greatest, if the profit to the church of God were not greater.

Flumina jam lactis, jam flumina nectaris ibant,
Flavaque de viridi stillabant ilice mella. OVID.

* Herod.

For so Samson's riddle was again expounded, "Out of the strong came meat, and out of the eater came sweetness." His arguments were strong, and the eloquence was sweet and delectable; and though there started up another combatant against him, yet he had only the honour to fall by the hands of Hector: still "hæret lateri lethalis arundo;" the headed arrow went in so far, that it could not be drawn out, but the barbed steel stuck behind: and whenever men will desire to be satisfied in those great questions, the bishop of Derry's book shall be his oracle.

I will not insist upon his other excellent writings; but it is known every where with what piety and acumen he wrote against the Manichean doctrine of "fatal necessity," which a late witty man had pretended to adorn with a new visor: but this excellent person washed off the ceruse and the meretricious paintings, rarely well asserted the economy of the Divine Providence, and having once more triumphed over his adversary, "plenus victoriarum et tropæorum," betook himself to the more agreeable attendance upon sacred offices; and having usefully and wisely discoursed of the sacred rite of confirmation, imposed his hands upon the most illustrious princes, the dukes of York and Gloucester, and the princess royal, and ministered to them the promise of the Holy Spirit, and ministerially established them in the religion and service of the holy Jesus. And one thing more I shall remark; that at his leaving those parts upon the king's return, some of the remonstrant ministers of the Low Countries coming to take their leaves of this great man, and desiring that by his means the church of England would be kind to them, he had reason to grant it, because they were learned men, and in many things of a most excellent belief; yet he reproved them, and gave them caution against it, that they approached too near and gave too much countenance to the great and dangerous errors of the Socinians.

He thus having served God and the king abroad, God was pleased to return to the king and to us all, as in the days of old, and we sang the song of David, "In convertendo captivitatem Sion," when king David and all his servants returned to Jerusalem. This great person having trod in the wine-press, was called to drink of the wine, and, as an honorary reward of his great services and abilities, was chosen primate of this national church, in which time we are to look upon him, as the king and the king's great vicege-

rent did, as a person concerning whose abilities the world had too great testimony ever to make a doubt. It is true he was in the declension of his age and health; but his very ruins were goodly; and they who saw the broken heaps of Pompey's theatre, and the crushed obelisks, and the old face of beautiful Philænum, could not but admire the disordered glories of such magnificent structures, which were venerable in their very dust.

He ever was used to overcome all difficulties, only mortality was too hard for him, but still his virtues and his spirit were immortal; he still took great care, and still had new and noble designs, and proposed to himself admirable things. He governed his province with great justice and sincerity;

Unus amplo consulens pastor gregi,
Somnos tuetur omnium solus vigil.

And had this remark in all his governments, that as he was a great hater of sacrilege, so he professed himself a public enemy to non-residence, and often would declare wisely and religiously against it, allowing it, in no case but of necessity, or the greater good of the church. There are great things spoken of his predecessor, St. Patrick, that he founded seven hundred churches and religious convents, that he ordained five thousand priests, and, with his own hands, consecrated three hundred and fifty bishops. How true the story is I know not; but we were all witnesses that the late primate, whose memory we now celebrate, did, by an extraordinary contingency of Providence, in one day, consecrate two archbishops and ten bishops; and did benefit to almost all the churches in Ireland, and was greatly instrumental to the re-endowments of the whole clergy; and in the greatest abilities and incomparable industry, was inferior to none of his most glorious antecessors.

Since the canonization of saints came into the church, we find no Irish bishop canonized, except St. Laurence of Dublin, and St. Malachias of Down; indeed Richard of Armagh's canonization was propounded, but not effected; but the character which was given of that learned primate by Trithemius,* does exactly fit this our late father: "Vir in Divinis Scripturis eruditus, secularis philosophiæ jurisque canonici non ignarus, clarus ingenio, sermone scholasticus, in declamandis sermonibus ad populum excellentis industriæ;" "He was learned in the Scriptures, skilled in secular philosophy, and not

* De Scriptor. Eccles.

unknowing in the civil and canon laws, (in which studies I wish the clergy were, with some carefulness and diligence, still more conversant,) he was of an excellent spirit, a scholar in his discourses, an early and industrious preacher to the people." And as if there were a more particular sympathy between their souls, our primate had so great a veneration to his memory, that he purposed, if he had lived, to have restored his monument in Dundalk, which time, or impiety, or unthankfulness, had either omitted or destroyed. So great a lover he was of all true and inherent worth, that he loved it in the very memory of the dead, and to have such great examples transmitted to the intuition and imitation of posterity.

At his coming to the primacy, he knew he should at first espy little besides the ruins of discipline, a harvest of thorns, and heresies prevailing in the hearts of the people, the churches possessed by wolves and intruders, men's hearts greatly estranged from true religion; and, therefore, he set himself to weed the fields of the church; he treated the adversaries sometimes sweetly, sometimes he confuted them learnedly, sometimes he rebuked them sharply. He visited his charges diligently and in his own person, not by proxies and instrumental deputations: "Quærens non nostra, sed nos, et quæ sunt Jesu Christi:" "He designed nothing that we know of but the redintegration of religion," the honour of God and the king, the restoring of collapsed discipline, and the renovation of faith and the service of God in the churches. And still he was indefatigable, and even at the last scene of his life, intended to undertake a regal visitation. "Quid enim vultis me otiosum à Domino comprehendi?" said one, "He was not willing that God should take him unemployed:" but, good man, he felt his tabernacle ready to fall in pieces, and could go no further,—for God would have no more work done by that hand; he, therefore, espying this, put his house in order, and had lately visited his diocese, and done what he then could, to put his charge in order; for he had, a good while since, received the sentence of death within himself, and knew he was shortly to render an account of his stewardship; he, therefore, upon a brisk alarm of death, which God sent him the last Jaquary, made his will; in which, besides the prudence and presence of spirit manifested in making just and wise settlement of his estate, and provisions for his descendants; at

midnight, and in the trouble of his sickness and circumstances of addressing death, still kept a special sentiment, and made confession of God's admirable mercies, and gave thanks that God had permitted him to live to see the blessed restoration of his majesty and the church of England, confessed his faith to be the same as ever, gave praises to God that he was born and bred up in this religion, and prayed to God, and hoped he should die in the communion of this church, which he declared to be the most pure and apostolical church in the whole world.

He prayed to God to pardon his frailties and infirmities, relied upon the mercies of God and the merits of Jesus Christ, and, with a singular sweetness, resigned up his soul into the hands of his Redeemer.

But God, who is the great Choragus and Master of the scenes of life and death, was not pleased then to draw the curtains; there was an epilogue to his life yet to be acted and spoken. He returned to actions and life, and went on in the methods of the same procedure as before; was desirous still to establish the affairs of the church, complained of some disorders which he purposed to redress, girt himself to the work; but though his spirit was willing, yet his flesh was weak; and as the apostles in the vespers of Christ's passion, so he in the eye of his own dissolution, was heavy, not to sleep, but heavy unto death; and looked for the last warning, which seized on him in the midst of business; and though it was sudden, yet it could not be unexpected, or unprovided by surprise, and therefore could be no other than that *εὐσυνούσια* which Augustus used to wish unto himself, a civil and well-natured death, without the amazement of troublesome circumstances, or the great cracks of a falling house, or the convulsions of impatience. Seneca tells that Bassus Aufidius was wont to say, "Sperare se nullum dolorem esse in illo extremo anheliu; si tamen esset, habere aliquantum int ipsâ brevitate solatii:"* "He hoped that the pains of the last dissolution were little or none; or if they were it was full of comfort that they could be but short. It happened so to this excellent man; his passive fortitude had been abundantly tried before, and therefore there was the less need of it now; his active graces had been abundantly demonstrated by the great and good things he did; and therefore, his last scene

* Epist. 30.

was not so laborious, but God called him away something after the manner of Moses, which the Jews express by "osculum oris Dei," "the kiss of God's mouth;" that is, a death indeed fore-signified, but gentle and serene, and without temptation.

To sum up all: he was a wise prelate, a learned doctor, a just man, a true friend, a great benefactor to others, a thankful beneficiary where he was obliged himself. He was a faithful servant to his masters, a loyal subject to the king, a zealous assertor of his religion against popery on the one side, and fanaticism on the other. The practice of his religion was not so much in forms and exterior ministries, though he was a great observer of all the public rites and ministries of the church, as it was in doing good for others. He was like Myson, whom the Scythian Anacharsis so greatly praised, ὁ Μύσιων ἦν ἄκρον οὐκῆσας καλῶς. "he governed his family well," he gave to all their due of maintenance and duty; he did great benefit to mankind; he had the fate of the apostle St. Paul, he passed "through evil report and good report, as a deceiver, and yet true." He was a man of great business and great resort: "Semper aliquis in Cydonis domo," as the Corinthians said; "There was always somebody in Cydon's house." He was μερίζων τὸν βίον ἔργῳ καὶ βίβλῳ,* "he divided his life into labour and his book." He took care of his churches when he was alive, and even after his death, having left five hundred pounds for the repair of his cathedral of Armagh and St. Peter's church in Drogheda. He was an excellent scholar, and rarely well accomplished; first instructed to great excellency by natural parts, and then consummated by study and experience. Melancthon was used to say, that himself was a logician, Pomernus a grammarian, Justus Jonas an orator, but that Luther was all these. It was greatly true of him, that the single perfections which make many men eminent, were united in this primate, and made him illustrious.

At, at, Quinctilium perpetuus sopor
Urget? cui Pudor, et, Justitiæ soror,
Incorrupta Fides, nudaque Veritas,
Quando ullum invenient parem?

It will be hard to find his equal in all things: "Fortasse tanquam Phœnix anno

* Synes. Ep. 57.

quingentesimo nascitur," (that I may use the words of Seneca.) "nec est mirum ex intervallo magna generari; mediocria et in turbam nascentia sæpe fortuna producit: eximia vero ipsâ raritate commendat." For in him were visible the great lines of Hooker's judiciousness, of Jewel's learning, of the acuteness of bishop Andrews. He was skilled in more great things than one: and as one said of Phidias, he could not only make excellent statues of ivory, but he could work in stone and brass. He showed his equanimity in poverty, and his justice in riches; he was useful in his country, and profitable in his banishment; for, as Paræus was at Anvilla, Luther at Wittenburg, St. Athanasius and St. Chrysostom in their banishment, St. Jerome in his retirement at Bethlehem, they were oracles to them that needed it: so was he in Holland and France, where he was abroad; and beside the particular endearments which his friends received from him, for he did do relief to his brethren that wanted, and supplied the soldiers out of his store in Yorkshire, when himself could but ill spare it: but he received public thanks from the convocation of which he was president, and public justification from the parliament where he was speaker; so that although, as one said, "Miraculi instar vitæ iter, si longum, sine offensione percurrere;" yet no man had greater enemies, and no man had greater justifications.

But God hath taken our Elijah from our heads this day: I pray God that at least his mantle may be left behind, and that his spirit may be doubled upon his successor; and that we may all meet together with him at the right hand of the Lamb, where every man shall receive according to his deeds, whether they be good or whether they be evil. I conclude with the words of Caius Plinius: "Equidem beatos puto quibus Deorum munere datum est, aut facere scribenda, aut scribere legenda:" "he wrote many things fit to be read, and did very many things worthy to be written:" which if we wisely imitate, we may hope to meet him in the resurrection of the just, and feast with him in the eternal supper of the Lamb, there to sing perpetual anthems to the honour of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; to whom be all honour, &c.

SERMON VIII.

PREACHED AT THE OBSEQUIES OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE AND MOST VIRTUOUS LADY, THE LADY FRANCES, COUNTESS OF CARRERY, WHO DECEASED OCTOBER 9, 1650, AT HER HOUSE, GOLDEN GROVE, IN CAERMARTHENSHIRE.

For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God respect any person: yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him.—2 Sam. xiv. 14.

WHEN our blessed Saviour and his disciples viewed the temple, some one amongst them cried out, "Magister, aspice, quales lapides!" "Master, behold what fair, what great stones are here!" Christ made no other reply, but foretold their dissolution, and a world of sadness and sorrow which should bury that whole nation, when the teeming cloud of God's displeasure should produce a storm, which was the daughter of the biggest anger, and the mother of the greatest calamity, which ever crushed any of the sons of Adam; "The time shall come, that there shall not be left one stone upon another." The whole temple and the religion, the ceremonies ordained by God, and the nation beloved by God, and the fabric erected for the service of God, shall run to their own period, and lie down in their several graves. Whatsoever had a beginning, can also have an ending; and it shall die, unless it be daily watered with the purls flowing from the fountain of life, and refreshed with the dew of heaven and the wells of God: and therefore, God had provided a tree in Paradise to have supported Adam in his artificial immortality; immortality was not in his nature, but in the hands and arts, in the favour and superadditions of God. Man was always the same mixture of heat and cold, of dryness and moisture; ever the same weak thing, apt to feel rebellion in the humours, and to suffer the evils of a civil war in his body natural: and, therefore, health and life was to descend upon him from heaven, and he was to suck life from a tree on earth; himself being but ingrafted into a tree of life, and adopted into the condition of an immortal nature. But he that in the best of his days was but a scion of this tree of life, by his sin was cut off from thence quickly, and planted upon thorns, and his portion was for ever after among the flowers, which today spring and look like health and beauty, and in the evening they are sick, and at night are dead, and the oven is their grave:

and, as before, even from our first spring from the dust on earth, we might have died, if we had not been preserved by the continual flux of a rare providence; so now that we are reduced to the laws of our own nature, "we must needs die." It is natural, and therefore necessary: it is become a punishment to us, and therefore it is unavoidable; and God hath bound the evil upon us by bands of natural and inseparable propriety, and by a supervening unalterable decree of heaven; and we are fallen from our privilege, and are returned to the condition of beasts, and buildings, and common things; and we see temples defiled unto the ground, and they die by sacrilege; and great empires die by their own plenty and ease, full humours, and factious subjects; and huge buildings fall by their own weight, and the violence of many winters eating and consuming the cement, which is the marrow of their bones; and princes die like the meanest of their servants; and every thing finds a grave and a tomb: and the very tomb itself dies by the bigness of its pompousness and luxury,

—Phario nutantia ponder saxo
Quæ cineri vanus dat ruitura labor. MART.

and becomes as friable and uncombined dust, as the ashes of the sinner or the saint that lay under it, and is now forgotten in his bed of darkness. And to this catalogue of mortality man is enrolled with a "statutum est;" "It is appointed for all men once to die, and after death comes judgment:" and if a man can be stronger than nature, or can wrestle with a decree of heaven, or can escape from a Divine punishment by his own arts, so that neither the power nor the providence of God, nor the laws of nature, nor the bands of eternal predestination can hold him, then he may live beyond the fate and period of flesh, and last longer than a flower: but if all these can hold us and tie us to conditions, then we must lay our heads down upon a turf, and entertain creeping things in the cells and little chambers of our eyes, and dwell with worms till time and death shall be no more. "We must needs die"—that is our sentence: but that is not all.

"We are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again." Stay,
1. We are as water, weak, and of no consistence, always descending, abiding in no certain place, unless where we are detained with violence; and every little breath of wind makes us rough and tempestuous, and trou-

bles our faces; every trifling accident decomposes us; and, as the face of the waters wafting in a storm, so wrinkles itself, that it makes upon its forehead furrows deep and hollow like a grave; so do our great and little cares and trifles first make the wrinkles of old age, and then they dig a grave for us: and there is in nature nothing so contemptible, but it may meet with us in such circumstances, that it may be too hard for us in our weaknesses; and the sting of a bee is a weapon sharp enough to pierce the finger of a child or the lip of a man; and those creatures which nature hath left without weapons, yet they are armed sufficiently to vex those parts of men, which are left defenceless and obnoxious to a sun-beam, to the roughness of a sour grape, to the unevenness of a gravel stone, to the dust of a wheel, or the unwholesome breath of a star looking awry upon a sinner.

2. But besides the weaknesses and natural decayings of our bodies, if chances and contingencies be innumerable, then no man can reckon our dangers, and the preternatural causes of our death: so that he is a vain person, whose hopes of life are too confidently increased by reason of his health; and he is too unreasonably timorous, who thinks his hopes at an end when he dwells in sickness. For men die without rule, and with and without occasions; and no man suspecting or foreseeing any of death's addresses, and no man in his whole condition is weaker than another. A man in a long consumption is fallen under one of the solemnities and preparations to death; but at the same instant, the most healthful person is as near death, upon a more fatal and a more sudden, but a less discerned cause. There are but few persons upon whose foreheads every man can read the sentence of death, written in the lines of a lingering sickness, but they sometimes hear the passing-bell ring for stronger men, even long before their own knell calls at the house of their mother to open her womb, and make a bed for them. No man is surer of to-morrow than the weakest of his brethren: and when Lepidus and Aufidius stumbled at the threshold of the senate, and fell down and died, the blow came from heaven in a cloud; but it struck more suddenly than upon the poor slave that made sport upon the theatre with a premeditated and fore-described death: "Quod quisque vitet, nunquam homini satis Cautum est in horas." There are sicknesses that walk in darkness; and there are exter-

minating angels, that fly wrapt up in the curtains of immateriality and an uncommunicating nature; whom we cannot see, but we feel their force, and sink under their sword; and from heaven the veil descends that wraps our heads in the fatal sentence.

There is no age of man but it hath proper to itself some posterns and outlets for death, besides those infinite and open ports out of which myriads of men and women every day pass into the dark, and the land of forgetfulness. Infancy hath life but in effigy, or like a spark dwelling in a pile of wood; the candle is so newly lighted, that every little shaking of the taper, and every ruder breath of air, puts it out, and it dies. Childhood is so tender, and yet so unwary; so soft to all the impressions of chance, and yet so forward to run into them, that God knew there could be no security without the care and vigilance of an angel-keeper; and the eyes of parents and the arms of nurses, the provisions of art, and all the effects of human love and providence, are not sufficient to keep one child from horrid mischiefs, from strange and early calamities and deaths, unless a messenger be sent from heaven to stand sentinel, and watch the very playings and sleepings, the eatings and drinkings of the children; and it is a long time before nature makes them capable of help: for there are many deaths, and very many diseases to which poor babes are exposed; but they have but very few capacities of physic; to show that infancy is as liable to death as old age, and equally exposed to danger, and equally incapable of a remedy; with this only difference, that old age hath diseases incurable by nature, and the diseases of childhood are incurable by art; and both the states are the next heirs of death.

3. But all the middle way the case is altered: nature is strong, and art is apt to give ease and remedy, but still there is no security; and there the case is not altered. 1. For there are so many diseases in men that are not understood. 2. So many new ones every year. 3. The old ones are so changed in circumstance, and intermingled with so many collateral complications. 4. The symptoms are oftentimes so alike. 5. Sometimes so hidden and fallacious. 6. Sometimes none at all; as in the most sudden and most dangerous imposthumations. 7. And then, the diseases, in the inward parts of the body, are oftentimes such, to which no application can be made. 8. They are so far off, that the effects of all medicines can no

otherwise come to them, than the effect and juices of all meats; that is, not till after two or three alterations and decoctions, which change the very species of the medicament. 9. And, after all this, very many principles in the art of physic are so uncertain, that after they have been believed seven or eight ages, and that upon them much of the practice hath been established, they come to be considered by a witty man, and other established in their stead; by which men must practise, and by which three or four generations of men more (as happens) must live or die. 10. And all this while the men are sick, and they take things that certainly make them sicker for the present, and very uncertainly restore health for the future: that it may appear of what a large extent is human calamity; when God's providence hath not only made it weak and miserable upon the certain stock of a various nature, and upon the accidents of an infinite contingency; but even from the remedies which are appointed, our dangers and our troubles are certainly increased: so that we may well be likened to water; our nature is no stronger, our abode no more certain; if the sluices be opened, "It falls away and runneth apace;" if its current be stopped it swells and grows troublesome, and spills over with a greater diffusion; if it be made to stand still, it putrefies: and all this we do. For,

4. In all the process of our health, we are running to our grave: we open our own sluices by viciousness and unworthy actions; we pour in drink, and let out life; we increase diseases, and know not how to bear them; we strangle ourselves with our own intemperance; we suffer the fevers and the inflammations of lust, and we quench our souls with drunkenness: we bury our understandings in loads of meat and surfeits; and then we lie down upon our beds, and roar with pain and disquietness of our souls: nay, we kill one another's souls and bodies with violence and folly, with the effects of pride and uncharitableness; we live and die like fools, and bring a new mortality upon ourselves; wars and vexatious cares, and private duels and public disorders, and every thing that is unreasonable, and every thing that is violent: so that now we may add this fourth gate to the grave: besides nature, and chance, and the mistakes of art, men die with their own sins, and then enter into the grave in haste and passion, and pull the heavy stone of the monument upon their own heads. And thus we make ourselves

like water spilt, on the ground; we throw away our lives as if they were unprofitable (and indeed most men make them so); we let our years slip through our fingers like water; and nothing is to be seen but like a shower of tears upon a spot of ground; there is a grave digged, and a solemn mourning and a great talk in the neighbourhood, and when the days are finished, they shall be, and they shall be remembered no more: and that is like water too,—when it is spilt, "It cannot be gathered up again."

There is no redemption from the grave.

Inter se mortales mutua vivunt:
Et, quasi cursores, vitæ lampada tradunt.—LUCR.
Men live in their course and by turns; their light burns awhile, and then it burns blue and faint, and men go to converse with spirits, and then they reach the taper to another; and as the hours of yesterday can never return again, so neither can the man whose hours they were, and who lived them over once, he shall never come to live them again, and live them better. When Lazarus, and the widow's son of Nain, and Tabitha, and the saints that appeared in Jerusalem at the resurrection of our blessed Lord, arose, they came into this world, some as strangers only to make a visit, and all of them to manifest a glory: but none came upon the stock of a new life, or entered upon the stage as at first, or to perform the course of a new nature: and therefore it is observable, that we never read of any wicked person that was raised from the dead: Dives would fain have returned to his brother's house; but neither he, nor any from him could be sent: but all the rest in the New Testament (one only excepted) were expressed to have been holy persons, or else by their age were declared innocent. Lazarus was beloved of Christ: those souls that appeared at the resurrection, were the souls of saints: Tabitha, raised by St. Peter, was a charitable and a holy Christian: and the maiden of twelve years old, raised by our blessed Saviour, had not entered into the regions of choice and sinfulness: and the only exception of the widow's son, is indeed none at all, for in it the Scripture is wholly silent; and therefore it is very probable that the same process was used, God, in all other instances, having chosen to exemplify his miracles of nature to purposes of the spirit, and in spiritual capacities. So that although the Lord of nature did not break the bands of nature in some instances, to manifest his glory to succeeding great

and never-failing purposes; yet (besides that this shall be no more) it was also instanced in such persons who were holy and innocent, and within the verge and comprehensions of the eternal mercy. We never read that a wicked person felt such a miracle, or was raised from the grave to try the second time for a crown; but where he fell, there he lay down dead, and saw the light no more.

This consideration I intend to you as a severe monitor and an advice of carefulness, that you order your affairs so that you may be partakers of the first resurrection; that is, from sin to grace, from the death of vicious habits to the vigour, life, and efficacy of an habitual righteousness: for (as it happened to those persons in the New Testament now mentioned, to them, I say, in the literal sense) "Blessed are they that have part in the first resurrection; upon them the second death shall have no power:" meaning that they who, by the power of Christ and his Holy Spirit, were raised to life again, were holy and blessed souls, and such who were written in the book of God; and that this grace happened to no wicked and vicious person: so it is most true in the spiritual and intended sense: you only that serve God in a holy life; you who are not dead in trespasses and sins; you who serve God with an early diligence, and an unwearied industry, and a holy religion, you, and you only, shall come to life eternal, you only shall be called from death to life; the rest of mankind shall never live again, but pass from death to death; from one death to another, to a worse; from the death of the body to the eternal death of body and soul: and therefore in the Apostle's Creed there is no mention made of the resurrection of wicked persons; but of "the resurrection of the body to everlasting life." The wicked indeed shall be haled forth from their graves, from their everlasting prisons, where, in chains of darkness, they are kept unto the judgment of the great day: but this therefore cannot be called, "in sensu favoris," a resurrection; but the solemnities of the eternal death; it is nothing but a new capacity of dying again; such a dying as cannot signify rest; but where death means nothing but an intolerable and never ceasing calamity; and therefore these words of my text are otherwise to be understood of the wicked, otherwise of the godly: the wicked are spilt like water, and shall never be gathered up again; no, not in the gather-

ings of eternity; they shall be put into vessels of wrath, and set upon the flames of hell; but that is not a gathering, but a scattering from the face and presence of God. But the godly also come under the sense of these words: they descend into their graves, and shall no more be reckoned among the living; they have no concernment in all that is done under the sun. Agamemnon hath no more to do with the Turk's armies invading and possessing that part of Greece where he reigned, than had the Hippocentaur, who never had a being; and Cicero hath no more interest in the present evils of Christendom, than we have to do with his boasted discovery of Catiline's conspiracy. What is it to me that Rome was taken by the Gauls? and what is it now to Camillus, if different religions be tolerated amongst us? These things that now happen concern the living, and they are made the scenes of our duty or danger respectively: and when our wives are dead, and sleep in charnel-houses, they are not troubled when we laugh loudly at the songs sung at the next marriage-feast; nor do they envy when another snatches away the gleanings of their husbands' passion.

It is true, they envy not, and they lie in a bosom where there can be no murmur; and they that are consigned to kingdoms, and to the feast of the marriage-supper of the Lamb, the glorious and eternal Bridegroom of holy souls, they cannot think our marriages here, our lighter laughings and vain rejoicings, considerable, as to them. And "yet there is a relation continued still:" Aristotle said, that to affirm the dead take no thought for the good of the living, is a disparagement to the laws of that friendship, which, in their state of separation, they cannot be tempted to rescind. And the church hath taught in general, that they pray for us, they recommend to God the state of all their relatives, in the union of the intercession that our blessed Lord makes for them and us: and St. Ambrose gave some things in charge to his dying brother Satyrus, that he should do for him in the other world: he gave it him, I say, when he was dying, not when he was dead. And certain it is, that, though our dead friends' affection to us is not to be estimated according to our low conceptions, yet it is not less, but much more than ever it was; it is greater in degree, and of another kind.

But then we should do well also to re-

member that in this world we are something besides flesh and blood; that we may not, without violent necessities, run into new relations, but preserve the affections we bore to our dead when they were alive: we must not so live as if they were perished, but so as pressing forward to the most intimate participation of the communion of saints. And we also have some ways to express this relation, and to bear a part in this communion, by actions of intercourse with them, and yet proper to our state: such as are strictly performing the will of the dead, providing for, and tenderly and wisely educating their children, paying their debts, imitating their good example, preserving their memories privately, and publicly keeping their memorials, and desiring of God, with hearty and constant prayer, that God would give them a joyful resurrection, and a merciful judgment,—for so St. Paul prayed in behalf of Onesiphorus;* that “God would show them mercy in that day;” that fearful, and yet much to be desired day, in which the most righteous person hath need of much mercy and pity, and shall find it. Now these instances of duty show, that the relation remains still; and though the relict of a man or woman hath liberty to contract new relations, yet I do not find they have liberty to cast off the old, as if there were no such thing as immortality of souls. Remember that we shall converse together again; let us therefore never do any thing of reference to them, which we shall be ashamed of in the day when all secrets shall be discovered, and that we shall meet again in the presence of God: in the mean time, God watcheth concerning all their interest, and he will, in his time, both discover and recompense. For though, as to us, they are like water spilt; yet, to God, they are as water fallen in the sea, safe and united in his comprehension and enclosures.

But we are not yet passed the consideration of the sentence: this descending to the grave is the lot of all men, “neither doth God respect the person of any man:” the rich is not protected for favour, nor the poor for pity; the old man is not revered for his age, nor the infant regarded for his tenderness; youth and beauty, learning and prudence, wit and strength, lie down equally in the dishonours of the grave. All men, and all natures, and all persons resist the ad-

resses and solemnities of death, and strive to preserve a miserable and unpleasant life; and yet they all sink down and die. For so have I seen the pillars of a building, assisted with artificial props, bending under the pressure of a roof, and pertinaciously resisting the infallible and prepared ruin,

*Donec certa dies, omni compage solutâ,
Ipsam cum rebus subruat auxilium;*

“till the determined day comes, and then the burden sunk upon the pillars, and disordered the aids and auxiliary rafters into a common ruin and a ruder grave: so are the desires and weak arts of man; with little aids and assistances of care and physic, we strive to support our decaying bodies, and to put off the evil day; but quickly that day will come, and then neither angels nor men can rescue us from our grave; but the roof sinks down upon the walls, and the walls descend to the foundation; and the beauty of the face, and the dishonours of the belly, the discerning head and the servile feet, the thinking heart and the working hand, the eyes and the guts together shall be crushed into the confusion of a heap, and dwell with creatures of an equivocal production, with worms and serpents, the sons and daughters of our own bones, in a house of dirt and darkness.

Let not us think to be excepted or deferred: if beauty, or wit, or youth, or nobleness, or wealth, or virtue, could have been a defence and an excuse from the grave, we had not met here to-day to mourn upon the hearse of an excellent lady: and God only knows, for which of us next the mourners shall go about the streets, or weep in houses.

*Ζεὺς μὲν πον τογὲ οἶδε καὶ ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι,
Ὅσποτέρῳ θανάτου τέλος πεπωμένον ἐστίν.*

Il. γ.

We have lived so many years; and every day, and every minute, we make an escape from those thousands of dangers and deaths that encompass us round about: and such escapings we must reckon to be an extraordinary fortune; and, therefore, that it cannot last long. Vain are the thoughts of man, who, when he is young or healthful, thinks he hath a long thread of life to run over, and that it is violent and strange for young persons to die, and natural and proper only for the aged. It is as natural for a man to die by drowning as by fever: and what greater violence or more unnatural thing is it, that the horse threw his rider into the river, than that a drunken meeting

* 2 Tim. i. 18.

cast him into a fever? and the strengths of youth are as soon broken by the strong sicknesses of youth, and the stronger intemperance, as the weakness of old age by a cough, or an asthma, or a continual rheum: nay, it is more natural for young men and women to die, than for old; because that is more natural which hath more natural causes, and that is more natural which is most common: but to die with age is an extreme rare thing; and there are more persons carried forth to burial before the five and thirtieth year of their age, than after it; and, therefore, let no vain confidence make you hope for long life: if you have lived but little, and are still in youth, remember that now you are in your biggest throng of dangers, both of body and soul; and the proper sins of youth to which they rush infinitely and without consideration, are also the proper and immediate instruments of death. But if you be old, you have escaped long and wonderfully, and the time of your escaping is out: you must not for ever think to live upon wonders, or that God will work miracles to satisfy your longing follies, and unreasonable desires of living longer to sin and to the world. Go home and think to die, and what you would choose to be doing when you die, that do daily: for you will all come to that pass to rejoice that you did so, or wish that you had: that will be the condition of every one of us: for "God regardeth no man's person."

Well! but all this you will think is but a sad story. What? we must die, and go to darkness and dishonour; and we must die quickly, and we must quit all our delights, and all our sins, or do worse, infinitely worse; and this is the condition of us all, from which none can be excepted; every man shall be spilt and fall into the ground, and "be gathered up no more." Is there no comfort after all this? "shall we go from hence, and be no more seen," and have no recompense?

"Misero misere," aiunt, "omnia ademit. Una dies infausta tibi tot præmia vitæ."—LUCR. Shall we exchange our fair dwellings for a coffin, our softer beds for the moistened and weeping turf, and our pretty children for worms; and is there no allay to this huge calamity? yes, there is: there is a *yet* in the text: "for all this, *yet* doth God devise means that his banished be not expelled from him:"—All this sorrow and trouble is but a phantasm, and receives its account

and degrees from our present conceptions, and the proportion to our relishes and gust.

When Pompey saw the ghost of his first lady, Julia, who vexed his rest and his conscience, for superinducing Cornelia upon her bed, within the ten months of mourning, he presently fancied it, either to be an illusion, or else that death could be no very great evil:

Aut nihil est sensûs animis in morte relictum,
Aut mors ipsa nihil.—LUCAN.

"Either my dead wife knows not of my unhandsome marriage, and forgetfulness of her; or if she does, then the dead live."

Longæ, canitis si cognita, vitæ
Mors media est.—Id.

"Death is nothing but the middle point between two lives, between this and another:" concerning which comfortable mystery the Holy Scripture instructs our faith, and entertains our hope in these words: God is still the "God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; for all do live to him;" and the souls of saints are with Christ: "I desire to be dissolved," (saith St. Paul,) "and to be with Christ, for that is much better:" and, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; they rest from their labours, and their works follow them: for we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens:" and this state of separation St. Paul calls "a being absent from the body, and being present with the Lord." This is one of God's means which he hath devised, that although our dead are like persons banished from this world, yet they are not expelled from God: they are "in the hands of Christ;" they are "in his presence;" they are, or shall be, "clothed with a house of God's making;" "they rest from all their labours;" "all tears are wiped from their eyes," and all discontents from their spirits; and in the state of separation, before the soul be reinvested with her new house, the spirits of all persons are with God, so secured, and so blessed, and so sealed up for glory, that this state of interval and imperfection is, in respect of its certain event and end, infinitely more desirable than all the riches, and all the pleasures, and all the vanities, and all the kingdoms of this world.

I will not venture to determine what are the circumstances of the abode of holy souls

* 1 Cor. xv. 18. 1 Thess. iv. 16. Rev. xiv. 13. John v. 24. 2 Cor. v. 6, 8.

in their separate dwellings; and yet, possibly, that might be easier than to tell what or how the soul is and works in this world, where it is in the body "tanquam in alienâ domo," "as in prison," in fetters and restraints; for here the soul is discomposed and hindered; it is not as it shall be, as it ought to be, as it was intended to be; it is not permitted to its own freedom and proper operation; so that all that we can understand of it here, is, that it is so incommo- dated with a troubled and abated instrument, that the object we are to consider cannot be offered to us in a right line, in just and equal propositions: or if it could, yet because we are to understand the soul by the soul, it becomes not only a troubled and abused object, but a crooked instrument; and we here can consider it just as a weak eye can behold a staff thrust into the waters of a troubled river, the very water makes a refraction, and the storm doubles the refraction, and the water of the eye doubles the species, and there is nothing right in the thing: the object is out of its just place, and the medium is troubled, and the organ is impotent: "At cum exierit, et in liberum cælum, quasi in domum suam, venerit;" "when the soul is entered into her own house, into the free regions of the rest," and the neighbourhood of heavenly joys, then its operations are more spiritual, proper, and proportioned to its being; and, though we cannot see at such a distance, yet the object is more fitted, if we had a capable understanding; it is in itself in a more excellent and free condition.

Certain it is that the body does hinder many actions of the soul; it is an imperfect body and a diseased brain, or a violent passion, that makes fools: no man hath a foolish soul; and the reasonings of men have infinite difference and degrees, by reason of the body's constitution. Among beasts, which have no reason, there is a greater likeness than between men, who have; and as by faces it is easier to know a man from a man, than a sparrow from a sparrow, or a squirrel from a squirrel; so the difference is very great in our souls; which difference, because it is not originally in the soul, (and indeed cannot be in simple or spiritual substances of the same species or kind,) it must needs derive wholly from the body, from its accidents and circumstances; from whence it follows, that because the body casts fetters and restraints, hinderances and impediments upon the soul, that the soul is much freer in the state of separation; and if it

hath any act of life, it is much more noble and expedite.

That the soul is alive after our death, St. Paul affirms: "Christ died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him."* Now it were strange that we should be alive, and live with Christ, and yet do no act of life: the body when it is asleep does many; and if the soul does none, the principle is less active than the instrument; but if it does any act at all in separation, it must necessarily be an act or effect of understanding; there is nothing else it can do, but this it can; for it is but a weak and unlearned proposition to say, that the soul can do nothing of itself, nothing without the phantasms and provisions of the body: for,

1. In this life the soul hath one principle clearly separate, abstracted, and immaterial; I mean "the spirit of grace," which is a principle of life and action, and in many instances does not at all communicate with matter, as in the infusion, superinduction, and creation of spiritual graces.

2. As nutrition, generation, eating and drinking, are actions proper to the body and its state; so ecstasies, visions, raptures, intuitive knowledge and consideration of itself, acts of volition, and reflex acts of understanding, are proper to the soul.

3. And therefore it is observable that St. Paul said, that "he knew not whether his visions and raptures were in or out of the body;" for by that we see his judgment of the thing, that one was as likely as the other, neither of them impossible or unreasonable; and therefore, that the soul is as capable of action alone as in conjunction.

4. If in the state of blessedness, there are some actions of the soul which do not pass through the body, such as contemplation of God, and conversing with spirits, and receiving those influences and rare immisions, which coming from the holy and mysterious Trinity, make up the crown of glory; it follows that the necessity of the body's ministry is but during the state of this life, and as long as it converses with fire and water, and lives with corn and flesh, and is fed by the satisfaction of material appetites; which necessity and manner of conversation, when it ceases, it can be no longer necessary for the soul to be served by phantasms and material representations.

5. And therefore, when the body shall be

* 1 Thess. v. 10.

reunited, it shall be so ordered that then the body shall confess it gives not any thing, but receives all its being and operation, its manner and abode, from the soul; and that then it comes not to serve a necessity, but to partake a glory: for as the operations of the soul, in this life, begin in the body, and by it the object is transmitted to the soul; so then they shall begin in the soul, and pass to the body; and as the operations of the soul, by reason of its dependence on the body, are animal, natural, and material; so in the resurrection, the body shall be spiritual, by reason of the pre-eminence, influence, and prime operation of the soul. Now between these two states stands the state of separation, in which the operations of the soul are of a middle nature, that is, not so spiritual as in the resurrection, and not so animal and natural as in the state of conjunction.

To all which I add this consideration, that our souls have the same condition that Christ's soul had in the state of separation, because he took on him all our nature, and all our condition; and it is certain, Christ's soul, in the three days of his separation, did exercise acts of life, of joy and triumph, and did not sleep, but visited the souls of the fathers, trampled upon the pride of devils, and satisfied those longing souls which were prisoners of hope: and from all this we may conclude, that the souls of all the servants of Christ are alive, and therefore do the actions of life, and proper to their state; and, therefore, it is highly probable that the soul works clearer, and understands brighter, and discourses wiser, and rejoices louder, and loves nobler, and desires purer, and hopes stronger, than it can do here.

But if these arguments should fail, yet the felicity of God's saints cannot fail: for suppose the body to be a necessary instrument, but out of tune and discomposed by sin and anger, by accident and chance, by defect and imperfections, yet that it is better than none at all; and that if the soul works imperfectly with an imperfect body, that then she works not at all when she hath none; and suppose also that the soul should be as much without sense or perception in death, as it is in a deep sleep, which is the image and shadow of death; yet then God devises other means that his banished be not expelled from him. For,

2. God will restore the soul to the body, and raise the body to such a perfection, that it shall be an organ fit to praise him upon;

it shall be made spiritual to minister to the soul, when the soul is turned into a spirit; then the soul shall be brought forth by angels from her incomparable and easy bed, from her rest in Christ's holy bosom, and be made perfect in her being, and in all her operations: and this shall first appear by that perfection, which the soul shall receive, as instrumental to the last judgment; for then she shall see clearly all the records of this world, all the register of her own memory: for all that we did in this life is laid up in our memories; and though dust and forgetfulness be drawn upon them, yet when God shall lift us from our dust, then shall appear clearly all that we have done, written in the tables of our conscience, which is the soul's memory. We see many times, and in many instances, that a great memory is hindered and put out, and we, thirty years after, come to think of something that lay so long under a curtain; we think of it suddenly, and without a line of deduction, or proper consequence: and all those famous memories of Simonides and Theodactes, of Hortensius and Seneca, of Sceptius, Metrodorus, and Carneades, of Cyneas the ambassador of Pyrrhus, are only the records better kept, and less disturbed by accident and disease: for even the memory of Herod's son of Athens, of Bathyllus, and the dullest person now alive, is so great, and by God made so sure a record of all that ever he did, that as soon as ever God shall but tune our instrument, and draw the curtains, and but light up the candle of immortality, there we shall find it all, there we shall see all, and the whole world shall see all; then we shall be made fit to converse with God after the manner of spirits, we shall be like to angels.

In the mean time, although upon the persuasion of the former discourse, it be highly probable that the souls of God's servants do live in a state of present blessedness, and in the exceeding joys of a certain expectation of the revelation of the day of the Lord, and the coming of Jesus; yet it will concern us only to secure our state by holy living, and leave the event to God, that (as St. Paul said) "whether present or absent, whether sleeping or waking," whether perceiving or perceiving not, "we may be accepted of him;" that when we are banished this world, and from the light of the sun, we may not be expelled from God, and from the light of his countenance, but that, from our beds of sorrow, our souls may pass into

the bosom of Christ, and from thence to his right hand in the day of sentence: "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ;" and then if we have done well in the body, we shall never be expelled from the beatifical presence of God, but be domestics of his family, and heirs of his kingdom, and partakers of his glory. Amen.

I have now done with my text, but yet am to make you another sermon. I have told you the necessity and the state of death, it may be, too largely for such a sad story; I shall, therefore, now with a better compendium teach you how to live, by telling you a plain narrative of a life, which if you imitate, and write after the copy, it will make that death shall not be an evil, but a thing to be desired, and to be reckoned among the purchases and advantages of your fortune. When Martha and Mary went to weep over the grave of their brother, Christ met them there, and preached a funeral sermon, discoursing of the resurrection, and applying to the purposes of faith, and confession of Christ, and glorification of God. We have no other, we can have no better precedent to follow: and now that we are come to weep over the grave of our dear sister, this rare personage, we cannot choose but have many virtues to learn, many to imitate, and some to exercise.

I choose not to declare her extraction and genealogy; it was indeed fair and honourable; but having the blessing to be descended from worthy and honoured ancestors, and herself to be adopted and ingrafted into a more noble family; yet she felt such outward appendages to be none of hers, because not of her choice; but the purchase of the virtues of others, which although they did engage her to do noble things, yet they would upbraid all degenerate and less honourable lives than were those, which began and increased the honour of the families. She did not love her fortune for making her noble; but thought it would be a dishonour to her, if she did not continue a nobleness and excellency of virtue fit to be owned by persons relating to such ancestors. It is fit for us all to honour the nobleness of a family; but it is also fit for them that are noble, to despise it, and to establish their honour upon the foundation of doing excellent things, and suffering in good causes, and despising dishonourable actions, and in communicating good things to others: for this is the rule in nature; those creatures are most honourable, which have the greatest power and do the

greatest good; and accordingly myself have been a witness of it, how this excellent lady would, by an act of humility and Christian abstraction, strip herself of all that fair appendage and exterior honour, which decked her person and her fortune, and desired to be owned by nothing but what was her own, that she might only be esteemed honourable according to that which is the honour of a Christian and a wise man.

2. She had a strict and severe education, and it was one of God's graces and favours to her: for being the heiress of a great fortune, and living amongst the throng of persons, in the sight of vanities and empty temptations, that is, in that part of the kingdom where greatness is too often expressed in great follies and great vices, God had provided a severe and angry education to chastise the forwardness of a young spirit and a fair fortune, that she might for ever be so far distant from a vice, that she might only see it and loathe it, but never taste of it, so much as to be put to her choice whether she would be virtuous or not. God intending to secure this soul to himself, would not suffer the follies of the world to seize upon her, by way of too near a trial, or busy temptation.

3. She was married young; and besides her business of religion, seemed to be ordained in the providence of God to bring to this honourable family a part of her fair fortune, and to leave behind her a fairer issue, worth ten thousand times her portion: and as if this had been all the public business of her life, when she had so far served God's ends, God in mercy would also serve hers, and take her to an early blessedness.

4. In passing through which line of providence, she had the art to secure her eternal interest, by turning her condition into duty, and expressing her duty in the greatest eminency of a virtuous, prudent, and rare affection, that hath been known in any example. I will not give her so low a testimony, as to say only that she was chaste; she was a person of that severity, modesty, and close religion, as to that particular, that she was not capable of uncivil temptation; and you might as well have suspected the sun to smell of the poppy that he looks on, as that she could have been a person apt to be sullied by the breath of a foul question.

5. But that which I shall note in her, is that which I would have exemplar to all ladies, and to all women: she had a love so great for her lord, so entirely given up to

a dear affection, that she thought the same things, and loved the same loves, and hated according to the same enmities, and breathed in his soul, and lived in his presence, and languished in his absence; and all that she was or did, was only for, and to, her dearest lord :

Si gaudet, si flet, si tacet, hunc loquitur ;
Cœnat, propinat, poscit, negat, innuit, unus
Nævius est :

MARTIAL.

And although this was a great enamel to the beauty of her soul, yet it might in some degrees be also a reward to the virtues of her lord: for she would often discourse it to them that conversed with her, that he would improve that interest which he had in her affection, to the advantages of God and of religion; and she would delight to say, that he called her to her devotions, he encouraged her good inclinations, he directed her piety, he invited her with good books; and then she loved religion, which she saw was not only pleasing to God, and an act or state of duty, but pleasing to her lord, and an act also of affection and conjugal obedience; and what at first she loved the more forwardly for his sake, in the using of religion, left such relishes upon her spirit, that she found in it amiability enough to make her love it for its own. So God usually brings us to him by instruments of nature and affections, and then incorporates us into his inheritance by the more immediate relishes of heaven, and the secret things of the Spirit. He only was (under God) the light of her eyes, and the cordial of her spirits, and the guide of her actions, and the measure of her affections, till her affections swelled up into a religion, and then it could go no higher, but was confederate with those other duties which made her dear to God: which rare combination of duty and religion, I choose to express in the words of Solomon; "She forsook not the guide of her youth, nor brake the covenant of her God."^{*}

6. As she was a rare wife, so she was an excellent mother: for in so tender a constitution of spirit as hers was, and in so great a kindness towards her children, there hath seldom been seen a stricter and more curious care of their persons, their deportment, their nature, their disposition, their learning, and their customs: and if ever kindness and care did contest and make parties in her,

yet her care and her severity was ever victorious; and she knew not how to do an ill turn to their severer part, by her more tender and forward kindness. And as her custom was, she turned this also into love to her lord: for she was not only diligent to have them bred nobly and religiously, but also was careful and solicitous, that they should be taught to observe all the circumstances and inclinations, the desires and wishes of their father; as thinking that virtue to have no good circumstances, which was not dressed by his copy, and ruled by his lines and his affections: and her prudence in the managing her children was so singular and rare, that whenever you mean to bless this family, and pray a hearty and a profitable prayer for it, beg of God, that the children may have those excellent things which she designed to them, and provided for them in her heart and wishes; that they may live by her purposes, and may grow thither, whither she would fain have brought them. All these were great parts of an excellent religion, as they concerned her greatest temporal relations.

7. But if we examine how she demeaned herself towards God, there also you will find her not of a common, but of an exemplary piety: she was a great reader of Scripture, confining herself to great proportions every day; which she read, not to the purposes of vanity, and impertinent curiosities, not to seem knowing, or to become talking, not to expound and rule; but to teach her all her duty, to instruct her in the knowledge and love of God and of her neighbours; to make her more humble, and to teach her to despise the world and all its gilded vanities; and that she might entertain passions wholly in design and order to heaven. I have seen a female religion that wholly dwelt upon the face and tongue; that like a wanton and an undressed tree, spends all its juice in suckers and irregular branches, in leaves and gum, and after all such goodly outsides, you should never eat an apple, or be delighted with the beauties or the perfumes of a hopeful blossom. But the religion of this excellent lady was of another constitution; it took root downward in humility, and brought forth fruit upward in the substantial graces of a Christian, in charity and justice, in chastity and modesty, in fair friendships and sweetness of society: she had not very much of the forms and outsides of godliness, but she was hugely careful for the power of it, for the moral,

* Prov. ii. 17.

essential, and useful parts; such which would make her be, not seem to be, religious.

8. She was a very constant person at her prayers, and spent all her time, which nature did permit to her choice, in her devotions, and reading, and meditating, and the necessary offices of household government; every one of which is an action of religion, some by nature, some by adoption. To these, also, God gave her a very great love to hear the word of God preached; in which, because I sometimes had the honour to minister to her, I can give this certain testimony, that she was a diligent, watchful, and attentive hearer: and to this, had so excellent a judgment, that if ever I saw a woman whose judgment was to be revered, it was hers alone: and I have sometimes thought that the eminency of her discerning faculties did reward a pious discourse, and placed it in the regions of honour and usefulness, and gathered it up from the ground, where commonly such homilies are spilt, or scattered in neglect and inconsideration. But her appetite was not soon satisfied with what was useful to her soul: she was also a constant reader of sermons, and seldom missed to read one every day; and that she might be full of instruction and holy principles, she had lately designed to have a large book, in which she purposed to have a stock of religion transcribed in such assistances as she would choose, that she might be "readily furnished and instructed to every good work." But God prevented that, and hath filled her desires, not out of cisterns and little aqueducts, but hath carried her to the fountain, where "she drinks of the pleasures of the river," and is full of God.

9. She always lived a life of much innocence, free from the violences of great sins; her person, her breeding, her modesty, her honour, her religion, her early marriage, the guide of her soul, and the guide of her youth, were as so many fountains of restraining grace to her, to keep her from the dishonours of a crime. "Bonum est portare jugum ab adolescentiâ:" "It is good to bear the yoke of the Lord from our youth:" and though she did so, being guarded by a mighty Providence, and a great favour and grace of God, from staining her fair soul with the spots of hell, yet she had strange fears and early cares upon her; but these were not only for herself, but in order to others, to her nearest relatives: for she was so great a lover of this honourable family, of which now she was

a mother, that she desired to become a channel of great blessings to it unto future ages, and was extremely jealous lest any thing should be done, or lest any thing had been done, though an age or two since, which should entail a curse upon the innocent posterity; and, therefore, (although I do not know that ever she was tempted with an offer of the crime,) yet she did infinitely remove all sacrilege from her thoughts, and delighted to see her estate of a clear and disentangled interest: she would have no mingled rights with it; she would not receive any thing from the church, but religion and a blessing; and she never thought a curse and a sin far enough off, but would desire it to be infinitely distant; and that as to this family God had given much honour, and a wise head to govern it, so he would also for ever give many more blessings: and because she knew the sins of parents descend upon children, she endeavoured, by justice and religion, by charity and honour, to secure that her channel should convey nothing but health, and a fair example, and a blessing.

10. And though her accounts to God were made up of nothing but small parcels, little passions, and angry words, and trifling discontents, which are the allays of the piety of the most holy persons; yet she was early at her repentance; and toward the latter end of her days grew so fast in religion, as if she had had a revelation of her approaching end, and, therefore, that she must go a great way in a little time: her discourses more full of religion, her prayers more frequent, her charity increasing, her forgiveness more forward, her friendships more communicative, her passion more under discipline; and so she trimmed her lamp, not thinking her night was so near, but that it might shine also in the day-time, in the temple, and before the altar of incense.

But in this course of hers there were some circumstances, and some appendages of substance, which were highly remarkable.

1. In all her religion, and in all her actions of relation towards God, she had a strange evenness and untroubled passage, sliding toward her ocean of God and of infinity, with a certain and silent motion. So have I seen a river, deep and smooth, passing with a still foot and a sober face, and paying to the "fiscus," the great "exchequer" of the sea, the prince of all the watery bodies, a tribute large and full; and

hard by it, a little brook skipping and making a noise upon its unequal and neighbour bottom; and after all its talking and bragged motion, it paid to its common audit no more than the revenues of a little cloud, or a contemptible vessel: so have I sometimes compared the issues of her religion to the solemnities and famed outsides of another's piety. It dwelt upon her spirit, and was incorporated with the periodical work of every day: she did not believe that religion was intended to minister to fame and reputation, but to pardon of sins, to the pleasure of God, and the salvation of souls. For religion is like the breath of heaven; if it goes abroad into the open air, it scatters and dissolves like camphire; but if it enters into a secret hollowness, into a close conveyance, it is strong and mighty, and comes forth with vigour and great effect at the other end, at the other side of this life, in the days of death and judgment.

2. The other appendage of her religion, which also was a great ornament to all the parts of her life, was a rare modesty and humility of spirit, a confident despising and undervaluing of herself. For though she had the greatest judgment, and the greatest experience of things and persons, that I ever yet knew in a person of her youth, and sex, and circumstances; yet, as if she knew nothing of it, she had the meanest opinion of herself; and like a fair taper, when she shined to all the room, yet round about her own station, she had cast a shadow and a cloud, and she shined to every body but herself. But the perfectness of her prudence and excellent parts could not be hid; and all her humility, and arts of concealment, made the virtues more amiable and illustrious. For as pride sullies the beauty of the fairest virtues, and makes our understanding but like the craft and learning of a devil; so humility is the greatest eminency, and art of publication in the whole world; and she, in all her arts of secrecy and hiding her worthy things, was but "like one that hideth the wind, and covers the ointment of her right hand."

I know not by what instrument it happened; but when death drew near, before it made any show upon her body, or revealed itself by a natural signification, it was conveyed to her spirit: she had a strange secret persuasion that the bringing this child should be her last scene of life: and we have known, that the soul, when she is about to disrobe herself of her upper garment, some-

times speaks rarely; "Magnifica verba mors propè admota excutit;"* sometimes it is prophetic; sometimes God, by a superinduced persuasion wrought by instruments, or accidents of his own, serves the ends of his own providence, and the salvation of the soul: but so it was, that the thought of death dwelt long with her, and grew from the first steps of fancy and fear, to a consent,—from thence to a strange credulity, and expectation of it; and without the violence of sickness she died, as if she had done it voluntarily, and by design, and for fear her expectation should have been deceived; or that she should seem to have had an unreasonable fear or apprehension; or rather, as one said of Cato, "Sic abiit è vitâ, ut causam moriendi nactam se esse gauderet;" "she died as if she had been glad of the opportunity."

And in this I cannot but adore the providence and admire the wisdom and infinite mercies of God; for having a tender and soft, a delicate, and fine constitution and breeding, she was tender to pain, and apprehensive of it as a child's shoulder is of a load and burden: "Grave est teneræ cervici jugum:" and in her often discourses of death, which she would renew willingly and frequently, she would tell, that "she feared not death, but she feared the sharp pains of death:" "Emori nolo, me esse mortuam non curo." The being dead, and being freed from the troubles and dangers of this world, she hoped would be for her advantage, and therefore, that was no part of her fear; but she believing the pangs of death were great, and the use and aids of reason little, had reason to fear lest they should do violence to her spirit, and the decency of her resolution. But God, that knew her fears and her jealousy concerning herself, fitted her with a death so easy, so harmless, so painless, that it did not put her patience to a severe trial. It was not in all appearance of so much trouble as two fits of a common ague, so careful was God to demonstrate to all that stood in that sad attendance, that this soul was dear to him,—and that since she had done so much of her duty towards it, he that began would also finish her redemption by an act of a rare providence and a singular mercy. Blessed be that goodness of God, who does such careful actions of mercy for the ease and security

* Seneca.

of his servants! But this one instance was a great demonstration, that the apprehension of death is worse than the pains of death; and that God loves to reprove the unreasonableness of our fears, by the mightiness and by the arts of his mercy.

She had in her *sickness*, if I may so call it,—or rather in the solemnities and graver preparations towards death,—some curious and well-becoming fears concerning the final state of her soul; but from thence she passed into a “*deliquium*,” or “a kind of trance;” and as soon as she came forth of it, as if it had been a vision, or that she had conversed with an angel, and from his hand had received a label or scroll of the book of life, and there seen her name enrolled, she cried out aloud, “*Glory be to God on high! now I am sure I shall be saved.*” Concerning which manner of discoursing we are wholly ignorant what judgment can be made; but, certainly, there are strange things in the other world, and so there are in all the immediate preparations to it; and a little glimpse of heaven, a minute’s conversing with an angel, any ray of God, any communication extraordinary from the spirit of comfort, which God gives to his servants in strange and unknown manners, are infinitely far from illusions, and they shall then be understood by us when we feel them, and when our new and strange needs shall be refreshed by such unusual visitations.

But I must be forced to use summaries and arts of abbreviature in the enumerating those things, in which this rare personage was dear to God and all her relatives.

If we consider her person, she was in the flower of her age, “*jucundum cum ætas florida ver ageret;*”^{*} of a temperate, plain, and natural diet, without curiosity or an intemperate palate; she spent less time in dressing than many servants; her recreations were little and seldom, her prayers often, her reading much; she was of a most noble and charitable soul, a great lover of honourable actions, and as great a despiser of base things; hugely loving to oblige others, and very unwilling to be in arrear to any upon the stock of courtesies and liberality; so free in all acts of favour, that she would not stay to hear herself thanked, as being unwilling that what good went from her to a needful or an obliged person, should ever return to her again.

* *Catullus.*

She was an excellent friend, and hugely dear to very many, especially to the best and most discerning persons; to all that conversed with her, and could understand her great worth and sweetness. She was of an honourable, a nice and tender reputation; and of the pleasures of this world, which were laid before her in heaps, she took a very small and inconsiderable share, as not loving to glut herself with vanity, or take her portion of good things here below.

If we look on her as a wife, she was chaste and loving, fruitful and discreet, humble and pleasant, witty and compliant, rich and fair; and wanted nothing to the making her a principal and precedent to the best wives of the world, but a long life and a full age.

If we remember her as a mother, she was kind and severe, careful and prudent, very tender, and not at all fond; a greater lover of her children’s souls than of their bodies, and one that would value them more by the strict rules of honour and proper worth, than by their relation to herself.

Her servants found her prudent and fit to govern, and yet open-handed and apt to reward; a just exacter of their duty, and a great rewarder of their diligence.

She was in her house a comfort to her dearest lord, a guide to her children, a rule to her servants, an example to all.

But as she related to God in the offices of religion, she was even and constant, silent and devout, prudent and material; she loved what she now enjoys, and she feared what she never felt, and God did for her what she never did expect; her fears went beyond all her evil; and yet the good which she had received, was, and is, and ever shall be, beyond all her hopes.

She lived as we all should live, and she died as I fain would die:

*Cum mihi supremos Lachesis perneverit annos,
Non aliter cineres mando jacere meos.*

MART.

I pray God I may feel those mercies on my death-bed that she felt, and that I may feel the same effect of my repentance which she feels of the many degrees of her innocence. Such was her death, that she did not die too soon; and her life was so useful and excellent, that she could not have lived too long: “*Nemo parum diu vixit, qui virtutis perfectæ perfecto functus est munere.*” And as now in the grave it shall not be inquired concerning her, how long she lived, but how well; so to us who live after her, to

suffer a longer calamity,—it may be some ease to our sorrows, and some guide to our lives, and some security to our conditions, to consider that God hath brought the piety of a young lady to the early rewards of a never-ceasing and never-dying eternity of glory. And we also, if we live as she did, shall partake of the same glories; not only having the honour of a good name, and a dear and honoured memory, but the glories of these glories, the end of all excellent labours, and all prudent counsels, and all holy religion, even the salvation of our souls, in that day when all the saints, and among them this excellent woman, shall be shown to all the world to have done more, and more excellent things than we know of, or can describe. “Mors illos consecrat, quorum exitum, et qui timent, laudant:” “death consecrates and makes sacred that person, whose excellency was such, that they that are not displeased at the death, cannot dispraise the life; but they that mourn sadly, think they can never commend sufficiently.”

SERMON IX.

PREACHED IN ST. MARY'S CHURCH, OXFORD,
UPON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE GUN-
POWDER TREASON.

But when James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?—Luke ix. 54.

I SHALL not need to strain much to bring my text and the day together. Here is “fire,” in the text “consuming fire,” like that whose “Antevorta” we do this day commemorate. This fire called for by the disciples of Christ; so was ours too, by Christ's disciples at least, and some of them entitled to our great Master by the compellation of his holy name of Jesus.

I would say the parallel holds thus far, but that the persons of my text, however “Boanerges,” “sons of thunder,” and of a reprobable spirit, yet are no way considerable in the proportion of malice with the persons of the day. For if I consider the cause that moved James and John to so inconsiderate a wrath, it bears a fair excuse: the men of Samaria turned their Lord and Master out of doors, denying to give a

night's lodging to the Lord of heaven and earth. It would have disturbed an excellent patience to see him, whom but just before they beheld transfigured, and in a glorious epiphany upon the mount, to be so neglected by a company of hated Samaritans, as to be forced to keep his vigils where nothing but the welkin should have been his roof, not any thing to shelter his precious head from the descending dews of heaven.

— Quis talia fando
Temperet?—ÆN.

It had been the greater wonder if they had not been angry. But now if we should level our progress by the same line, and guess that in the present affair there was an equal cause, because a greater fire was intended,—we shall too much betray the ingenuity of apparent truth, and the blessing of this anniversary. They had not half such a cause for an excuse to a far greater malice, it will prove they had none at all; and, therefore, their malice was so much the more malicious, because causeless and totally inexcusable.

However, I shall endeavour to join their consideration in as near a parallel as I can; which if it be not exact,—as certainly it cannot, where we have already discovered so much difference in degrees of malice, yet, by laying them together, we may better take their estimate, though it be only by seeing their disproportion.

The words, as they lay in their own order, point out, 1. The persons that asked the question. 2. The cause that moved them. 3. The person to whom they propounded it. 4. The question itself. 5. And the precedent they urged to move a grant, drawn from a very fallible topic, a singular example, in a special and different case. The persons here were Christ's disciples, and so they are in our case, designed to us by that glorious surname of Christianity: they will be called catholics; but if our discovery perhaps rise higher, and that the see apostolic prove sometimes guilty of so reprobable a spirit, then we are very near to a parallel of the persons, for they were disciples of Christ and apostles. 2. The cause was the denying of toleration of abode upon the grudge of an old schism; religion was made the instrument. That which should have taught the apostles to be charitable, and the Samaritans hospitable, was made a pretence to justify the unhospitality of the one, and the uncharitableness

of the other. Thus far we are right; for the malice of this present treason stood upon the same base. 3. Although neither side much doubted of the lawfulness of their proceedings, yet St. James and St. John were so discreet as not to think themselves infallible, therefore they asked their Lord: so did the persons of the day ask the question too, but not of Christ, for he was not in all their thoughts; but yet they asked of Christ's delegates, who, therefore, should have given their answer "ex eodem tripode," from the same spirit. They were the fathers confessors who were asked. 4. The question is of both sides concerning a consumptive sacrifice, the destruction of a town there, of a whole kingdom here, but differing in the circumstance of place whence they would fetch their fire. The apostles would have had it from heaven, but these men's conversation was not there. *Tὰ κάτωθεν*, "things from beneath," from an artificial hell, but breathed from the natural and proper, were in all their thoughts. 5. The example, which is the last particular, I fear I must leave quite out; and when you have considered all, perhaps you will look for no example.

First of the persons; they were disciples of Christ and apostles; "But when James and John saw this." When first I considered they were apostles, I wondered they should be so intemperately angry; but when I perceived they were so angry, I wondered not that they sinned. Not the privilege of an apostolical spirit, not the nature of angels, not the condition of immortality, can guard from the danger of sin; but if we be overruled by passion, we almost subject ourselves to its necessity. It was not, therefore, without reason altogether, that the Stoics affirmed wise men to be void of passions; for sure I am, the inordination of any passion is the first step to folly. And although of them, as of waters of a muddy residence, we may make good use, and quench our thirst, if we do not trouble them; yet upon any ungentle disturbance we drink down mud instead of a clear stream, and the issues of sin and sorrow, certain consequents of temerarious or inordinate anger. And, therefore, when the apostle had given us leave to "be angry," as knowing the condition of human nature, he quickly enters a caveat that "we sin not;" he knew sin was very likely to be hand-maid where anger did domineer, and this was the reason why St. James and St.

John are the men here pointed at; for the Scripture notes them for "Boanerges," "sons of thunder," men of an angry temper, "et quid mirum est filios tonitru fulgurasse voluisse?" said St. Ambrose. But there was more in it than thus. Their spirits, of themselves hot enough, yet met with their education under the law, whose first tradition was in fire and thunder, whose precepts were just, but not so merciful; and this inflamed their distemper to the height of a revenge. It is the doctrine of St. Jerome* and Titus Bostrensis,†—the law had been their schoolmaster, and taught them the rules of justice, both punitive and vindictive; but Christ was the first that taught it to be a sin to retaliate evil with evil; it was a doctrine they could not read in the killing letter of the law. There they might meet with precedents of revenge and anger of a high severity, "an eye for an eye," and "a tooth for a tooth," and "let him be cut off from his people:" but forgiving injuries, praying for our persecutors, loving our enemies, and relieving them, were doctrines of such high and absolute integrity, as were to be reserved for the best and most perfect lawgiver, the bringer of the best promises, to which the most perfect actions have the best proportion, and this was to be when Shiloh came. Now then the spirit of Elias is out of date,

— Jam ferrea primum
Desinit, ac toto surgit gens aurea mundo.

And, therefore, our blessed Master re-proved them of ignorance, not of the law, but of his Spirit, which had they but known or could have but guessed at the end of his coming, they had not been such abecedarii in the school of mercy.

And now we shall not need to look far for persons, disciples professing at least in Christ's school, yet as great strangers to the merciful spirit of our Saviour, as if they had been sons of the law, or foster-brothers to Romulus, and sucked a wolf; and they are Romanists too; this day's solemnity presents them to us, *πρὸς αἵματι σωματεσφυμένους*;‡ and yet were that washed off, underneath they write Christian and Jesuit.

One would have expected that such men, set forth to the world's acceptance with so merciful a "cognomentum," should have put a hand to support the ruinous fabric of the world's charity, and not have pulled the

* Epist. ad Algas. † In Lucam. ‡ Seuton.

frame of heaven and earth about our ears. But yet,—“*Ne credite, Teucri!*” Give me leave first to make an inquisition after this antichristian pravity, and try who is of our side, and who loves the king, by pointing at those whose sermons do blast loyalty, breathing forth treason, slaughters, and cruelty, the greatest imaginable contrariety to the spirit and doctrine of our dear Master. So we shall quickly find out more than a pareil for St. James and St. John, the Boanerges of my text.

“It is an act of faith, by faith to conquer the enemies of God and holy church,” saith Sanders, our countryman.* Hitherto nothing but well; if James and John had offered to do no more than what they could have done with “the sword of the Spirit, and the shield of faith,” they might have been inculpable, and so had he if he had said no more; but the blood boils higher, the manner spoils all. “For it is not well done, unless a warlike captain be appointed by Christ’s vicar to bear a crusade in a field of blood.” And if the other apostles did not proceed such an angry way as James and John, it was only discretion that detained them, not religion. “For so they might, and it were no way unlawful for them to bear arms to propagate religion, had they not wanted an opportunity;” if you believe the same author: “for fighting is proper for St. Peter and his successors, therefore, because Christ gave him commission to feed his lambs.”† A strange reason!

I had thought Christ would have his lambs fed with the sincere milk of his word, not like to cannibals,

—— solitisque cruentum
Lac potare Getis, et pocula tingere venis,

To mingle blood in their sacrifices, (as Herod to the Galileans,) and quaff it off for an “auspicious” to the propagation of the Christian faith. Methinks here is already too much clashing of armour, and effusion of blood, for a Christian cause; but this were not altogether so unchristian-like, if the sheep, though with blood, yet were not to be fed with the blood of their shepherd Cyrus, I mean their princes. But I find many such “nutriti” in the nurseries of Rome, driving their lambs from their folds, unless they will be taught to worry the lion.

Emanuel Sà, in his Aphorisms, affirms it lawful to kill a king; indeed not every king, but such a one as rules with tyranny; and not then, unless the pope hath sentenced him to death, but then he may, though he be his lawful prince.* Not the necessitude which the law of nations hath put between prince and people, not the obligation of the oath of allegiance, nor the sanctions of God Almighty himself, must reverse the sentence against the king when once passed; but any one of his subjects, of his own sworn subjects, may kill him.

This perfidious treasonable position of Sà is not a single testimony. For 1. it slipped not from his pen by inadvertency; it was not made public until after forty years’ deliberation, as himself testifies in his preface.† 2. After such an avisamente, it is now the ordinary received manual for the fathers confessors of the Jesuits’ order.

This doctrine, although—“*Titulo res digna sepulchri*”—yet is nothing if compared with Mariana.‡ For 1. he affirms the same doctrine in substance. 2. Then he descends to the very manner of it, ordering how it may be done with the best convenience: he thinks poison to be the best way, but yet that, for the more secrecy, it be cast upon the chairs, saddles, and garments of his prince. It was the old laudable custom of the Moors of Spain.§ 3. He adds examples of the business, telling us that this was the device, to wit, by poisoned boots, that old Henry of Castile was cured of his sickness. 4. Lastly, this may be done, not only if the pope judge the king a tyrant, (which was the utmost Emanuel Sà affirmed,) but it is sufficient proof of his being a tyrant if learned men, though but few, and those seditious too, do but murmur it, or begin to call him so.¶ I hope this doctrine was long since disclaimed by the whole society, and condemned “*ad umbras Acherunticas*.” Perhaps so; but yet these men who use to object to us an infinity of divisions among ourselves, who

* Tyrannicè gubernans justè acquisitum dominium non potest spoliari sine publico judicio. Latè verò sententià, quisque potest fieri executor. Post autem à populo etiam qui juravit ei obedientiam, si monitus, non vult corrigi.—Verb. Tyrannus.

† Præsertim cum in hoc opus per annos serè quadraginta diligentissime incubuerim.

‡ De Rege et R. Institut. lib. i. c. vi.

§ Qui est l’artifice dont je trouve que les rois Mores ont souvent usé. c. 7.

¶ Postquam à paucis seditiosis, sed doctis, ceperit tyrannus appellari.

* Sanderus de Clave David, lib. ii. c. 15.

† Ibid. c. 14.

boast so much of their own union and consonancy in judgment, with whom nothing is more ordinary than to maintain some opinions quite throughout their order, (as if they were informed by some common "intellectus agens,") should not be divided in a matter of so great moment, so much concerning the monarchy of the see apostolic, to which they are vowed liegemen. But I have greater reason to believe them united in this doctrine, than is the greatness of this probability. For 1. There was an apology printed in Italy, "permissu superiorum," in the year 1610, that says, "They were all enemies of that holy name of Jesus, that condemned Mariana for any such doctrine." I understand not why, but sure I am that the Jesuits do or did think his doctrine innocent; for in their apology put forth in the name of the whole society against the accusations of Anticoton, they deny that the assassin of Henry IV., I mean Ravaiillac, was moved to kill the king by reason of Mariana, and are not ashamed to wish that he had read him.* Perhaps they mean it might have wrought the same effect upon him, which the sight of a drunkard did upon the youth of Lacedæmon; else I am sure it is not very likely he should have been dissuaded from his purpose by reading in Mariana, that it was lawful to do what he intended. 3. I add, they not only thought it innocent, and without positive hurt, but good and commendable; so that it is apparent that it was not the opinion of Mariana alone, but that the Moors of Spain had more disciples than Mariana. 1. He says it himself; for, commending the young monk that killed Henry III., he says he did it "having been informed, by several divines, that a tyrant might lawfully be killed."† 2. The thing itself speaks it, for his book was highly commended by Gretser‡ and Bonarscius,§ both for style and matter,—higher yet by Petrus de Onna, provincial of Toledo, who was so highly pleased with it, he was sorry he wanted leisure¶ to read it the second and third time over, and, with this censure prefixed, was licensed to the press. Further yet, for Stephen Hoyeda, visiter of the Je-

suits for the same province, approved it not only from his own judgment, but as being before approved by grave and learned men of the Jesuits' order,* and so with a special commission from Claudius Aquaviva, their general, with these approbations, and other solemn privileges, it was printed at Toledo† and Mentz;‡ and lastly, inserted into the catalogues of the books of their order by Petrus Ribadineira.

What negligence is sufficient that such a doctrine as this should pass so great supervisors, if in their hearts they disavow it? The children of this world are not such fools in their generations. The fathers of the society cannot but know, how apt these things of themselves are to public mischief, how invidious to the Christian world, how scandalous to their order; and yet they rather excuse, than condemn, Mariana: speaking of him, at the hardest, but very gently, as if his only fault had been his speaking a truth "in tempore non opportuno," "something out of season;" or as if they were forced to yield to the current of the times, and durst not profess openly of what, in their hearts, they were persuaded. I speak of some of them, for others, you see, are of the same opinion. But I would fain learn why they are so sedulous and careful to procure the decrees of the rector and deputies of Paris, rescripts of the bishop, revocation of arrest of the parliament which had been against them, and all to acquit the fathers of the society from these scandalous opinions; as if these laborious devices could make what they have said and done, to be unspoken and undone, or could change their opinions from what indeed they are; whereas they never went "ex animo" to refute these theorems, never spake against them in the real and serious dialect of an adversary, never condemned them as heretical, but what they have done they have been shamed to, or forced upon, as Père Coton by the king of France, and Servin to a confutation of Mariana (from which he desired to be excused, and after the king's death wrote his declaratory letter to no purpose;) the apologists of Paris, by the outcries of Christendom against them; and when it is done, done so coldly in their reprehensions with a greater readiness to excuse all, than condemn any. I say, these

* Quodammodo optandum esse ut ille Alastor Marianam legisset.

† Cum cognito à theologis quos erat sciscitatus, tyrannum jure interimi posse. Cap. 6.

‡ Chauvesaurit poli.

§ Amphith. Honoris, lib. i. c. 12.

¶ Iterum et tertio facturus, si per otium et tempus licuisset.

* Ut approbatus priùs a viris doctis et gravibus ex eodem nostro ordine.

† By Petrus Rhodriques, 1599.

‡ By Balth. Lippius, 1605.

things, to a considering man, do increase the suspicion, if at least that may be called suspicion, for which we have had so plain testimonies of their own.

I add this more, to put the business past all question; that when some things of this nature were objected to them by Arnald, the French king's advocate, they were so far from denying them, or excusing them, that they maintained them in spite of opposition, putting forth a book, entitled, "*Veritas defensa contra actionem Antonii Arnaldi.*" What the things were, for which they stood up patrons, hear themselves speaking,* "Tum enim id non solum potest papa, sed etiam debet, se ostendere superiorem illis principibus. Exceptio hæc stomacho tibi commovet, facit ut ringaris, sed oportet haurias, et de cætero fatearis tibi nec rationem esse, nec conscientiam." Hard words these! The advocate is affirmed to be void both of reason and honesty, for denying the pope's dominion over kings. The reason follows, "The pope could not keep them to their duties, unless he kept them in awe with threatening them the loss of their kingdoms." But this is but the least part of it. They add, "If the subjects had been but disposed as they should have been, there was no time but it might have been profitable to have exercised the sword upon the persons of kings."† Let them construe their meaning, those are their words. But see further.

The damned act of Jacques Clément, the monk, upon the life of Henry III. of France, of Jean Chastel and Ravailac upon Henry IV. are notorious in the Christian world, and yet the first of these was commended by F. Guignard,‡ in a discourse of purpose, and by Mariana, as I before cited him. The second had two apologies made for him, the one by Constantinus Veruna,§ the other,|| without a name indeed, but with the mark and cognizance of the Jesuits' order, and the last was publicly commended in a sermon by a monk of Cologne, as it is reported by the excellent Thuanus.

Not much less than this is that of Baronius, just, I am sure, of the same spirit with James and John, for he calls for a ruin upon the Venetians, for opposing of his holiness. "Arise, Peter, not to feed these wandering sheep, but to destroy them; throw away

thy pastoral staff, and take thy sword." I confess here is some more ingenuity, to oppose murdering to feeding, than to make them all one, as Sanders* doth, but yet the same fiery spirit inflames them both, as if all Rome were on fire, and put the world in a combustion.

Further yet. Guignard, a Jesuit of Clerimont college in Paris, was executed by command of the parliament,† for some conclusions he had written, which were of a high nature treasonable; and yet as if either there were an infallibility in every person of the society, or as if the parliament had done injustice in condemning Guignard, or lastly, as if they approved his doctrine, he was apologized for by Lewis Richeome,‡ and Bonarscius.§ I know they will not say, that every Jesuit is infallible, they are not come to that yet; it is plain then, they are of the same mind with Guignard, or else (which I think they dare not say) the parliament was unjust in the condemnation of him; but if they do, they thus proclaim their approbation of these doctrines he was hanged for; for that he had such; was under his own hand, by his own confession, and of itself evident, as is to be seen in the arrest of the parliament against him.

Lastly, more pertinent to the day is the fact of Garnet,—who, because a Jesuit could have done nothing for which he should not have found an apologist, for even for this his last act of high treason he was apologized for, by Bellarmine,|| Gretser,¶ and Eudæmon Johannes.**

Thus far we have found out persons fit enough to match any malice; Boanerges all, and more than a pareil for James and John: but I shall anon discover the disease to be more epidemical, and the pest of a more catholic infection; and yet if we sum up our accounts, we shall already find the doctrine to be too catholic. For we have already met with Emanuel Sà, a Portuguese; Mariana and Ribadineira, Spaniards; Bonarscius, a Bas Almain; Gretser, a German; Eudæmon Johannes, a false Greek; Guignard, Richeome, and the apologists for Chastel, Frenchmen; Bellarmine and Baronius, Italians; Garnet and Sanders, English.

The doctrine, you see, they would fain

* Page 7, 1st. edit. † Page 67, 1st. edit.
 ‡ Voyez le Procès du Parlem. de Paris contre le père Guignard prêtre Jésuite.
 § Vid. cap. 3.
 || Lugduni, de justâ abdicacione Hen. III. 1610.

* De clave David, c. 14. Vid. page 7.
 † Arrest. de Parliam. 7 de Tanv. 1595.
 ‡ Expostul. Apologet. pro Societ. Jes.
 § Amphith. Honor. lib. i.
 || Apol. adv. R. Anglie. ¶ Stigm. Miseric.
 ** Apol. pro Garnetto.

make catholic; now, if it prove to be but apostolic too, then we have found out an exact parallel for James and John, great disciples and apostles: and whether or no the see apostolic may not sometime be of a fiery and consuming spirit, we have so strange examples, even in our own home, that we need seek no farther for resolution of the "Quære." In the bull of excommunication put forth by Pius Quintus against Queen Elizabeth of blessed memory, there is more than a naked encouragement, as much as comes to a "Volumus et jubemus ut adversus Elizabetham, Angliæ reginam, subditi arma capessant,"—"Bone Jesu! in quæ nos reservasti tempora?" Here is a command to turn rebels, a necessity of being traitors. "Quid eo infelicis, cui jam esse malum necesse est."

The business is put something further home by Catena and Gabutius, who wrote the life of Pius Quintus, were resident at Rome, one of them an advocate in the Roman court; their books both printed at Rome, "con licenza," and "con privilegio."* And now hear their testimonies of the whole business between the queen and his holiness.

"Pius Quintus published a bull against Queen Elizabeth, declared her a heretic, and deprived her of her kingdom, absolved her subjects from their oath of allegiance, excommunicated her, and gave power to any one to rebel against her," &c.† This was but the first step; he therefore thus proceeds; "He procures a gentleman of Florence to move her subjects to a rebellion against her for her destruction."‡ Further yet; he thought this would be such a real benefit to Christendom to have her "destroyed, that the pope was ready to aid in person, to spend the whole revenue of the see apostolic, all the chalices and crosses of the church, and even his very clothes, to promote so pious a business as was the destruction of Queen Elizabeth."§

The witnesses of truth usually agree in one. The same story is told by Antonius Gabutius,|| and some more circumstances

* 1588, et 1605.

† Pio pubblicò una bolla e sentezza contra Elisabetta, dichiarandola heretica, e priva del regno, .. in tal forma concedendo, che ciascuno andar contra le potesse, &c. Girolamo Catena. p. 114.

‡ Il quale . . . muovesse gli animi al sollevamento per distruzione d'Elisabetta, p. 113.

§ L'andare in persona, impegna e tutte le sostanze della sede apostolica, e calici, e i proprj vestimenti, p. 117.

|| De Vitâ et Gestis Pii V. lib. iii. c. 9.

added. First, he names the end of the pope's design, it was "to take her life away, in case she would not turn Roman catholic." "To achieve this, because no legate could come into England, nor any public messenger from the see apostolic, he employed a Florentine merchant to stir her subjects to a rebellion for her perdition."* Nothing but "sollevamento," "rebellion," perdition and destruction to the queen could be thought upon by his holiness.

More yet; for when the Duke of Alva had seized upon the English merchants' goods which were at Antwerp, the pope took the occasion, instigated the king of Spain to aid "the pious attempts of those who conspired against the queen;" they are the words of Cabutius.† This rebellion was intended to be under the conduct of the Duke of Norfolk, "viro catholico," "a Roman catholic;" Gabutius notes it, for fear some heretic might be suspected of the design, and so the catholics lose the glory of the action. However Pius Quintus "intended to use the utmost and most extreme remedies to cure her heresy, and all means to increase and strengthen the rebellion." I durst not have thought so much of his holiness, if his own had not said it; but if this be not worse than the fiery spirit which our blessed Saviour reproved in James and John, I know not what is.

I have nothing to do to specify the spirit of Paulus Quintus in the Venetian cause; this only, Baronius‡ propounded the example of Gregory VII. to him, of which how far short he came, the world is witness. Our own business calls to mind the bulls of Pope Clement VIII., in which the catholics in England were commanded to see, that however the right of succession did entitle any man to the crown of England, yet, if he were not a catholic, they should have none of him, but with all their power they should hinder his coming in. This bull Bellarmine§ doth extremely magnify; and, indeed, it was for his purpose, for it was (if not author) yet the main encourager of Catesby to the powder-treason. For, when Garnet would willingly have known the pope's mind in the business, Catesby eased him of the trouble of sending to Rome, since the pope's mind was clear. "I doubt

* Qui incolarum animos ad Elizabethæ perditionem, rebellionem factâ, commoveret.

† Efflagitabat ab rege, ut Anglorum in Elizabetham piè conspirantium studia foveret.

‡ Hildebrand. § Apol. adv. R. Angl.

not" (said Catesby) "at all of the pope's mind, but that he, who commanded our endeavours to hinder his coming in, is willing enough we should throw him out."* It was but a reasonable collection.

I shall not need to instance in the effects which this bull produced; the treason of Watson and Cleark, two English seminaries, is sufficiently known; it was as a "præludium" or warning-piece to the great "fougade," the discharge of the powder-treason. Briefly, the case was so, that after the publication of the bull of Pius Quintus, these catholics in England durst not be good subjects till F. Parsons and Campian got a dispensation that they might for a while do it; and "rebus sic stantibus," with a safe conscience profess a general obedience in causes temporal: and, after the bull of Clement, a great many of them were not good subjects; and if the rest had not taken to themselves the privilege which the pope† sometimes gave to the archbishop of Ravenna, "either to do as the pope bid them, or to pretend a reason why they would not:" we may say, as Creswell, in defence of Cardinal Allen, "Certainly we might have had more bloody tragedies in England, if the moderation of some more discreetly tempered had not been interposed."‡ However, it is no thank to his holiness; his spirit blew high enough.

But I will open this secret no farther, if I may have but leave to instance once more. If I mistake not, it was Sixtus Quintus who sometimes pronounced a speech in full consistory,§ in which he compares the assassinat of Jacques Clément upon Henry III. to the exploits of Eleazar and Judith; where, after having aggravated the faults of the murdered king, concluded him to have died impenitent, denied him the solemnities of mass, dirge, and requiem for his soul, at last he ends with a prayer, "that God would finish what in this (bloody) manner had been begun." I will not aggravate the foulness of the thing by any circumstances (though I cannot but wonder that his holiness should say a prayer of so much abomination); it is of itself too bad.

If his holiness be wronged in the business, I have no hand in it; the speech was printed at Paris,|| three months after the murder of the king, and avouched for au-

thentic by the approbation of three doctors, Boucher, Decreil, and Ancelein; let them answer it; I wash my hands of the accusation, and only consider the danger of such doctrines, if set forth with so great authority, and practised by so uncontrollable persons.

If the disciples of Christ, if apostles, if the see apostolic, if the fathers confessors, prove "boutefesus" and incendiaries, I'll no more wonder if the people call for fire to consume us, but rather wonder if they do not. And indeed, although it be no rare or unusual thing for a papist to be "de facto" loyal and duteous to his prince, yet it is a wonder that he is so, since such doctrines have been taught by so great masters; and at the best he depends but upon the pope's pleasure for his loyalty, which upon what security it rests, you may easily guess from the antecedents.

Thus much for consideration of the persons who asked the question; they were Christ's disciples, they were James and John.

But when James and John "saw this." Our next inquiry shall be of the cause of this their angry question. This we must learn from the foregoing story. Christ was going to the feast at Jerusalem, and passing through a village of Samaria, asked lodging for a night;* but they, perceiving, that he was a Jew, would by no means entertain him, as being of a different religion. For although God appointed that all of the seed of Jacob should go up to Jerusalem to worship, ἀγγελῶν γὰρ ἐν ἐνὶ τόπῳ προσκυνῶντες,† yet the tribes of the separation first under Jeroboam, worshipped in groves and high places; and after the captivity, being a mixed people, half Jew, half gentile, procured a temple to be built them by Sanballat, their president,‡ near the city Sichem, upon the mountain Gerizim, styling themselves "pertinentes ad montem benedictum,"§ by allusion to the words of God by Moses, "they shall stand upon the mount Gerizim to bless the people, and these upon mount Ebal to curse." And in case arguments should fail to make this schism plausible, they will make it good by turning their adversaries out of doors: they shall not come near their blessed mount of Gerizim, but fastening an anathema on them, let them go to Ebal, and curse there. And now I

* Proced. agt. Traytors.

† Innoc. Decretal. de rescript. cap. si quando.

‡ Philop. p. 212, n. 306. § Sep. 11, 1489.

|| By Nichol. Nivelles, and Rollin Thierry.

* Ver. 50.

† Chrysost. in hunc locum.

‡ Josephi Antiq. lib. xi. c. 6.

§ Postellus de Linguis. lib. xii. Deut. 27.

wonder not that these disciples were very angry at them, who had lost their true religion, and neglected the offices of humanity to them that kept it. They might go near now to make it a cause of religion; *σεμνότερον ὄνομα τῆς εὐσεβείας*, as Nazianzen* speaks, might seem to apologize for them; and so it might, if it had not led them to indiscreet and uncharitable zeal. But men care not how far they go, if they do but once think they can make God a party of their quarrel. For when religion, which ought to be the antidote of our malice, proves its greatest incentive, our uncharitableness must needs run faster to mischief, by how much that which stopped its course before, drives it on with the greater violence. And, therefore, as it is ordinary for charity to be called coldness in religion, so it is as ordinary for a pretence of religion to make cold charity.

The present case of the disciples, and the same spirit, which, for the same pretended cause, is taken up by the persons of the day, proves all this true; with whom fire and faggot is esteemed the best argument to convince the understanding, and the inquisitors of heretical pravity, the best doctors and subtlest disputants, determining all with a "*viris ignem, fossam mulieribus.*"† For thus we had like to have suffered; it was mistaken religion that moved these traitors to so damnable a conspiracy, not for any defence of their own cause, but for extirpation of ours. For else what grievances did they groan under? "*In quos eorum populum exæstantem sollicitavimus? quibus vitæ periculum attulimus?*"‡ it was Nazianzen's question to the apostate.‡ Give me leave to consider it as applicable to our present case, and try if I can make a just discovery of the cause that moved these traitors to so accursed a conspiracy.

1. Then there was no cause at all given them by us; none put to death for being a Roman catholic, nor any of them punished for his religion.

This hath been the constant attestation of our princes and state, since the first laws made against recusants; and the thing itself will bear them record.§

* Orat. 12.

† Decret. Carol. Quinti, pro Flandris.

‡ Orat. 2. in Julian.

§ Vid. L. Burleigh's Book called "Execution for Treason, not Religion." King James' Declaration to all Christian Kings and Princes, and the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury's Speech in Star-chamber in Burton's case.

From "primo of Elizabeth to undecimo," the papists made no scruple of coming to our churches; recusancy was not then so much as a chrisom, not an embryo. But when Pius Quintus sent forth his briefs of excommunication and deposition of the queen, then first they forbore to pray with us, or to have any religious communion. This, although every where known, yet being a matter of fact, and so as likely to be denied by others, as affirmed by us, without good evidence, see it therefore affirmed expressly by an act of parliament in "decimo-tertio of Elizabeth," which specifies this as one inconvenience and ill consequences of the bull; "whereby hath grown great disobedience and boldness in many, not only to withdraw and absent themselves from divine service, now most godly set forth, and used within this realm, but also have thought themselves discharged of all obedience," &c. Not only recusancy, but likewise disobedience; therefore both recusancy and disobedience.

Two years, therefore, after this bull, this statute was made, if it was possible, to nullify the effects of it, to hinder its execution, and, if it might be, by this means to keep them, as they had been before, in communion with the church of England, and obedience to her majesty. This was the first statute that concerned them in special, but yet their religion was not meddled with; for this statute against execution of the pope's bulls, was no more than what had been established by act of parliament in the sixteenth year of Richard II., by which it was made "*præmunire*" to purchase bulls from Rome; and the delinquents in this kind, with all their abettors, factots, procurators, and maintainers, to be referred to the king's council for further punishment." There was indeed this severity expressed in the act of decimo-tertio of the queen, that the putting them in execution should be capital; and yet this severity was no more than what was inflicted upon the bishop of Ely, in Edward III.'s time, for publishing of a bull against the Earl of Chester, without the king's leave; and on the bishop of Carlisle, in the time of Henry IV., for the like offence. Thus far our laws are innocent.

But when this statute did not take the good effect for which it was intended, neither keeping them in their ancient communion nor obedience, but for all this, Mayne, Campian, and many others, came

as the pope's emissaries for execution of the bull, the state proceeded to a further severity, making laws against recusancy, against seditious and traitorous books, and against the residence of Romish priests in England; making the first finable with a pecuniary mulct, the two latter capital, as being made of a treasonable nature. Of these in order:

1. The mulct which was imposed for recusancy, was not soul money, or paid for religion; and that for these reasons: 1. Because it is plain, religion did not make them absent themselves from our churches, unless they had changed their religion since the bull came over: for if religion could consist with their communion with us before the bull, as it is plain it did, then why not after the bull? unless it be part of their religion to obey the pope, rather than to obey God commanding us to obey our prince. 2. Their recusancy was an apparent mischief to our kingdom, and it was the prevention or diversion of this that was the only or special end of these laws.

The mischief is apparent these two ways: 1. Because by their recusancy they gave attestation that they held the bull to be valid; for else why should they, after the bull, deny their communion, which, before, they did not? Either they must think the queen, for a just cause, and by a just power, excommunicate; or why did they separate from her communion? Now if the queen, by virtue of the bull, was excommunicate, why should they stop here? She was by the same deposed, they absolved from all allegiance to her, and commanded to take arms against her. I confess it is no good argument of itself to say, the pope might excommunicate the queen, therefore depose her from her kingdom: but this concludes with them sufficiently, with whom excommunication not only drives from spirituals, but deprives of temporals, and is not to mend our lives, but to take them away. I speak how it is in the case of princes, and I shall anon prove it; for they being public persons, from whose deposition more may be gotten, are like to suffer more. "Ut ex tunc ipse (pontifex) vassallos ab ejus fidelitate denuntiet absolutos, et terram exponat catholicis occupandam;" as they are taught by Pope Innocent III., in the eighth Lateran council. Such is their excommunication for matter of heresy, as was this pretended in the queen's case, so that in respect of them the danger was apparent.

2. It is plain that recusancy and disobedience came actually hand in hand: I say not that the one was the issue of the other, but that they were coetaneous, for the same persons that moved them to recusancy by virtue of the bull, moved them to the execution of it "per omnia." Now see whither this would tend. They by recusancy were better able to judge of their forces in England, and what party they were able to make for execution of the bull; whilst by that, as by a discriminative cognizance, they were pointed at as abettors of the catholic cause.

Thus far they suffered not for their religion or conscience, unless it were against their conscience to be good subjects; and then it was not religion, at least not Christian, that was inconsistent with their loyalty: and so hitherto, in respect of us, their machination was altogether causeless.

2. For the second, (of which sometimes they accuse our laws,)—I mean the writing and publishing of seditious and traitorous books; I shall not need to say any thing in defence of its being made capital; for they were ever so, and of a high nature treasonable, and the publishers of them, by the canons of the church, were "ipso facto" excommunicate.* This I noted, because the same censure involves more, by virtue of the same canon: I mean not only the seditious libellers, but impugnors of the king's regalities; as also the bringers, publishers, and executioners of the bull; as is to be seen in the constitution of Archbishop Stephen, in a council held at Oxford.—But, secondly, whether they were or were not, it matters nothing: this I suppose was no part of their religion, therefore this might be made treason, and yet their religion and peace of conscience undisturbed. 3. But the next is the main outcry of all, the very "conclamatum est" of the catholic cause, if suffered: it was made treason to be a priest, or at least if any of their priests should be found in England, he should be adjudged a traitor; and these laws were not yet repealed, but then in execution.

When certain sycophants told Philip of Macedon, that some of his discontented subjects called him tyrant, his answer was, "Rudes sunt Macedones, et scapham vo-

* Apud Linwood de sentent. excommunicat. Item omnes illos excommunicationis in nodamus sententiã, qui pacem et tranquillitatem Domini Regis et Regni, injuriose perturbare presumunt, et qui jura Domini Regis injuste detinere conteadunt.

cant scapham." I wish these men who object this, had the same ingenuity, and would acknowledge that the rudeness of a Macedonian tell-truth is no apparent calumny: and truly, as the case then stood, it was no worse. For consider that the statute against priests was not made till sixteen years after the bull of Pius V., and after much evidence, both by the confession of some priests themselves, and divers lay persons, that at least many of them came into England with this errand, that they might instigate the queen's liege people to the execution of it. This is very plain in the case of Mayne the Jesuit, and M. Tregon, who were executed at Launceston for the same business.*

The state could not certainly know what would be the issue, but yet could not but think it likely to produce more and worse consequences for the future. "Ideo leges in facta constitui, quia futura in incerto sint."† The queen then providing for her safety, banished these priests out of her dominions. This was all; and this done with so much lenity and moderation, as if of purpose to render good for their evil; such was her innocence;—and yet to provide for her safety, such was her prudence. She gave them forty days' time of preparation for their journey, imposed no penalty for their longer stay, in case that any of them were less healthful, or that the winds were cross, or that the weather served not: provided that during their stay, they gave security for their due obedience to her laws, and that they should attempt nothing against her person or government, for this was all she aimed at; but if they obeyed not the proscription, having no just cause to the contrary, such as were expressed in the act, then it should be adjudged their errand was not right, and, therefore, not their religion, but their disobedience, treasonable.

This was the highest ἀρχή of the severity of this state against them. Now first I shall briefly show, that this proscription, which was the highest penalty, was for just cause, as the case then stood, and deserved on their part. 2. It was but reasonable, in case they obeyed not the proscription, their stay should be made treason. 1. Because the priests did generally preach the pope's power, either directly over temporals, or else in order to spirituals,—of which the pope being judge, it would come to the same issue, and this

was dangerous to the peace of the kingdom, and entrenched too much upon the regality. In particular, the case of bringing from the see of Rome, and publishing of bulls, was by the lords of the parliament, in the sixteenth year of Richard the Second, judged to be "clearly in derogation of the king's crown and of his regality, as it is well known, and hath been of a long time known;" and, therefore, they protested "together and every one severally by himself, that they would be with the same crown and regality, in these cases specially, and in all other cases which shall be attempted against the same crown and regality, in all points, with all their power." I hope then if the state, in the time of Queen Elizabeth, having far greater reason than ever, shall judge that these bulls, the publishing of them, the preaching of their validity, and reconciling, by virtue of them, her subjects to the see of Rome, be derogatory to her crown and regality,—I see no reason she should be frightened from her just defence with the bugbear of pretended religion; for if it was not against religion then, why is it now? I confess there is a reason for it, to wit, because now the pope's power is an article of faith, as I shall show anon, but then it was not with them, any more than now it is with us: but whether this will convince any man of reason, I leave it to himself to consider.

But one thing is observable in that act of parliament of Richard the Second, I mean this clause, "As it is well known, and hath been of a long time known." The pope's encroachments upon the state of England had been an old sore, and by its old almost habituate; but yet it grieved them nevertheless, nor was the less a fever for being hectic: but so it is, that I am confident, upon very good grounds, it may be made as apparent as the noon sun, for these six hundred years and upwards, that the bishops of Rome have exercised so extreme and continual tyranny and exactions in this kingdom, that our condition was under him worse than the state of the Athenians under their thirty tyrants, or than our neighbours are now under their Belgic tributes. So many grievances of the people, expilations of the church, abuses to the state, entrenchments upon the royalties of the crown, were continued, that it was a great blessing of Almighty God, our kingdom was delivered from them upon so easy terms, which Grost-head, bishop of Lincoln, thought would never be done, but in "Ore gladii cruentandi:"

* 1577.

† Tacitus, lib. iii. Annal.

and now to have all these mischiefs return with more strength upon us, by the attempts of these priests, had been the highest point of indiscretion and sleepiness. I said, *with more strength*,—because what anciently at the highest was thought but a privilege of the church, began now to be an article of faith; and, therefore, if admitted, would have bound stronger and without all possibility of redress.

And now, if after all this, any man should doubt of the justice of these laws against the priests obtruding upon the state of the pope's power, I only refer him to the parliament of Paris, where let him hold his plea against those great sages of the law, for their just censures upon Florentinus Jacobus, Thomas Blanzius,* and John Tanquerell, who were all condemned to a solemn honorary penance and satisfaction to the state, and not without extreme difficulty escaped death, for the same cause: but this is not all. I add,

Secondly; the pope had his agent in England, to stir up the subjects to rebel against the queen, as I proved before by the testimonies of Catena and Gabutius. It is not then imaginable that he should so poorly intend his own designs, to employ one on purpose, and he but a merchant; and that the priests, who were the men, if any, most likely to do the business, should be unemployed. I speak not of the argument from matter of fact; (for it is apparent that they were employed, as I showed but now;) but it is plain also that they must have been employed, if we had had no other argument but a presumption of the pope's ordinary discretion. Things then remaining in this condition, what security could the queen or state have, without the absence of those men who must be the instruments of their mischief?

Thirdly, there was great reason those men might be banished, who might from their own principles plead immunity from all laws, and subordination to the prince. But that so these priests might, I only bring two witnesses, leading men of their own side. Thus Bellarmine:† “The pope hath exempted all clerks from subjection to princes.” The same is taught by Emanuel Sà in his “Aphorisms,” verbo “clericus.” I must not dissemble that this aphorism, however it passed the press at first, yet in the edition of Paris it was left out. The cause is known to every man: for that it was merely to serve

their ends is apparent; for their French freedom was there taken from them, they durst not “parler tout” so near the parliament; but the aphorism is to this day retained in the editions of Antwerp and Cologne.

If this be their doctrine, as it is plain it is taught by these leading authors, I mean Sà and Bellarmine, I know no *raison* but it may be very just and most convenient to deny those men the country from whose laws they plead exemption.

Secondly: It was but reasonable, in case they obeyed not the proscription, their disobedience should be made capital. For if they did not obey, then either they sinned against their conscience, in disobeying their lawful prince, and so are *ἀνόμοιοι-καίριτοι*, and inexcusable from the law's penalty, which may be extended at the pleasure of the law-giver, where there is no positive injustice in the disproportion; or if they did not sin against their conscience, then of necessity must they think her to be no lawful prince, or not their lawful prince, nor they her subjects, and so “*ipso facto*” are guilty of high treason, and their execution was for “treason, not religion;” and so the principle is evicted which I shall beg leave to express in St. Cyprian's language, “*Non erat illa fidei corona, sed pœna perfidiæ; nec religiosæ virtutis exitus gloriosus, sed desperationis interitus.*”**

For if Valentius banish Eusebius from Samosata, and Eusebius obey not the edict, if Valentius puts him to death, it is not for his being a Christian that he suffers death; but for staying at Samosata, against the command of Valentius.† Such was the case of the priests, whom for just cause, as I have proved, and too apparent proof of seditious practices, the queen banished. Now if the queen was their lawful sovereign, then were they bound to obey her decree of exile, though it had been unjust, as was the case of Eusebius; or if they did not obey, not to think the laws unjust for punishing their disobedience. I say again their disobedience, not their religion; for that it was not their religion that was struck at by the justice of these laws, but the security of the queen and state only aimed at,—besides what I have already said, is apparent to the evidence of sense. For when Hart and Bosgrave, Jesuits both, came into England against the law, they were apprehended and imprisoned: for the laws with-

* 1561.

† Lib. i. c. 28. De Clericis.

* De Simplific. Prælat.

† Theodoret, lib. iv. c. 14.

out just execution were of no force for the queen's safety; but when these men had acknowledged the queen's legitimate power, and put in their security for their due obedience, they obtained their pardon and their liberty. The same proceedings were in the case of Horton and Rishton, all which I hope were not apostates from their order or religion; but so they must have been, or not have escaped death, in case that their religion had been made capital. Lastly, this statute extended only to such priests who were made priests, since "Primo of Elizabeth," and were born in England. It was not treason for a French priest to be in England, but yet so it must have been, if religion had been the thing they aimed at. But it is so foul a calumny, I am ashamed to stand longer to refute it. The proceedings of the church and state of England were just, honourable, and religious, full of mercy and discretion, and unless it were that as C. Fimbria complained of Q. Scævola, we did not open our breasts wide enough to receive the danger, there is no cause imaginable, I mean on our parts, to move them to so damned a conspiracy, or indeed to any just complaint.

Secondly: If these were not the causes, (as they would fain abuse the world into a persuasion that they were,) what was? I shall tell you, if you will give me leave ἀναθεὶν τῆν πηγήν διορῶσαι, "to derive it from its very head," and then I will leave it to you to judge whether or not my augury fails me.

First, I guess that the traitors were encouraged and primarily moved to this treason, from the prevailing opinion which is most generally received, on that side, of the lawfulness of deposing princes that are heretical. I say, generally received, and I shall make my words good, or else the blame shall lay on themselves for deceiving me, when they declare their own minds. I instance, first, in the fathers of the society.* Bellarmine teacheth that kings "have no wrong done them, if they be deprived of their kingdoms, when they prove heretics."—Creswell, in his "Philopater," goes further, saying, "that if his heresy be manifest, he is deposed without any explicit judicial sentence of the pope, the law itself hath passed the sentence of deposition."† And therefore,

* Nec ulla eis injuria fiet, si deponantur. Lib. v. de Rom. Pontif. c. 7.

† Ex ipsâ vi juris et ante omnem sententiam supremi pastoris ac judicis contra ipsam prolatam. Lugduni impres. 1593, p. 106. n. 157. Amphith. Honor. p. 117.

Bonarcius is very angry* at Arnald, the French king's advocate, for affirming that religion could be no just cause to depose a lawful prince; if he had been brought up in their schools, he might have learnt another lesson; "papa potest mutare regna, et uni auferre, atque alteri conferre, tanquam summus princeps spiritualis, si id necessarium sit ad animarum salutem," saith Bellarmine.† He gives his reason too, "Quia alioqui possent mali principes impunè fovere hæreticos;"‡ which is a thing not to be suffered by his holiness.

This doctrine is not the private opinion of these doctors, but "est certa, definita, atque indubitata virorum clarissimorum sententia," saith F. Creswell,§ I suppose he means in his own order; and yet I must take heed what I say, for Eudæmon Johannes|| is very angry with Sir Edward Cooke, for saying it is the doctrine of the Jesuits. Do they then deny it? No, surely, but "Non est Jesuitarum propria," it is not theirs alone, "sed, ut Garnetus respondit, totius Ecclesiæ, et quidem ab antiquissimis temporibus consensione recepta doctrina nostra est;" and there he reckons up seven-and-twenty famous authors of the same opinion. Creswell, in his Philopater,¶ says as much if not more: "Hinc etiam infert universa theologorum et jurisconsultorum ecclesiasticorum schola, et est certum, et de fide, quemcunque principem christianum, si a religione catholicâ manifestè deflexerit, et alios advocare voluerit, excidere statim omni potestate ac dignitate, ex ipsâ vi juris, tum humani, tum Divini." You see how easily they swallow this great camel. Add to this, that Bellarmine** himself proves, that the pope's temporal power, or of disposing of princes' kingdoms, is a catholic doctrine: for he reckons up of this opinion, one-and-twenty Italians, fourteen French, nine Germans, seven English and Scotch, nineteen Spaniards, and these not "è fæce plebis," but "è primoribus," all very famous and very leading authors.

You see it is good divinity amongst them, and I have made it good, that it is a general opinion, received by all their side, if you will believe themselves; and now let us see if it will pass for good law, as well as good divinity.

* Sed heus, Arnalde, à cujus institutione haussisti nullam posse interdicere causam, quæ regem cogat abire regno? Non religionis?

† Bellar. de Pont. R. lib. v. c. 6. † Cap. 7.

§ Ubi suprâ, p. 107. || Apol. pro Garnet. c. 3.

¶ Num. 157.

** Contra Barclaium in princip. fere.

It is not for nothing that the church of France protests against some of their received canons; if they did not, I know not what would become of their princes. Their "lilies" may be to-day, and to-morrow be cast into the oven, if the pope either call their prince "Huguenot," as he did Henry IV.; or "tyrant," as Henry III.; or, "unprofitable for the church or kingdom," as he did King Childeric, whom Pope Zachary, "de facto" did depose for the same cause, and inserted his act into the body of the law as a precedent for the future, "Quod etiam ex auctoritate frequenti agit sancta ecclesia;" it is impaled in a parenthesis in the body of the canon,* lest deposition of princes should be taken for news. The law is clear for matter of fact; the lawfulness follows.

"Hæreticis licitum est auferri quæ habent;"† and this not only from a private man, but even from princes, "Nam qui in majore dignitate est, plus punitur;" or take it, if you please, in more proper terms. "Dominus papa principem secularem deponere potest propter hæresim;"‡ and so another may be chosen, like the Palatines and Castellans in Poland, just as if the king were dead, "Nam per hæresim plusquam civiliter mortuus censetur," saith Simancha§, and that, by virtue of a constitution of Gregory IX., by which every man is freed from all duty, homage, allegiance, or subordination whatsoever due to a heretic, whether due by a natural, civil, or political right; "Aliquo pacto aut quâcunque firmitate vallatum.—Et sic nota," saith the gloss, "Quod papa potest absolvere laicum de juramento fidelitatis."

I end those things with the attestation of Bellarmine,|| "Est res certa et explorata, posse pontificem maximum justis de causis temporalibus judicare, atque ipsos temporales principes aliquando deponere."—And again, that we may be sure to know of what nature this doctrine is, he repeats it; "Sic igitur de potestate in temporalibus, quod ea sit in papâ, non opinio, sed certitudo apud catholicos est." And now let any man say, if this be not a catholic doctrine, and a likely antecedent to have treason to be its consequent.

But I fix not here, only this, it is plain that this proposition is no friend to loyalty; but

* Can. Alius. Caus. 15. q. 6.

† Cl. I. in Summa, 23. q. 7.

‡ Gl. cap. excommunicamus, tit. de hæreticis lib. v.

§ Cap. 45. de Pœnit.

|| Contra Barlaam, cap. 3.

flows is absolutely inconsistent with the case our prince be of a different persuasion in matters of religion. For,

It is not only lawful to depose princes heretical, but it is necessary, and the canons are bound to do it "sub mortali." I know not whether it be so generally, I am sure it is as confidently taught as the former, as by as great doctors.

Ecclesia nimis gravior erraret, si admitteret aliquem regem, qui vellet impunè libet sectam, et defendere hæreticam" so Bellarmine.* And again,† "Non Christianis tolerare regem hæreticum, sine turba pertrahere subditos ad suam hæresim." F. Creswell‡ puts the business in this purpose, "Certè non tantum licet depone etiam juris Divini necessitate ac precepto, imò conscientiarum vinculo acriter vitare, sed et tremo animarum suarum periculo Bellarmine, Christianis omnibus hoc imperat, ut præstare rem possint." Uler peril of their souls they must not suffer a prince to reign over them. "Posset, et debent eum arcere ex hominum Christianorum dominatu, ne alios inficiat," &c.‡

He that saith subjects "may, and are bound to depose their princes, and to drive them from all rule over Christians, if they be heretical," means something more: for what if the prince resist? still he is bound to depose him if he be able. How if the prince make war? the catholic subject must do his duty nevertheless, and war too, if he be able. He that saith he may wage a war with his prince, I doubt not but thinks he may kill him; and if the fortune of the war lights so upon him, the subject cannot be blamed for doing so.

It is plain that killing a prince is a certain consequence of deposing him, unless the prince be bound in conscience to think himself a heretic, when the pope declares him so, and be likewise bound not to resist; and he that bids all this, will perform these his obligations, and as certainly think himself heretical, as he really give over his kingdom quietly, and he is bound. For in case any of these should fail, there can be but very slender assurance of his life. I would be loath to obtrude upon men the odious consequences of their opinions, or to make any thing worse which is capable of a fairer construction; but I crave pardon in this particular; the life of a prince is sacred, and is not to be violated.

* Lib. v. de Rom. Pont. c. 10.

† Philopat. p. 110. n. 10.

‡ Pag. 106. n. 157.

as in thought, or by the most remote
 quence of a public doctrine: but her
 it is so immediate and natural a con
 of the former, that it must not be dis
 But what shall we think, if even the
 phemy be taught "in terminis?" See

In the year 1407, when the Duke
 leans had been slain by John of Bu
 and the fact notorious beyond the
 of concealment, he thought it his be
 employ his chaplain to justify the
 tending that Orleans was a tyrant
 stood him in small stead, for by the
 ment of Gerson, it was decreed in the
 of Constance, that tyranny was no
 cause for a man to kill a prince. But
 that even this decree will not stand
 in much stead. First, because the
 runs "ut nemo privatâ autoritate,"
 if the pope commands it, then it is
 publicum," and so they are never
 secure for all this. Secondly, beca
 riana* tells us, that this decree is
 "Namque id decretum (Concilii Co
 ensis) Romano Pontifici Martino qu
 batum non invenio, non Eugenio au
 soribus, quorum consensu concilio
 clesiasticorum sanctitas stat." The
 cause though the council had the
 killing of tyrannical princes, even
 authority, though this decree had b
 firmed by the pope, which yet it wa
 princes are never the more secure, i
 convicted of heresy; and, therefore,
 but add heresy to their tyranny,
 council, "Non obstante," they may
 by any man; for so it is determined
 apology made for Chastel, "Licet
 privatis et singulis, reges et princip
 seos et tyrannidis condemnatos, occi
 obstante decreto concilii Constantie
 and the author of the book "De ju
 dicatione Henrici III., affirms it
 lawful but meritorious.

How much less than this is that
 mine †‡ "Si temporalia obsint fini
 spiritualis potestas potest, et debet
 temporalem, omni ratione ac viâ." I
 ratione," then this of killing him
 necessity, or greater inconvenience,
 be excluded. But to confess the
 openly and freely, it is known
 the consent of the
 the pope
 will

um," and sufficient to sentence a prince, and
 convict him of heresy or tyranny. That
 opinion which makes the people judge, is
 very rare amongst them, but almost ge
 nerally exploded; * that opinion which makes
 the learned to be their judge is, I think, pro
 per to Mariana, or to a few more with him;
 but that the sentence of the pope is a suf
 ficient conviction of him, and a complete
 judicial act, is the most catholic opinion on
 that side, as I shall show anon. Now whether
 the pope, or learned men, or the people, be
 to pass this sentence upon the prince, it is
 plain that it is a universal doctrine amongst
 them, that after this sentence (whosoever it
 be) it is then without question lawful to kill
 him; and the most that ever they say is, that
 it is indeed not lawful to kill a king, not law
 ful for a private man, of his own head, with
 out the public sentence of his judge; but
 when this judge (whom they affirm to be the
 pope) hath passed his sentence, then they
 doubt not of its being lawful. That I say
 true, I appeal to Gregory de Valentia, †
 Tolet, ‡ Bellarmine, § Suarez, ¶ Salmeron, **
 Serarius, †† Molina, †† Emanuel Sâ, §§ Azo
 rius, ||| Martinus Delrius, ¶¶ Lessius, ***
 Gretser, ††† Becanus, ††† Sebastian Heis
 sius, §§§ Richeome, ||||| Eudæmon Johan
 nes, ¶¶¶ Salianus, **** Filliucius, ††† Adam
 Tanner, †††† and their great T. Aquinas. §§§§

All these, and many more that I have
 seen, teach the lawfulness of killing kings
 after public sentence; and then, to beautify
 the matter, profess that they deny the law
 fulness of "regicidium," by a private au
 thority. For if the pope sentence him, then
 he is no longer a king, and so the killing of
 him is not "regicidium;" and if any man
 doth kill him after such sentence, then he
 kills him not "privatâ autoritate," or "sua

* Vide P. D. M. Image of both Churches.

† Tom. iii. disp. 5. q. 8. punct. 3.

‡ In Sum. lib. v. c. 6.

§ Apolog. ad R. Angl. c. 13.

¶ Defens. Fidei. lib. vi. c. 4.

** In 13 cap. ad. Rom. disp. 5.

†† Quest. p. in c. 3. Jud.

‡‡ De Just. et Jure, tom. iv. c. 3.

§§ Aphoris. verb. Tyrannus.

||| Instit. Moral. 2. p. lib. xi. c. 2.

¶¶ In Hercul. Furent.

*** De Insul. et Jure, c. 3. de

††† Chauvesouris pol.

†††† In Resp. ad. Ap.

§§§ Contr. Calvin.

¶¶¶ Expositio

¶¶¶¶

judicio publico;" which is all they affirm to be unlawful.

And thus they hope to stop the clamour of the world against them, yet to have their opinions stand entire, the way to their own ends fair, but the prince no jot the more secure of his life. I do them no wrong, I appeal to the authors themselves; there I will be tried. For that either the people, or that a company of learned men, or to be sure the pope, may license a man to kill the king, they speak it with one voice and tongue. And now after all this we may better guess what manner of counsel or threatening (for I know not which to call it) that was which Bellarmine* gave sometimes to King James of blessed memory. "Si securus regnare velit rex, si vitæ suæ et suorum consulere cupiat, sinat catholicos frui religione suâ!"—If this be good counsel, then in case the catholics were hindered from the free profession of their religion, at the best it was full of danger, if not certain ruin. But I will no more rake this Augean stable; in my first part I showed it was too catholic a doctrine, and too much practised by the great Cisalpine prelate. I add no more, lest truth itself should blush, fearing to become incredible.

Now, if we put all these things together, and then we should prove to be heretics in their account, we are in a fair case, both prince and people; if we can but guess rightly at this, we shall need, I think, to look no further why fire was called for to consume both our king and country, nor why we may fear it another time.

The author of the "Epistle of Comfort to the Catholics in Prison," printed by authority, in the year of the powder treason, is very earnest to persuade his catholics, not to come to our churches, or communicate with us in any part of our divine service; affrighting them with the strange "terriculamenta" of half Christians, hypocrites, deniers of Christ, in case they joined with us in our Liturgy.† Strange affrightments these, yet not much more than what is true, if they esteem us heretics. For if they think us so, we are so to them; and they communicating with us, do as much sin, as if we were so indeed.

* In lib. sub nomine Torti, edit. Colon. Agrip. 1610. p. 21.

† Εἴ τις Κληρικὸς ἢ Λαϊκὸς εἰσέλθῃ εἰς τὴν συναγωγὴν Ἰουδαίων, ἢ αἱρετικῶν συνεξασθαι, καὶ ζυμεῖσθαι, καὶ ἀφορίζεσθαι. 36 Can. Apost. 33. Laodic. Ὅτι οὐ δεῖ αἱρετικὸς συνεχεῖσθαι.

But if we be not heretics, what need all this stir, "permissu superiorum:" the counsel of recusancy was unreasonable, dangerous, schismatical, and, as the case then stood, very imprudent. In charity to their discretion, we cannot but think them uncharitable in their opinion of us.

But there is no need we should dispute ourselves into a conjecture, themselves speak out and plain enough. Hear Bellarmine,* under the visor of Tortus, affirming that the king's edict commanded the catholics to go to heretics' churches, speaking of ours. But more plain is that of Champ, the Sorbonist, in his treatise of "Vocation of Bishops." "Therefore, as Arianism is a condemned heresy, and the professors thereof be heretics,—so likewise is protestantism a condemned heresy, and those that profess it be also heretics."†

By this time we see too plainly that the state of protestant princes is full of danger, where these men have to do. They may be deposed and expelled from the government of their kingdoms, they must be deposed by the Catholics, under peril of their souls, it may be done any way that is most convenient; they may be rebelled against, fought with, slain. For all this, it were some ease, if here we might fix a "non ultra." For, perhaps, these princes might put in a plea for themselves, and go near to prove themselves to be no heretics. All is one, for though they do, yet unless they can persuade his holiness not to judge them so, or declare them heretics, all is to no purpose, for to him they must stand or fall. "Nam judicare a rex pertrahat ad hæresim necne, pertinet ad pontificem." So Bellarmine. They need not stay till his heresy be of itself manifest, he is then to be used like a heretic, "when by the pope of Rome he shall be judged heretical."

But what matter is it if the pope be judge, for if they may be deposed, as good he as any else? What grievance then can this be to the state of princes more than the former? Yes, very much. 1. Because the pope, by his order to spirituals, may take away kingdoms upon more pretences than actual heresy. It is a large title, and may do any thing. Bellarmine‡ expresses it handsomely, and it is the doctrine of their great Aquinas.§ "The pope," saith he, by his spiritual power may dispose of the

* Apol. ad. R. Angl.

† Cap. 11. p. 149. Douay, 1616.

‡ Ubi supra.

§ De Regim. Princip.

temporalities of all the Christians in the world, when it is requisite to the end of the spiritual power."—The words are plain that he may do it for his own ends, (for his is the spiritual power,) that is, for the advancement of the see apostolic; and thus (to be sure) he did actually with Frederick Barbarossa, John of Navarre, the Earl of Thoulouse, and our own King John. 2. The pope pretends to a power, that to avoid the probable danger of the increase of heresy, he may take away a territory from the right owner, as is reported by the Cardinal D'Ossat; and this is soon pretended, for who is there that cannot make probabilities, especially when a kingdom is at stake? 3. We find examples, that the pope hath excommunicated princes, and declared them heretics, when all the heresy hath been a not laying their crowns at the feet of St. Peter. The case of Lewis IV. is every where known, whom John XXIII. excommunicated. Platina* tells the reason. He called himself emperor without the pope's leave, and aided the Italian deputies to recover Milan. Doubtless a most damnable and fundamental heresy. 4. How, if it proves in the pope's account to be a heresy to defend the immediate right of princes to their kingdoms, dependent only on God, not on the see apostolic. If this be no heresy, nor like heresy to say it, I would fain learn the meaning of Baronius† concerning the book of Johannes de Roa, who sometime had been a Jesuit, but then changed his order, and became Augustan, saying, "it was sentenced to the fire before it had escaped the press." And good reason, "Nihil enim tale à patribus societatis didicit." Good men, they never taught him any such doctrine as is contained in that pestilent book, "de juribus principalibus defendendis et moderandis juste." Now, if this be heresy, or like it, to preach such a doctrine, then likely it will be judged heresy in princes to do so, that is, to hold their crowns without acknowledgment of subordination to St. Peter's chair. And if it be not heresy to do so, it is in their account as bad, for so the Jesuits, in their "Veritas defensa" against the action of Arnald the advocate, affirm "in terminis," that the actions of some kings of France against the pope, in defence of their regalities, were but "examples of rebellion, and spots to disgrace the purity

of the French lilies." 5. But in case the pope should chance to mistake in his sentence against a prince, for the cause of heresy, yet for all this mistake, he can secure any man to take away the prince's life or kingdom. His lawyers will be his security for this point. For although, in this case, the deposition of the prince should be, and be acknowledged to be, against God's law, the prince being neither tyrant nor heretic, yet his holiness commanding it, takes away the unlawfulness of it, by his dispensation. So D. Marta;* and for this doctrine he quotes Hostiensis, Felinus, Gratus the abbot, the archbishop of Florence, Ancharanus, Johannes Andreas, Laurentius, de Pinu, and some others. Indeed his divines deny this, "sed contrarium tamen observatur," as it is very well observed by the same doctor;† for he brings the practice and example of Pope Martin V., Julius II., Celestine III., Alexander III., and Sixtus Quintus, all which dispensed in cases acknowledged to be expressly against God's law. 6. Lastly, how if the pope should lay a claim to all the kingdoms of the world, as belonging to St. Peter's patrimony, by right of spiritual pre-eminence? I know no great security we have to the contrary. For, first, it is known he hath claimed the kingdom of England, as feudatory to the see apostolic.‡ Which when I considered, I wondered not at that new and insolent title of which Mosconius gives his holiness, § of "Defensor fidei." He might have added the title of "Rex Catholicus," and "Christianissimus." For D. Marta, in his treatise of "jurisdiction,"|| which he dedicated to Paulus Quintus, hath that for an argument why he dedicated his book to him, because, forsooth, the pope is the only monarch of the world. But of greater authority is that of Thomas Aquinas,¶ affirming the pope to be the vertical top of all power, ecclesiastical and civil. So that now it may be true which the bishop of Patara told the emperor, in behalf of Pope Sylvester. "Multos esse reges, sed nullum talem,

* De Jurisd. cas. lxiv. n. 14. † Num. 17.

‡ Rex Anglorum est subditus Romano pontifici, ratione directi domini, quod in regnum Angliæ et Hiberniæ Romana habet ecclesia. Bellarm. Apol. adv. R. Angl. c. 3.

§ De Majest. milit. Eccles. c. 1. p. 25.

|| "Tibi à quo emanat omnis jurisdictio, unicus in orbe pontifex, imperator et rex, omnium principum superior, rerumque et personarum supremus et dominus." Epist. Dedicat.

¶ 2 Sent. Dist. 44. et lib. iii. de Regim. Princ.

* In Clement. Quinto.

† Baron. tom. vi. Annal. An. Dom. 447. n. 8.

qualis ille, qui est papa super ecclesiam mundi totius?"*

For these reasons, I think, it is true enough, that the constituting the pope the judge of princes in the matter of deposition, is of more danger than the thing itself. The sum is this. However schism or heresy may be pretended, yet it is but during the pope's pleasure, that kings or subjects shall remain firm in their mutual necessitude. For if our prince be but excommunicate or declared heretic, then to be a good subject will be accounted no better than irreligion and anti-catholicism. If the conclusion be too hard and intolerable, then so are the premises, and yet they pass for good catholic doctrine among themselves.

But if truly, and "ex animo," they are otherwise affected, they should do well to unsay what hath been said, and declare themselves, by public authority, against such doctrines: and say whether or not their determinations shall be "de fide?" If they be, then all those famous catholic doctors, Thomas Aquinas, Bellarmine, Creswell, Mariana, Emanuel Sà, &c., are heretics, and their canons teach heresy, and many of their popes to be condemned as heretical, for practising and teaching deposition of princes, by an authority usurped against, and in prejudice of, the Christian faith. But if their answers be not "de fide," then they had as good say nothing, for the danger is not at all decreased; because if there be doctors on both sides, by their own assertion† they may without sin follow either, but yet more safely, if they follow the most received and the most authorized; and whether this rule will lead them, I will be judged by any man that hath considered the premises. Briefly, either this thing must remain in the same state it is, and our princes still exposed to so extreme hazards, or else let his holiness seat himself in his chair, condemn these doctrines, vow against their future practice, limit his "ordo ad spiritualia," contain himself within the limits of causes directly and merely ecclesiastical, disclaim all power, so much as indirect over princes' temporals, and all this with an intent to oblige all Christendom. Which when I see done, I shall be most ready to believe that nothing in popery doth, either directly or by a necessary consequence, destroy loyalty to our law-

ful prince; but not till then, having so much evidence to the contrary.

Thus much was occasioned by consideration of the cause of the disciples' query, which was when they saw this, that their Lord and Master, for his difference in religion, was turned forth of doors, which when they saw, "They said, Lord:" it was well they asked at all, and would not too hastily act what they too suddenly had intended; but it was better that they asked Christ; it had been the best warrant they could have had, could they have obtained but a "magister dixit." But this was not likely, it was too strange a question to ask of such a Master, "a Magistro mansuetudinis licentiam crudelitatis." Nothing could have come more cross to his disposition. His spirit never was addicted to blood, unless it were to shed his own. He was a Prince of peace, and set forth to us by all the symbols of peace and gentleness, as of a sheep, a lamb, a hen, a gentle twining vine, the healing olive: and is it likely, that such a one should give his "placet" to the utter ruin of a company of poor villagers, for denying him a night's lodging, moved thereto by the foregoing scandal of a schism? he knew better what it cost to redeem a man, and to save his life from destruction, than to be so hasty for his ruin. And if the fathers confessors, who were to answer the question of the day, had but reflected upon this gospel, they might have informed their penitents better, than to have engaged them upon such antichristian and treasonable practices, as to destroy an assembly of Christians, as to depose or kill a king.

It is the proper cognizance of Mahometanism, by fire and sword to maintain their cause, and to propagate their religion by ruin of princes and conquering their kingdoms. But it is the excellency of Christianity, that by humility and obedience it made princes tributary to our dear Master, and homagers to his kingdom. When Valentinian sent Calligonus, his chamberlain, to St. Ambrose, to threaten him from his faith, his answer was, "Deus permittit tibi ut impleas quod minaris. Ego patiar, quod est episcopi; tu facies, quod est spadonis." He did not stir up the numerous people of his diocese to rebel against the emperor, or depose him, employed no agent in his court to undermine his security, nor assassin to take his life. He and the rest of those good fathers would not have lost their possibility of being martyrs for the world, unless it

* Lib. erat. in Breviar. de Causâ Nestorian. c. 21.

† Charity maintained by Cath. c. 7.

were by persuading the emperors to the Christian faith. "We pray for all our governors, that they might have long life, a secure government, a safe house, strong armies, good subjects, quiet world." So Tertullian.*

I had thought that the doctrine and example of our blessed Saviour, the practice apostolical and primitive, had been ties enough to keep us in our obedience to God and the king, and in Christian charity to all; but I find that all these precepts come to nothing; for the apostles and primitive Christians did not actually depose kings, nor alter states, nor call for fire to consume their enemies; not because it was simply unlawful so to do, or any way adverse to the precepts of Christ, but because they wanted power. So Bellarmine: † "The church gave leave that the faithful should obey Julian, because they wanted forces." And F. Cresswell‡ is very confident of the business, "They might without all question have appointed to themselves other kings and princes, if the Christians had been strong enough to bring their intendments to pass." But because they could not, therefore it was not lawful for them to go about it, nor is it for us in the same case, "especially if the prince hath quiet possession, and a strong guard about him, then by no means is it lawful for a single man, by his own authority, to assault his prince that rules tyrannically." So Salmeron.§ But who sees not that this way murder may be lawful? For true it is God commanded us, saying, "Thou shalt not kill;" that is, if thou art not able to lift up thy hand, or strike a stroke: thou shalt not blaspheme, that is, if thou beest speechless; thou must be obedient to thy prince, that is, if thou canst not tell how to help it. Good doctrine this? And indeed it might possibly be something if God had commanded our subordination to princes only "for wrath," for then "si vires adsint," if we can defend ourselves we are secure, we need not fear his wrath; but when he adds, "also for conscience' sake," I cannot sufficiently wonder that any man should obtrude so senseless, so illiterate, and so impious an interpretation upon the Christian world, under the title of catholic doctrine.

Christ, when he was betrayed, and seized upon by his murderers, could have commanded twelve legions of angels for his guard, "Non defuerunt vires;" and, in all

human likelihood, such a "satellitium," as that would have moved them to a belief in him, or else, I am sure, might have destroyed the unbelievers. Shall I say more against this rude "glossema?" Then thus. It is false that the primitive Christians had not power to defend themselves against their persecutors. Hear St. Cyprian; "Nemo nostrum, quando apprehenditur, reluctatur, nec se adversus injustitiam, et violentiam vestram, quamvis nimius et copiosus noster sit populus, ulciscitur." They could have resisted, and that to blood, but they had not so learned Christ. Prayers and tears were the arms of Christians, and then they had a defence beyond all this, when they were hard put to it, "Mori potuerunt;" a submission of their bodies to martyrdom was their last refuge.

Thus St. Agnes, Lucia, Agatha, Christina, Domitilla saved both their faith and chastity, "non armis, sed ignibus et carnificis manu;" the tormentor's last cruelty defended them from all succeeding danger.

I will not yet conclude, that that which these men obtrude for catholic doctrine is flat and direct heresy; I will instance but once more, and then I shall. In the fourth council of Toledo, which was assembled when the usurping and tyrannizing Goths did domineer in Europe, the most whereof were tyrants, usurpers, or Arians; the council decreed that if any man did violate the life or person of his king, "aut potestate regni exuerit," kill him or depose him, "Anathema sit" &c., he should be accursed in the sight of God and his holy angels, and together with all the companions of his iniquity, he should be separated from the catholic church. And now, I hope, I may say that these men who either practice or advise such practices as killing or deposing kings, are as formally condemned for heresy, and anathematized, as ever was Manichee or Cataphrygian. I know not, but, perhaps, this might be thought of when the Jesuits were inscribed heretics upon the public pillar before the Louvre, in Paris, upon their banishment: however, let them answer it as they may, it concerns them as much as their being catholics comes to, "Et considerent, quia quæ prædicant tantoperè verba, aut ipsorum summorum pontificum sunt suas fimbrias extendentium, aut illorum qui eis adulantur," as said Æneas Sylvius;* but at no hand can it be Christian doctrine.

* Apologet. † De Pontif. R. lib. v. c. 7.

‡ Philopat. p. 107. n. 158.

§ Disp. 5. in c. 13. ad Roman.

* De Gestis Concil. Basil. lib. i.

¶ I instanced in these things to show the antithesis between the spirit of our blessed Saviour, who answered the question of the text, and the fathers confessors, of whom was asked the question of the day.

But give me leave to consider them not only as misinforming their penitents, but as concealing their intended purpose; for even this way, the persons to whom the question was propounded made themselves guilty of the intended machination.* For by all law, ecclesiastical and civil, he that conceals an intended murder or treason, makes himself as much a party for concealing, as is the principal for contriving.

Ob. But these fathers confessors could not be accused by virtue of these general laws, as being exempt by virtue of a special case, for they received notice of these things only in confession, the seal of which is so sacred and inviolable, that he is sacrilegious who in any case doth break it open, though it be to avoid the greatest evil that can happen, so Bellarmine; † to save the lives of all the kings in Christendom, so Binet; ‡ though to save a whole commonwealth from damage, temporal or spiritual, of body or soul, so Suarez. §

A considerable matter! On the one side we are threatened by sacrilege, on the other by danger of princes and commonwealths; for the case may happen, that either the prince and the whole state may be suffered to perish bodily and ghostly, or else the priest must certainly damn himself by the sacrilegious breach of the holy seal of confession. Give me leave briefly to consider it, and, both for the acquittance of our state in its proceedings against these traitors, and for the regulating of the case itself, to say these two things.

1. This present treason was not revealed to these fathers confessors in formal confession. 2. If it had, it did not bind to secrecy in the present case. Of the first, only a word.

1. It was only propounded to them in way of question or consultation, ¶ (like this in the text,) as appeared by their own confessions, and the attestation of then Sir

Henry Mountague, recorder of London, to Garnet himself. It could not, therefore, be a formal confession; and, therefore, not bind to the seal. It is the common opinion of their own doctors: "Non enim inducitur obligatio sigilli in confessione, quam quis facit sine ullo animo accipiendi absolutio-nem, sed solum consilii petendi causa." ¶

2. It was propounded to these fathers confessors as a thing not subjectable to their penitential judicature, because it was a fact not repented of, but then in agitation, and resolved upon for the future. How then could this be a confession, whose institution must certainly be in order to absolution, and how could this be in any such order, when it was a business of which they could not expect to be absolved, unless they hoped to sin with a pardon about their necks; and on condition God would be merciful to them in its remission, would come and profess that they were resolved to anger him? In reason, this could be no act of repentance, neither could it, by confession of their own side. It is the doctrine of Hostiensis: and Navarre, † and Cardinal Alban ‡ confess it to be most commonly received.

4. It was not only not repented of, but by them reputed to be a good action, and so could not be a matter of confession. I appeal to any of their own manuals and penitentiary books. It is culpable, say they. I am sure it is ridiculous in any man to confess, and shrive himself of a good action; and that this was such in their opinion, it is plain, by that impious answer of Garnet, affirming it a business greatly meritorious, if any good might thence accrue to the catholic cause. §

4. By this their pretended confession they endeavoured to acquire new complices, as is evident "in the proceedings against the traitors." They were therefore bound to reveal it, for it neither was, nor could be, a proper and formal confession. That this is the common opinion of their own schools, see it affirmed by Ægidius Conineck. §

The first particular then is plain. Here neither was the form of confession, nor yet could this thing be a matter of confession;

* Cap. quanta de senten. excom. &c. delicto ibid. in 6. 13. q. 3. lib. i. Occissorum ad ¶ c. Syllanian et lib. sec. 1. ad L. Cornel. de Falsis. l. quisquis ad l. Jul. Majest.

† Apol. adv. R. Angl.

‡ Casaub. ad Front. Duc. In 3 part. D. Thom. dis.

§ 33. Sect. i. n. 2.

¶ Vide Casaub. Ep. ad Front. D. p. 133.

* De Soto. in lib. iv. Sent. d. 18. q. 4. art. 5. concl. 5. Navar. c. 8. n. 18. Suarez. disp. 33. sec. 2. Conineck. de sigil. conf. dub. l. n. 7.

† Cap. Sacerdos. 3. q. n. 116.

‡ In Lucubratis ad Bartolum, in L. ut vim. n. 22. ff. de Justitia et Jure.

§ See Proceedings against late Traitors.

¶ Ubi suprâ.

therefore supposing the seal of confession to be sacredly inviolable, in all cases, yet they were highly blameable for their concealment in the present.

2. But the truth of the second particular is more to be inquired of. That is, that though these things had been only revealed in confession, and this confession had been formal and direct, yet they were bound, in the present case, to reveal it, because the seal of confession is not so inviolable, as that in no case it is to be broken up, and if in any, especially it may be opened in the case of treason.

I never knew any thing cried up with so general a voice, upon so little ground, as is the over-hallowed seal of confession.

True it is that an ordinary secret, committed to a friend in civil commerce, is not to be revealed upon every cause, nor upon many; but upon some it may, as they all confess. If thus, then much rather is this to be observed in the revelation of the secrets of our consciences, not only from the ordinary tie to secrecy, but likewise, lest sins should grow more frequent, if so great a remedy of them be made so odious, as to expose us to a public infamy or danger of the law. The council, therefore, that first introduced this obligation, was very prudent and reasonable, pleads a thousand years' prescription, and relies upon good conveniences. This is all that ever could be proved of it, as may appear anon; but these are too weak a base, to build so great a structure on it, as to make it sacrilege, or any sin at all, to reveal confessions, in some cases.

1. For first, if because it is delivered as a secret, and such a secret, it is the more closely and religiously to be kept; it is true, —but concludes no more, but that it must be a greater cause that must authorize a publication of this, than of the secrets of ordinary commerce between friend and friend.

2. If the licensing of publication of confession be a way to make confession odious, and therefore that it may not be published, —I say, if this concludes, then, on the contrary, it concludes far more strongly, that therefore, in some cases, it may be published, because nothing can make a thing more odious and intolerable, than if it be made a cover for grand impieties, so as to engage a true subject, quietly and knowingly, to see his prince murdered.

3. If it be discouragement to the practice

of confession, that some sins revealed in it must be published, though with peril to the delinquent's fame and life, then it will be a far greater discouragement to the sin, when that it shall, by a universal judgment, be so detested, that its concealment may not be permitted, though it be with the hazard of discouraging the holy duty of confession: and when the being guilty of such a sin, shall reduce men into such straits, that either they shall want the benefit of absolution, or submit themselves to a public satisfaction, and so, even in this particular, the benefit is far greater than the imaginary inconvenience.

The conveniences of the seal force no more, than that it is convenient to be observed, not simply and absolutely, in all cases necessary. And perhaps Saurez, the great patron of it, perceived it; however, he lays the burden "super communi consensu ecclesie, ejusque perpetua traditione."* If then I can show, that there is no such catholic consent of the present church, nor any universal tradition of the ancient church, for the inviolable seal, but plainly the contrary, then our church, in her permission of the priests to reveal some confessions, is as inculpable as those of the present church, who (besides herself) teach and practise it, and as the primitive church, whose example in this, as in other things, she strictly follows.

Of the first, the church of England, which observes the seal of confession, as sacredly as reason or religion itself can possibly permit, yet forbids not disclosure, in case of murder or treason, but, in these particulars, leaves us entire in our obedience to the common laws of England; and these command it.†

That the church of England gives leave, in some cases, to reveal confessions, is argument enough to prove, that the seal is not founded upon the consent of the present catholic church: for it is no more a begging of the question (nor apparently so much) to say, the church of England is a part of the catholic church, and therefore her consent is required to make a thing universal, than to say, the church of Rome is the whole catholic church, therefore her consent is sufficient to make a thing catholic. But I shall not need to proceed this way. For,

1. It is apparent, that, of their own side,

* In 3 part. D. Thom. disp. 33. sec. 1. n. 2.

† Can. 113. A. D. 1604.

Altisidiorensis largely and professedly proves the lawfulness of publication, in some cases, as it is to be seen. Lib. 4. Summæ tract. 6. cap. 3. q. 7. and Garnet himself,—the man who, if any, had most need to stand in defence of the seal, that the pretence of it might have defended him,—yet confessed of his own accord, “*Leges quæ celare hæc prohibent, apprimè esse justas et salutaris.*”^{*} He adds his reason, and that is more than his authority; for, saith he, it is not fitting that the life and safety of a prince should depend upon the private niceties of any man’s conscience. If two, nay, if one dissent, it is enough to destroy a consent. But see further.

There are many cases, generally confessed amongst themselves, in which the seal of formal, and, as they love to speak, sacramental confession, may be broken open. I instance but in two or three.

First, Confession may be revealed to clear a doubtful case of marriage. It is the opinion of many great canonists,† as you may see them quoted by Saurez de Paz, and Covaruvias,‡ and the case of the Venetian, who married a virgin that was both his sister and daughter;—and that at Rome, under Pope Paul III. almost to like purpose,—were long disputed on both sides, whether they were to be revealed or not; so that at most, it is but a doubtful matter in such cases, whether the tie of secrecy doth oblige. Now, if for the proof of marriage, the seal may be broken up, that man and wife might live contentedly, and as they ought, strange it should be unlawful to reveal confessions, in case of treason, for the safety of a prince or state!

In case of heresy, the seal binds not, by their own general confession. It is a rule amongst them,

“*Hæresis est crimen, quod non confessio celat.*”

Now I would fain learn why treason is not as revealable as heresy? Is heresy dangerous to souls? Then surely so is treason, unless it be none, or a very small crime. May heresy infect others? So may treason, as it did in the present. It may then as well be revealed as heresy. Now that it may something rather, I have these reasons. 1. Because it is not so certain, that such an opinion is heresy, as that such a fact is treason. 2. Because, although both treason and

real heresy be damnable and dangerous to souls, yet heresy kills no kings as treason doth. I confess that heresy may, and doth teach it, but then it degenerates into treason. Now, if some heresy may be treason, then that treason is heresy; and so a case of treason may occur, in which, from their own confession, treason is revealable.

3. By the most general voice of their own side, any man may license his confessor to reveal his confession. It is the doctrine of Scotus, Durandus, Almain, Navarre, Medina, and generally of all the Thomists. I infer, if a private man may license his confessor to reveal his confession, then the seal of confession is not founded upon any Divine commandment; for if it were, the penitent could not give the priest license to break it. But, if the penitent may give his confessor leave, because the tie of secrecy is a bond in which the priest stands bound to the penitent, and, he giving him leave, remits of his own right, then much rather may a whole state authorize this publication;‡ for, whatever personal right a private man hath, that the whole state hath much rather, for he is included in it as a part of the whole; and in such cases as concern the whole commonwealth, as this of treason doth most especially, the rule of the law holds without exception, “*refertur ad universos, quod publice fit per majorem partem,*”† the delinquent gives leave to the publication of confession, therefore, because the whole state doth, whereof he is one member. I add, that in the case of treason, this is much rather true, for here the delinquent loseth all his right whatsoever, prædial, personal, and of privilege; and, therefore, the commonwealth can the better license the publication, and the breach of the bond of secrecy, in which the confessor stood tied to the penitent by virtue of implicit stipulation.

4. Lastly, even in special, in the very case of treason confessed, many of their own do actually practise a publication, when either they are loyal of themselves, or dare not be otherwise.

I instance first in the church of France. For this, see Bodinus,‡ who reports of a Norman gentleman, whom his confessor discovered for having confessed a treason—

* *Actio in prodit. lat. p. 99.*

† *Practic. Crim. Ecclesiast. c. 109.*

‡ *Resol. de Matrimon.*

* *L. quod Major. ff. ad Municipalem.*

† *ff. de Regul. Juris. ad sec. refertur. Lib. vii. sec. ult. ff. de pact.*

‡ *De Republ. lib. ii. c. 5.*

able purpose he sometimes had, of killing Francis I., of which he was penitent, did his penance, craved absolution, obtained it, but yet was sentenced to the axe by express commission from the king to the parliament of Paris.* The like confession was made by the lord of Hauterville, when he was in danger of death; which when he had escaped, he incurred it with the disadvantage of public infamy upon the scaffold. I instance not in the case of Barriere, it is every where known, as it is reported partly by Thuanus, but more fully by the author of "Histoire de la Paix." Nor yet is France singular in the practice of publication of confessed treason. For at Rome there have been examples of the like, I mean of those who confessed their purpose of killing the pope, who were revealed by their confessors, and accordingly punished.†

Thus then the first pretence proves a nullity, and either our laws are just in commanding publication of confession in case of treason, or themselves very culpable in teaching and practising it in the same, and in cases of less moment. The second is like the first, for it is extremely vain to pretend that the seal of confession is founded upon catholic tradition. Judge by the sequel.

The first word I hear of concealing confessions, is in Sozomen,‡ relating how the Greek church, about the time of Decius the emperor, set over the penitents a public penitentiary priest, who was bound to be "Vir bonæ conversationis, servansque secretum," "a good man, and a keeper of secrets;" for, indeed, he was bound to conceal some crimes, in particular, those which an adulteress had confessed, I mean, concerning her adultery, as appears in the canons of St. Basil.§ But yet this priest who was so tied to a religious secrecy, did "publish many of them in the congregation before the people," that they might reprove the delinquent and discountenance the sin. The same story is reported by Cassiodore and Nicephorus from the same author.

The lawfulness and practice of publication, in some cases, is as clear in Origen.||

* Histoire de Lapaix.

† Dominic. e Soto memb. 3. q. 4. concl. 2. de rat. regendi secret.

‡ Hist. lib. vii. c. 16.

§ Τὰς μοιχευθείσας γυναῖκας καὶ ἐξαγορεύσας δι' εὐλαβίαν δημοσιεύειν οὐκ ἐπέλεον αἱ Πατέρες ἡμῶν.—Epist. ad Amphil.

|| Hamil. 2. in Psal. xxxvii.

"If," (saith he) "the physician of thy soul perceives thy sins to be such as to need so harsh a remedy, as to have them published before the assemblies of the people, that others may be admonished, and thou the better cured, he need be very deliberate, and skilful in the application of it." Hitherto, no such thing as a universal tradition for the pretended inviolable sacramental seal; for Origen plainly, and by them confessedly, speaks of such sins, as first were privately confessed to the priest; how else should he deliberate of their publication? but yet he did so, and for all the seal of confession, sometimes opened many of them to no fewer witnesses than a whole assembly. Thus it was, in the Greek church, both law and custom. But now if we look into the Latin church, we shall find that it was taken up from example of the Greeks and somewhile practised, that some particular sins should be published in the church before the congregation, as it is confessed in the council of Mentz, and inserted by Burcharth into his decree.*

But when the lay-piety began to cool, and the zeal of some clergymen wax too hot, they would needs heighten this custom of publication of some sins, to a law of the publishing of all sins. This being judged to be inconvenient, expressed the first decree for the seal of confession in the Latin church. Now see how it is uttered, and it will sufficiently inform us both of the practice and the opinion, which antiquity had of the obligation to the seal.

"Illam contra apostolicam regulam præsumptionem," &c. that is, "it was against the apostolical ordinance, that a law should enjoin that the priest should reveal all those sins which had been told him in confession."† It might be done, so it were not required and exacted, and yet might be so required, so it were not a publication of all. "Non enim omnium hujusmodi sunt peccata;" saith St. Leo: "some sins are inconvenient to be published:" it is not fit the world should know all, therefore some they might, or else he had said nothing. The reason which he gives, make the business somewhat clearer, for he derives it, not from any simple necessity of the thing, or a Divine right, but lest men out of inordinate love to themselves, "should rather refuse to be washed than buy their purity with so

* Cap. 10. et 21. lib. xix. c. 37.

† Decret. S. Leonis. P. M. Epist. 83. ad episc. Campan.

much shame." The whole epistle hath many things in it excellently to the same purpose.

I say no more; the doctrine and practice of antiquity is sufficiently evident, and that there is nothing less than a universal tradition for the seal of confession to be observed in all cases, even of sins of the highest malignity.

Thus these fathers confessors are made totally inexcusable by concealing a treason, which was not revealed to them in a formal confession, and had been likewise culpable though it had, there being, as I have shown, no such sacredness of the seal as to be inviolable in all cases whatsoever.

I have now done with the several considerations of the persons to whom the question was propounded; they were the fathers confessors in the day, but it was Christ the Lord, in my text. The question itself follows, "Shall we command fire to come from heaven and consume them?"

The question was concerning the fate of a whole town of Samaria; in our case it was more, of the fate of a whole kingdom. It had been well if such a question had been silenced by a direct negative, or (as the judges of the Areopagus used to do) put off "ad diem longissimum," that they might have expected the answer three ages after.

"De morte hominis nulla est cunctatio longa;" no demur had been too long in a case of so much and so royal blood, the blood of a king, of a king's children, of a king's kingdom. Πρίαιμος Πρίαιμοῦ τε παῖδες, king and kingdom should have been made a solemn sacrifice to appease their solemn deliberate malice. I said "deliberate," for they were loth to be malicious without good advice, and therefore they asked their question, worthy of an oracle even no less than Delphic, where an evil spirit was the "numen," and a witch the prophet. For the question was such of which a Christian could not doubt, though he had been fearfully scrupulous in his resolutions. For who ever questioned the unlawfulness of murder, of murdering innocents, of murdering them who were confessed righteous? For such was their proposal; being rather willing that catholics should perish with those whom they thought heretics, than that there should be no blood spilt.

But to the question. It was fire they called for, the most merciless of all the elements, no possibility of relenting when

once kindled, and had its object. It was the fittest instrument for merciless men, men of no bowels, whose malice, like their instrument, did "agere ad extremum suarum virium," "work to the highest of its possibility." Secondly; it was fire indeed they called for, but not like that in my text, not fire from heaven. They might have called as long and as loud as those priests did who contested with Elisha; no fire would have come from heaven to have consumed what they had intended for a sacrifice. God's anathemas post not so fast as ours do: "Deus non est sicut homo." Man curseth often when God blesseth; men condemn whom God acquits, and, therefore, they were loth to trust God with their cause, they therefore take it into their own hands. And certainly, if to their anathemas they add some faggots of their own, and gunpowder, it is odds but then we may be consumed indeed; and so did they; their fire was not from heaven.

Lastly, it was a fire so strange, that it had no example. The apostles, indeed, pleaded a mistaken precedent for the reasonableness of their demand, they desired leave to do but "even as Elias did." The Greeks only retain this clause, it is not in the bibles of the church of Rome, and really these "Romano-barbari" could never pretend to any precedent for an act so barbarous as theirs. Adramelech, indeed, killed a king, but he spared the people; Haman would have killed the people, but spared the king; but that both king and people, princes and judges, branch, and rush, and root, should die at once, (as if Caligula were actuated and all England upon one head,) was never known till now, that all the malice in the world met in this, as in a centre. The Sicilian even-song, the matins of St. Bartholomew, known for the pitiless and damned massacres, were but κάπνον οκίας ὄναρ, "the dream of the shadow of smoke," if compared with this great fire. "In tam occupato sæculo fabulas vulgaris nequitia non invenit." This was a busy age; Erostratus must have invented a more sublimed malice than the burning of one temple, or not have been so much as spoke of since the discovery of the powder-treason. But I must make more haste, I shall not else climb the sublimity of this impiety. Nero was sometimes the "popularare odium," was "popularly hated;" and deserved it too; for he slew his master, and his wife,

and all his family, once or twice over, opened his mother's womb, fired the city, laughed at it, slandered the Christians for it, but yet all these were but "principia malorum," the very first "rudiments of evil." Add then to these, Herod's masterpiece at Ramah, as it was deciphered by the tears and sad threnes of the matrons in a universal mourning for the loss of their pretty infants; yet this of Herod will prove but an infant wickedness, and that of Nero, the evil but of one city. I would willingly have found out an example, but I see I cannot, should I put into the scale the extract of all the old tyrants famous in antique stories,

"Bistonii stabulum regis, Busiridis aras,
Antiphatae mensas, et Taurica regna Thoantis."

Should I take for true story the highest cruelty as it was fancied by the most hieroglyphical Egyptian, this alone would weigh them down, as if the Alps were put in scale against the dust of a balance. For had this accursed treason prospered, we should have had the whole kingdom mourn for the inestimable loss of its chiefest glory, its life, its present joy, and all its very hopes for the future. For such was their destined malice, that they would not only have inflicted so cruel a blow, but have made it incurable, by cutting off our supplies of joy, the whole succession of the line royal. Not only the vine itself, but all the "gemulæ," and the tender olive-branches should either have been bent to their intentions, and made to grow crooked, or else been broken.

And now after such a sublimity of malice, I will not instance in the sacrilegious ruin of the neighbouring temples, which needs must have perished in the flame, nor in the disturbing the ashes of our entombed kings, devouring their dead ruins, like sepulchral dogs, these are but minutes, in respect of the ruin prepared for the living temples.

Stragem sed istam non tulit
Christus cadentium principum
Impune, ne forsitan sui
Patris periret fabrica.

Ergo quæ poterit lingua retexere
Laudes, Christe, tuas, qui domitum struis
Infidum populum cum duce perfido?

PRUDENT. Hymn.

Let us then return to God the cup of thanksgiving, he having poured forth so largely to us of the cup of salvation. We cannot want wherewithal to fill it, here is matter enough for an eternal thankfulness, for the

expression of which a short life is too little; but let us here begin our hallelujahs, hoping to finish them hereafter, where the many choirs of angels will fill the concert.

Praise the Lord, ye house of Levi; ye that fear the Lord, praise the Lord. Praise the Lord out of Sion, which dwelleth at Jerusalem.*

SERMON X.

THE WHOLE DUTY OF THE CLERGY IN LIFE, BELIEF, AND DOCTRINE, DESCRIBED AND PRESSED EFFECTUALLY UPON THEIR CONSCIENCES, IN TWO SERMONS ON TIT. II. 7, 8. PREACHED IN SO MANY SEVERAL VISITATIONS.

In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,

Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part, may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say to you.—Tit. ii. 7, 8.

As God, in the creation of the world, first produced a mass of matter, having nothing in it but an obediential capacity and passivity; which God separated into classes of division, gave to every part a congruity to their respective forms, which, in their distinct orbs and stations, they did receive in order, and then were made beauteous by separations and a new economy; and out of these he appointed some for servants, and some for government; and some to eat, and some to be eaten; some above, and some below; some to be useful to all the rest, and all to minister to the good of man, whom he made the prince of the creation, and a minister of the Divine glory.—So God hath also done in the new creation; all the world was concluded under sin; it was a corrupt mass; all mankind "had corrupted themselves;" but yet were capable of Divine influences, and of a nobler form, producible in the new birth: here then God's Spirit moves upon the waters of a Divine birth, and makes a separation of part from part, of corruption from corruption; and first chose some families to whom he communicated the Divine influences and the breath of a nobler life; Seth and Enoch, Noah and Abraham, Job and Bildad, and these were the special repositories of the Divine grace, and prophets of righteousness to glorify God in themselves, and in their sermons unto others.

* Psal. cxxxv. 20, 21.

But this was like enclosing of the sun; he that shuts him in, shuts him out; and God, who was and is an infinite goodness, would not be circumscribed, and limited to a narrow circle; goodness is his nature, and infinite is his measure, and communication of that goodness is the motion of that eternal being: God, therefore, breaks forth as out of a cloud, and picks out a whole nation; the sons of Israel became his family, and that soon swelled into a nation, and that nation multiplied, till it became too big for their country, and by a necessary dispersion went, and did much good, and gained some servants to God out of other parts of mankind. But God was pleased to cast lots once more, and was like the sun already risen upon the earth, who spreads his rays to all the corners of the habitable world, that all that will open their eyes and draw their curtains, may see and rejoice in his light. Here God resolved to call all the world; he sent into the highways and hedges, to the corners of the Gentiles, and the highways of the Jews, all might come that would; for "the sound of the gospel went out into all lands:" and God chose all that came, but all would not; and those that did, he gathered into a fold, marked them with his own mark, sent his Son to be "the great Shepherd and Bishop of their souls;" and they became "a peculiar people unto God," "a little flock," "a new election."

And here is the first separation and singularity of the gospel; all that hear the voice of Christ's first call, all that profess themselves his disciples, all that take his signature, they and their children are the church, an Ἐκκλησία, called out from the rest of the world, the "elect" and the "chosen of God."

Now these being thus chosen out, culled and picked from the evil generations of the world, he separates them from others, to gather them to himself; he separates them and sanctifies them to become holy; to come out, not of the companies so much, as from the evil manners of the world; God chooses them unto holiness, they are *πεταγμένοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον*, "put in the right order to eternal life."

All Christians are holy unto the Lord, and therefore must not be unholy in their conversation; for nothing that is unholy shall come near to God; that is the first great line of our duty; but God intends it further; all Christians must not be only holy, but *eminently* holy. For "John indeed

baptized with water;" but that is but a dull and inactive element, and moves by no principle, but by being ponderous; Christ "baptizes with the Holy Ghost and with fire," and God hates lukewarmness; and when he chooses to him a peculiar people, he adds, they must be "zealous of good works."

But in this affair there are many steps and great degrees of progression. 1. All God's people must be delivered from all sin; for as Christ came wholly "to destroy the works of the devil," so he intends also "to present his church as a pure virgin unto Christ;" ἀσπίλον, ἀπόρροιστον, ἐλακρινῆ, "without scandal, without hypocrisy," "without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing:" for to be quit from sin, that is, from all affection to it, is supposed in the Christian's life; "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts," and "being cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit," and "having escaped from all corruption that is in the world through lust;" this is not so much commanded as supposed: without this, nothing can be done, nothing can be hoped: this is but the foundation of the Christian, who is intended to be "a habitation of God," "a member of Christ," "a temple of the holy Spirit of God:" the building follows.

2. All Christians must acquire all the graces of the Holy Spirit of God: St. Peter gives the catalogue; "faith, and virtue, and knowledge, and temperance, and patience, and godliness, and brotherly kindness, and charity;"* and that you may see what is the spirit of a Christian, what an activity and brisk principle is required to the acquisition of these things; the apostle gives this precept, that for the acquiring these things, "we should give" *πάναν σπουδὴν*, "all diligence;" no lazy worker is a good Christian, he must be diligent; and not every diligence, nor every degree of good diligence; but it must be *all*, "omnem omnino diligentiam," "give all diligence."

3. There is yet another degree to be added hereto: it is not enough for a Christian to be free from corruption, and to have these graces; and therefore to be diligent, very diligent to obtain them; but "they must be in us, and abound."† N. B. they must be *in us*; these graces and this righteousness must be inherent; it is not enough for us that Christ had them for us; for it is true, if he had not had them, we should never have received those, or any thing else that

* 2 Pet. i. 5.

† 2 Pet. i. 8.

is good: but he had them, that we might have them, and follow his steps who knew no sin, and fulfilled all righteousness. They "must be in us," saith St. Péter; and not only so, they must also *abound in us*; that is the end of Christ's death; that is the fruit of his Spirit: they must be plentiful, like a full vintage, or like Euphrates in the time of ripe fruits; they must swell over the banks: for when they are out "in gradu virtutis," "in the lowest step of sincerity," they may fall from the tree like unripe fruit, and be fit for nothing but for prodigals and swine; they must be in their season and period, great, and excellent, and eminent; they must take up all our faculties, fill up all our time, spend all our powers, satisfy the will, and be adequate to all the powers of our choice; that is, as St. Peter adds, they must be so, that we "make our calling and election sure;" so as that we shall never any more depart from God: well, thus far, you see how severe and sacred a thing it is to be a Christian.

4. But there are yet three steps more beyond this: God requires of us perseverance; a thrusting all this forward, even unto the end: "without peace and holiness no man shall see God,"* saith the author to the Hebrews; but that is not all; *διώκετε εἰρήνην καὶ ἀγιασμόν*, "follow after peace and holiness with all men," *ἀνευ οὗ*, "without which;" it is not *ἀνευ ἧς εἰρήνης*, "without which peace," but *ἀνευ οὗ διώκειν*, "without which following of peace and holiness;" that is, unless we endure all contradiction of sinners and objections; without following it close and home to the utmost issue, to the end of all righteousness, tending even to comprehension, to consummation and perfection, no man shall see God; *διωκῆν ἐν ἀγιασμῷ*, is good and great, "to dwell in holiness;" but that is not enough, it must be *διώκειν* too, we must still *pursue* it, and that *unto the end*: "for he that endureth unto the end shall be saved."

5. And what more? yes, there is something yet: for besides this extension of duration, there must be "*intensio graduum*:" for "*nondum comprehendimus, nondum perfecti sumus*;" "we have not yet comprehended, we are not yet made perfect;" but that must be aimed at: "Be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect;"—be "ye meek as Christ is;"—"be ye holy as God is holy;"—"pure as your Father in

heaven is pure:"—and who can be so? no man can be so in degree, but so in kind; every man must desire, and every man must contend to be, and therefore it is possible, else it had never been required.

6. And now after all this, one thing more is to be done: you must be so for yourselves, and you must be so for others: you must be so as to please God, and you must be so to edify your brethren: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may glorify your Father which is in heaven:" let it be so eminent and conspicuous, that all that see your conversation, and all that come into your congregations, may be convinced, and "falling down and worshipping, may say, of a truth, the Spirit of the Lord is in you." And therefore our blessed Saviour, in his sermon upon the mount, which is the summary of a Christian's life,—at the end of the eight beatitudes, tells all his followers and disciples: "Ye are the salt of the world, ye are the light of the world;" and therefore "the kingdom of heaven," or the gospel, is compared "to a woman that hid, in three measures of meal,"—the Jews, the Turks, the heathen idolaters,—"her leaven, till all was leavened:" our light must be so shining, our conversation so exemplar, as to draw all the world after us; that they that will not, may be ashamed, and they that will, may be allured by the beauty of the flame. These are the proportions and measures of every Christian; for "from the days of John the Baptist, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force;" that although "John the Baptist was the greatest that ever was born of woman," yet he that "is least in the kingdom of heaven," the meanest of the laity, may be "greater than he." This is a great height: and these things I have premised, not only to describe the duty of all that are here present, even of all Christians whatsoever, that you may not depart without your portion of a blessing; but also as a foundation of the ensuing periods, which I shall address to you, my brethren of the clergy, the fathers of the people; for I speak in a school of the prophets, prophets and prophets' sons; to you who are, or intend to be so.

For God hath made a separation of you even beyond this separation: he hath separated you yet again; he hath put you anew into the crucible; he hath made you to pass through the fire seven times more. For it is true, that the whole community of the peo-

* Heb. xii. 14.

ple is the church; "Ecclesia sancta est communio sanctorum," "the holy catholic church is the communion of saints;" but yet, by the voice and consent of all Christendom, you are the church, by way of propriety, and eminency, and singularity; "churchmen,"—that is your appellative: all are ἀνδρες πνευματικοί, "spiritual men;" all have received the Spirit, and all walk in the Spirit, and ye are all "sealed by the Spirit unto the day of redemption;" and yet there is a spirituality peculiar to the clergy: "If any man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness:"* you who are spiritual by office and designation, of a spiritual calling, and spiritual employment; you who have the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, and minister the Spirit of God, you are more eminently spiritual; you have the Spirit in graces and in powers, in sanctification and abilities, in office and in person; the unction from above hath descended upon your heads and upon your hearts: you are κατ' ἐξοχὴν "by way of eminency" and prelation, "spiritual men." All "the people of God were holy;" Korah and his company were in the right so far; but yet Moses and Aaron were more holy, and stood nearer to God. All the people are prophets: it is now more than Moses' wish, for the Spirit of Christ hath made them so: "If any man prayeth or prophesieth with his head covered;" or "if any woman prophesieth with her head uncovered," they are dishonoured: but either man or woman may do that work in time and place; for "in the latter days I will pour out of my Spirit, and your daughters shall prophesy;" and yet, God hath appointed in his church prophets above these, to whose spirit all the other prophets are subject; and as God said to Aaron and Miriam concerning Moses, "to you I am known in a dream or a vision, but to Moses I speak face to face;" so it is in the church; God gives of his Spirit to all men, but you he hath made the ministers of his Spirit: nay, the people have their portion of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, so said St. Paul; "To whom ye forgive any thing, to him I forgive also:" and to the whole church of Corinth he gave a commission, "in the name of Christ, and by his Spirit, to deliver the incestuous person unto Satan;" and when the primitive penitents stood in their penitential stations, they did "Charis Dei adgeniculari, et toti populo legationem

orationis suæ commendare;" and yet the keys were not only promised, but given to the apostles, to be used then, and transmitted to all generations of the church; and we are "ministers of Christ, and stewards of the manifold mysteries of God; and to us is committed the word of reconciliation." And thus, in the consecration of the mysterious sacrament, the people have their portion; for the bishop or the priest blesses, and the people, by saying "Amen" to the mystic prayer is partaker of the power, and the whole church hath a share in the power of spiritual sacrifice; "Ye are a royal priesthood, kings and priests unto God;" that is, so ye are priests as ye are kings; but yet kings and priests have a glory conveyed to them, of which the people partake but in minority, and allegory, and improper communication: but you are, and are to be respectively, that considerable part of mankind, by whom God intends to plant holiness in the world; by you God means to reign in the hearts of men; and therefore you are to be the first in this kind, and consequently the measure of all the rest: to you, therefore, I intend this, and some following discourses, in order to this purpose: I shall but now lay the first stone, but it is the corner-stone in this foundation.

But to you, I say, of the clergy, these things are spoken properly; to you these powers are conveyed really; upon you God hath poured his spirit plentifully; you are the choicest of his choice, the elect of his election, a church picked out of the church, vessels of honour for your Master's use, appointed to teach others, authorized to bless in his name; you are the ministers of Christ's priesthood, under-labourers in the great work of mediation and intercession, "Medii inter Deum et populum;" you are for the people towards God, and convey answers and messages from God to the people: these things I speak, not only to magnify your office, but to enforce and heighten your duty; you are holy by office and designation; for your very appointment is a sanctification and a consecration; and therefore whatever holiness God requires of the people who have some little portions in the priesthood evangelical, he expects it of you, and much greater, to whom he hath conveyed so great honours, and admitted so near unto himself, and hath made to be the great ministers of his kingdom and his Spirit: and now, as Moses said to the Levitical schismatics, Korah and his company, so I may say to you; "Seemeth

* Gal. vi. 1.

it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel to bring you to himself, to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to minister to them? And he hath brought thee near to him.* Certainly, if of every one of the Christian congregation God expects a holiness that mingles with no unclean thing; if God will not suffer of them a lukewarm and an indifferent service, but requires zeal of his glory, and that which St. Paul calls the *πίσιος της αγάπης*, "the labour of love;" if he will have them to be "without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing;" if he will not endure any pollution in their flesh or spirit; if he requires that their bodies, and souls, and spirits be kept blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus; if he accepts of none of the people, unless they have within them the conjugation of all Christian graces; if he calls on them to abound in every grace and that in all the periods of their progression, unto the ends of their lives, and to the consummation and perfection of grace; if he hath made them lights in the world, and the salt of the earth, to enlighten others by their good example, and to teach them and invite them by holy discourses, and wise counsels, and speech seasoned with salt; what is it, think ye, or with what words is it possible to express what God requires of you? They are to be examples of good life to one another; but you are to be examples even of the examples themselves: that is your duty, that is the purpose of God, and that is the design of my text, "That in all things ye show yourselves a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing incorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you."

Here then is, 1. Your duty. 2. The degrees and excellency of your duty.

The duty is double: 1. Holiness of life. 2. Integrity of doctrine. Both these have their heightenings, in several degrees.

1. For your life and conversation, it ought not only to be good, not only to be holy, but to be so up to the degrees of an excellent example; "Ye must be a pattern."

2. Ye must be patterns, not only of knowledge and wisdom, not of contemplation and skill in mysteries, not of unprofitable notions, and ineffectual wit and eloquence; but of

something that is more profitable, of something that may do good, something by which mankind shall be better; of something that shall contribute to the felicity and comfort of the world; "a pattern of good words."

3. It must not be a *τύπος*, "a type" or pattern to be hidden or laid in tabernacles, like those images of Moloch and Remphan, which the Spirit of God in the Old Testament calls *סוּכּוֹת בְּנוֹת* "Succoth Benoth," little repositories or booths to hide their images and patterns of their gods; but *παρεχόμενος τύπον*, "you must be exhibited" and shown forth, brought forth into action and visibility, and notorious observation.

4. There is also another mystery and duty in this word; for Moloch and Remphan they were patterns and figures, but they were *τύποι οὓς ἐποίησαντο*, "patterns which the people made;"—but to Titus St. Paul commanded that he himself should be *παρεχόμενος τύπον*, "he should give a pattern" to the people; that is, the ministers of Christ must not be framed according to the people's humour, they must not give him rules, nor describe his measures; but he should be a rule to them; he is neither to live with them, so as to please their humours, or to preach doctrines "populo ut placentur, quas fecisset fabulas:"* but the people are to require the doctrine at his mouth, and he is to become exemplar to them, according to the pattern seen in the mount, according to the laws of the religion and the example of Christ.

5. It must be *ἐν πάσι*; he must be a pattern "in all things;" it is not enough that the minister be a loving person, a good neighbourly man, that he be hospitable, that he be not litigious, that he be harmless, and that he be diligent; but in every grace he must "præferre facem," "hold a torch," and show himself a light in all the commands of God. These are the measures of his holiness, the pattern in his life and conversation.

Secondly; Integrity of doctrine. The matter of the doctrine you are to preach, hath in it four qualifications.

1. It must be *ἀδιάφθορος*, "incorrupt;" that is, it must be *κατ' ἀναλογίαν πίστεως*, it must be "according to the analogy of faith," no heretical mixtures, pure truths of God.

2. It must be *σεμνός*, "grave," and clean, and chaste; that is, *ἀνευ φληαρίας*, no vain and empty notions, little contentions, and pitiful disputes; but becoming the wisdom

* Numb. xvi. 9.

* Terent.

of the guides of souls, and the ministers of Christ.

And 3. It must be *ὑγιής*, "sound speech," so we read it; the word properly signifies "salutary" and "wholesome;" that is, such as is apt for edification, *εἰς οἰκοδομὴν πιστεως καὶ ἀγάπης*; "for the building men up in a most holy faith, and a more excellent charity;" not feeding the people with husks and druff, with colocynths and gourds, with gay tulips and useless daffodils, but with the bread of life, and medicinal plants, springing from the margin of the fountains of salvation. This is the matter of their doctrine; and this also hath some heightenings, and excellencies, and extraordinaries: for,

4. It must be *ἀκατάργωστος*, so evidently demonstrated, that "no man shall be able to reprove it;" so certainly holy, that no man shall be willing to condemn it.

And 5. It must be *ἀφθαρτος*, "sincere," not polluted with foul intentions and little devices of secular interests, complying with the lusts of the potent, or the humours of the time; not biassed by partiality, or bending of the flexures of human policy: it must be so conducted that your very enemies, schismatics and heretics, and all sorts of gainsayers, may see that you intend God's glory, and the good of souls; and, therefore, that as they can say nothing against the doctrine delivered, so neither shall they find fault with him that delivers it: and he that observes all this, will indeed be a pattern both of life and doctrine; both of good words and good works.

But I shall not be so minute in my discourse, as in the division; the duties, and the manner or degrees of the duties, I shall handle together, and give you the best measures I can, both for institution of life and excellency of doctrine:—it is required of every one of you, that in all things you show yourselves a pattern of good works.

That is the first thing required in a minister; and this is, upon infinite accounts, necessary: 1. In general. 2. In particular. 1. In general. The very first words of the whole psalter are an argument of this necessity: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the chair of the mockers," the seat of the scornful. The doctor's chair or pulpit must have nothing to do with the "irrisores," that mock God, and mock the people; he must neither walk with them, nor stand with them, nor sit with them; that is, he must "have no fellowship with the un-

fruitful workers of darkness, but rather reprove them;" for they that do preach one thing, and do another, are *ἄντι*, "mockers;" they destroy the benefit of the people, and diminish the blessings of God; and "binding burdens on the people's shoulders which they will not touch with the top of their finger," they secretly laugh and mock at the people, as at the asses of Issachar, fit to be cozened into unnecessary burdens. These words are greatly to be regarded: the primitive church would admit no man to the superior orders of the clergy, unless, among other preredquired dispositions, they could say all of David's psalter by heart; and it was very well, besides many other reasons, that they might in the front read their own duty, so wisely and so mysteriously, by the Spirit of God, made preliminary to the whole office.

To the same purpose is that observation of St. Jerome made concerning the vesting of the priests in the Levitical ministrations; the priest put on the humeral, beset with precious stones, before he took the *λόγιον*, or the "rationale" upon his breast, to signify, that first the priest must be a shining light, resplendent with good works, before he fed them with the *γάλα λογικόν*, "the rational milk," of the word: concerning which symbolical precept, you may please to read many excellent things to this purpose, in St. Jerome's epistle to Fabiola. It will be more useful for us to consider those severe words of David: "But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth; seeing thou hatest instruction and castest my words behind thee?"* The words are a sad upbraiding to all ungodly ministers, and they need no commentary; for whatever their office and employment be to teach God's people, yet, unless they regard the commandments of God in their heart and practice themselves, they have nothing to do with the word of God,—they sin in taking the covenant, a testament of God, into their mouth. God said to the sinner, *שׁוֹר* Raschaah, that is, "to him that had sinned and had not repented of his sins;" so the Chaldee paraphrase reads it; "Impio autem, qui non agit penitentiam et orat in prævaricatione, dixit Deus." Indeed, if none could be admitted to this ministry but those who had never sinned, the harvest might be very great, but the

* Psal. l. 16, 17.

labourers would be extremely few, or rather none at all; but, after repentance, they must be admitted, and not before; "Iniquitas opilabit os eorum," "iniquity shall stop their mouths," saith David;* that ought to silence them indeed: and this was David's care, when he had fallen into the foul crimes of murder and adultery; he knew himself unfit and unable, though he were a prophet, to teach others the laws of God; but when he prayed to God to restore him to a free spirit, he adds; "Then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee:†" till then it was to no purpose for him to preach. "But thou, when thou art converted," said Christ to Peter, "strengthen thy brethren." The primitive church had a degree of severity beyond this; for they would not admit any man, who had done public penance, to receive holy orders: to which purpose they were excellent words which P. Hormisda spake in his letters to the bishops of Spain, in which he exhorts them to the observation of the ancient canons of the church, telling them that "They who are promoted to the clergy, ought to be better than others;" "nam longâ debet vitam suam probatione monstrare, cui gubernacula committuntur ecclesiæ; non negamus," &c. we deny not but amongst the laity there are many whose manners are pleasing to God, but the faithful laws of God seek for him soldiers that are approved; and they ought rather to afford to others, by themselves, an example of a religious life, than require it from them; "ideoque nullus ex pœnitentibus debet ordinari; quis enim quem paulo ante jacentem viderat, veneretur antistitem?" "None of the public penitents must be ordained; for who will esteem that priest venerable, whom a little before he saw dishonoured by scandalous and public crimes?" But this is to be understood of them only, as the prophet Amos expresses it, "qui corripuntur in portâ" "who are rebuked in the gate,"‡ condemned by public sentence, and are blotted with the reproaches of the law. But in all cases,

Turpe est doctori, cum culpa redarguit ipsum.

The guilt of the sin which a man reproves, quite spoils his sermon: "ipsam obmutescere facundiam, si ægra sit conscientia," said St. Ambrose; "a sick conscience spoils

the tongue of the eloquent, and makes it stammer." For how shall any man preach against sin, or affright his people from their dangers, if he denies God's justice? and if he thinks God is just, why is not he confounded, that, with his own mouth, pronounces damnation against himself? Nothing confounds a man so much, as to be judged out of his own mouth: "Esse munda studeat manus, quæ diluere sordes curat," said St. Gregory; "the hand that means to make another clean, should not itself be dirty. But all this is but in general; there are yet considerations more particular and material.

1. A minister of an evil life cannot do so much good to his charges; he cannot profit them, he is not useful *εις οικοδομην*, he pulls down as fast, or faster than he builds up. "Talmud absque opere non est magnum Talmud," said the Jews' proverb: "a good sermon without a good example is no very good sermon." For, besides that such a man is contemptible to his people, contemptible, not only naturally, but by Divine judgment (according to that of the prophet, "Propter quod dedi vos contemptibiles omni populo," "for this very reason I have made you to be scorned in the eyes of all the people"): but besides this, it is very considerable what St. Chrysostom says: "Si prædicas et non facis, opus proponis tanquam impossibile:" "he that preaches mortification and lives voluptuously, propounds the duty as if it were impossible:" for certainly if it be good, and if it be possible, a man will ask, why is it not done? It is easy for him that is well to give a sick man counsel: "Verùm tu si hic esses, certè aliter sentire;" when it comes to be his own case, when the sickness pinches, and when the belly calls for meat, where's the fine oration then? "Omnia quæ vindicaris in altero, tibi ipsi vehementer fugienda sunt: etenim non modo accusator, sed ne objurgator ferendus est, qui, quod in altero vitium reprehendit, in eo ipse deprehenditur:" "whatsoever you reprove in others, must be infinitely avoided by yourself; for no man will endure an accuser, no not so much as a man to chide, for that fault in which himself was taken."‡ But if your charges see you bear your sickness patiently, and your cross nobly, and despise money generously, and forgive your enemy

* Psal. cvii. 42. † Psal. li. 13. ‡ Amos v. 10.

* Mal. ii.

† Cic. Act 5. in Verrem.

bravely, and relieve the poor charitably, then he sees your doctrine is tangible and material; it is more than words, and he loves you, and considers what you say. In the East the shepherds used to go before their sheep, to which our blessed Saviour alludes, "My sheep hear my voice and follow me;" but our shepherds are forced to drive them, and affright them with dogs and noises: it were better if themselves did go before. 3. A minister of an evil life cannot preach with that fervour and efficacy, with that life and spirit, as a good man does; for besides that he does not himself understand the secrets of religion, and the private inducements of the Spirit, and the sweetness of internal joy, and the inexpressible advantages of a holy peace; besides this, he cannot heartily speak all that he knows; he hath a clog at his foot, and a gag in his teeth; there is a fear, and there is a shame, and there is a guilt, and a secret willingness that the thing were not true; and some little private arts to lessen his own consent, and to take off the asperities and consequent troubles of a clear conviction. To which if we add, that there is a secret envy in all wicked men against the prosperities of goodness; and if I should say no more, this were enough to silence a Boanerges, and to make his thunder still and easy as an oaten pipe: "Nonne id flagitium est, te aliis consilium dare, foris sapere, tibi non posse auxiliari?" "That is a burning shame and an intolerable wickedness, that a minister shall be like Marcotis, or the statue of Mercury, show the way to others, and himself stand still like a painted block; to be wise abroad, and a very fool in his own concerns, and unable to do himself good."—"Dicit Reslakis, 'orna teipsum, postea ornato alios:'" "first trim thyself, and then adorn thy brother," said the rabbins; but certain it is, he that cannot love to see others better than himself, it cannot be that he should heartily endeavour it.

Scilicet expectas, ut tradat mater honestos,
Atque alios mores, quam quos habet? uile porro
Filiolam turpi vetulæ producere turpem.—JUVEN.

It is not to be expected that a diseased father should beget wholesome children: like will come from like, whether the principle be good or evil.

But, secondly; for this is but the ἀρχὴ ἁδίστων; this is but the least evil; there is yet much worse behind. A wicked minister cannot with success and benefit pray for the people of his charges; and this is a

great matter; for prayer is the key of David, and God values it at so high a rate, that Christ is made the prince of all intercession, and God hath appointed angels to convey to his throne of grace the prayers of the saints; and he hath made prophets and priests, even the whole clergy, the peculiar ministers of prayer: "Orabit pro eo sacerdos;" "the priest shall pray for him," the priest shall make an atonement for his sin, and it shall be forgiven him.* And God's anger is no where more fiercely described, than when things come to that pass that he will not hear the priest or prophet praying for the people: "Pray not thou for this people, neither lift up prayer nor cry for them, neither make intercession to me; for behold mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place.†" When the prayers of the gracious and acceptable persons, the presidents of prayer, are forbidden, then things are desperate; it is a greater excommunication; the man sins a sin unto death; and I say not that thou pray for him that sins unto death." This, I say, is the priest's office, and if the people lose the benefit of this, they are undone. To bishop Timothy, St. Paul gave it in charge, "That supplications, and prayers, and intercessions, be made for all men." And St. James advised "the sick to send for the elders of the church," (the bishops and priests,) "and let them pray over them," and then "their sins shall be forgiven them." But how? that is supposed, the minister prays fervently, and be a righteous man; for "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much;" it is promised on no other terms. "Qualis vir, talis oratio," is an old rule: "as is the man, such is his prayer." "The prayer of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord," said Solomon; he cannot prevail for himself, much less for others. I remember that Bias being once in a storm, and a company of villains in the ship, being affrighted, called upon their gods for help: "Cavete," said he, "ne vos dii interesse sentiant:" "take heed lest the gods perceive you to be here," lest we all perish for your sakes. And upon surer grounds it was that David said, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayer." And what then do you think will be the event of those assemblies, where he that presents the prayers of all

* Numb. xv. 5. Lev. iv. 35.

† Jer. vii. 16, 20.

the people, is hateful to God? will God receive the oblation that is presented to him by an impure hand? The Levitical priests were commanded to wash before they sacrificed: and every man is commanded to repent before he prays; "My son, hast thou sinned, do so no more;" and then, "ask pardon for thy former fault."† And can we hope that the minister, who, "with wrath and doubting," and covetousness, presents the people's prayers, that ever those intercessions shall pierce the clouds, and ascend to the mercy-seat, and descend with a blessing? Believe it not: a man that is ungracious in his life, can never be gracious in his office, and acceptable to God. We are abundantly taught this, by those excellent words of God by the prophet Micah: "The heads of Sion judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money; yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us?"‡ As if God had said nothing is so presumptuous and unreasonableness as to lean upon God, and think he will be among us, when the priests and the prophets are covetous and wicked. No, he declares it expressly, (ver. 7.) "Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded, yea, they shall all cover their lips; for there is no answer of God." God will not answer; for sometimes the case is so, that, "though Noah, Daniel, and Job were there," God would not hear; that is, when the people are incorrigibly wicked, and the decree is irrevocably gone out for judgment. But there are other times, in which the prayers of innocent people, being presented by an ungracious minister and intercessor, are very much hindered in prevailing. In such cases, God is put to extraordinaries; and Christ and Christ's angels are then the supplementaries, and, at the best, the people's prayers go alone, they want the assistance of the "angel of the church," and they get no help or furtherance from him, and probably very much hinderance: according to that of St. Gregory: "Cum is qui displicet, ad intercedendum mittitur, irati animus ad deteriora provocatur." Alexander hated to see Zeron, and, therefore, if he had interceded for Clytus, it would but have hastened his death: a man's suit thrives the worse for having a hated intercessor. If, therefore,

he that robs a church of a patin or a chalice, be a sacrilegious person, what is he that steals from the church of God (so far as lies in him) the fruit of all their holy prayers; that corrupts the sacrifice, and puts coluquintida into the cups of salvation, and mingles death in the pottage provided for the children and disciples of the prophets? I can say no more, but to expostulate with them in those upbraiding words of God, in the prophet: "Do they provoke me to anger, saith the Lord? do they not provoke themselves to the confusion of their own faces?"* "Confundentur divini, et operient vultus suos omnes;"† "all such divines shall be confounded, and shall cover their faces in the day of sad accounts." "Divini sunt, non theologi;"‡ "they are diviners, and not divines," witches rather than prophets; they are the sons of Bosor, and have no portion in the economy of God. In short, if so much holiness as I formerly described, be required of him that is appointed to preach to others, to offer spiritual sacrifices for the people, to bless the people, to divert judgments from them, to deprecate the wrath of God, to make an atonement for them, and to reconcile them to the eternal mercy;—certain it is, that though the sermons of a wicked minister may do some good, not so much as they ought, but some they can; yet the prayer of a wicked minister does no good at all; it provokes God to anger, it is an abomination in his righteous eyes.

Thirdly: The ecclesiastical order is by Christ appointed to minister his Holy Spirit to the people; the priests, in baptism, and the holy eucharist, and prayer, and intercession; the bishops, in all these, and in ordination besides, and in confirmation, and in solemn blessing: now then consider what will be the event of this without effect: can he minister the Spirit, from whom the Spirit of God is departed? And, therefore, since all wickedness does "grieve the Spirit of God," and great wickedness defiles his temples, and destroys them unto the ground, and extinguishes the Spirit that drives iniquity away;—these persons are no longer spiritual men; "they are carnal, and sold under sin," and walk not in the Spirit; they are Spiritual just as Simon Magus was a Christian, or as Judas was an apostle; he had the name of it; but what says the Scripture? "He fell from it

* Exod. xxx. 40.

† Ecclus.

‡ Cap. iii. 11.

* Jer. vii. 19.

† Mic. iii. 7.

by transgression;" only this, as he that is baptized has for ever a title to the promises, and a possibility of repentance, and a right to restitution, until he renounces all, and never will or can repent; so there is in all our holy orders an indelible character, and they can, by a new life, be restored to all their powers; but in the mean time, while they abide in sin and carnality, the cloud is over the face of the sun, and the Spirit of God appears not in a fiery tongue, that is, not in material and active demonstrations; and how far he will be ministered by the offices of an unworthy man, we know not; only by all that is said in Scripture we are made to fear, that things will not be so well with the people, till the minister be better; only this we are sure of, that though one man may be much the worse for another man's sin, yet, without his own fault, no man shall perish; and God will do his work alone; and the Spirit of God, though he be ordinarily conveyed by ecclesiastical ministries, yet he also comes irregularly, and in ways of his own, and prevents the external rites, and prepossesses the hearts of his servants; and the people also have so much portion in the evangelical ministration, that if they be holy, they shall receive the Holy Ghost in their hearts, and will express him in their lives, and themselves also become kings and priests unto God, while they are zealous of good works. And to this purpose may the proverb of the Rabbins be rightly understood, "Major est qui respondit 'amen,' quam qui benedicit;" "He that says 'amen,' is greater than he that blesses or prays;" meaning, if he heartily desires what the other perfunctorily, and with his lips only, utters, not praying with his heart, and with the acceptabilities of a good life, the "amen" shall be more than all the "prayer," and the people shall prevail for themselves, when the priest could not; according to the saying of Midrasich Tehillim. "Quicumque dicit 'amen,' omnibus viribus suis, ei aperientur portæ paradisi, sicut dictum est, 'et ingredietur gens justa:'" "He that says 'amen,' with his whole power, to him the gates of Paradise shall be open, according to that which is said,—and the righteous nation shall enter in." And this is excellently discoursed of by St. Austin, "Sacramentum gratiæ dat etiam deus per malos; ipsam vero gratiam non nisi per seipsum, vel per sanctos suos;" and, therefore, he gives remission of sins by himself, or by the

members of the Dove; so that good men shall be supplied by God. But as this is an infinite comfort to the people, so it is an intolerable shame to all wicked ministers; the benefit which God intended to minister by them, the people shall have without their help, and whether they will or not; but because the people get nothing by their ministration, or but very little, the ministers shall never have their portion, where the good people shall inhabit to eternal ages: and I beseech you to consider what an infinite confusion that will be at the day of judgment, when they, to whom you have preached righteousness, shall enter into everlasting glory, and you who have preached it shall have the curse of Hanaeel, and the reward of Balaam, "The wages of unrighteousness." But thus it was, when the wise men asked the doctors where Christ should be born, they told them right; but the wise men went to Christ, and found him, and the doctors sat still, and went not.

Fourthly; Consider, that every sin which is committed by a minister of religion, is more than one, and it is as soon espied too; for more men look upon the sun in an eclipse, than when he is in his beauty: but every spot, I say, is greater, every mote is a beam; it is not only made so, but it is so; it hath not the excuses of the people, is not pitiable by the measures of their infirmity: and, therefore, 1. It is reckoned in the accounts of malice, never of ignorance: for ignorance itself, in them, is always a double sin; and, therefore, it is very remarkable, that when God gave command to the Levitical priests to make atonement for the sins of ignorance in the people, there is no mention made of the priests' sin of ignorance; God supposed no such thing in them, and Moses did not mention it, and there was no provision made in that case, as you may see at large in Levit. iv. and Numb. xv.* But 2. Because every priest is a man also, observe how his sin is described, Levit. iv. 3. "If the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people;" that is, if he be so degenerate, and descend from the glory where God hath placed him, and do sin after the manner of the people, then he is to proceed to remedy: intimating that it is infinitely besides expectation; it is a strange thing, it is like a monstrous production; it is unna-

* Vide Origen. Homil. ii. in Levit.

tural that a priest should sin, according as the people do; however, if he does, it is not connived at with a sentence gentle, as that finds which is a sin of ignorance, or the sin of the people: no, it is not; for it is always malice, it is always uncharitableness; for it brings mischief to their congregations, and contracts their blessings into little circuits, and turns their bread into a stone, and their wine to vinegar: and then besides this, 3. It is also scandalous, and then it is infinitely against charity; such ministers make the people of God to sin, and that is against the nature of their office, and design of their persons: God sent them to bring the people from sin, and not to be like so many Jeroboams, the sons of Nebat, to set forward the devil's kingdom, to make the people to transgress the covenant of their God: for they who live more by example than by precept, will more easily follow the works of their minister than the words of God; and few men will aspire to be more righteous than their guide; they think it well if they be as he is: and hence it is no wonder that we see iniquity so popular. "Oppida tota canem venerantur, nemo Dianam;"* every man runs after his lusts, and after his money, because they see too many of the clergy little looking after the ways of godliness. But then consider, let all such persons consider,

5. That the accounts, which an ungodly and an irreligious minister of religion shall make, must needs be intolerable; when, besides the damnation which shall certainly be inflicted upon them for the sins of their own lives, they shall also reckon for all the dishonours they do to God, and to religion, and for all the sins of the people, which they did not, in all just ways, endeavour to hinder, and all the sins which their flocks have committed by their evil example and undisciplined lives.

6. I have but two words more to say in this affair: 1. Every minister that lives an evil life, is that person whom our blessed Saviour means under the odious appellation of a "hireling:" for he is not the hireling that receives wages, or that lives of the altar; "sine farinâ non est lex," said the doctors of the Jews; "without bread-corn no man can preach the law:" and St. Paul, though he spared the Corinthians, yet he took wages of other churches, of all, but in the regions of Achaia; and the law of na-

ture and the law of the gospel have taken care, that "he that serves at the altar should live of the altar;" and he is no hireling for all that; but he is a hireling, that does not do his duty; he that "flies when the wolf comes," says Christ, he that is not present with them in dangers, that helps them not to resist the devil, to master their temptations, to invite them on to piety, to gain souls to Christ; to him it may be said, as the apostle did of the Gnostics, ἐπίβειά ἐστι πορειαῖς, "Gain to them is godliness;" and theology is but "artificium venale," a trade of life, to fill the belly, and keep the body warm. "An cuiquam licere putas, quod cuivis non licet?" "Is any thing lawful for thee, that is not lawful for every man?" and if thou dost not mind, in thy own case, whether it be lawful or not, then thou dost but sell sermons, and give counsel at a price, and like a fly in the temple, taste of every sacrifice, but do nothing but trouble the religious rites: for certain it is, no man takes on him this office, but he "either seeks those things which are his own, or those things which are Jesus Christ's;" and if he does this, "he is a minister of Jesus Christ;" if he does the other, he is "the hireling," and intends nothing but his belly, and God shall destroy both it and him."

7. Lastly; These things I have said unto you, that ye sin not; but this is not the great thing here intended; you may be innocent, and yet not "zealous of good works:" but if you be not this, you are not good ministers of Jesus Christ: but, that this is infinitely your duty, and indispensably incumbent on you all, besides the express words of my text, and all the precepts of Christ and his apostles, we have the concurrent sense of the whole church, the laws and expectations of all the world, requiring of the clergy a great and an exemplar sanctity: for, therefore it is, that, upon this necessity is founded the doctrine of all divines in their discourses of the states and orders of religion; of which you may largely inform yourselves in Gerson's Treatise "De perfectione Religionis," in Aquinas,* and in all his scholars upon that question; the sum of which is this, that all those institutions of religions, which St. Anselm calls "facilitas religiones," that is, the schools of discipline in which men, forsaking the world, give themselves up wholly to a pious life, they are indeed very excellent if

† Juvenal.

* 2. 2. q. 184.

rightly performed; they are "status perfectionis acquirendæ," they are excellent institutions "for the acquiring perfection;" but the state of the superior clergy is "status perfectionis exercendæ," they are states which suppose perfection to be already in great measures acquired, and then to be exercised, not only in their own lives, but in the whole economy of their office: and, therefore, as none are to be chosen but those who have given themselves up to the strictness of a holy life,—so far as can be known; so none do their duty, so much as tolerably, but those who, by an exemplar sanctity, become patterns to their flocks of all good works. Herod's doves could never have invited so many strangers to their dove-cotes, if they had not been besmeared with opobalsamum: but *εἰς ἀν μύρον χρίσας τὰς περισσεύσας, καὶ ἔξωθεν ἀλλαν ἄζωσιν*, said Didymus;* "Make your pigeons smell sweet, and they will allure whole flocks;" and if your life be excellent, if your virtues be like a precious ointment, you will soon invite your charges to run "in odorem unguentorum," after your precious odours:" but you must be excellent, not "tanquam unus de populo," "but tanquam homo Dei;" you must be a man of God, not after the common manner of men, but "after God's own heart;" and men will strive to be like you, if you be like to God: but when you only stand at the door of virtue, for nothing but to keep sin out, you will draw into the folds of Christ none but such as fear drives in. "Ad majorem Dei gloriam," "To do what will most glorify God," that is the line you must walk by: for to do no more than all men needs must, is servility, not so much as the affection of sons; much less can you be fathers to the people, when you go not so far as the sons of God: for a dark lantern, though there be a weak brightness on one side, will scarce enlighten one, much less will it conduct a multitude, or allure many followers, by the brightness of its flame. And indeed, the duty appears in this, that many things are lawful for the people, which are scandalous in the clergy; you are tied to more abstinences, to more severities, to more renunciations and self-denials, you may not with that freedom receive secular contentments that others may; you must spend more time in prayers, your alms must be more bountiful, your hands more open, your hearts enlarged; others

must relieve the poor, you must take care of them; others must show themselves their brethren, but you must be their fathers; they must pray frequently and fervently, but you must give "yourselves up wholly to the word of God and prayer;" they must "watch and pray, that they fall not into temptation," but you must watch for yourselves and others too; the people must mourn when they sin, but you must mourn for your own infirmities, and for the sins of others; and indeed, if the life of a clergyman does not exceed even the piety of the people, that life is, in some measure, scandalous: and what shame was ever greater than is described in the parable of the traveller going from Jerusalem to Jericho, when, to the eternal dishonour of the Levite and the priest, it is told that they went aside, and saw him with a wry neck and bended head, but let him alone, and left him to be cured by the good Samaritan? The primitive church in her discipline used to thrust their delinquent clergy "in laicam communionem," even then when their faults were but small, and of less reproach than to deserve greater censures; yet they lessened them by thrusting them "into the lay communion," as most fit for such ministers, who refused to live at the height of sacerdotal piety. Remember your dignity, to which Christ hath called you: "Shall such a man as I flee?" said the brave Eleazar, shall the stars be darkness, shall the ambassadors of Christ neglect to do their King honour, shall the glory of Christ do dishonourable and inglorious actions? "ye are the glory of Christ," saith St. Paul; remember that,—I can say no greater thing; unless possibly this may add some moments for your care and caution, that "potentes potentior cruciabantur," "great men shall be greatly tormented," if they sin; and to fall from a great height is an intolerable ruin. Severe were the words of our blessed Saviour, "Ye are the salt of the earth; if the salt have lost his savour, it is henceforth good for nothing, neither for land, nor yet for dunghill:" a greater dishonour could not be expressed; he that takes such a one up, will shake his fingers. I end with the saying of St. Austin, "Let your religious prudence think, that, in the world, especially at this time, nothing is more laborious, more difficult, or more dangerous, than the office of a bishop, or a priest, or a deacon: 'Sed apud Deum nihil. beatius, si eo modo militetur quo noster imperator jubet;' 'but nothing is more

* Geoponic. lib. 14.

blessed, if we do our duty, according to the commandment of our Lord.’”*

I have already discoursed of the integrity of life, and what great necessity there is, and how deep obligations lie upon you, not only to be innocent and void of offence, but also to be holy; not only pure, but shining; not only to be blameless, but to be didactic in your lives; that as, by your sermons, you preach in season, so, by your lives, you may preach out of season; that is, at all seasons, and to all men, that they, “seeing your good works, may glorify God” on your behalf, and on their own.

SERMON XI.

The second Sermon on Titus ii. 7.

Now by the order of the words, and my own undertaking, I am to tell you what are the rules and measures of your doctrine, which you are to teach the people.

1. Be sure that you teach nothing to the people but what is certainly to be found in Scripture: “*Servemus eas mensuras, quas nobis per legislatorem lex spiritualis enunciat;*” “The whole spiritual law given us by our lawgiver, that must be our measures;”† for though, by persuasion and by faith, by mispersuasion and by error, by false commentaries and mistaken glosses, every man may become a law unto himself, and unhappily bind upon his conscience burdens which Christ never imposed; yet you must bind nothing upon your charges, but what God hath bound upon you; you cannot become a law unto them; that is the only privilege of the lawgiver, who, because he was an interpreter of the Divine will, might become a law unto us; and because he was faithful in all the house, did tell us all his Father’s will; and, therefore, nothing can be God’s law to us, but what he hath taught us. But of this I shall need to say no more but the words of Tertullian; “*Nobis nihil licet ex nostro arbitrio indulgere, sed nec eligere aliquid, quod de suo arbitrio aliquis induxerit: apostolos Domini habemus, autores, qui nec ipsi quicquam de suo arbitrio quod inducerent elegerunt, sed acceptam à Christo disciplinam fideliter nationibus assignarunt.*”‡ Whatsoever is

not in, and taken from, the Scriptures, is from a private spirit, and that is against Scripture certainly; “for no Scripture is,” *ιδίας ἐκλάσεως*, saith St. Peter; it is not, it cannot be “of private interpretation;” that is, unless it come from the Spirit of God, which is that Spirit that moved upon the waters of the new creation, as well as of the old, and was promised to all, “to you, and to your children, and to as many as the Lord our God shall call,” and is bestowed on all, and is the earnest of all our inheritance, and is “given to every man to profit withal;” it cannot prove God to be the author, nor be a light to us to walk by, or to show others the way to heaven.

This rule were alone sufficient to guide us all in the whole economy of our calling, if we were not weak and wilful, ignorant and abused: but the Holy Scripture hath suffered so many interpretations, and various sounds and seemings, and we are so prepossessed and predetermined to misconstruction by false apostles without, and prevailing passions within, that though it be in itself sufficient, yet it is not so for us; and we may say with the eunuch, “How can I understand, unless some man should guide me?” And indeed, in St. Paul’s epistles, “there are many things hard to be understood;” and, in many other places, we find that the well is deep; and unless there be some to help us to draw out the latent senses of it, our souls will not be filled with the waters of salvation. Therefore, that I may do you what assistance I can, and, if I cannot in this small portion of time, instruct you, yet that I may counsel you, and remind you of the best assistances that are to be had; if I cannot give you rules sufficient to expound all hard places, yet that I may show how you shall sufficiently teach your people, by the rare rules and precepts, recorded in places that are, or may be made, easy, I shall first give you some advices in general, and then descend to more particular rules and measures.

1. Because it is not to be expected, that every minister of the word of God should have all the gifts of the Spirit, and every one to abound in tongues, and in doctrines, and in interpretations; you may, therefore, make great use of the labours of those worthy persons, whom God hath made to be lights in the several generations of the world, that a hand may help a hand, and a father may teach a brother, and we all be

* Epist. 148. † Origen. ‡ Contra hæres.

taught of God: for there are many who have, by great skill, and great experience, taught as many good rules for the interpretation of Scripture; amongst which those that I shall principally recommend to you, are the books of St. Austin, "De Utilitate Credendi" and his 3 lib. "De Doctrinâ Christianâ;" the "Synopsis" of Athanasius; the "Proems" of Isidore; the "Prologues" of St. Jerome. I might well add the "Scholia" of Œcumenius; the "Catenæ" of the Greek fathers, and of later times, the ordinary and interlineary glosses; the excellent book of Hugo de S. Victore, "De eruditione didascalicâ;" "Ars interpretandi Scripturas," by Sixtus Senensis; Serarius' "Prolegomena;" Tena's "Introduction to the Scriptures;" together with Laurentius à Villa-Vincentio, Andreas Hyperius "de Ratione studii Philosophici," and the "Hypotyposes" of Martinus Capratensis: Arias Montanus' "Joseph," or "de Arcano Sermone," is of another nature, and more fit for preachers; and so is Sanctes Paguine's "Isagoge;" but Ambrosius Catharinus' book "Duarum clavium ad sacram scripturam," is useful to many good purposes: but more particularly, and I think more usefully, are those seven rules of interpreting Scriptures, written by Tichonius, and first made famous by St. Austin's commendation of them, and inserted in tom. v. of the Biblioth. SS. pp.—Sebastian Perez wrote thirty-five rules for the interpretation of Scripture: Franciscus Ruiz drew from the ancient fathers two hundred and thirty-four rules: besides those many learned persons who have written vocabularies, tropologies, and expositions of words and phrases; such as are Flacius Illyricus, Junius, Jerome Lauretus, and many others, not infrequent in all public libraries. But I remember, that he that gives advice to a sick man in Ireland to cure his sickness, must tell him of medications that are "facile parabilia," "easy to be had," and cheap to be bought, or else his counsel will not profit him; and even of these God hath made good provision for us; for, although many precious things are reserved for them that dig deep, and search wisely, yet there are medicinal plants, and corn and grass, things fit for food and physic, to be had in every field.

And so it is in the interpretation of Scripture; there are ways of doing it well and wisely, without the too laborious methods of weary learning, that even the meanest

labourers in God's vineyard may have that which is fit to minister to him that needs. Therefore,

2. In all the interpretations of Scripture, the literal sense is to be presumed and chosen, unless there be evident cause to the contrary. The reasons are plain; because the literal sense is natural, and it is first, and it is most agreeable to some things, in their whole kind; not indeed to prophecies, nor to the teachings of the learned, nor those cryptic ways of institution by which the ancients did hide a light, and keep it in a dark lantern from the temeration of ruder handlings and popular preachers: but the literal sense is agreeable to laws, to the publication of commands, to the revelation of the Divine will, to the concerns of the vulgar, to the foundations of faith, and to all the notice of things, in which the idiot is as much concerned as the greatest clerks. From which proposition these three corollaries will properly follow; 1. That God hath plainly and literally described all his will, both in belief and practice, in which our essential duty, the duty of all men is concerned. 2. That, in plain expressions we are to look for our duty, and not in the more secret places and darker corners of the Scripture. 3. That you may regularly, certainly, and easily do your duty to the people, if you read and literally expound the plain sayings, and easily expressed commandments, and promises, and threatenings of the gospel, and the Psalms, and the prophets.

3. But then remember this also; that not only the grammatical or prime signification of the word is the literal sense; but whatsoever is the prime intention of the speaker, that is the literal sense; though the word be to be taken metaphorically, or by translation signify more things than one. "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous;" this is literally true; and yet it is as true, that God hath no eyes properly; but by "eyes" are meant, God's "providence;" and though this be not the first literal sense of the word "eyes," it is not that which was at first imposed and contingently; but it is that signification, which was secondarily imposed, and by reason and proportion. Thus, when we say, "God cares for the righteous," it will not suppose that God can have any anxiety or afflictive thoughts; but "he cares" does as truly and properly signify provision, as caution; beneficence, as fear; and therefore the literal sense of it

is, that "God provides good things for the righteous." For in this case the rule of Abulensis is very true; "Sensus literalis semper est verus," "the literal sense is always true;" that is, all that is true, which the Spirit of God intended to signify by the words, whether he intended the first or second signification; whether that of voluntary and contingent, or that of analogical and rational institution. "Other sheep have I," said Christ, "which are not of this fold:" that he did not mean this of the "pecus lanigerum" is notorious; but of the Gentiles to be gathered into the privileges and fold of Israel: for in many cases, the first literal sense is the hardest, and sometimes impossible, and sometimes inconvenient; and when it is any of these, although we are not to recede from the literal sense; yet we are to take the second signification, the tropological or figurative. "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out," said Christ: and yet no man digs his eyes out; because the very letter or intention of this command bids us only to throw away that, which if we keep, we cannot avoid sin: for sometimes the letter tells the intention, and sometimes the intention declares the letter; and that is properly the literal sense, which is the first meaning of the command in the whole complexion: and in this, common sense and a vulgar reason will be a sufficient guide, because there is always some other thing spoken by God, or some principle naturally implanted in us, by which we are secured in the understanding of the Divine command. "He that does not hate father and mother for my sake, is not worthy of me:" the literal sense of "hating" used in Scripture is not always "malice," but sometimes a "less loving;" and so Christ also hath expounded it: "He that loves father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me."—But I shall not insist longer on this; he that understands nothing but his grammar, and hath not conversed with men and books, and can see no farther than his fingers' ends, and makes no use of his reason, but for ever will be a child; he may be deceived in the literal sense of Scripture; but then he is not fit to teach others: but he that knows words signify rhetorically, as well as grammatically, and have various proper significations,* and which of these is the first, is not always of itself easy

to be told; and remembers also that God hath given him reason, and observation, and experience, and conversation with wise men, and the proportion of things, and the end of the command, and parallel places of Scripture, in other words to the same purpose;—will conclude, that, since in plain places, all the duty of man is contained, and that the literal sense is always true, and, unless men be wilful or unfortunate, they may, with a small proportion of learning, find out the literal sense of an easy moral proposition:—will, I say, conclude, that if we be deceived, the fault is our own; but the fault is so great, the man so supine, the negligence so inexcusable, that the very consideration of human infirmity is not sufficient to excuse such teachers of others, who hallucinate or prevaricate in this. The Anthropomorphites fell foully in this matter, and supposed God to have a face, and arms, and passions, as we have; but they prevailed not: and Origen was, in one instance, greatly mistaken, and thinking there was no literal meaning but the prime signification of the word, understood the word εἰσὸν ὄχιζεν, "to make an eunuch," to his own prejudice; but that passed not into a doctrine: but the church of Rome hath erred greatly in pertinacious adhering, not to the letter, but to the grammar; nor to that, but in one line or signification of it: "Hoc est corpus meum" must signify nothing but grammatically; and though it be not, by their own confessions, to be understood without divers figures, in the whole complexion, yet peevishly and perversely, they will take it by the wrong handle; and this they have passed into a doctrine, that is against sense, and reason, and experience, and Scripture, and tradition, and the common interpretation of things, and public peace and utility, and every thing by which mankind ought to be governed and determined.

4. I am to add this one thing more; that we admit in the interpretation of Scripture but one literal sense; I say, but one prime literal sense; for the simplicity and purity of the Spirit, and the philanthropy of God, will not admit that there should, in one single proposition, be many intricate meanings, or that his sense should not certainly be understood, or that the people be abused by equivocal and doubtful senses; this was the way of Jupiter in the sands, and Apollo Pythius, and the devil's oracles: but be it far from the wisdom of the Spirit of God.

* Verba non sono sed sensu sapiunt.—HILAR.

5. But then take in this caution to it; that although there be but one principal literal sense; yet others that are subordinate may be intended subordinately; and others that are true by proportion, or that first intention, may be true for many reasons, and every reason applicable to a special instance; and all these may be intended as they signify, that is, one only by prime design, and the other by collateral consequence. Thus when it is said, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee;" the Psalmist means it of the eternal generation of Christ: others seem to apply it to his birth of the blessed virgin Mary; and St. Paul expounds it of the resurrection of Christ.* This is all true: and yet but one literal sense primely meant; but by proportion to the first, the others have their place, and are meant by way of similitude. Thus we are the sons of God, by adoption, by creation, by favour, by participation of the Spirit, by the laver of regeneration; and every man, for one or other of these reasons, can say, "Our Father which art in heaven;" and these are all parts of the literal sense, not different, but subordinate and by participation: but more than one prime literal sense must not be admitted.

6. Lastly; sometimes the literal sense is lost by a plain-change of the words; which when it is discovered, it must be corrected by the fountain; and till it be, so long as it is pious, and commonly received, it may be used without scruple. In the 41st Psalm the Hebrews read, "My soul hath longed after 'the strong, the living God;'" *Deum fortem, vivum:*" in the vulgar Latin, it is "*Deum fontem vivum,*" "the living fountain;" and it was very well, but not the literal sense of God's Spirit; but when they have been so often warned of it, that they were still in love with their own letter, and leave the words of the Spirit, I think was not justifiable at all: and this was observed at last by Sixtus and Clement, and corrected in their editions of the Bible, and then it came right again. The sum is this; he that with this moderation and these measures, construes the plain meaning of the Spirit of God, and expounds the articles of faith, and the precepts of life, according to the intention of God, signified by his own words, in their first or second signification, cannot easily be cozened into any heretical doctrine; but his doctrine will be *ἀδιάθορος*, the pure word and mind of God.

* Heb. i.

2. There is another sense or interpretation of Scripture, and that is mystical or spiritual; which the Jews call מדרש "mid-rash;" which Elias the Levite calls "omne commentarium, quod non est juxta simplicem et literalem sensum;" "every gloss that is not according to their כשח 'peschat,' to the literal sense;" and this relates principally to the Old Testament: thus the waters of the deluge did signify the waters of baptism; Sarah and Agar, the law and the gospel; the brazen serpent, the passion of Christ; the conjunction of Adam and Eve, the communion of Christ and his church; and this is called the spiritual sense, St. Paul being our warrant; "Our fathers ate of the same spiritual meat, and drank of that same spiritual rock;" now that rock was not spiritual, but of solid stone; but it signified spiritually; for "that rock was Christ."

This sense the doctors divide into tropological, allegorical, and anagogical,—for method's sake, and either to distinguish the things, or to amuse the persons; for these relate but to the several spiritual things signified by divers places; as matters of faith, precepts of manners, and celestial joys; you may make more if you please, and yet these are too many to trouble men's heads, and to make theology an art and craft, to no purpose. This spiritual sense is that which the Greeks call *ὑπόνοιαν*, or "the sense that lies under the cover of words:" concerning this I shall give you these short rules, that your doctrine be *ἀδιάθορος*, pure and without heretical mixtures, and the leaven of false doctrines; for, above all things, this is to be taken care of.

1. Although every place of Scripture hath a literal sense, either proper or figurative, yet every one hath not a spiritual and mystical interpretation; and, therefore, Origen was blamed by the ancients for forming all into spirit and mystery; one place was reserved to punish that folly. Thus the followers of the family of love, and the quakers, expound all the articles of our faith, all the hopes of a Christian, all the stories of Christ, into such a clancular and retired sense, as if they had no meaning by the letter, but were only a hieroglyphic or a Pythagorean scheme, and not to be opened but by a private key, which every man pretends to be borrowed from the Spirit of God, though made in the forges here below; to which purposes the epistles of St. Jerome to Avitus, to Pammachius and Oceanus, are worth your reading. In this case men do as he

said of Origen, "Ingenii sui acumina putant esse ecclesiæ sacramenta:" "every man believes God meant as he intended, and so he will obtrude his own dreams instead of sacraments." Therefore,

2. Whoever will draw spiritual senses from any history of the Old or New Testament, must first allow the literal sense, or else he will soon deny an article of necessary belief. A story is never the less true, because it is intended to profit as well as to please; and the narrative may well establish or insinuate a precept, and instruct with pleasure; but if, because there is a jewel in the golden cabinet, you will throw away the enclosure, and deny the story that you may look out a mystical sense, we shall leave it arbitrary for any man to believe or disbelieve what story he please; and Eve shall not be made of the rib of Adam, and the garden of Eden shall be no more than the Hesperides, and the story of Jonas a well-dressed fable; and I have seen all the Revelation of St. John turned into a moral commentary, in which every person can signify any proposition, or any virtue, according as his fancy chimes. This is too much, and, therefore, comes not from a good principle.

3. In moral precepts, in rules of polity and economy, there is no other sense to be inquired after but what they bear upon the face; for he that thinks it necessary to turn them into some further spiritual meaning, supposes that it is a disparagement to the Spirit of God to take care of governments, or that the duties of princes and masters are no great concerns, or not operative to eternal felicity, or that God does not provide for temporal advantages; for if these things be worthy concerns, and if God hath taken care of all our good, and if "godliness be profitable to all things, and hath the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come," there is no necessity to pass on to more abstruse senses, when the literal and proper hath also in it instrumentality enough towards very great spiritual purposes. "God takes care" for servants, yea "for oxen" and all the beasts of the field; and the letter of the command enjoining us to use them with mercy, hath in it an advantage even upon the spirit and whole frame of a man's soul; and therefore let no man tear those Scriptures to other meanings beyond their own intentions and provisions. In these cases a spiritual sense is not to be inquired after.

4. If the letter of the story infers any in-

decency or contradiction, then it is necessary that a spiritual or mystical sense be thought of; but never else is it necessary. It may in other cases be useful, when it does advantage to holiness; and may be safely used, if used modestly; but because this spiritual or mystical interpretation, when it is not necessary, cannot be certainly proved, but relies upon fancy, or at most some light inducement, no such interpretation can be used as an argument to prove an article of faith, nor relied upon in matters of necessary concern. The "three measures of meal," in the gospel, are but an ill argument to prove the blessed and eternal Trinity: and it may be, the three angels that came to Abraham, will signify no more than the two that came to Lot, or the single one to Manoah or St. John. This divine mystery relies upon a more sure foundation; and he makes it unsure, that causes it to lean upon an unexpounded vision, that was sent to other purposes. "Non esse contentiosus et infidelibus sensibus ingerendum," said St. Austin of the book of Genesis. Searching for articles of faith in the by-paths and corners of secret places, leads not to faith but to infidelity, and by making the foundations unsure, causes the articles to be questioned.

I remember that Agricola, in his book "De Animalibus Subterraneis," tells of a certain kind of spirits that used to converse in mines, and trouble the poor labourers: they dig metals, they cleanse, they cast, they melt, they separate, they join the ore; but when they are gone, the men find just nothing done, not one step of their work set forward. So it is in the books and expositions of many men: they study, they argue, they expound, they confute, they reprove, they open secrets, and make new discoveries; and when you turn the bottom upwards, up starts nothing; no man is the wiser, no man is instructed, no truth discovered, no proposition cleared, nothing is altered, but that much labour and much time is lost: and this is manifest in nothing more than in books of controversy, and in mystical expositions of Scripture: "Quæ-runt quod nusquam est, inveniunt tamen." Like Isidore, who, in contemplation of a pen, observed, that the nib of it was divided into two, but yet the whole body remained one: "Credo propter mysterium:"* he found a knack in it, and thought it was a

* Isid. Orig. lib. vi. c. 14.

mystery. Concerning which I shall need to say no more but that they are safe when they are necessary, and they are useful when they teach better, and they are good when they do good; but this is so seldom, and so by chance, that oftentimes if a man be taught truth, he is taught it by a lying master; it is like being cured by a good witch, an evil spirit hath a hand in it; and if there be not error and illusion in such interpretations, there is very seldom any certainty.

“What shall I do to my vineyard?” said God:^{*} “Auferam sepem ejus:” “I will take away the hedge:” that is, “custodiam angelorum,” saith the gloss, “the custody of their angel guardians.” And God says, “Manasseh humeros suos comedit:”† “Manasseh hath devoured his own shoulders;” that is, “gubernatores dimovit,” say the doctors, “hath removed his governors,” his princes, and his priests. It is a sad complaint, ’tis true, but what it means is the question. But although these senses are pious, and may be used for illustration and the prettiness of discourse, yet there is no further certainty in them than what the one fancies and the other is pleased to allow. But if the spiritual sense be proved evident and certain, then it is of the same efficacy as the literal; for it is according to that letter by which God’s Holy Spirit was pleased to signify his meaning, and it matters not how he is pleased to speak, so we understand his meaning. And in this sense, that is true which is affirmed by St. Gregory: “Allegoriam interdum œdificare fidem:” “sometimes our faith is built up by the mystical words of the Spirit of God.” But because it seldom happens that they can be proved, therefore you are not to feed your flocks with such herbs whose virtue you know not, of whose wholesomeness or powers of nourishing you are wholly, or for the most part, ignorant. We have seen and felt the mischief, and sometimes derided the absurdity. “God created the sun and the moon,” said Moses; that is, said the extravagants of Pope Boniface VIII., “the pope and the emperor.” And “Behold here are two swords,” said St. Peter: “It is enough,” said Christ; enough for St. Peter; and so he got the *two* swords, the *temporal* and *spiritual*, said the gloss upon that text. Of these things there is no beginning and no end, no certain principles and no good conclusions.

These are the two ways of expounding all Scriptures; these are as “the two witnesses of God;” by the first of which he does most commonly, and by the latter of which he does sometimes, declare his meaning; and in the discovery of these meanings, the measures which I have now given you are the general landmarks, and are sufficient to guide us from destructive errors. It follows in the next place, that I give you some rules that are more particular, according to my understanding, that you in your duty, and your charges in the provisions to be made for them, may be more secure.

1. Although you are to teach your people nothing but what is the word of God, yet by this word I understand all that God spake expressly, and all that by certain consequence can be deduced from it. Thus Dionysius Alexandrinus argues, ἔγνω ὅτι υἱὸς καὶ λόγος οὐ ξένος ἀν εἰη τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς “He that in Scripture is called the Son and the Word of the Father, I conclude he is no stranger to the essence of the Father.” And St. Ambrose derided them that called for express Scripture for ἁμοούσιος, since the prophets and the gospels acknowledge the unity of substance in the Father and the Son; and we easily conclude the Holy Ghost to be God, because we call upon him; and we call upon him because we believe in him; and we believe in him because we are baptized into the faith and profession of the Holy Ghost. This way of teaching our blessed Saviour used, when he confuted the Sadducees, in the question of the resurrection; and thus he confuted the Pharisees, in the question of his being the Son of God.* The use I make of it is this, that right reason is so far from being an exile from the inquiries of religion, that it is the great insurance of many propositions of faith; and we have seen the faith of men strangely alter, but the reason of man can never alter, every rational truth supposing its principles being eternal and unchangeable. All that is to be done here is to see that you argue well, that your deduction be evident, that your reason be right: for Scripture is to our understandings, as the grace of God to our wills; that instructs our reason, and this helps our wills; and we may as well choose the things of God without our wills, and delight in them without love, as understand the Scriptures or make use of them without reason.

* Isaiah v.

† Isaiah ix.

* John x. 37.

Quest. But how shall our reason be guided that it may be right, that it be not a blind guide, but direct us to the place where the star appears, and point us to the very house where the babe lieth, that we may indeed do as the wise men did? To this I answer :

2. In the making deductions, the first great measure to direct our reason and our inquiries is the analogy of faith; that is, let the fundamentals of faith be your cynosura, your great light to walk by, and whatever you derive from thence, let it be agreeable to the principles from whence they come. It is the rule of St. Paul, Προφητειῶν κατ' ἀναλογίαν πίστεως, "Let him that prophesies, do it according to the proportion of faith;"* that is, let him teach nothing but what is revealed, or agreeable to the ἀπόκριστα, "the prime credibilities" of Christianity; that is, by the plain words of Scripture let him expound the less plain, and the superstructure by the measures of the foundation, and doctrines be answerable to faith, and speculations relating to practice, and nothing taught, as simply necessary to be believed, but what is evidently and plainly set down in the Holy Scriptures; for he that calls a proposition necessary, which the apostles did not declare to be so, or which they did not teach to all Christians, learned and unlearned, he is gone beyond his proportions; for every thing is to be kept in that order where God hath placed it. There is a "classis" of necessary articles, and that is the apostles' creed, which Tertullian calls "regulam fidei," "the rule of faith;" and according to this we must teach necessities: but what comes after this is not so necessary; and he that puts upon his own doctrines a weight equal to this of the apostles' declaration, either must have an apostolical authority, and an apostolical infallibility, or else he transgresses the proportion of faith, and becomes a false apostle.

3. To this purpose it is necessary that you be very diligent in reading, laborious and assiduous in the studies of Scripture; not only lest ye be blind seers and blind guides, but because, without great skill and learning, ye cannot do your duty. A minister may as well sin by his ignorance as by his negligence; because when light springs from so many angles that may enlighten us, unless we look round about us and be skilled in all the angle of reflexion, we shall but turn

our backs upon the sun, and see nothing but our own shadows. "Search the Scriptures," said Christ. "Non dixit legite, sed scrutamini," said St. Chrysostom; "quia oportet profundius effodere, ut quæ altè delitescunt, invenire possimus." "Christ did not say read, but search the Scriptures;" turn over every page, inquire narrowly, look diligently, converse with them perpetually, be mighty in the Scriptures; for that which is plain there, is the best measure of our faith and of our doctrines. The Jews have a saying, "Qui non advertit, quod supra et infra in Scriptoribus legitur, pervertit verba Dei viventis." He that will understand God's meaning, must look above and below, and round about; for the meaning of the Spirit of God is not like the wind blowing from one point, but like light issuing from the body of the sun, it is light round about; and in every word of God there is a treasure, and something will be found somewhere, to answer every doubt, and to clear every obscurity, and to teach every truth by which God intends to perfect our understandings. But then take this rule with you: do not pass from plainness to obscurity, nor from simple principles draw crafty conclusions, nor from easiness pass into difficulty, nor from wise notices draw intricate nothings, nor from the wisdom of God lead your hearers into the follies of men. Your principles are easy, and your way plain, and the words of faith are open, and what naturally flows from thence will be as open; but if, without violence and distortion, it cannot be drawn forth, the proposition is not of the family of faith. "Qui nimis emungit, elicit sanguinem:" "he that rings too hard, draws blood;" and nothing is fit to be offered to your charges and your flocks but what flows naturally, and comes easily, and descends readily and willingly, from the fountains of salvation.

4. Next to this analogy or proportion of faith let the consent of the catholic church be your measure, so as by no means to pervariate in any doctrine, in which all Christians always have consented. This will appear to be a necessary rule by-and-by; but in the mean time, I shall observe to you, that it will be the safer, because it cannot go far: it can be instanced but in three things, in the creed, in ecclesiastical government, and in external forms of worship and liturgy. The catholic church hath been too much and too soon divided: it hath been used as the man upon a hill used his heap of heads

* Rom. xii. 7.

in a basket; when he threw them down the hill, every head ran his own way, "quot capita tot sententiæ;" and as soon as the spirit of truth was opposed by the spirit of error, the spirit of peace was disordered by the spirit of division; and the Spirit of God hath overpowered us so far, that we are only fallen out about that, of which if we had been ignorant, we had not been much the worse; but in things simply necessary, God hath preserved us still unbroken: all nations and all ages recite the creed, and all pray the Lord's prayer, and all pretend to walk by the rule of the commandments; and all churches have ever kept the day of Christ's resurrection, or the Lord's day, holy; and all churches have been governed by bishops, and the rites of Christianity have been for ever administered by separate orders of men, and those men have been always set apart by prayer and the imposition of the bishop's hands; and all Christians have been baptized, and all baptized persons were, or ought to be, and were taught that they should be, confirmed by the bishop, and presidents of religion; and for ever there were public forms of prayer, more or less in all churches; and all Christians that were to enter into holy wedlock, were ever joined or blessed by the bishop or the priest: in these things all Christians ever have consented, and he that shall prophesy or expound Scripture to the prejudice of any of these things, hath no part in that article of his creed; he does not believe the holy catholic church, he hath no fellowship, no communion with the saints and servants of God.

It is not here intended, that the doctrine of the church should be the rule of faith distinctly from, much less against, the Scripture; for that were a contradiction to suppose the church of God, and yet speaking and acting against the will of God; but it means, that where the question is concerning an obscure place of Scripture, the practice of the catholic church is the best commentary. "Intellectus, qui cum praxi concurrit, est spiritus vivificans," said Cusanus. Then we speak according to the Spirit of God, when we understand Scripture in that sense in which the church of God hath always practised it. "Quod pluribus, quod sapientibus, quod omnibus videtur," that is Aristotle's rule; and it is a rule of nature; every thing puts on a degree of probability as it is witnessed "by wise men, by many wise men, by all wise men:" and it is Vincentius Lirinensis' great

rule of truth; "Quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus:" and he that goes against "what is said always, and every where, and by all" Christians, had need have a new revelation, or an infallible spirit; or he hath an intolerable pride and foolishness of presumption. Out of the communion of the universal church no man can be saved; they are the body of Christ; and the whole church cannot perish, and Christ cannot be a head without a body, and he will for ever be our Redeemer, and for ever intercede for his church, and be glorious in his saints; and, therefore, he that does not sow in these furrows, but leaves the way of the whole church, hath no pretence for his error, no excuse for his pride, and will find no alleviation of his punishment. These are the best measures which God hath given us to lead us in the way of truth, and to preserve us from false doctrines; and whatsoever cannot be proved by these measures, cannot be necessary. There are many truths besides these; but if your people may be safely ignorant of them, you may quietly let them alone, and not trouble their heads with what they have so little to do; things that need not to be known at all, need not to be taught: for if they be taught, they are not certain, or are not very useful; and, therefore, there may be danger in them besides the trouble; and since God hath not made them necessary, they may be let alone without danger; and it will be madness to tell stories to your flocks of things which may hinder salvation, but cannot do them profit. And now it is time that I have done with the first great remark of doctrine noted by the apostle in my text; all the guides of souls must take care that the doctrine they teach be ἀδιάφθορος, "pure and incorrupt," the word of God, the truth of the Spirit. That which remains is easier.

2. In the next place, it must be σεμνός, "grave," and reverend, no vain notions, no pitiful contentions, and disputes about little things, but becoming your great employment in the ministry of souls: and in this the rules are easy and ready.

1. Do not trouble your people with controversies: whatsoever does gender strife, the apostle commands us to avoid; and, therefore, much more the strife itself: a controversy is a stone in the mouth of the bearer, who should be fed with bread, and it is a temptation to the preacher, it is a state of temptation; it engages one side in lying, and both in uncertainty and uncharitable-

ness; and after all, it is not food for souls; it is the food of contention, it is a spiritual lawsuit, and it can never be ended; every man is right and every man is wrong in these things, and no man can tell who is right, or who is wrong. For as long as a word can be spoken against a word, and a thing be opposite to a thing; as long as places are hard, and men are ignorant, or "knowing but in part;" as long as there is money and pride in the world, and for ever till men willingly confess themselves to be fools and deceived, so long will the saw of contention be drawn from side to side. "That which is not, cannot be numbered;" saith the wise man: no man can reckon upon any truth that is got by contentious learning; and whoever troubles his people with questions, and teaches them to be troublesome, note that man, he loves not peace, or he would fain be called "Rabbi, Rabbi." Christian religion loves not tricks nor artifices of wonder; but like the natural and amiable simplicity of Jesus, by plain and easy propositions, leads us in wise paths to a place, where sin and strife shall never enter. What good can come from that which fools begin, and wise men can never end but by silence? and that had been the best way at first, and would have stilled them in the cradle. What have your people to do whether Christ's body be in the sacrament by consubstantiation or transubstantiation; whether purgatory be in the centre of the earth, or in the air, or any where, or nowhere; and who but a madman would trouble their heads with the entangled links of the fanatic chain of predestination? Teach them to fear God and honour the king, to keep the commandments of God, and the king's commands, because of the oath of God; learn them to be sober and temperate, to be just and to pay their debts, to speak well of their neighbours and to think meanly of themselves; teach them charity, and learn them to be zealous of good works. Is it not a shame, that the people should be filled with sermons against ceremonies, and declamations against surplice, and tedious harangues against the poor airy sign of the cross in baptism? These things teach them to be ignorant; it fills them with wind, and they suck dry nurses; it makes them lazy and useless, troublesome and good for nothing. Can the definition of a Christian be, that a Christian is a man that rails against bishops and the common prayer-book? and yet this is the great labour of our neighbours that are crept in

among us; this they call the work of the Lord, and this is the great matter of the desired reformation; in these things they spend their long breath, and about these things they spend earnest prayers, and by these they judge their brother, and for these they revile their superior, and in this doughty cause they think it fit to fight and die. If St. Paul or St. Anthony, St. Basil or St. Ambrose, if any of the primitive confessors, or glorious martyrs, should awake from within their curtains of darkness, and find men thus striving against government, for the interest of disobedience, and labouring for nothings, and preaching all day for shadows and moonshine; and that not a word shall come from them, to teach the people humility, not a word of obedience or self-denial; they are never taught to suspect their own judgment, but always to prefer the private minister before the public, the presbyter before a bishop, fancy before law, the subject before his prince, a prayer in which men consider not at all, before that which is weighed wisely and considered; and, in short, a private spirit before the public, and Mass John before the patriarch of Jerusalem: if, I say, St. Paul or St. Anthony should see such a light, they would not know the meaning of it, nor of what religion the country were, nor from whence they had derived their new nothing of an institution. "The kingdom of God consists in wisdom and righteousness, in peace and holiness, in meekness and gentleness, in chastity and purity, in abstinence from evil, and doing good to others;" in these things place your labours, preach these things, and nothing else but such as these; things which promote the public peace and public good; things that can give no offence to the wise and to the virtuous: for these things are profitable to men and pleasing to God.

2. Let not your sermons and discourses to your people be busy arguings about hard places of Scripture; if you strike a hard, against a hard, you may chance to strike fire, or break a man's head; but it never makes a good building: "*Philosophiam ad syllabas vocare,*" that is to no purpose; your sermons must be for edification, something to make the people better and wiser, "*wiser unto salvation,*" not wiser to discourse; for if a hard thing get into their heads, I know not what work you will make of it, but they will make nothing of it or something that is very strange: dress your people unto the imagery of Christ, dress them for

their funerals, help them to make their accounts up against the day of judgment. I have known some persons and some families that would religiously educate their children, and bring them up in the Scriptures from their cradle; and they would teach them to tell who was the first man, and who was the oldest, and who was the wisest, and who was the strongest; but I never observed them to ask who was the best, and what things were required to make a man good:* the apostles' creed was not the entertainment of their pretty talkings, nor the life of Christ; the story of his bitter passion, and his incomparable sermon on the mount, went not into their catechisms. What good can your flocks receive, if you discourse well and wisely, whether Jephthah sacrificed his daughter, or put her into the retirements of a solitary life; nor how David's numbering the people did differ from Joshua's; or whether God took away the life of Moses by an apoplexy, or by the kisses of his mouth? If scholars be idly busy in these things in the schools, custom, and some other little accidents may help to excuse them; but the time that is spent in your churches, and conversation with your people, must not be so thrown away: *λόγος ἔστω σεμνός*, that is your rule; "let your speech be grave" and wise, and useful, and holy, and intelligible; something to reform their manners, to correct their evil natures, to amend their foolish customs; "to build them up in a most holy faith." That is the second rule and measure of your preachings that the apostle gives you in my text.

3. Your speech must be *ἰγαής*, "salutary" and wholesome: and, indeed, this is of greatest concern, next to the first, next to the truth and purity of that doctrine; for unless the doctrine be made fit for the necessities of your people, and not only be good in itself but good for them, you lose the end of your labours, and they the end of your preachings: "Your preaching is vain, and their faith is also vain." The particulars of this are not many, but very useful.

1. It is never out of season to preach good works; but when you do, be careful that you never indirectly disgrace them by telling how your adversaries spoil them. I do not speak this in vain; for too many of us account good works to be popery, and so

not only dishonour our religion, and open wide the mouths of adversaries, but disparage Christianity itself, while we hear it preached in every pulpit, that they who preach good works think they merit heaven by it; and so for fear of merit, men let the work alone; to secure a true opinion they neglect a good practice, and out of hatred of popery we lay aside Christianity itself. Teach them how to do good works, and yet to walk humbly with God; for better is it to dwell even upon a weak account, than to do nothing upon the stock of a better proposition: and let it never be used any more as a word of reproach unto us all, that the faith of a protestant, and the works of a papist, and the words of a fanatic, make up a good Christian. Believe well, and speak well, and do well; but in doing good works a man cannot deceive any one but himself, by the appendage of a foolish opinion; but in our believing only, and in talking, a man may deceive himself, and all the world; and God only can be safe from the cozenage. Like to this is the case of external forms of worship, which too many refuse, because they pretend that many who use them rest in them, and pass no further: for besides that no sect of men teaches their people so to do, you cannot without uncharitableness suppose it true of very many. But if others do ill, do not you do so too; and leave not out the external forms of fear of formality, but join the inward power of godliness; and then they are reprov'd best, and instructed wisely, and you are secured. But remember, that profaneness is commonly something that is external; and he is a profane person who neglects the exterior part of religion: and this is so vile a crime, that hypocrisy, while it is undiscovered, is not so much mischievous as open profaneness, or a neglect and contempt of external religion. Do not despise external religion, because it may be sincere, and do not rely upon it wholly, because it may be counterfeit; but do you preach both, and practise both; both what may glorify God in public, and what may please him in private.

2. In deciding the questions and cases of conscience of your flocks, never strive to speak what is pleasing but what is profitable, *οὐ λόγους, ἀλλὰ πραγμάτων φέγγεσθαι οὐσίας*, as was said of Isidore, the philosopher; "You must not give your people words, but things and substantial food."

* *Σχημάτων ἀρέτων ποταμός.*

Let not the people be prejudiced in the matter of their souls, upon any terms whatsoever, and be not ashamed to speak boldly in the cause of God; for he that is angry when he is reprov'd, is not to be considered, excepting only to be reprov'd again; if he will never mend, not you but he will have the worst of it; but if he ever mends, he will thank you for your love, and for your wisdom, and for your care: and no man is finally disgrac'd for speaking of a truth; only here, pray for the grace of prudence, that you may speak opportunely and wisely, lest you profit not, but destroy an incapable subject.

Lastly: The apostle requires of every minister of the gospel that his speech and doctrine should be ἀκατάγνωστος, "unreprovable:" not such against which no man can cavil; for the Pharisees found fault with the wise discourses of the eternal Son of God; and heretics and schismatics prated against the holy apostles and their excellent sermons; but ἀκατάγνωστος is "such as deserves no blame," and needs no pardon, and flatters not for praise, and begs no excuses, and makes no apologies; a discourse that will be justified by all the sons of wisdom: now that yours may be so, the preceding rules are the best means that are imaginable. For, so long as you speak the pure truths of God, the plain meaning of the Spirit, the necessary things of faith, the useful things of charity, and the excellencies of holiness, who can reprove your doctrine? But there is something more in this word which the apostle means, else it had been a useless repetition: and a man may speak the truths of God, and yet may be blameworthy by an importune, unseasonable, and imprudent way of delivering them, or for want of such conduct, which will place him and his doctrine in reputation and advantages. To this purpose these advices may be useful.

1. Be more careful to establish a truth than to reprove an error. For besides that a truth will, when it is established, of itself reprove the error sufficiently; men will be less apt to reprove your truth, when they are not engag'd to defend their own propositions against you. Men stand upon their guard when you proclaim war against their doctrine. Teach your doctrine purely and wisely, and without any angry reflections; for you shall very hardly persuade him whom you go about publicly to confute.

2. If any man have a revelation or disco-

very, of which thou knowest nothing but by his preaching, be not too quick to condemn it; not only lest thou discourage his labour and stricter inquiries in the search of truth, but lest thou also be a fool upon record; for so is every man that hastily judges what he slowly understands. Is it not a monument of a lasting reproach, that one of the popes of Rome condemn'd the bishop of Sulzbach, for saying that there were antipodes? And is not Pope Nicholas deserted by his own party, for correcting the sermons of Berengarius, and making him recant into a worse error? and posterity will certainly make themselves very merry with the wise sentences made lately at Rome, against Galileo and the Jansenists. To condemn one truth is more shameful than to broach two errors: for he that, in an honest and diligent inquiry, misses something of the mark, will have the apologies of human infirmity, and the praise of doing his best; but he that condemns a truth, when it is told him, is an envious fool, and is a murderer of his brother's fame and his brother's reason.

3. Let no man, upon his own head, reprove the religion that is established by law, and a just supreme authority; for no reproofs are so severe as the reproofs of law; and a man will very hardly defend his opinion, that is already condemn'd by the wisdom of all his judges. A man's doctrine possibly may be true though against law; but it cannot be ἀκατάγνωστος, "unreprovable;" and a schismatic can, in no case, observe this rule of the apostle. If something may be amiss when it is declared by laws, much easier may he be in an error, who goes upon his own account, and declares alone: and, therefore, it is better to let things alone, than to be troublesome to our superiors by an impertinent wrangling for reformation. We find that some kings of Judah were greatly praised, and yet they did not destroy all the temples of the false gods which Solomon had built: and if such public persons might let some things alone that were amiss, and yet be innocent, trouble not yourself that all the world is not amend'd according to your pattern; see that you be perfect at home, that all be rightly reformed there; as for reformation of the church, God will never call you to an account. Some things cannot be reformed, and very many need not, for all thy peevish dreams; and after all, it is twenty to one but thou art mistaken, and

thy superior is in the right; and if thou wert not proud thou wouldst think so too. Certain it is, he that sows in the furrows of authority, his doctrine cannot so easily be reprov'd as he that ploughs and sows alone. When Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, fell into the hands of the Egyptian monks, who were ignorant and confident, they handled him with great rudeness, because he had spoken of the immateriality of the Divine nature; the good man, to escape their fury, was forced to give them crafty and soft words, saying "Vidi faciem vestram ut faciem Dei:" which because they understood in the sense of the anthropomorphites and thought he did so too, they let him depart in peace. When private persons are rude against the doctrines of authority, they are seldom in the right; but, therefore, are the more fierce, as wanting the natural supports of truth, which are reason and authority, gentleness and plain conviction; and, therefore, they fall to declamation and railing, zeal and cruelty, trifling and arrogant confidences. They seldom go asunder: it is the same word in Greek that signifies, "disobedience," and "cruelty:" ἀπηγής is both; "He that will endure no bridle," "that man hath no mercy." Αὐθάδεια, ἀπῆγεια ὀμολίας ἐν λόγοις. Confidence is that which will endure no bridle, no curb, no superior. It is worse in the Hebrew; "The sons of Belial," signify "people that will endure no yoke, no government, no imposition;" and we have found them so, they are the sons of Belial indeed. This is that αὐθάδεια, that kind of boldness and refractory confidence, that St. Paul forbids to be in a minister of religion; * μὴ αὐθάδης, "not confident;" that is, let him be humble and modest, distrusting his own judgment, believing wiser men than himself; never bold against authority, never relying on his own wit. Αὐθάδης ἐστὶν αὐτοάδης, said Aristotle; "that man is bold and presumptuous, who pleases himself," and sings his own songs, all voluntary, nothing by his book.

Οὐδ' ἄστυν ἦνες, ὅσους αὐθάδης γεγώς,
Πικρὸς πολεταὺς ἐστὶν ἀμαθίας ὑπο.

EURIP.

said the tragedy. Every confident man is ignorant, and by his ignorance, troublesome to his country, but will never do it honour.

4. Whatever scriptures you pretend for

your doctrine, take heed that it be not chargeable with foul consequences; that it lay no burden upon God, that it do not tempt to vanity, that it be not manifestly serving a temporal end, and nothing else; that it be not vehemently to be suspected to be a design of state, like the sermon at Paul's Cross, by Dr. Shaw, in Richard the Third's time; that it do not give countenance and confidence to a wicked life; for then your doctrine is reprov'd for the appendage, and the intrinsic truth or falsehood will not so much be inquired after, as the visible and external objection: if men can reprove it in the outside, they will inquire no further. But, above all things, nothing so much will reproach your doctrine, as if you preach it in a railing dialect; we have had too much of that within these last thirty years. Optatus observes it was the trick of the Donatists, "Nullus vestrum est, qui non convitia nostra suis tractatibus misceat:" "There is none of you but with his own writings mingles our reproaches;"* you begin to read chapters, and you expound them to our injuries; you comment upon the gospel, and revile your brethren that are absent; you imprint hatred and enmity in your people's hearts, and you teach them war when you pretend to make them saints. They that do so, their doctrine is not ἀκατάγνωστος; that is the least which can be said. If you will not have your doctrine reprehensible, *do nothing with offence*; and above all offences avoid the doing or saying those things, that give offence to the king and to the laws, to the voice of Christendom and the public customs of the church of God. Frame your life and preachings to the canons of the church, to the doctrines of antiquity, to the sense of the ancient and holy fathers. For it is otherwise in theology than it is in other learnings. The experiments of philosophy are rude at first, and the observations weak, and the principles unproved; and he that made the first lock, was not so good a workman as we have now-a-days: but in Christian religion, they that were first were best, because God, and not man, was the teacher; and ever since that, we have been unlearning the wise notices of pure religion, and mingling them with human notices and human interest. "Quod primum, hoc verum:" and although concerning antiquity, I may say as he in the tragedy; †

* Tit. i. 7.

* Lib. iv. adv. Parmen.

† Euripides.

Συμφορῶν σοὶ βούλομαι, ἀλλ' οὐ συννοεῖν,

I would have you be wise with them, and under them, and follow their faith, but not their errors; yet this can never be of use to us, till antiquity be convicted of an error, by an authority great as her own, or a reason greater, and declared by an authorized master of sentences. But, however, be very tender in reproving a doctrine for which good men and holy have suffered martyrdom, and of which they have made public confession; for nothing reproves a doctrine so much as to venture it abroad with so much scandal and objection: and what reason can any schismatic have against the common prayer-book, able to weigh against that argument of blood, which for the testimony of it was shed by the Queen Mary martyrs? I instance the advice in this particular, but it is true in all things else of the like nature. It was no ill advice, whoever gave it, to the favourite of a prince; "Never make yourself a professed enemy to the church; for their interest is so complicated with the public, and their calling is so dear to God, that one way or other, one time or other, God and man will be their defender."—The same I say concerning authority and antiquity: never do any thing, never say or profess any thing against it: for besides that if you follow their measures, you will be secured in your faith, and in your main duty; even in smaller things they will be sure to carry the cause against you, and no man is able to bear the reproach of singularity. It was in honour spoken of St. Malachias, my predecessor in the see of Down, in his life written by St. Bernard; "Apostolicas sanctiones et decreta Ss. pp. in cunctis ecclesiis statuebat." I hope to do something of this for your help and service, if God gives me life, and health, and opportunity; but for the present, I have done. These rules if you observe, your doctrine will be ἀκατάγνωστος, "it will need no pardon;" and ἀνέγκλητος, "never to be reproved in judgment." I conclude all with the wise saying of Bensirach: "Extol not thyself in the counsel of thine own heart, that thy soul be not torn in pieces as a bull straying alone."*

* Ecclus. vi. 2.

SERMON XII.

PREACHED AT THE FUNERAL OF SIR GEORGE DALSTON, OF DALSTON IN CUMBERLAND.

September 28, 1657.

If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.—1 Cor. xv. 19.

WHEN God, in his infinite and eternal wisdom, had decreed to give to man a life of labour, and a body of mortality; a state of contingency, and a composition of fighting elements; and having designed to be glorified by a free obedience, would also permit sin in the world, and suffer evil men to go on in their wickedness, to prevail in their impious machinations, to vex the souls and grieve the bodies of the righteous, he knew that this would not only be very hard to be suffered by his servants, but also be very difficult to be understood by them who know God to be a "Lawgiver" as well as a "Lord;" a "Judge" as well as a "King;" a "Father" as well as a "Ruler;" and that, in order to his own glory, and for the manifestation of his goodness, he had promised to reward his servants, to give good to them that did good: therefore, to take off all prejudices, and evil resentments, and temptations, which might trouble those good men who suffered evil things,—he was pleased to do two great things which might confirm the faith, and endear the services, and entertain the hopes of them who are indeed his servants, but yet were very ill used in the accidents of this world.

1. The one was, that he sent his Son into the world to take upon him our nature; and him, being the "Captain of our salvation, he would perfect through sufferings;" that no man might think it much to suffer, when God spared not his own Son; and every man might submit to the necessity, when the Christ of God was not exempt; and yet that man should fear the event which was to follow such sad beginnings, when "it behoved even Christ to suffer, and so to enter into glory."

2. The other great thing was, that God did not only by revelation, and the sermons of the prophets to his church, but even to all mankind competently teach, and effectively persuade, that the soul of man does not die; but that although things were ill here, yet they should be well hereafter; that the evils of this life were short and tolerable, and that to the good, who usually feel most of them, they should end in

honour and advantages. And, therefore, Cicero had reason on his side to conclude, that there is to be a time and place after this life, wherein the wicked shall be punished, and the virtuous well rewarded, when he considered that Orpheus and Socrates, Palamedes and Thræseas, Lucretia and Papinian, were either slain or oppressed to death by evil men. But to us Christians, *εἰ μὴ ἰπαχθῆς ἐστὶν εἰπεῖν, πᾶν ἰκανῶς ἀποδείξειν*, as Plato's* expression is; we have a necessity to declare, and a demonstration to prove it, when we read that Abel died by the hands of Cain, who was so ignorant, that though he had malice and strength, yet he had scarce art enough to kill him: when we read that John the Baptist, Christ himself, and his apostles, and his whole army of martyrs, died under the violence of evil men; when virtue made good men poor, and free speaking of brave truths made the wise to lose their liberty; when an excellent life hastened an opprobrious death, and the obeying God destroyed ourselves; it was but time to look about for another state of things, where justice should rule, and virtue find her own portion: where the men that were like to God in mercy and justice, should also partake of his felicity; and, therefore, men cast out every line, and turned every stone, and tried every argument, and sometimes proved it well; and when they did not, yet they believed strongly; and they were sure of the thing, even when they were not sure of the argument.

Thus, therefore, would the old priests of the capitol, and the ministers of Apollo, and the mystic persons at their oracles believe, when they made apotheoses of virtuous and braver persons, ascribing every braver man into the number of their gods; Hercules and Romulus, Castor and Pollux, Liber Pater, † him that taught the use of vines, and her that taught them the use of corn. For they knew that it must needs be, that they who like to God do excellent things, must like to God have an excellent portion.

This learning they also had from Phercydes the Syrian, from Pythagoras of Samos, and from Zamolxis the Gete, from the neighbours of Euphrates, and the inhabitants by Ister, who were called *ἀθανάτιζοντες*, "Immortalists;" because, in the midst of all their dark notices of things, they saw this clearly, *ὅτι ἀγαθὰ ποιοῦντες οὐκ ἀποθανοῦνται, ἀλλὰ ἤξουσι ἐς χώρον τοῦτον, ἵνα ἔχωσι τὰ*

πάντα ἀγαθὰ; "that virtuous and good men do not die, but their souls do go into blessed regions, where they shall enjoy all good things;" and it was never known that ever any good man was of another opinion. Hercules and Themistocles, Epaminondas and Cicero, Socrates and Cimon, Ennius and Phidias, all the flower of mankind have preached this truth. *Κυριώτερα τὰ τῶν θείων ἀνδρῶν μαντεύματα, ἢ τὰ τῶν μὴ· οἱ δὲ ἐπιεικίστατοι πάντα ποιοῦσιν, ὅπως ἀνὲς τὸν ἕκαστον χρόνον εὐ ἀκούσωσιν.* "The discourings and prophesyings of divine men are much more proper and excellent than of others, because they do equal and good things, until the time comes that they shall hear well for them:"

τεκμήριον δὲ ποιῶμαι, ὅτι ἐστὶ τὴν αἰσθητικῆς τεθνεῶς τῶν ἐνθάδε· αἱ δὲ βέλτεται ψυχὰι μαντεύονται τὰτα οὕτως ἔχειν· αἱ δὲ μοχθηρόταται οὐ φαίνονται. "And this is the sign, that when we die we have life and discerning; because though the wicked care not for believing it, yet all the prophets and the poets, the wise and the brave heroes say so;" they are the words of Plato. For though that which is compounded of elements, returns to its material and corruptible principles, yet the soul, which is a particle of the Divine breath, returns to its own Divine original, where there is no death or dissolution; and because the understanding is neither hot nor cold, it hath no moisture in it, and no dryness, it follows that it hath nothing of those substances, concerning which alone we know that they are corruptible. There is nothing corruptible that we know of, but the four elements, and their sons and daughters; nothing dies that can discourse, that can reflect in perfect circles upon their own imperfect actions; nothing can die that can see God, and converse with spirits, that can govern by laws and wise propositions. For fire and water can be tyrannical, but not govern; they can bear every thing down that stands before them, and rush like the people; but not rule like judges, and therefore they perish as tumults are dissolved. *Λέγεται δὲ τὸν νοῦν μόνον θύραθεν ἐπισκίεσθαι, καὶ θεῶν εἶναι μόνον· οὐδὲ γὰρ αὐτοῦ τῆ ἐνεργείᾳ κοιναντὴ σωματικῆ ἐνέργεια·* says Aristotle:‡ "But the soul only comes from abroad, from a Divine principle; (for so saith the scripture,—'God breathed into Adam the spirit of life;') and that which in operation does not communicate with the body," shall have no part in its corruption.

* Phæd. c. 37.

† Horace.

‡ De gen. an. lib.

Thus far they were right; but when they descended to particulars, they fell into error. That the rewards of virtue were to be hereafter, that they were sure of; that the soul was to survive the calamities of this world, and the death of the body, that they were sure of; and upon this account they did bravely and virtuously: and yet they that thought best amongst them, believed that the souls departed should be reinvested with other bodies, according to the dispositions and capacities of this life.

Thus Orpheus, who sang well, should transmigrate into a swan; and the soul of Thamyris, who had as good a voice as he, should wander till it were confined to the body of a nightingale; Ajax to a lion, Agamemnon to an eagle, tyrant princes into wolves and hawks, the lascivious into asses and goats, the drunkards into swine, the crafty statesmen into bees and pismires, and Thersites to an ape. This fancy of theirs prevailed much amongst the common people, and the uninstructed amongst the Jews: for when Christ appeared so glorious in miracle, Herod presently fancied him to be the soul of John the Baptist in another body; and the common people said he was Elias, or Jeremias, or one of the old prophets. And true it is, that although God was pleased, in all times, to communicate to mankind notices of the other world, sufficient to encourage virtues, and to contest against the rencounters of the world,—yet he was ever sparing in telling the secrets of it; and when St. Paul had his rapture into heaven, he saw fine things, and heard strange words, but they were ἀόριστα ῥήματα, “words that he could not speak,” and secrets that he could not understand, and secrets that he could not communicate. For as a man staring upon the broad eye of the sun at his noon of solstice, feels his heat, and dwells in light, and loses the sight of his eyes, and perceives nothing distinctly; but the organ is confounded, and the faculty amazed with too big a beauty: so was St. Paul in his ecstasy; he saw that he could see nothing to be told below, and he perceived the glories were too big for flesh and blood, and that the beauties of separate souls were not to be understood by the soul in conjunction; and, therefore, after all the fine things that he saw, we only know what we knew before, viz. that the soul can live when the body is dead; that it can subsist without the body; that there are very great glories reserved for them that serve God; that they

who die in Christ, shall live with him; that the body is a prison, and the soul is in fetters, while we are alive; and that when the body dies, the soul springs and leaps from her prison, and enters into the first liberty of the sons of God. Now much of this did rely upon the same argument, upon which the wise gentiles of old concluded the immortality of the soul; even because we are here very miserable and very poor: we are sick, and we are afflicted; we do well, and we are disgraced; we speak well, and we are derided; we tell truths, and few believe us; but the proud are exalted, and the wicked are delivered, and evil men reign over us, and the covetous snatch our little bundles of money from us, and the “fiscus” gathers our rents; and every where the wisest and the best men are oppressed; but, therefore, because it is thus, and thus it is not well, we hope for some great good thing hereafter. “For if, in this life only, we had hope,”—then we Christians, all we to whom persecution is allotted for our portion, we who must be patient under the cross, and receive injuries, and say nothing but prayers,—“we certainly were of all men the most miserable.”

Well then: in this life we see plainly that our portion is not; here we have hopes; but not here only, we shall go into another place, where we shall have more hopes: our faith shall have more evidence, it shall be of things seen afar off; and our hopes shall be of more certainty and perspicuity, and next to possession; we shall have very much good, and be very sure of much more. Here then are three propositions to be considered.

1. The servants of God in this world are very miserable, were it not for their hopes of what is to come hereafter.

2. Though this be a place of hopes, yet we have not our hopes only here. “If in this life only we had hopes,” saith the apostle; meaning, that in another life also we have hopes; not only *metonymically*, taking hopes for the thing we hope for; but *properly*, and for the acts, objects, and causes of hope. In this state of separation the godly shall have the vast joys of a certain intuitive hope, according to their several proportions and capacities.

3. The consummation and perfection of their felicity, when all their miseries shall be changed into glories, is in the world to come, after the resurrection of the dead; which is the main thing which St. Paul here intends.

1. The servants of God in this life are calamitous and afflicted; they must live under the cross. "He that will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me," said our glorious Lord and Master. And we see this prophetic precept, (for it is both a prophecy and a commandment, and, therefore, shall be obeyed whether we will or not,) but I say, we see it verified by the experience of every day. For here the violent oppress the meek; and they that are charitable, shall receive injuries. The apostles who preached Christ crucified were themselves persecuted, and put to violent deaths; and Christianity itself for three hundred years was the public hatred; and yet then it was that men loved God best, and suffered more for him; then they did most good, and least of evil. In this world, men thrive by villany; and lying and deceiving is accounted just; and to be rich is to be wise; and tyranny is honourable; and though little thefts, and petty mischiefs, are interrupted by the laws; yet if a mischief become public and great, acted by princes, and effected by armies, and robberies be done by whole fleets, it is virtue, and it is glory: it fills the mouths of fools that wonder, and employs the pens of witty men that eat the bread of flattery. How many thousand bottles of tears, and how many millions of sighs does God every day record, while the oppressed and the poor pray unto him, worship him, speak great things of his holy name, study to please him, beg for helps that they may become gracious in his eyes, and are so, and yet never sing in all their life, but when they sing God's praises out of duty, with a sad heart and hopeful spirit, living only upon the future, weary of to-day, and sustained only by the hope of to-morrow's event! and after all, their eyes are dim with weeping and looking upon distances, as knowing they shall never be happy till the "new heavens and the new earth" appear.

But I need not instance in the "miserabili," in them that dwell in dungeons, and lay their head in places of trouble and disease: take those servants of God who have greatest plenty, who are encircled with blessings, whom this world calls prosperous, and see if they have not fightings within, and crosses without, contradiction of accidents, and perpetuity of temptations, the devil assailing them, and their own weakness betraying them; fears encompassing them round about, lest they lose the favour

of God, and shame sitting heavily upon them, when they remember how often they talk foolishly, and lose their duty, and dishonour their greatest relations, and walk unworthy of those glories which they would fain obtain; and all this is besides the unavoidable accidents of mortality, sickly bodies, troublesome times, changes of government, loss of interests, unquiet and peevish accidents round about them: so that when they consider to what they are primarily obliged; that they must in some instances deny their appetite, in others they must quit their relations, in all they must deny themselves, when their natural or secular danger tempts to sin and danger; and that for the support of their wills, and the strengthening their resolutions, against the arguments and solicitation of passions, they have nothing but the promises of another world; they will easily see that all the splendour of their condition, which fools admire, and wise men use temperately, and handle with caution, as they try the edge of a razor, is so far from making them recompense for the sufferings of this world, that the reserves and expectations of the next is, that conjunction of aids, by which only they can well and wisely bear the calamities of their present plenty.

But if we look round about us, and see how many righteous causes are oppressed, how many good men are reproached, how religion is persecuted, upon what strange principles the greatest princes of the world transact their greatest affairs, how easily they make wars, and how suddenly they break leagues; and at what expense, and vast pensions, they corrupt each other's officers; and how the greatest part of mankind watches to devour one another: and they that are devoured are commonly the best, the poor and the harmless, the gentle and uncrafty, the simple and religious; and then how many ways all good men are exposed to danger; and that our scene of duty lies as much in passive graces as in active; it must be confessed that this is a place of wasps and insects, of vipers and dragons, of tigers and bears; but the sheep are eaten by men, or devoured by wolves and foxes, or die of the rot; and when they do not, yet every year they redeem their lives by giving their fleece and their milk, and must die, when their death will pay the charges of the knife.

Now, from this, I say, it was that the very heathen, Plutarch and Cicero, Pytha-

goras and Hierocles, Plato, and many others, did argue and conclude, that there must be a day of recompenses to come hereafter, which would set all right again: and from hence also our blessed Saviour himself did convince the Sadducees in their fond and pertinacious denying of the resurrection: for that is the meaning of that argument, which our blessed Lord did choose as being clearly and infallibly the aptest of any in the Old Testament, to prove the resurrection; and though the deduction is not at first so plain and evident, yet upon nearer intuition, the interpretation is easy, and the argument excellent and proper.

For it is observed by the learned among the Jews, that when God is by way of particular relation, and especial benediction, appropriated to any one, it is intended that God is to him "a rewarder and benefactor," Θεὸς ἐμπεργέτης, Θεὸς μισθαποδότης; for that is the first thing and the last, that every man believes and feels of God; and, therefore, St. Paul sums up the gentiles' creed in this compendium: "He that cometh to God, must believe that God is; and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."* And as it is in the indefinite expression, so it is in the limited; as it is in the absolute, so also in the relative. God is the rewarder; and to be their God, is to be their rewarder, to be their benefactor, and their gracious Lord. "Ego ero Deus vester,"—"I will be your God;" that is, "I will do good," says Aben Ezra: and Philo; τὸ δὲ Θεὸς αἰώνιος ἴσον ἐστὶ τῷ, ὁ χαρίζομενος, οὐ τότε μὲν, πότε δὲ οὐ, αἰεὶ δὲ, καὶ συνεχῶς. "The everlasting God, that is, as if he had said, one that will do you good; not sometimes some, and sometimes none at all, but frequently, and for ever:" and this we find also observed by St. Paul: "Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God;"† and that by which the relative appellative is verified, is the consequent benefit; He is "called their God; for he hath provided for them a city."

Upon this account, the argument of our blessed Saviour is this: "God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob;" that is, the gracious God, the benefactor, the rewarder; and, therefore, Abraham is not dead, but is fallen asleep, and he shall be restored in the resurrection to receive those blessings and rewards, by the title of which, God was called the "God of Abraham." For in this world Abraham had not that harvest

of blessings, which is consigned by that glorious appellative; he was an exile from his country; he stood far off from the possession of his hopes; he lived in ambulatory life; he spent most of his days without an heir; he had a constant piety; and at the latter end of his life, one great blessing was given him; and because that was allayed by the anger of his wife, and the expulsion of his handmaid, and the ejection of Ishmael, and the danger of the lad; and his great calamity about the matter of Isaac's sacrifice; and all his faith, and patience, and piety, was rewarded with nothing but promises of things a great way off; and before the possession of them, he went out of this world: it is undeniably certain that God, who, after the departure of the patriarchs, did still love to be called "their God," did intend to signify that they should be restored to a state of life, and a capacity of those greatest blessings, which were the foundation of that title and that relation. "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living;" but God is the God of Abraham, and the other patriarchs; therefore they are not dead; dead to this world, but alive to God; that is, though this life be lost, yet they shall have another and a better; a life in which God shall manifest himself to be their God, to all the purposes of benefit and eternal blessings.

This argument was summed up by St. Peter, and the sense of it is thus rendered by St. Clement, the bishop of Rome, as himself testifies: "Si Deus est justus, animus est immortalis;" which is perfectly rendered by the words of my text, "If in this life only we have hope, then are we of all men the most miserable;" because this cannot be, that God who is just and good, should suffer them that heartily serve him, to be really and finally miserable: and yet in this world they are so, very frequently; therefore, in another world, they shall live to receive a full recompense of reward.

Neither is this so to be understood, as if the servants of God were so wholly forsaken of him in this world, and so permitted to the malice of evil men, or the asperities of fortune, that they have not many refreshments, and great comforts, and the perpetual festivities of a holy conscience; for "God my maker is he that giveth songs in the night," said Elihu;* that is, God, as a reward, giveth a cheerful spirit, and makes

* Heb. xi. 6.

† Heb. xi. 16.

* Job xxxv. 10.

a man to sing with joy, when other men are sad with the solemn darkness, and with the affrights of conscience, and with the illusions of the night. But God, who intends vast portions of felicity to his children, does not reckon these little joys into the account of the portion of his elect. The good things which they have in this world, are not little, if we account the joys of religion, and the peace of conscience, amongst things valuable; yet whatsoever it is, all of it, all the blessings of themselves, and of their posterity, and of their relatives, for their sakes, are cast in for intermedial entertainments; but "their good" and their prepared portion shall be hereafter. But for the evil itself, which they must suffer and overcome, it is such a portion of this life, as our blessed Saviour had; injuries and temptations, care and persecutions, poverty and labour, humility and patience: it is well; it is very well; and who can long for or expect better here, when his Lord and Saviour had a state of things, so very much worse than the worst of our calamities? but bad as it is, it is to be chosen rather than a better; because it is the high way of the cross; it is Jacob's ladder, upon which the saints and the King of saints did descend, and at last ascend to heaven itself; and bad as it is, it is the method and inlet to the best; it is a sharp, but it is a short step to bliss; for it is remarkable, in the parable of Dives and Lazarus, that the poor man, the afflicted saint, died first, Dives being permitted to his purple and fine linen, to his delicious fare, and (which he most of all needed) to a space of repentance: but, in the mean time, the poor man was rescued from his sad portion of this life, and carried into Abraham's bosom; where he who was denied in this world to be feasted even with the portion of dogs, was placed in the bosom of the patriarch, that is, in the highest room; for so it was in their "discubitus," or lying down to meat, the chief guest, the most beloved person, did lean upon the bosom of the master of the feast; so St. John did lean upon the breast of Jesus, and so did Lazarus upon the breast of Abraham; or else *κόλιτος Ἀβραάμ*, "sinus Abrahami," may be rendered "the bay of Abraham," alluding to the place of rest, where ships put in after a tempestuous and dangerous navigation; the storm was quickly over with the poor man, and the angel of God brought the good man's soul to a safe port, where he should be disturbed no more: and so saith the Spirit;

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; for they rest from their labours."

But this brings me to the second great inquiry; if here we live upon hopes, and that this is a place of hopes, but not this only; what other place is there, where we shall be blessed in our hope, where we shall rest from our labour and our fear, and have our hopes in perfection; that is all the pleasures which can come from the greatest and most excellent hope?

"Not in this life only:"—So my text. Therefore hereafter; as soon as we die; as soon as ever the soul goes from the body it is blessed. *Blessed*, I say, but not *perfect*: it rejoices in peace and a holy hope: here we have hopes mingled with fear, there our hope is heightened with joy and confidence; it is all the comfort that can be, in the expectation of unmeasurable joys: it is only, not fruition, not the joys of a perfect possession; but less than that, it is, every good thing else.

But that I may make my way plain: I must first remove an objection, which seems to overthrow this whole affair. St. Paul intends these words of my text, as an argument to prove the resurrection; we shall rise again with our bodies; for "if in this life only we had hope, then we were of all men most miserable;" meaning, that unless there be a resurrection, there is no good for us any where else; but if "they who die in the Lord," were happy before the resurrection, then we were not of all men most miserable, though there were to be no resurrection; for the godly are presently happy. So that one must fail; either the resurrection, or the intermedial happiness; the proof of one relies upon the destruction of the other; and because we can no other ways be happy, therefore there shall be a resurrection.

To this I answer, that if the godly, instantly upon their dissolution, had the vision beatifical, it is very true, that they were not most miserable, though there be no resurrection of the dead, though the body were turned into its original nothing: for the joys of the sight of God would, in the soul alone, make them infinite recompense for all the sufferings of this world. But that which the saints have after their dissolution, being only the comforts of a holy hope, the argument remains good: for these intermedial hopes being nothing at all, but in relation to the resurrection, these hopes do not destroy, but confirm it rather; and if the resurrec-

tion were not to be, we should neither have any hopes here, nor hopes hereafter, and therefore the apostle's word is, "If here only we had hopes;" that is, if our hopes only related to this life; but because our hopes only relate to the life to come, and even after this life we are still but in the regions of an enlarged hope, this life and that interval are both but the same argument to infer a resurrection: for they are the hopes of that state, and the joys of those hopes, and it is the comfort of that joy, which makes them blessed who die in the love of God, and the faith and obedience of the Lord Jesus.

And now to the proposition itself.

In the state of separation, the souls departed perceive the blessing and comfort of their labours; they are alive after death; and after death, immediately they find great refreshments. "Justorum animæ in manu Dei sunt, et non tanget illos tormentum mortis:" "The torments of death shall not touch the souls of the righteous, because they are in the hands of God."* And fifteen hundred years after the death of Moses, we find him talking with our blessed Saviour in his transfiguration upon mount Tabor: and as Moses was then, so are all the saints immediately after death, "præsentem apud Dominum," "they are present with the Lord;" and to be so, is not a state of death; and yet of this it is, that St. Paul affirms it to be much better than to be alive.

And this was the undoubted sentence of the Jews before Christ, and since; and therefore our blessed Saviour told the converted thief, that he should "that day be with him in paradise." Now without peradventure, he spake so as he was to be understood: meaning by "paradise," that which the schools and the pulpits of the Rabbins did usually speak of it. By paradise, till the time of Esdras, it is certain, the Jews only meant the blessed garden, in which God only placed Adam and Eve: but in the time of Esdras, and so downward, when they spake distinctly of things to happen after this life, and began to signify their new discoveries, and modern philosophy by names, they called the state of souls, expecting the resurrection of their bodies, by the name of גן עדן, "the garden of Eden." Hence came that form of commendation and blessing to the soul of an Israelite, "Sit anima ejus in horto Eden,"

"Let his soul be in the garden of Eden;" and in their solemn prayers at the time of their death, they were wont to say, "Let his soul rest; and let his sleep be in peace, until the Comforter shall come, and open the gates of paradise unto him:" expressly distinguishing paradise from the state of the resurrection: and so it is evident, in the intercourse on the cross, between Christ and the converted thief. "That day both were to be in paradise;" but Christ himself was not then ascended into heaven, and therefore paradise was no part of that region, where Christ now, and hereafter the saints, shall reign in glory. For παράδεισος did, by use and custom, signify "any place of beauty and pleasure." So the LXX read Eccles. ii. 5. "I made me gardens and orchards," "I made me a paradise," so it is in the Greek; and Cicero* having found this strange word in Xenophon, renders it by "conseptum agrum ac diligenter consitum:" "a field well hedged and set with flowers and fruit."—"Vivarium," Gellius renders it, "a place to keep birds and beasts alive for pleasure." Pollux says this word was Persian by its original; yet because by traduction it became a Hebrew, we may best learn the meaning of it from the Jews, who used it most often, and whose sense we better understand. Their meaning, therefore, was this; that as paradise, or the garden of Eden, was a place of great beauty, pleasure, and tranquillity; so the state of separate souls was a state of peace and excellent delights. So Philo allegorically does expound paradise. λέγουσι γὰρ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ φῦτα εἶναι μὴδὲν ἰσχυρότα τοῖς παρ' ἡμῶν ἀλλὰ ζωῆς, ἀθανασίας, εὐδαιμονίας. "For the trees that grow in paradise are not like ours, but they bring forth knowledge, and life, and immortality." It is, therefore, more than probable, that when the converted thief heard our blessed Saviour speak of "paradise," or "Gan Eden," he who was a Jew, and heard that on that day he should be there, understood the meaning to be, that he should be there where all the good Jews did believe the souls of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to be placed. As if Christ had said: Though you only ask to be remembered when I come into my kingdom, not only that shall be performed in time, but even to-day thou shalt have great refreshment; and this the Hellenish Jews called ἀνάπαυσιν τοῦ παραδείσου, "the rest of para-

* Wisd. iii. 1.

* De Sen. xvii.

dise;" and *παράκλησις*, "the comfort" of paradise; the word being also warranted from that concerning Lazarus; *παράκλησέναι*, "he is comforted."

But this we learn more perfectly from the raptures of St. Paul: "He knew a man" (meaning himself,) "rapt up into the third heaven: and I knew such a man how that he was caught up into paradise."* The raptures and visions were distinct; for St. Paul being a Jew, and speaking after the manner of his nation, makes "paradise" a distinct thing from "the third heaven." For the Jews deny any "orbes" to be in heaven; but they make three regions only, the one of clouds, the second of stars, and the third of angels. To this third or supreme heaven was St. Paul rapt; but he was also borne to paradise, to another place distinct and separate by time and station; for by paradise his countrymen never understood the third heaven. But there also it was that he heard *τὰ ἀόρητα ῥήματα*, "unspeakable words," great glorifications of God, huge excellencies, such which he might not or could not utter below. The effect of these considerations is this; that although the saints are not yet admitted to the blessings consequent to a happy resurrection, yet they have the intermedial entertainments of a present and a great joy.

To this purpose are those words to be understood: "To him that overcomes, will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."† That is, if I may have leave to expound these words, to mean what the Jews did about that time understand by such words: *δένδρον τῆς ζωῆς*, "the tree of life," does signify the principle of peace and holiness, of wisdom and comforts for ever. Philo, expounding it, calls it *τὴν μεγίστην τῶν ἀρετῶν θεοσεβείαν*, *δι' ἧς ἀθανατίζεται ἡ ψυχὴ*: "The worship of God, the greatest of all virtues, by which the soul is made to live for ever:" as if by eating of this tree of life in the paradise of God, they did mean, that they who die well, shall immediately be feasted with the deliciousness of a holy conscience, which the Spirit of God expresses by saying, "They shall walk up and down in white garments, and their works shall follow them;" their tree of life shall germinate; they shall then feel the comforts of having done good works; a sweet remembrance and a holy peace shall caress and feast them, and there they shall

"walk up and down in white;"* that is, as candidates of the resurrection to immortality.

And this allegory of the garden of Eden and paradise was so heartily pursued by the Jews, to represent the state of separation, that the Essenes describe that state by the circumstances and ornaments of a blessed garden: *Χῶρον οὐτε ὄμβρους, οὐτε υπεραῖς, οὐτε κύμασι βαρυνόμενον*: "a region that is not troubled with clouds or showers, or storms or blasts:" *ἀλλ' ὃν ἐξ ὀκειανοῦ πρᾶγῃ ἀεὶ ζέφυρος ἐπισπένειον ἀναφύχει*; "but a place which is perpetually refreshed with delicious breaths." This was it which the heathens did dream concerning the Elysian fields; for all the notices *περὶ ἄδου*, concerning the regions of separate souls, came into Greece from the barbarians, says Diodorus Siculus; and Tertullian observes, although we call that paradise, which is a place appointed to receive the souls of the saints, and that this is separated from the notices of the world by a wall of fire, a portion of the torrid zone (which he supposes to be meant by the flaming sword of the angel placed at the gates of paradise;) yet, says he, the Elysian fields have already possessed the faith and opinions of men. All comes from the same fountain, the doctrine of the old synagogue, confirmed by the words of Christ and the commentaries of the apostles; viz. that after death, before the day of judgment, there is a paradise for God's servants, a region of rest, of comfort, and holy expectations. And, therefore, it is remarkable that these words of the psalmist, "Ne rapias me in medio dierum meorum;"† "snatch me not away in the midst of my days:" in the Hebrew it is, "Ne facias me ascendere;" "make me not to ascend," or to go upwards; meaning, to the supernatural regions of separate souls, who, after death, are in their beginnings of exultation. For to them that die in the Lord, death is a ferment, it is a part of their great good fortune; for death hath not only lost the sting, but it brings a coronet in his hand, which will invest and adorn the heads of saints, till that day come in which the crown of righteousness shall be brought forth, to give them the investiture of an everlasting kingdom.

But that I may take up this proposition useful and clear, I am to add some things by way of supplement.

* 2 Cor. ii. 3.

† Rev. ii. 7.

* Rev. iii. 4, 5, and xiv. 13. † Psal. cii. 25.

1. This place of separation was called "paradise" by the Jews, and by Christ, and after Christ's ascension, by St. John, because it signifies a place of pleasure and rest: and, therefore, by the same analogy, the word may be still used in all the periods of the world, though the circumstances, or though the state of things, be changed. It is generally supposed that this had a proper name, and in the Old Testament was called "Abraham's bosom;" that is, the region where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob did dwell, till the coming of Christ. But I suppose myself to have great reason to dissent from this common opinion; for this word of "Abraham's bosom," being but once used in both the Testaments, and then particularly applied to the person of Lazarus, must needs signify the eminence and privilege of joy that Lazarus had; for all that were in the blessed state of separation, were not in "Abraham's bosom," but only the best and most excellent persons; but they were μετὰ τοῦ Ἀβραάμ, "with Abraham;" and the analogy of the phrase to the manner of the Jewish feasting, where the best guest did lie in the bosom of the master, that is, had the best place, makes it most reasonable to believe that "Abraham's bosom" does not signify the general state of separation, even of the blessed, but the choicest place in that state, a greater degree of blessedness. But because he is the father of the faithful, therefore, to be with Abraham, or to sit down with Abraham, in the time of the Old Testament, did signify the same thing as to be in paradise; but to be in "Abraham's bosom" signifies a great eminence of place and comfort, which is indulged to the most excellent and the most afflicted.

2. Although the state of separation may now also, and is by St. John called paradise, because the allegory still holds perfectly, as signifying comfort and holy pleasures; yet the spirits of good men are not to be said "to be with Abraham," but "to be with Christ;" and as being with Abraham was the specification of the more general word of paradise in the Old Testament, so "being with Christ" is the specification of it in the New. So St. Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit;" and St. Paul said, "I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ;" which expression St. Polycarp also used in his epistle to the Philippians, ὅτι εἰς τὸν ἀφειλούμενον αὐτοῖς τόπον, εἰσὶ παρὰ Κυρίου; "they are in the place that is due to them, they are with the Lord;" that is, in the

hands, in the custody of the Lord Jesus; as appears in the words of St. Stephen and St. Paul. So St. Jerome; "Scimus Nepotianum nostrum esse cum Christo, et sanctorum mixtum choris:" "We know that our Nepotian is with Christ, mingled in the choirs of saints." Upon this account (and it is not at all unreasonable,) the church hath conjectured, that the state of separate souls, since the glorification of our Lord, is much bettered and advanced, and their comforts greater; because, as before Christ's coming, the expectation of the saints that slept was fixed upon the revelation of the Messias in his first coming, so now it is upon the second coming unto judgment, and in his glory. This improvement of their condition is well intimated by their being said to be under the altar; that is, under the protection of Christ, under the powers and benefits of his priesthood, by which he makes continual intercession both for them and us. This place some of the old doctors understood too literally, and from hence they believed that the souls of departed saints were under their material altars; which fancy produced that fond decree of the council of Eliberis,* that wax lights should not by day be burnt in cemeteries, "inquietandi enim spiritus sanctorum non sunt:" "lest the spirits of saints should, by the light of the diurnal tapers, be disquieted." This reason, though it be trifling and impertinent, yet it declares their opinion, that they supposed their souls to be near their relics, which were placed under the altars. But better than this their state is described by St. John, in these words: "Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him night and day in his temple, and he that sits upon the throne shall dwell among them." With which general words, as being modest bounds to our inquiries, enough to tell us it is rarely well, but enough also to chastise all curious questions, let us remain content; and labour with faith and patience, with hope and charity, to be made worthy to partake of those comforts, after which when we have long inquired, when at last we come to try what they are, we shall find them much better, and much otherwise than we imagine.

3. I am to admonish this also, that although our blessed Saviour is, in the creed, said to descend εἰς ᾄδου, "into hell" (so we render it;) yet this does not at all prejudice his other words, "This day thou shalt be

* Can. iii. 4.

with me in paradise:" for the word *εις ἄδου* signifies indefinitely the state of separation, whether blessed or accursed; it means only "the invisible place," or the region of darkness, whither whoso descends shall be no more seen. For as among the heathens the "Elysian fields," and "Tartara," are both *ἐν ἄδου*; so amongst the Jews and Christians, "paradisus" and "gehenna" are the distinct states of hades. Of the first we have a plain testimony in Diphilus:

Καὶ γὰρ καθ' ἄδην δύο τρίβους νομίζομεν,
Μίαν δικαίων, κατέραν ἀσεβῶν ὁδόν.

"In hades there are two ways, one for just men, and another for the impious." Of the second we have the testimony of Josephus, who speaking of the Sadducees, says *τὰς καθ' ἄδου τιμωρίας καὶ τιμὰς ἀναιροῦσι*, "they take away or deny the rewards and punishments respectively which are in hades," or in the state of separation; so that if Christ's soul was in paradise, he was in hades. In vain, therefore, does St. Austin torment himself to tell how Christ could be in both places at once, when it is no harder than to tell how a man may be in England and London at the same time.

4. It is observable, that in the mentions of paradise by St. John, he twice speaks of "the tree of life," but never of "the tree of knowledge of good and evil;" because this was the symbol of secular knowledge, of prudence and skill of doing things of this world, which we can naturally use; we may smell and taste them, but not feed upon them; that is, these are no part of our enjoyment; and if we be given up to the study of such notices, and be emerged in the things of this world, we cannot attend to the studies of religion and of the Divine service. But these cares and secular diversions shall cease, when our souls are placed in paradise; there shall be no care taken for raising portions for our children, nor to provide bread for our tables; no cunning contrivances to be safe from the crafty snare of an enemy; no amazement at losses, no fear of slanderings or of the gripes of publicans; but we shall feed on the tree of life, love of God, and longings for the coming of Christ: we are then all spirit, and our employment shall be symbolical, that is, spiritual, holy, and pleasant.

I have now made it as evident as questions of this nature will bear, that in the state of separation, the spirits of good men shall be blessed and happy souls,—they have

an antepast or taste of their reward; but their great reward itself, their crown of righteousness, shall not be yet; that shall not be until the day of judgment; and this was the third proposition I undertook to prove; the consummation and perfection of the saints' felicity shall be at the resurrection of the dead.

Ἐν παρουσίᾳ αὐτοῦ, "at his coming;" so St. John expresses the time, "that we may not then be ashamed: for now we are the sons of God, but it does not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like unto him, and see him as he is."⁸ At his glorious appearing, we shall also appear glorious; we shall see him as he is; but till then, this beatific vision shall not be at all; but for the interval, the case is otherwise. Tertullian affirms, "*Puniri et foveri animam interim in inferis, sub expectatione utriusque judicii, in quâdam usurpatione et candidâ ejus*:" "the souls are punished or refreshed in their regions, expecting the day of their judgment and several sentences."[†] "*Habitacula illa, animarum promptuaria, nominavit Scriptura*," saith St. Ambrose: "the Scripture calls these habitations, the promptuaries or repositories of souls."[‡] There is comfort, but not the full reward; a certain expectation, supported with excellent intervals of joy: "*refrigerium*," so the Latins call it, "a refreshment." "*Donec consummatio rerum resurrectionem omnium plenitudine mercedis expungat, tunc appariturâ cœlesti promissione*," saith Tertullian: "until the consummation of all things points out the resurrection, by the fulness of reward, and the appearing of the heavenly promise." So the author of the questions "*ad orthodoxos*:"[§] "Immediately after death, presently there is a separation of the just from the unjust; for they are borne by angels *εις ἀξίους αὐτῶν τόπους*, "into the places they have deserved;" and they are in those places *φιλετόμενοι ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας τῆς ἀναστάσεως καὶ ἀναποδόσεως*, "kept unto the day of resurrection and retribution." But what do they in the mean time? how is it with them? *Θαυμασίαν τῖνα ἡδονὴν ἔδεται, καὶ ἀγάλλεται*, says Nazianzen: "they rejoice and are delighted in a wonderful joy." "They see angels and archangels, they converse with them, and see our blessed Saviour Jesus in

* 1 John ii. 29. iii. 4.

† *Lib. de Anima. et. lib. adv. Marcion.*

‡ *De Bono Mortis, cap. 10. § Quest. 75.*

§ *Orat. Funer. Cæsar Fratris.*

his glorified humanity:" so Justin Martyr.* But in these great joys they look for greater. They are now "in paradiso," but they long that the body and soul may be in heaven together; but this is the glory of the day of judgment, the fruit of the resurrection. And this whole affair is agreeable to reason and the analogy of the whole dispensation, as it is generally and particularly described in Scripture.

For when the greatest effect of the Divine power, the mightiest promise, that hardest thing to Christian faith, that impossible thing to gentle philosophy, the expectation of the whole world, the new creation, when that shall come to pass, viz. that the souls shall be reinvested with their bodies, when the ashes of dissolved bones shall stand up a new and living frame, to suppose that then there shall be nothing done in order to eternity, but to publish the salvation of saints, of which they were possessed before, is to make a great solemnity for nothing, to do great things for no great end, and therefore, it is not reasonable to suppose it.

For if it were a good argument of the apostle, that the patriarchs and saints of the Old Testament received not the promises signified by Canaan and the land of promise, because "God hath provided some better thing for us, that without us they should not be made perfect," it must also conclude of all alike; that they who died since Christ, must stay till the last day, that they and we and all may be made perfect together. And this very thing was told to the spirits of the martyrs, who under the altar cried, "How long, O Lord,"† &c., that they should "rest yet for a little season," until their fellow-servants also shall be fulfilled.

Upon this account it is, that the day of judgment is a day of recompense. So said our blessed Lord himself: "Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."‡ And this is the day in which all things shall be restored; for "the heavens must receive Jesus till the time of restitution of all things:"§ and till then, the reward "is said to be laid up." So St. Paul: "Henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the righteous Judge shall give me in that day." And that you may know he means the resurrection and the day of judgment, he adds; "and not to me only, but to all them that love his coming;"|| of whom it is certain many shall

be alive at that day, and therefore cannot, before that day, receive the crown of righteousness: and then also, and not till then, shall be his appearing; but till then, it is a "depositum." The sum is this: in the world, we walk and live by faith; in the state of separation, we live by hope; and in the resurrection, we shall live by an eternal charity. Here we see God as "in a glass, darkly:" in the separation we shall behold him, but it is afar off; and after the resurrection we shall see him "face to face," in the everlasting comprehensions of an intuitive beatitude. In this life we are warriors; in the separation we are conquerors; but we shall not triumph till after the resurrection.

And in proportion to this is also the state of devils and damned spirits. "Art thou come to torment us before the time," said the devils to our blessed Saviour. There is for them also an appointed time, and when that is we learn from St. Jude:* "They are reserved in chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." Well, therefore, did St. James affirm, "that the devils believe and tremble;" and so do the damned souls, with an insupportable amazement, fearing the revelation of that day. They know that day will come, and they know they shall find an intolerable sentence on that day; and they fear infinitely, and are in amazement and confusion, feeling the worm of conscience, and are in the state of devils, who fear God and hate him; they tremble, but they love him not; and yet they die because they would not love him, because they would not with their powers and strengths keep his commandments.

This doctrine, though of late it hath been laid aside, upon the interest of the church of Rome, and for compliance with some other schools, yet it was universally the doctrine of the primitive church; as appears out of Justin Martyr, who, in his dialogues with Tryphon, reckons this amongst the *ἑτεροδοξίαι*, "errors" of some men, who say there shall be no resurrection of the dead; but that, as soon as good men are dead, *τὰς ψυχὰς αὐτῶν ἀναλαμβάνεσθαι εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν*, "their souls are taken up immediately into heaven." And the writer of the questions "ad orthodoxos," asks,† whether, before the resurrection, there shall be a reward of works? because to the thief paradise was promised *that day*. He answers: "It was fit the thief should go to paradise, and there perceive what things should be given to the

* Ubi suprâ. † Rev. vi. 10. ‡ Luke xiv. 14.
§ Acts iii. 7. || 2 Tim. iv. 8.

* Cap. vi. † Qu. 76. Q. 60. Q. 75.

works of faith; but there he is kept, *ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας τῆς ἀναστάσεως καὶ ἀνταποδόσεως*, "until the day of resurrection and reward." But in paradise the soul hath an intellectual perception, both of herself, and of those things which are under her.

Concerning which I shall not need to heap up testimonies. This only: it is the doctrine of the Greek church unto this day; and was the opinion of the greatest part of the ancient church, both Latin and Greek; and by degrees was, in the west, eaten out by the doctrine of purgatory and invocation of saints; and rejected a little above two hundred years ago, in the council of Florence; and since that time it hath been more generally taught, that the souls of good men enjoy the beatific vision before the resurrection, even presently upon the dissolution. According to which new opinion, it will be impossible to understand the meaning of my text, and of divers other places of Scripture, which I have now alleged and explicated; or at all to perceive the economy and dispensation of the day of judgment; or how it can be a day of discerning; or how the reapers (the angels) shall bind up the wicked into bundles, and throw them into the unquenchable fire; or yet how it can be useful, or necessary, or prudent for Christ to give a solemn sentence upon all the world; and how it can be, that that day should be so formidable and full of terrors, when nothing can affright those that have long enjoyed the beatific presence of God; and no thunders or earthquakes can affright them, who have upon them the biggest evil in the world, I mean the damned, who, according to this opinion, have been in hell for many ages: and it can mean nothing but to them that are alive; and then it is but a particular, not a universal judgment; and after all it can pretend to no piety, to no Scripture, to no reason, and only can serve the ends of the church of Rome, who can no way better be confuted in their invocations of saints than by this truth, that the saints do not yet enjoy the beatific vision; and though they are in a state of ease and comfort, yet are not in a state of power and glory and kingdom, till the day of judgment.

This also perfectly does overthrow the doctrine of purgatory. For as the saints departed are not perfect, and therefore certainly not to be invoked, not to be made our patrons and advocates; so neither are

they in such a condition as to be in torment; and it is impossible that any wise man should believe, that the souls of good men after death should endure the sharp pains of hell, and yet at the same time believe those words of Scripture, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."* If they can rest in beds of fire, and sing hymns of glory in the torments of the damned, if their labours are done when their pains are almost infinite, then these words of the Spirit of God, and that doctrine of purgatory, can be reconciled; else never to eternal ages. But it is certain they are words that cannot deceive us: "Non tanget eos tormentum mortis:" "torment in death shall never touch them."

But having established the proposition, and the intended sense of the text, let us awhile consider,

1. That God is our God when we die, if we be his servants while we live: and to be our God signifies very much good to us. He will rescue us from the powers of hell; the devil shall have no part or portion in us; we shall be kept in safe custody, we shall be in the hands of Christ, out of which all the powers of hell shall never snatch us; and therefore we may die with confidence, if we die with a good conscience; we have no cause of fear, if we have just grounds to hope for pardon. The Turks have a saying that the Christians do not believe themselves when they talk such glorious things of heaven and the state of separation; for if they did, they would not be so afraid to die: but they do not so well consider that Christians believe all this well enough, but they believe better than they live; and therefore they believe and tremble, because they do not live after the rate of going to heaven; they know that for good men glorious things are prepared; but "Tophet is prepared for evil kings" and unjust rulers, for vicious men and degenerate Christians; there is a hell for accursed souls, and men live without fear of it so long, till their fear as soon as it begins in an instant passes into despair, and the fearful groans of the damned. It is no wonder to see men so unwilling to die, to be impatient of the thought of death, to be afraid to make their will, to converse with the solemn scarecrow. He that is fit to die, must have long

* Rev. xx. 6.

dwelt with it, must handle it on all sides, must feel whether the sting be taken out; he must examine "whether he be in Christ;" that is, whether "he be a new creature." And indeed I do not so much wonder that any man fears to die, as when I see a careless and a wicked person descend to his grave with as much indifference as he goes to sleep; that is, with no other trouble than that he leaves the world, but he does not fear to die; and yet, upon the instant of his dissolution, he goes into the common receptacle of souls, where nothing can be addressed to him but the consequence of what he brings along with him, and he shall presently know whether he shall be saved or damned.

We have read of some men, who by reading or hearing strange opinions have entered into desperate melancholy, and divers who have perfectly despaired of the Divine mercy; who feeling such horrid convulsions in their souls, such fearful expectations of an eternal curse, that not finding themselves able to bear so intolerable a fear, have hanged or drowned themselves; and yet they only thought so, or feared it; and might have altered it if they would have hoped and prayed: but then let it be considered, when the soul is stripped of the cloud, her body,—when she is entered into strange regions, and converses only with spirits, and sees plainly all that is within her,—when all her sins appear in their own natural ugliness, and set out by their aggravating circumstances; then she remembers her filthy pleasures, and hates them infinitely, as being such things to which she can have no appetite: then she perceives she shall perish for that which is not, for that whose remembrance is intolerable; when she sees many new secrets which she understood not before, and hath stranger apprehensions of the wrath of God, than ever could be represented in this life: when she hath the notices of a spirit, and an understanding pure enough to see essences, and rightly to weigh all the degrees of things; when, possibly, she is often affrighted with the alarms and conjectures of the day of judgment; or if she be not, yet certainly knows not only by faith and fear, but by a clear light and proper knowledge, that it shall certainly come, and its effects shall remain for ever, then she hath time enough to bewail her own folly and remediless infelicity; if we could not think seriously that things must come to that pass, and place ourselves, by holy meditation, in

the circumstances of that condition, and consider what we should then think,—how miserably deplore our folly, how comfortless remember our ill-gotten wealth; with how much asperity and deep sighing we should call to mind our foolish pride, our trifling, swearing, our beastly drinkings, our unreasonable and brutish lusts; it could not be but we must grow wiser on a sudden, despise the world, betake ourselves to a strict religion, reject all vanities of spirit, and be sober and watch unto prayer. If any of us had but a strange dream, and should, in the fears of the night, but suppose ourselves in hell, and be affrighted with those circumstances of damnation which we can tell of, and use in our imperfect notices of things, it would effect strange changes upon a ductile and malleable spirit. A frequent, severe meditation can do more than a seldom and a fantastic dream; but an active faith can do more than all the arts and contingencies of fancy or discourse.

Now it is well with us, and we may yet secure it shall be well with us for ever; but within an hour it may be otherwise with any of us all, who do not instantly take courses of security. But he that does not, would, in such a change, soon come to wish that he might exchange his state with the meanest, with the miserablest of all mankind; with galley-slaves and miners, with men condemned to tortures for a good conscience.

*Sed cum pulcra minax succidet membra securis.
Quam velles spinas tunc habuisse meas.*

AVIEN.

In the day of felling timber, the shrub and the bramble are better than the tallest fir, or the goodliest cedar; and a poor saint, whose soul is in the hand of Jesus, placed under the altar, over which our High Priest, like the cherubim over the propitiatory, intercedes perpetually for the hastening of his glory, is better than the greatest tyrant, who if he dies, is undone for ever. For, in the interval, there shall be rest and comfort to the one; and torment, and amazement, and hellish confusion to the other; and the day of judgment will come, and it shall appear to all the world, that they whose joys were not in this world, were not, "of all men, most miserable," because their joys and their life were hid with Christ in God, and at the resurrection of the just, shall be brought forth, and be illustrious, beyond all the beauties of the world.

I have now done with my text, and been

the expounder of this part of the divine oracle; but here is another text, and another sermon yet. Ye have heard Moses and the prophets; now hear one from the dead, whose life and death would each of them make an excellent sermon, if this dead man had a good interpreter: for he being dead, yet speaketh, and calleth upon us to live well, and to live quickly, to watch perpetually, and to work assiduously; for we shall descend into the same shadows of death.

Linquenda tellus, et domus, et placens
Uxor; neque harum, quas colis, arborum
Te, præter invisas cupressos,
Ulla brevem dominum sequetur. HOR.

“Thou must leave thy rich land, and thy well built house, and thy pleasing wife; and of all the trees of thy orchard or thy wood, nothing shall attend thee to the grave, but oak for thy coffin, and cypress for thy funeral.” It shall not then be inquired how long thou hast lived, but how well. None below will be concerned, whether thou wert rich or poor, but all the spirits of light and darkness shall be busy in the scrutiny of thy life; for the good angels would fain carry thy soul to Christ; and if they do, the devils will follow, and accuse thee there; and when thou appearest before the righteous Judge, what will become of thee, unless Christ be thy advocate, and God be merciful and appeased, and the angels be thy guards, and a holy conscience be thy comfort. There will to every one of us come a time, when we shall with great passion, and great interest, inquire, how have I spent my days, how have I laid out my money, how have I employed my time, how have I served God, and how repented me of my sins? and upon our answer to these questions depends a happy or unhappy eternity: and blessed is he, who concerning these things, takes care in time; and of this care I may with much confidence and comfort propound to you the example of this good man, whose relics lay before you: Sir George Dalston, of Dalston in Cumberland, a worthy man, beloved of his country, useful to his friends, friendly to all men, careful of his religion, and a true servant of God.

He was descended of an ancient and worthy house in Cumberland: and he adorned his family and extraction with a more worthy comportment: for to be of a worthy family, and to bring to it no stock of our proper virtue, is to be upbraided by our family; and a worthy father can be no honour to his son, when it shall be said,

“behold the difference, this crab descended from a goodly apple-tree;” but he who beautifies the escutcheon of his ancestors by worthy achievements, by learning, or by wisdom, by valour and by great employments, by a holy life and a useful conversation, that man is the parent of his own fame, and a new beginner of an ancient family; for as conversion is a perpetual creation, so is the progression of a family in a line of worthy descendants, a daily beginning of its honour, and a new stabiliment.

He was bred in learning, in which Cambridge was his tiring room, and the court of Queen Elizabeth was his stage, in which he first represented the part of a hopeful young man; but there he stayed not; his friends not being desirous, that the levities of youth should be fermented by the liberties of a rich and splendid court, caused him to lie in the restraints and to grow ripe in the sobrieties of a country life and a married state; in which, as I am informed, he behaved himself with so great worthiness, and gave such probation of his love of justice, popular regards of his country's good, and abilities to serve them, that, for almost forty years together, his country chose him for their knight, to serve in all the intervening parliaments. “Magistratus, indicatorium;” “employment shows the man;” he was a leading man in parliaments, prevailing there by the great reputation of his justice and integrity; and yet he was not unpleasant and hated at court: for he had well understood, that the true interests of courts and parliaments were one, and that they are like the humours of the body, if you increase one beyond its limits, that destroys all the rest, and itself at last; and when they look upon themselves as enemies, and that hot and cold must fight, the prevailing part is abated in the conflict, and the vanquished part is destroyed: but when they look upon themselves as varieties serving the differing aspects and necessities of the same body, they are for the allay of each other's exorbitances and excesses, and, by keeping their own measures, they preserve the man: this the good man well understood; for so he comported himself, that he was loud in parliaments and valued at court; he was respected in very many parliaments, and was worthily regarded by the worthy kings; which, without an orator, commends a man: “Gravissimi principis judicium in minoribus etiam rebus consequi pulcrum est,” said Pliny; “To be approved, though but in lesser terms, by the

judgment of a wise prince, is a great ornament to a man."—For as King Theodoric, in Cassiodore, said, "Neque dignus est à quopiam redargui, qui nostro judicio mereatur absolvi." "No man to reprove him, whom the king aught commends."

But I need no artifices to represent him worthy, his arguments of probation were within, in the magazines of a good heart, and represented themselves by worthy actions. For God was pleased to invest him with a marvellous sweet nature, which is certainly to be reckoned as one half of the grace of God: because a good nature, being the relics and remains of that shipwreck which Adam made, is the proper and immediate disposition to holiness, as the corruption of Adam was to disobedience and peevish counsels. A good nature will not upbraid the more imperfect persons, will not deride the ignorant, will not reproach the erring man, will not smite sinners on the face, will not despise the penitent. A good nature is apt to forgive injuries, to pity the miserable, to rescue the oppressed, to make every one's condition as tolerable as he can; and so would he. For, as when good nature is heightened by the grace of God, that which was natural becomes now spiritual; so these actions which proceeded from an excellent nature, and were pleasing and useful to men,—when they derive from a new principle of grace, they become pleasant in the eyes of God: then obedience to laws is duty to God; justice is righteousness, bounty becomes graciousness, and alms is charity.

And, indeed, this is a grace in which this good man was very remarkable, being very frequent and much in alms, tender-hearted to the poor, open-handed to relieve their needs; the bellies of the poor did bless him, he filled them with food and gladness; and I have heard that he was so regular, so constant, so free in this duty, that in these late unhappy wars, being in a garrison, and near the suffering some rude accidents, the beggars made themselves guard, and rescued him from that trouble, who had so often rescued them from hunger.

He was of a meek and gentle spirit, but not too soft; he knew how to do good, and how to put by an injury; but I have heard it told by them that knew his life, that being, by the unavoidable trouble of a great estate, engaged in great suits at law, he was never plaintiff, but always upon the defensive part; and that he had reason on his side, and justice for him, I need allege no other

testimony, but that the sentence of his judges so declared it.

But that in which I propound this good man most imitable, was in his religion; for he was a great lover of the church; a constant attender to the sermons of the church; a diligent hearer of the prayers of the church, and an obedient son to perform the commands of the church. He was diligent in his times and circumstances of devotion; he would often be at church so early, that he was seen to walk long in the churchyard before prayers, being as ready to confess his sins at the beginning, as to receive the blessing at the end of prayers. Indeed he was so great a lover of sermons, that though he knew how to value that which was the best, yet he was patient of that which was not so; and if he could not learn any thing to improve his faith, yet he would find something to exercise his patience, and something for charity; yet this his great love of sermons could not tempt him to a willingness of neglecting the prayers of the church, of which he was a great lover to his dying day. "Oves meæ exaudiunt vocem meam," says Christ; "my sheep hear my voice;" and so the church says, "my sheep hear my voice, they love my words, they pray in my forms, they observe my orders, they delight in my offices, they revere my ministers, and obey my constitutions:" and so did he; loving to have his soul recommended to God, and his needs represented, and his sins confessed, and his pardon implored, in the words of his mother, in the voice and accent of her that nursed him up to a spiritual life, to be a man in Christ Jesus.

He was indeed a great lover, and had a great regard for God's ministers, ever remembering the words of God, "keep my rest, and reverence my priests;" he honoured the calling in all, but he loved and revered the persons of such who were conscientious keepers of their "depositum," "that trust," which was committed to them: such which did not for interest quit their conscience, and did not, to preserve some parts of their revenue, quit some portions of their religion. He knew that what was true in 1639, was also true in 1644, and so to 57, and shall continue true to eternal ages; and they that change their persuasions by force or interest, did neither believe well nor ill, upon competent and just grounds; they are not just, though they happen on the right side. Hope of gain did by chance teach them

well, and fear of loss abuses them directly. He pitied the persecuted, and never would take part with persecutors: he prayed for his prince, and served him in what he could: he loved God, and loved the church; he was a lover of his country's liberties, and yet an observer of the laws of his king.

Thus he behaved himself to all his superior relatives; to his equals and dependants he was also just, and kind, and loving. He was an excellent friend, laying out his own interests to serve theirs; sparing not himself, that he might serve them: as knowing society to be the advantage of man's nature; and friendship the ornament of society, and usefulness the ornament of friendship, and in this he was well known to be very worthy. He was tender and careful of his children, and so provident and so wise, so loving and obliging to his whole family, that he justly had that love and regard, that duty and observance from them, which his kindness and his care had merited. He was a provident and careful conductor of his estate; but far from covetousness, as appeared toward the evening of his life, in which that vice does usually prevail amongst old men, who are more greedy, when they have least need, and load their sumpters so much the more, by how much nearer they are to their journey's end; but he made a demonstration of the contrary; for he washed his hands and heart of the world, and gave up his estate long before his death or sickness, to be managed by his only son, whom he left since, but then first made and saw him his heir; he emptied his hands of secular employment; meddled not with money, but for the uses of the poor, for piety, justice, and religion.

And now having divested himself of all objections and his conversation with the world, quitting his affections to it, he wholly gave himself to religion and devotion; he awakened early, and would presently be entertained with reading; when he rose, still he would be read to, and hear some of the Psalms of David: and excepting only what time he took for the necessities of his life and health, all the rest he gave to prayer, reading, and meditation, save only that he did not neglect, nor rudely entertain the visits and offices of his neighbours.

But in this great vacation from the world he espied his advantage, he knew well, according to that saying of the emperor Charles V., "*Oportet inter vitæ negotia et diem mortis spatium aliquod intercedere;*"

there ought to be a valley between two such mountains, the business of our life, and the troubles of our death; and he stayed not till the noise of the Bridegroom's coming did awaken and affright him; but by daily prayers twice a day, constantly with his family, besides the piety and devotion of his own retirements, by a monthly communion, by weekly sermons, and by the religion of every day, he stood in procincts, ready with oil in his lamp, watching till his Lord should call.

And, indeed, when he was hearing what God did speak to him of duty, he also received his summons to give his account. For he was so pertinacious and attendant to God's holy word, and the services of the church, that though he found himself sick, he would not off, but stay till the solemnity was done; but it pleased God at church to give him his first arrest; and since that time I have often visited him, and found him always doing his work, with the greatest evenness and indifferency of spirit, as to the event of life and death, that I have observed in any. He was not unwilling to live; but if he should, he resolved to spend his life wholly in the service of God: but yet neither was he unwilling to die, because he then knew he should weep no more, and he should sin no more. He was very confident, but yet with great humility and great modesty, of the pardon of his sins; he had indeed lived without scandal, but he knew he had not lived without error; but as God had assisted him to avoid the reproach of great crimes, so he doubted not but he should find pardon for the less; and, indeed, I could not but observe, that he had, in all the time of his sickness, a very quiet conscience; which is to me an excellent demonstration of the state of his life, and the state of his grace and pardon. For though he seemed to have a conscience tender and nice, if any evil thing had touched it; yet I could not but apprehend that his peace was a just peace, the mercy of God, and the price and effect of the blood of Jesus.

He was so joyful, so thankful, so pleased in the ministries of the church, that it gave in evidence where his soul was most delighted, what it did apprehend the quickest, where it did use to dwell; and what it did most passionately love. He discoursed much of the mercies of God to him, repeated the blessings of his life, the accidents and instruments of his trouble; he

loved the cause of his trouble, and pardoned them that neither loved it nor him.

When he had spent great portions of his time of sickness in the service of God, and in expectation of the sentence of his life or death, at last he understood the still voice of God, and that he was to go where his soul loved to be; he still increased his devotion, and being admonished, as his strength failed him, to supply his usual forms, and his want of strength and words, by short exercise of virtue, of faith and patience, and the love of God; he did it so willingly, so well, so readily, making his eyes, his hands, and his tongue, as long as he could, the interpreters of his mind, that as long as he was alive, he would see what his soul was doing. He doubted not of the truth of the promises, nor of the goodness of God, nor the satisfaction of Christ, and the merits of his death, nor the fruit of his resurrection, nor the prevalency of his intercession, nor yet doubted of his own part in them; but expected his portions in the regions of blessedness, with those who loved God, and served him heartily and faithfully in their generations.

He had so great a patience in his sickness, and was so afraid lest he should sin at last; that his piety outdid his nature, and though the body cannot feel but by the soul, yet his soul seemed so little concerned in the passions of the body, that I neither observed, nor heard of him, that he in all his sickness, so much as complained with any semblance of impatience.

He so continued to pray, so delighted in hearing psalms sung, which I wish were made as fit to sing by their numbers as they are by their weight, that so very much of his time was spent in them, that it was very likely when his Lord came he would find him so doing; and he did so: for in the midst of prayers he went away, and got to heaven as soon as they; and saw them (as we hope) presented to the throne of grace; he went along with them himself, and was his own messenger to heaven; where although he possibly might prevent his last prayers, yet he would not prevent God's early mercy, which, as we humbly hope, gave him pardon for his sins, ease of his pain, joy after his

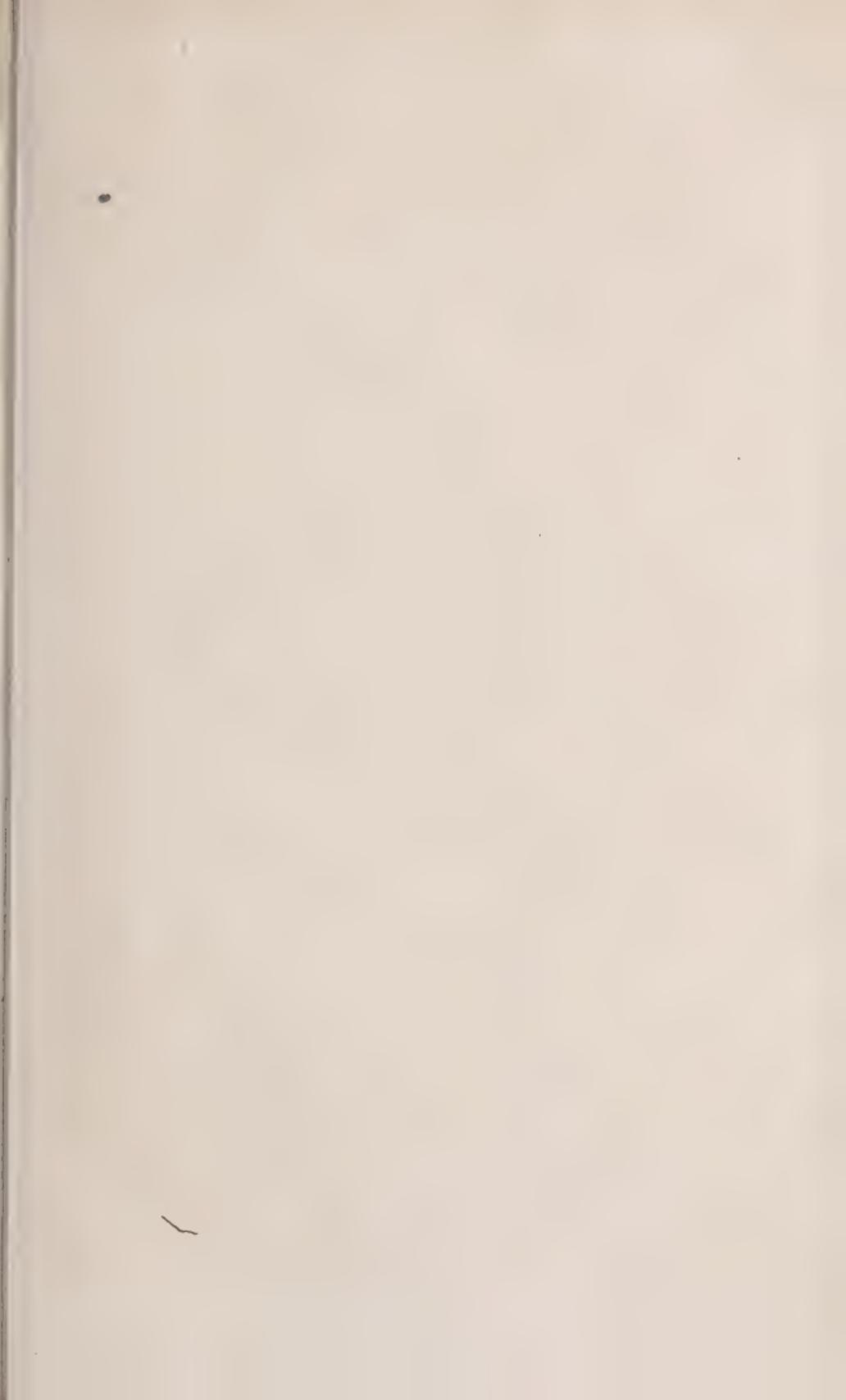
sorrow, certainty for his fears, heaven for earth, innocence and impeccability instead of his infirmity.

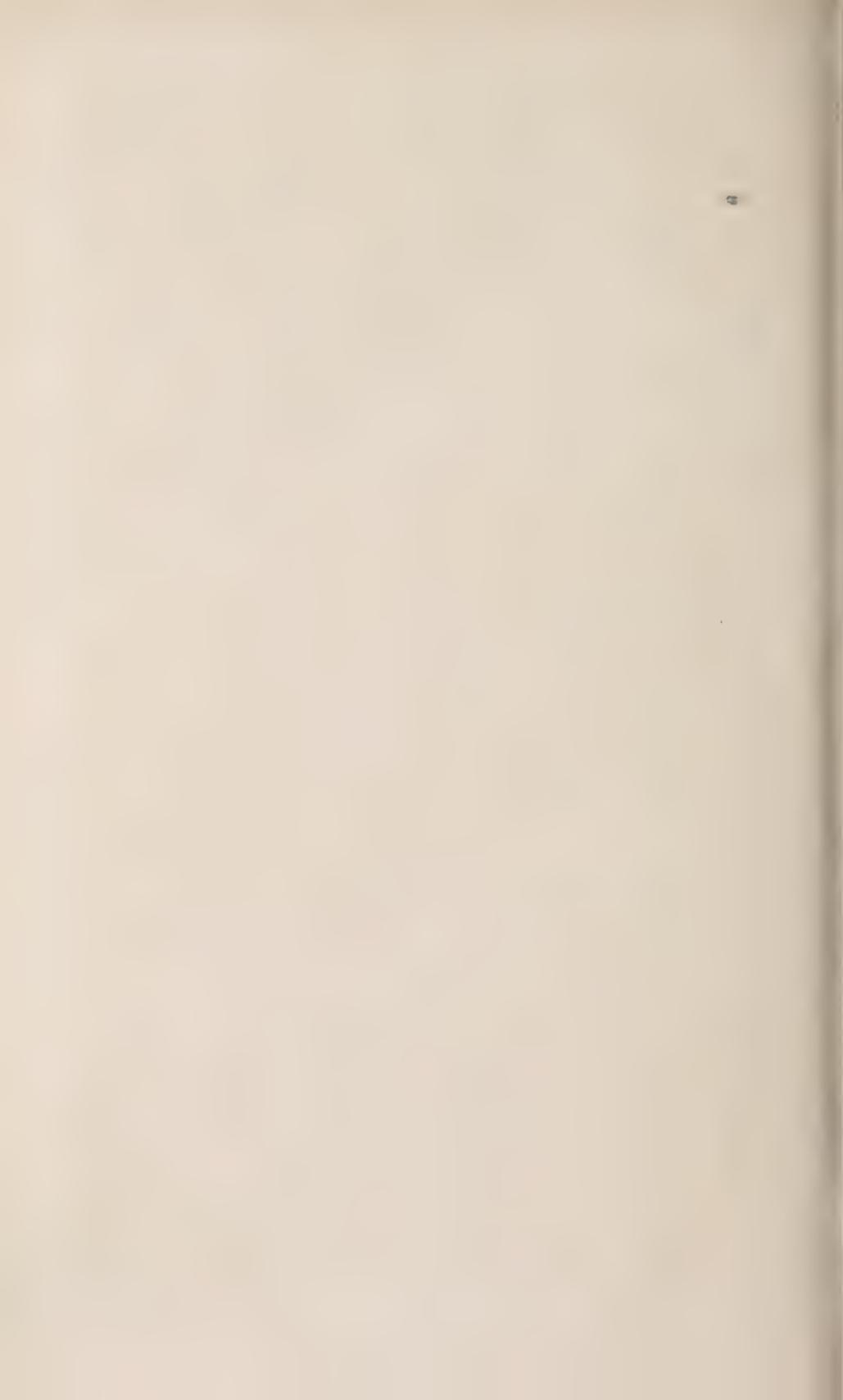
Ergo Quinctilium perpetuus sopor
Urquet! cui Pudor, et Justitias soror
Incorrupta Fides, nudaque Veritas
Quando ullum inveniet parem?

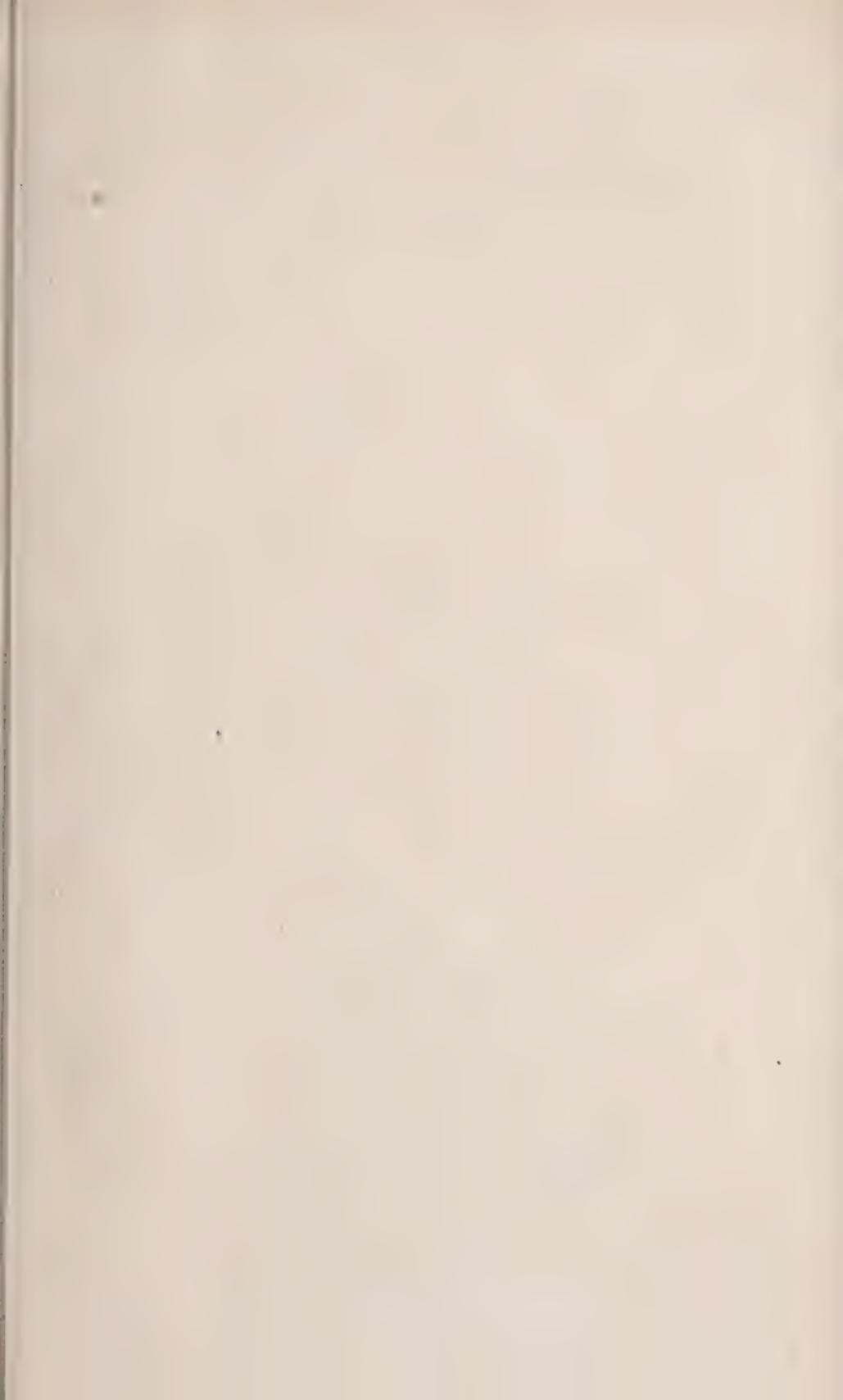
Faith and justice, modesty and pure righteousness, made him equal to the worthiest examples; he was *ἁγιος ἀνὴρ*, "a good man," loving and humble, meek and patient, he would be sure to be the last in contention, and the first at a peace; he would injure no man, but yet if any man was displeased with him, he would speak first, and offer words of kindness; if any did dispute concerning priority, he knew how to get it, even by yielding and compliance; walking profitably with his neighbours, and humbly with his God; and having lived a life of piety, he died in a full age, an honourable old age, in the midst of his friends, and in the midst of prayer: and although the events of the other world are hidden to us below, that we might live in faith, and walk in hope, and die in charity, yet we have great reason to bless God for his mercies to this our brother, and endeavour to comport ourselves with a strict religion, and a severe repentance; with an exemplar patience, and an exemplar piety; with the structures of a holy life, and the solemnities of a religious death, that we also may, as our confident and humble hope is, this our brother doth, by the conduct of angels, pass into the hands and bosom of Jesus, there to expect the most merciful sentence of the right hand, "Come ye blessed children of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world." Amen, Lord Jesus, Amen.

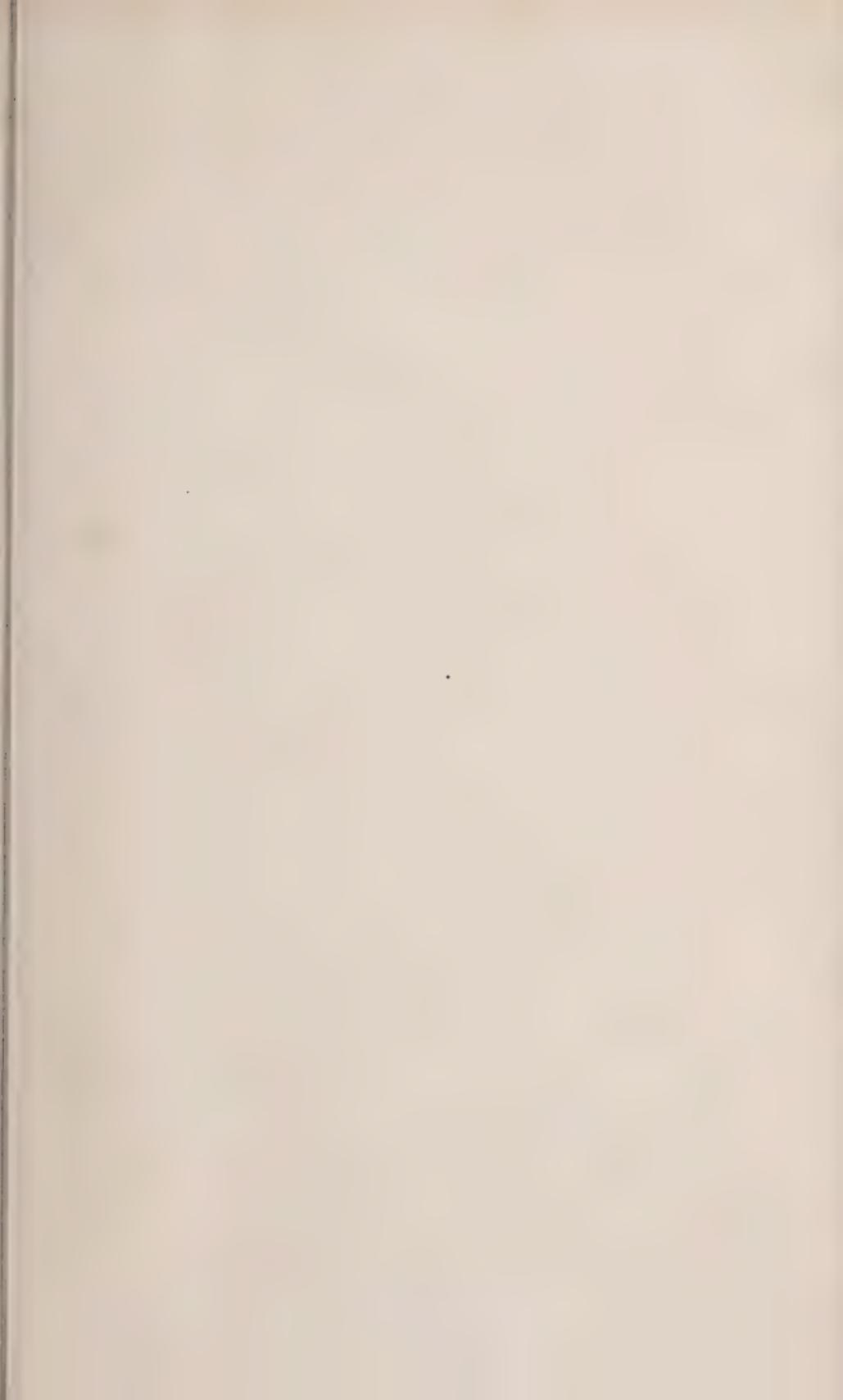
Grant this, eternal God, for Jesus Christ's sake; to whom with thee, O Father, and the Holy Spirit, be all glory and honour, service and dominion, love and obedience be confessed due, and ever paid by all angels, and all men, and all the creatures, this day, henceforth and for evermore. Amen.

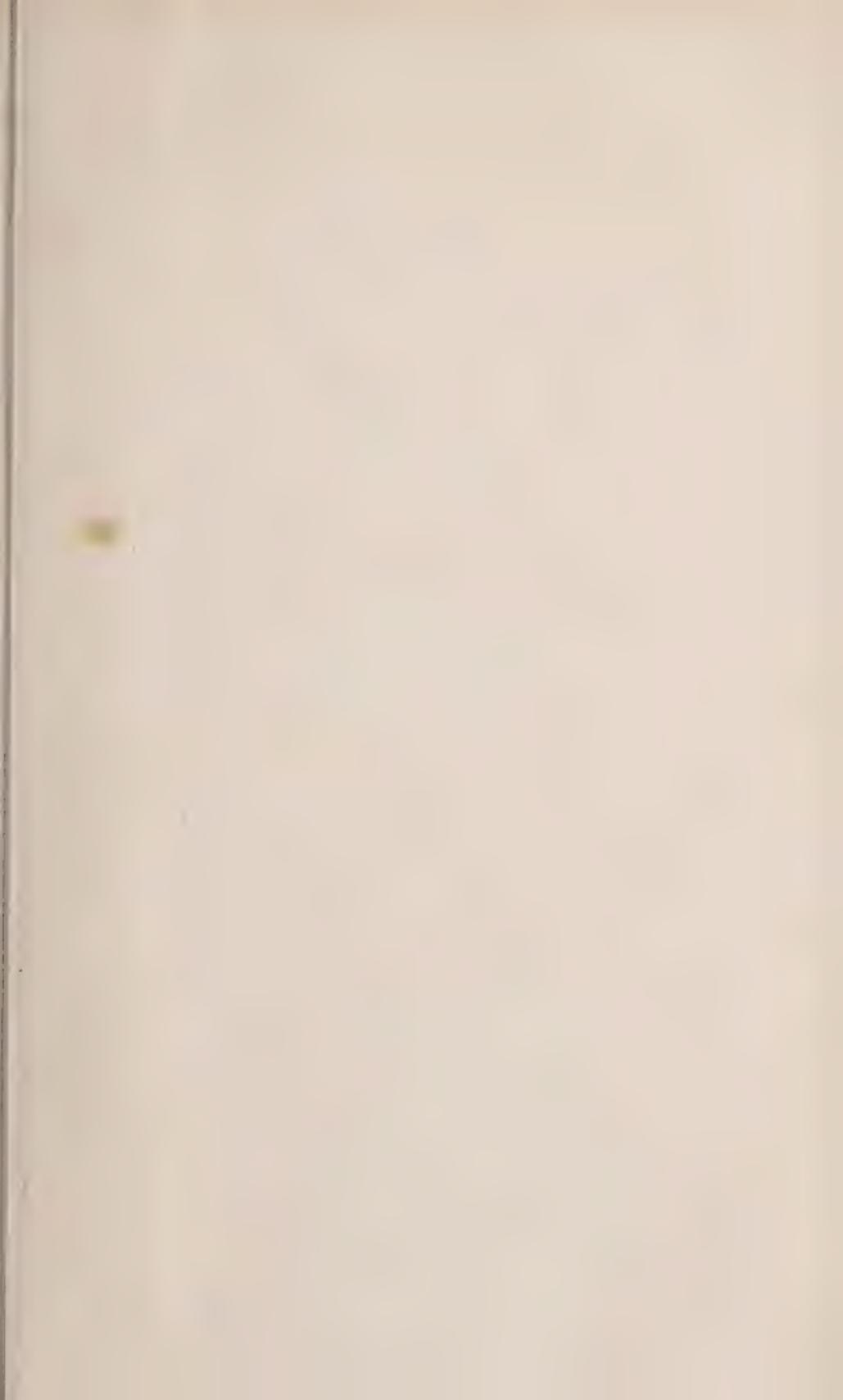


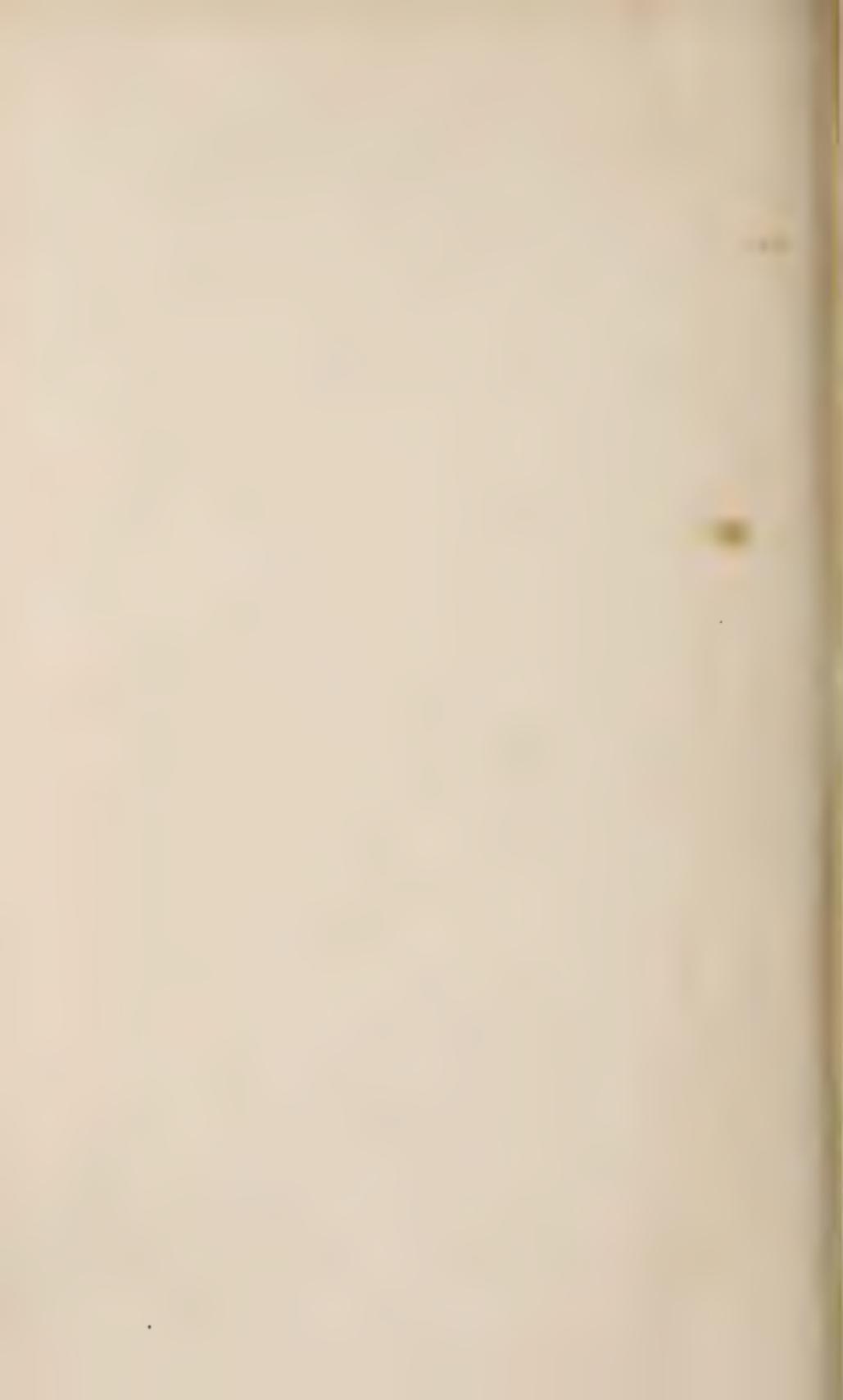


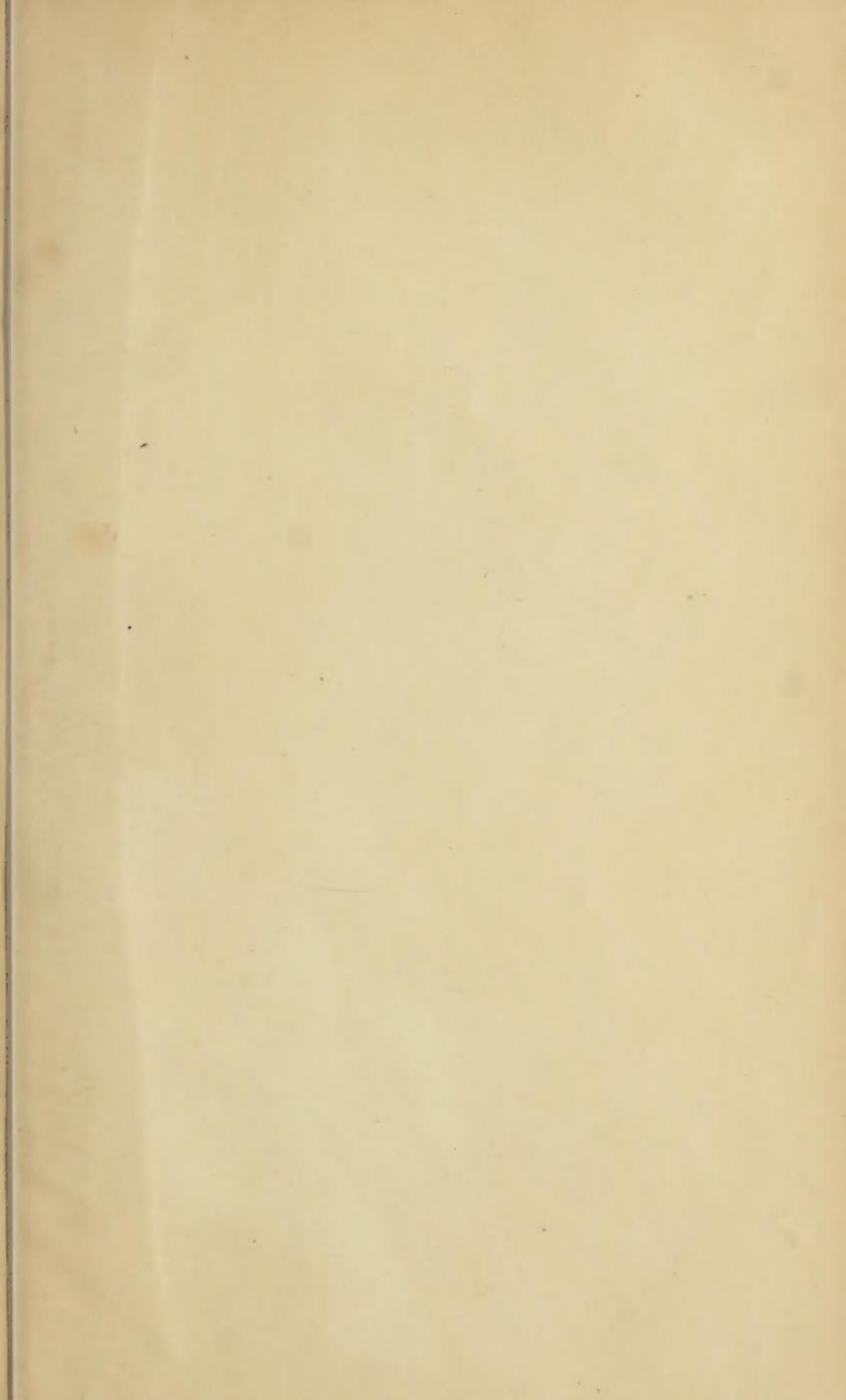




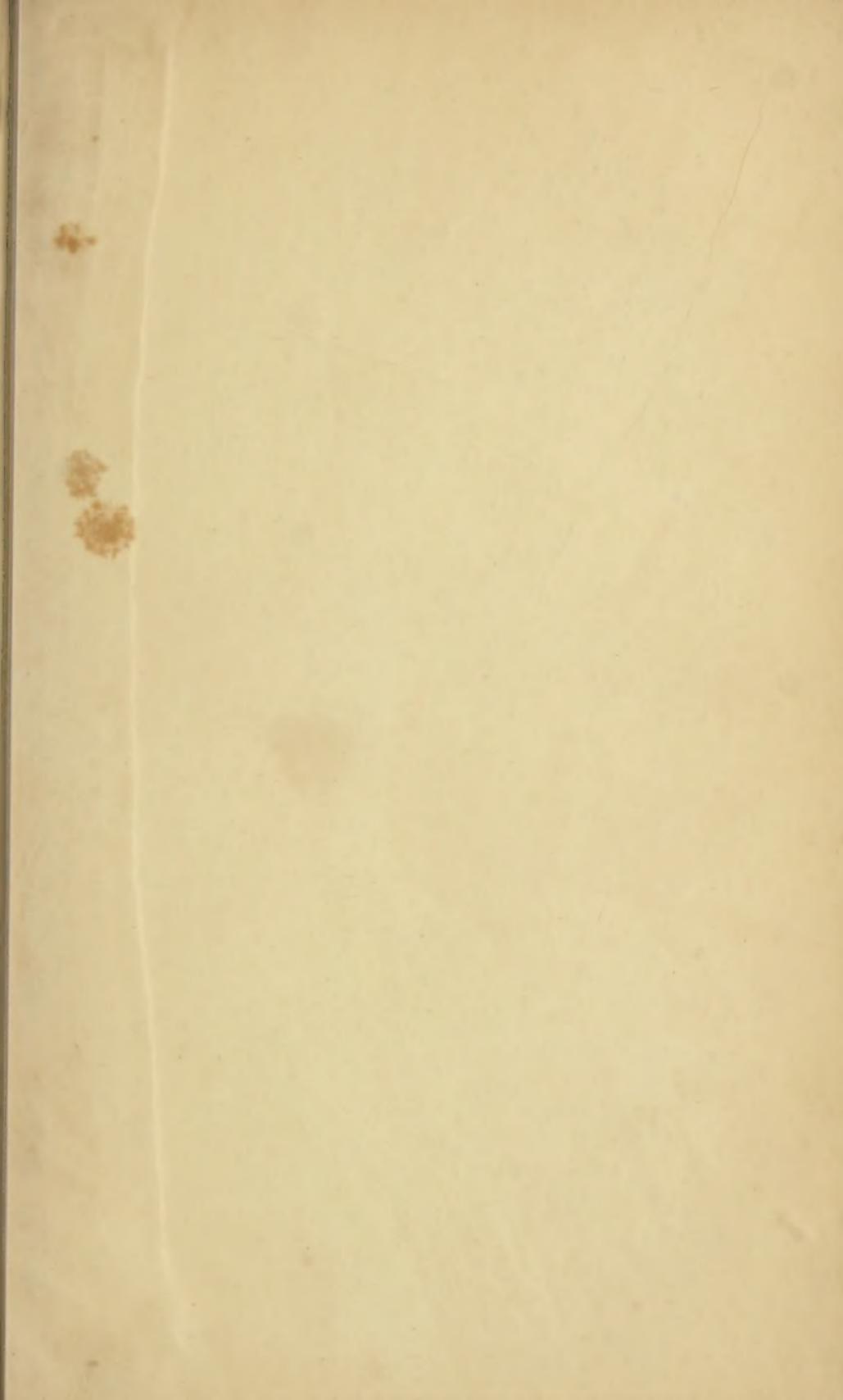












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