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Y. VANITY OF Y CRETURE



London Printed for John Kidgell at y. Golden Ball near Grays Inn Gate in Holborn

THE
VANITY
OF THE
CREATURE.

By the AUTHOR
OF THE
Whole Duty of Man, &c.

Together with a
LETTER
Prefix'd, sent to the Bookseller, relating
to the AUTHOR.

ECCLES. 1. 2.
Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity.

L O N D O N : Printed for John Kidgell at
the Golden-Ball near Grays-Inn-Gate
in Holborn. 1 6 8 4.

T. R.
A. 4302

T O T H E Bookseller.

Mr. Kidgell,

You having Printed that most
Excellent piece, Entituled, The
Whole Duty of Man, Part
II. Wherein the Author of
that Book hath discovered much Judg-
ment, together with a composure of Ele-
gancy of Style and Expression, I having
a good opinion of your Conversation by a
little acquaintance with you, at the re-
quest of my Kinsman Mr. G. L. I. send
you an account of the little Tract you are
Printing, called The Vanity of the Crea-
ture; which was, (if my word may
pass for it) written by the first Author of
The Whole Duty of Man. That he
A 3 was

To the Bookseller.

was a person of great Learning and Piety, I think no man will gain-say ; which if he did, he would be sufficiently confuted by that his most Excellent and Divine Treatise. He was also of that Christian-like temper of meekness and modesty, rarely to be found in the best of men of these flagitious times, that out of a perfect enmity and aversion to vain-glory, he purposefully concealed his name ; which hath been the occasion of as many conjectures (almost) to know who he was, as there have been scrutinies to find out the head-spring and original source of the River Nile. For my part, I shall not (though I could) break the rules of Decency and good Manners, to satisfy the itching desire of the over-curious, in divulging that which the Author himself was so careful to conceal.
-----Cum vides velatam, quid inquiris in rem absconditam ? This is certain, and I will adventure at the boldness to say, that all those several Discourses which have appeared abroad in the World under

To the Bookseller.

*der our Authors name , were not written
by him ; but whoever were the Authors,
it cannot be denyed , but that they have
written them with the greatest Judgment,
Learning, and Piety imaginable, and that
they are only worthy of imitating so great
a Divine as our Author.*

Yours in all Civil Offices,

J. L.

T H E

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T H E

Vanity of the Creature.

TH E Creatures Vanity and Mutability is so great, that it should be the greatest incentive to us to look to the Supream good, as the only Center of our Happiness and Felicity. Since the *Summum bonum* of Man lies in something more sublime and excellent than any Created Being, it's not in vain for him, in order to attaining the true object of his real Happiness, to take a Contemplative view of the Creatures vanity, which is most perspicuously demonstrable even in Monarchies, which *Bodin* tells us, are more durable than Popular States, because less subject to be divided, (Unity being the great Preserver of all things :) and yet have these had, as the Moon, not only their

increase and full light , but also their wain and changes , and this sometimes in a moment. That as in Musick you shall hear sometimes a string tun'd up to its *ultimum potentia*, as high as it will bear, and presently depressed again to the lowest Key, and another elevated, yet both of them breathing but light Airs , and of short continuance : So may you see a Monarchy now wound up to the highest pitch of Happiness, and by and by let down again into the lowest depths of misery. This is Gods doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.

And here I shall begin with those Empires and Monarchies that were most famous among the rest.

For how soon was the *Assyrian* or *Babylonian* Monarchy swallow'd up by the *Persian*, the *Persian* by the *Greek* or *Macedonian* Empire , and the *Greek* by the *Roman* ? which the Prophet *Daniel* presents unto us, by the Gold , Silver, Brass, and Iron, whereof *Nebuchadnezzars* Image consisted, *Dan. 2. 32.* The disso-

dissolution of one, as in natural things; so here, being still the generation of another ; and again, the erection of the later being the destruction of the former.

And as for the *Roman* Monarchy, their own Historian can tell us of that, how it had both its Infancy , Youth, Manhood, and Old age, as it were by turns : As its Infancy under Kings , its Youth under Consuls, its Manhood from the first *Punick* War unto the time of *Augustus Cæsar*, and from that time its Old age under the succeeding Emperours ; until at length that solid Body was torn asunder by the struglings of her own Children , into the Eastern and Western Empires, whereof the former was soon eaten out by the *Turks* and *Saracens*, and the later also fell away much, after a little revolution of time , by the falling off of divers Nations from her, each of which after they had pluck'd off their own feathers from the *Roman* Eagle, left her almost naked ; As the *Franks* and *Burgundians*

4 *The Vanity of the Creature.*

in *France*, the *Goths* in *Spain*, the *Normans* and *Lombards* in *Italy*, together with the *English* and *Scots* in *Britain*: until at the last cast the *Roman* Monarchy began a little to recal her self into *Germany*, where she hath held up since little more than the bare name of the Empire. So that Vicissitude you see is the great Empress of the world, unto whose unstay'd Dominion all earthly Powers and Principalities must be subject, even those that are of the first Magnitude, much more others that move in a lower Orb.

And of these I shall single out only three, which I conceive most eminent, to be instanced in for this point.

The first is *Judea*, whose Government was Monarchically settled by God himself; yet how oft did she change her Lords and Masters, yielding her self as it were successively first to the *Babylonian*, and after that to the *Roman*, *Persian*, *Saracen*, *Christian*, *Ægyptian*, and now to the *Turkish* power? That as
the

the Poet spake of Troy, *Fuit Ilium* ; so may we of *Jerusalem* , her Metropolis, *Fuit Hierosolyma*, that *Jerusalem* was; She was great among the Nations, or *Domina Gentium*, the Lady of the Nations, , but now, *Non sic ut olim*, it hath not been with her for these many Generations past, as in former days , (to use *Job's* words in his twenty ninth Chapter, second and third verses) when God preserved her, when his Candle shined upon her head, and when by that light she walked through darkness ; but Servants have ruled over her, and there was none to deliver her out of their hands. Which is a good Lecture of Mutability to other Kingdoms and their Mother-cities. For *Jerusalem* was once a holy and happy City, and had been happy still, had she but continued holy ; but that failing, How is her Gold become dim , how is her fine Gold chang'd into Dross ! as she complains her self.

The second Example I produce here is *Naples* , which we may well call the

Ball of Providence : And indeed so it was , being bandied from one Lord to another ten several times, before it came to lie (as now it doth) at the foot of *Spain*. For being a Countrey at first diversly peopled , it was upon the division allotted to the Eastern Emperours, but from them forc'd by the *Almains* , and so to the *Greeks* and *Saracens* , and then successively hurried about to the *Normans*, *Germans*, *French*, *Hungarians*, *Arragonoys*, and from them to the *French* again ; till in the end the *Spaniard* seized upon it : and whether it will continue long with him or no, is very uncertain ; especially if we remember how of late years a poor Fisherman (*Massinello* by name) snatch'd up the Reins of Government from him, and (had not God otherwise determined of that Kingdom , by infatuating that Mushrome-King) for ought we know , he might have run quite away with them ; so slippery are all earthly Kingdoms !

3. But not to look out any longer to other Nations of *Christendom*, (methinks) we may instance this best by reflecting upon our selves. For you all know (I suppose) how the *Romans*, *Saxons*, *Danes*, and *Normans*, had each of them their several and alternate days of Lordship over this Nation; but yet because they did not know in those their days the things that belonged unto their Peace, how do we see the shadows of the night stretched out upon them, their Suns set with us, and their days shut in!

The longest day we read of, was that in *Joshuah's* time, wherein though the Sun stood still in *Gibeon* for the space of a whole day, yet set it did at last.

The day of the *Romans* was long upon our Horizon, for the Sun of their prosperity shone here for the space of four hundred years and more; yet did it then go down as to us in this Nation, and Darkness here now doth lie upon it.

Again, the day of the *Saxons* continued five hundred years and upwards ; That of the *Danes* two hundred fifty five years, or thereabouts.

And how long the day of the *Normans* hath lasted , every petty Almanack can tell us. I, and if none of those Suns come to rise again within our Hemisphere, (when the sins of this Nation are ripe , and call for Gods sickle to cut them down) it's beside his ordinary rule , which usually runs out all Humane things by a changeable circumference ; for so *Solomon* tells us in his Book of *Ecclesiastes*, *That the Sun rises, and the Sun goes down , and hasteth to the place where he arase.*

Neither is this all , that the Powers and Principalities on earth are upon a daily turn , but as the *Primum Mobile* (you know) carries about the other Spheres ; so do these carry about many other changes and alterations with them : As that of Religion, Laws, Liberties, Sciences, Customs, and such like.

Nay,

Nay, even the Houses of God, which before to violate, was held a Crime in-expiable, yet are they now upon such removes broken down without scruple; and the very Urns of the Dead, which have been always look'd upon as Sacred Cabinets to preserve the Bodies of Gods Saints in for Eternity, yet are they now broken up, and their Ashes thrown about, (such is the unsetledness of all things here below) even as the vilest Dust upon the face of the earth.

Beloved, it hath been ever thus upon the conversion of such great Bodies, and it is so still: for never was there any conversion in this Land like to that our eyes have seen of late; That if any one should have slept but some few years last past (as the Ancients fain of *Epimenides*) and should have awaked again in these times, how would he wonder at those strange *Metamorphoses* that are now among us, there being *Novæ rerum facies*, A new face of things both in Church and State! Inſomuch,

(as

(as Mr. *Harding* spake sometimes of *Rome*, That he did *querere Romam in Roma*, That he did seek *Rome* in *Rome*, and could not find it,) so may we say now, That we may *querere Angliam in Anglia*, That we may now seek for old *England* in our new *England*, and yet go without it, it is so much changed from what it was before.

And as we have seen much of this already, so who knows but we may come to see a great deal more hereafter? Since we know not what a Day may bring forth.

Secondly, Neither is this true only in Empires and Monarchies, but also in Cities and their popular Governments. *Etiam summis negatum est urbibus stare diu*, says the Moralist. And to this purpose tends that of the Author to the Hebrews, Heb. 13. 14. *We have here no abiding City, but we look for one to come, whose foundation is in the heavens.*

There is then no City on earth, nor any kind of Government in it that e-

ever stood up long in one posture, none that ever was, or shall be abiding. *Pass ye up to Calneh and see*, says the Prophet, *Amos 6. 2. and from hence go to Hemath the Great, and so to Gath of the Philistins.* So, pass ye up to *Athens* the eye of *Greece* for Knowledge and humane Literature, and see; and from thence go to *Rome*, the Head of the Western Empire, and so come to *Florence*, the Beauty of *Italy*; (for I forbear to name more, Examples in this kind being almost infinite) in all which you may read this truth at large.

And first for *Athens*: How many changes of Governours and Governments did she endure? putting her self off from Hereditary Kings to Archons, or Aristocratical Lords, who govern'd first for term of life, then decennially; and after these, to Democratical Rulers.

Next for *Rome*; how oft hath that City been alter'd by *Gauls*, *Hunnes*, *Goths* and *Vandals*?

Yea

Yea, how oft hath the Government of it been pass'd away from one hand to another?

It is mystically represented to us, Rev. 17.3. by the beast of seven heads, which is there interpreted by the seven Hills it is built upon, to be *Rome*: And according to the number of those Hills, to so many Masters did it submit it self, who had their several turns of supreme power and regiment over her; as *Kings, Consuls, Dictators, Decemviri, Tribunes, Emperours, and Popes*: under the last of which, I do not find that it was ever Besieged by any that took it not: such strange ebbings hath that Sea had experience of!

Last of all for *Florence*. It is strange to tell what various whirlings about that hath had in point of Supreme Rule and power. For at first the Nobility ruled it in an Aristocratical way. But a little after, some Grandees among the people wrested it to themselves; who being tired out with continual quarrel-
lings

lings one with another, (for the people were divided into three ranks) the middle sort of them took upon them the management of the State. And these also falling quickly together by the ears, the third and lowest sort became Masters of it. Which holding not long, by reason of their mutual discords, they yield themselves and the Government of their City unto *Charles* of *France*, Brother to *Lewis* the Ninth; who within a short time being invited to the Kingdom of *Naples*, and leaving only Deputies at *Florence*, the *Florentines* return to their Popular Government; and renew their Civil Wars among themselves. For redress whereof, they send for the Duke of *Athens*, and give up all to him. But shortly they supposing themselves to be brought in bondage, and to be despoiled of their Liberty by the fear of his Guard, banish him the City, and within less than one years space shake off his Government over them. After which
they

they come to an Aristocracie again, devising new Names and Officers for their Magistrates, and changing and rechanging them so oft, that sometimes their State was no better order'd, than if it had been committed to Mad men, or Children without discretion, the City scarce twenty years together keeping the same form of State: but as sick men in Feavers (says *Bodin*) desire to be removed now hither, and by and by thither, or from one bed to another, as if the Disease were in the places where they lay, and not in the intrals of their own Bodies; so were the *Florentines* still turning their State, till they turn'd it into the hands of the *Medices*, who now hold it. A thing almost incredible, (says he) did not their own Recorder leave it recorded to posterity.

But in the second place let us descend to Families or Races of men that are lineally successive for Name and Greatness.

And

And here let me ask, where are those Illustrious Families cried up so much in former times, and famous in their Generations?

As the Couragious Family of the *Maccabees* in *Jewry*, and of the *Ptolemies* in *Ægypt*.

Again, where is the *Zelzuccian* Family in the less *Asia*, and the Imperial Family of the *Palæologi* in *Greece*?

That of the *Merovignians* in *France*?

Of the *Plantagenets* in *England*, with many more of this rank I might name, did not the narrow compass of so small a Treatise bound me?

Tell me, is not the Name and Greatness of these Families long since expired, the Roots and Branches of them quite remov'd, and others planted in their rooms? Examples of this sort are innumerable, as *Elihu* says in *Job*: *He breaks in pieces mighty men without number; (so mighty Families without number) and sets up others in their stead.*

And

And as for such Families as are of a lower form, we need not go far, since our own knowledge here will lead us to continual changes and alterations.

For thou hast seen it may be many Families heretofore in this Nation, brim-full of earthly happiness, and running over; and now upon thy second view of them, behold there is no such thing, but they are much alter'd, and running very low in the world, if not clean run out.

So that prosperity (you see) was never yet so entail'd upon any Family, and the Heirs thereof, but within a little time some one or other hath cut it off.

But last of all, if we look upon particular persons, this will appear most evident; but especially if we consider them three ways. In respect of their Bodies, Minds, and Estates.

Gregory Nazianzen hath an excellent saying of the two former joyntly consider'd,

sider'd, which is this ; Ἡμεῖς τε γὰρ ὁ σμύθεται μόνον
ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀντίθεται, καὶ ἀλλήλοις, καὶ ἡμῶν αὐτοῖς ὁυδὲ ἐπὶ μιᾷ ἡμέρᾳ οἱ αὐτοὶ
καθαρὰς μένοντες, ἀλλὰ καὶ σώμασι, καὶ ψυχαῖς αἰεὶ ῥέοντες τε καὶ μεταπίπτοντες.

i. e. We are not mixt Creatures only,
but also contrary both to others and
our selves: not continuing truly the
same, no not so much as one day ; but
both in regard of our Bodies and Minds,
perpetually flowing and perpetually
changing.

And we can instance this in all the
stages of our life , wherein by the or-
dinary course of Nature , we are first
weak, and then strong, and after weak
again. As in our Childhood, we are
then weak both in Body and Mind : in
our Youth, strong in Body and weak in
Mind ; and in our Manhood, strong in
both ; but in our Old age, strong in
Mind and weak in Body ; and in our
Decrepit , weak again in both, as we
were in our Childhood at the first.

But to leave this general considera-
tion of them , and to look upon them
now more distinctly and severally by
C them-

themselves. And first for the change of particular Persons in regard of their Bodies.

And here it is true of them, what *Seneca* affirms, *viz.* That *no man is the same to day, he was yesterday: Ego ipse* (says he) *dum hæc loquor mutari, mutatus sum.* Our Bodies (says he) are like a River, which keeps nothing but the bare name that was first given it; for as touching the present individual matter, which is the watry substance of it, this is always transient, and other comes into its room: And so it is with the Body of Man, which is always receiving in new Air and Life, and venting the former. Which makes *David* profess of himself, that he was toss'd up and down like the Locust; and *Job* compares Man for his bodily substance to a flower that never continues in one stay, *Job* 14. 2. For now we are strong, and by and by weak; now beautiful, and presently deformed. A little Fit of the Feaver, Small Pox, or the like, alters

alters us so, as if we were not the same men we were before ; insomuch that we hear some speaking thus unto us,---
Hæc quantum mutatus ab illo ! Alas, how hath this fit alter'd you from what you were in your health ! for how are your lips grown pallid , your cheeks discolour'd, your eyes sunk into their holes, and your face quite disfigur'd ! And others there be of our acquaintance that like *Jobs* three friends do lift up their eyes afar off , and know us not ; so much are we chang'd in respect of our Bodies !

But Secondly, Let us consider it also in respect of mens Minds.

And here (to say nothing of a moral change, which is obvious every where) as on the one side we find nothing more notable *Quinquennio Neronis* , than the first five years of *Nero's* Reign , and more excellent than his Youth : Yet afterwards, having well tasted the sweet morsel of Sovereignty, he became (says one) the most detestable Tyrant that

ever was : And so also of *Herod* the Great, *Philo* says, that he Reign'd six years as a good and just Prince, presenting the *Protasis* of his Reign with a large Fringe of Goodness about it ; (as *Joaz*, *Amazias*, and *Ozias* did) but as for the *Catastrophe* of it, that was very sad and fearful. So on the other side, we find *Manasseh* and *Paul* soaking the forepart of their Lives in Blood, being no better at first then *Nero* was at the last, even a piece of clay temper'd with blood ; yet was their end like the end of *David's* good man, *The end of that man is peace*, *Psal.* 37. 37.

But to wave these, (whereof much might be said, did it not quite lie out of my road I am now in) and to insist only upon the changeableness that doth naturally adhere to the mind of man.

Now tell me, if any thing in the world may be said to be more moveable than the mind of man.

It is a Spiritual substance , and so is always moving , (though insensibly) from one thing unto another ; never resting, until at last like *Noah's* dove it be taken into the Heavenly Ark. *S.Chrysostome* therefore compares it to a Bird, which flies in a moment of time over Mountains and Hills , over Seas and Rocks , without any hinderance : for now it is upon the lowest Shrub , and presently upon the highest branch of the tallest Cedar ; now upon heavenly, and within the twinkling of an eye upon earthly things ; now at *Dan*, and in a trice at *Beersheba* ; now at one part of the earth, and then at another : for sometimes it is soaring after *Principalities and Powers, and spiritual Wickednesses in high places* , as the Apostle speaks ; then after Riches, and by and by after pleasures ; now rejoicing, and then sorrowing ; now quieted, and immediately troubled , and as soon pacified again ; now hoping, and straightway fearing those hopes ; now loving,

and then hating what it loved before. *Sic omnia mutabilitati subjacent* (says St. Augustine) Thus do all things lie down under mutability! And it amaz'd Saint Bernard much, to consider how in the same moment of time his mind was not only diversly, but likewise contrarily affected, and as it were pull'd a pieces betwixt love and hatred, joy and sorrow, fear and hope; having as many varieties of affections within him, as there were diversities of things in the world for them to light upon.

So that you see how the several Passions of our Minds do in a breath, and with the turning of a hand, steer divers ways, first looking one way, and then another, according as they are wheeled about with the motions of outward Contingencies.

But in the last place, we shall add unto the former, the great changes that particular men are subject to in regard of their outward Estates and Fortunes. For the condition of Mortals (says a
Hea-

Heathen man) hath its turns and returns, both of Prosperity and Adversity.

That as in a Military skirmish there be some come up to discharge, while others fall off: So is it in the World's *Militia*.

One there is that is rais'd out of the Dust to sit among Princes: whereas there is another that is flung down from the pinnacle of worldly joy and prosperity, and stated, as *Job* was, upon the Dunghil. And this doth the Preacher tell us, among the rest of those changes that fell under his observation, *That one comes out of Prison to Reign*, (as Queen *Elizabeth* did out of the Tower to the Throne) *whereas also* there is *he that is born in his Kingdom, and becomes very poor*; (as our *Henry* the Third was, while he lived sometimes on the Churches Alms.)

God hath appointed us (saith one well) all our parts to play, and hath not in their distribution been either spare-handed to the meanest, nor yet partial to the greatest. C 4 He

He gave *Caius Marius* at first the part of a Carpenters Son, but afterwards the part of one that was seven times Consul. So also *Agathocles* the part of a Potters Son at the first, but afterwards of the King of *Sicily*.

So also on the other side, *Darius* play'd the part one while of the greatest Emperour, and another time of the most miserable Beggar, begging but a little water to quench the drought of Death. And *Bajazet* play'd the Grand Signior in the morning, but in the evening stood for *Tamerlains* footstool.

And *Jane Shore*, *Edward* the Fourths Minion, acts now as Mistress of a stately Palace, and a little after dies in a Ditch for want of a House; and (as he said of *Icarus*) so may we of her, That---*Nomina fecit aquis*, she gave Name to the place where she died, it being call'd from her *Shore-ditch* to this day.

But I forbear, since there is enough recorded for our use in the Sacred Scriptures to this purpose; where we find

an example of the one in *David*, who says, that God took him from following the *Ewes with young*, and set him upon the Throne; there to feed (as he says) *Jacob his people, and Israel his Inheritance*. And to go lower yet, not only from the sheepfold, so he says, *Psal. 113. 7. and 8 verses; God takes the poor out of the Dust, and the needy out of the Dunghill, that he may set him among Princes, even with the Princes of his people*. Now more vile and contemptible than the Dust we tread upon, which the least breath of wind commands any way; or than the worst of dust, which is that of the Dunghil, we cannot be; yet these are they (says the Psalmist) whom he sets among Princes, even with the Princes of his people.

An example of the other we have in *Antiochus*, *2 Mac. 9. 9.* who was so fill'd with Pride through the rankness of his Prosperity, that he thought he might command the Sea, (so proud was he, says the Text, beyond the condition of man)

man) and further, that he could weigh the Mountains in a ballance, and reach up to the Stars of Heaven: yet by and by is his Comb cut, all his Glory worm-eaten, and none able to endure him for the filthiness of his smell.

Adde to this the example of *Balthazar*, *Dan. 5. 5.* who was now carousing in the Consecrated Vessels that *Nebuchadnezzar* his Grandfather had plundered the Temple of, and House of God at *Jerusalem*, as you may see, *2 Kings chap. last.* But in the same hour (says the Text) came out the hand-writing of the wall against him, and then was the Kings countenance chang'd, his thoughts troubled, the joynts of his Loyns loosed, and his Kingdom given away to the *Medes and Persians*.

Thus are we for outward things like so many Counters, which stand one while for a pound, and another for a penny.

That as we see commonly in Highways, where one man hath set his foot,
ano-

another presently follows him and treads it out again; so is it usually. That if one man beat out an Honour or Estate to himself, another comes after and treads out that impression; and whose it shall be next, there is no man knows. Nay, *Lucan, Ipsa vices natura subit*--- Even the whole course of Nature runs about in a circular motion. Our Bodies, Minds, and outward felicities, whatsoever we are, or whatsoever we have, are all subject to change in such wise, that we can have no assurance of them, no not for a day. We know not what a day may bring forth.

And so much for the demonstration of this truth, *viz.* That there is such a Vicissitude.

The next thing is the Efficient Causes of it. For we never know any thing thoroughly, (says the Philosopher) until we know the Causes of it.

Now in speaking to this, I shall proceed, 1. Negatively, 2. Affirmatively.

1. Nega-

1. Negatively, in shewing what have been thought to be the causes of all Changes and Alterations, yet are not so indeed. And here the *Epicures* and vulgar Heathen have thought *Fortune* to be the cause of them: And they define it thus to be, *An Event of things without Reason.*

But how unreasonable it is to say, That an Event of Things without a Cause, should be the Cause of all Events, judge ye.

For it was only the ignorance of the true Causes, that made the name of *Fortune*; there being nothing fortuitous in it self, but only to us and our ignorance; since the power and providence of God hath the ordering and disposing of all things here below. And this did the wiser sort among them confess, as the Satyrist tells us.

*Nullum numen abest si sit prudentia, sed te
Nos facimus Fortuna Deam----*

Others

Others again, as the *Stoicks*, make *Fate* or *Destiny* the cause of all Alterations, which they say is an Event that necessarily falls out, from a certain inevitable order and connection of Natural Causes, working without the will of God, as the Supreme Orderer and Disposer of them, he being subjected to them, and not they to him: whereby they take away the very Nature of the Godhead, which is to be a most powerful and free Agent, that works what, and by what means it pleases; all secondary causes depending upon that, and that upon none.

But enough of these: For I must remember my self, that I am now speaking to *Christians*, who acknowledge the Divine Providence in all things; and therefore shall speak no more of these Negative and supposed Causes, but shall now give you the true Efficient Causes of them, by way of Affirmation.

And

And here know, that *Logicians* tell us of two Efficient Causes; Principal, and less Principal: And this is twofold, Impulsive, and Instrumental.

First then, the Principal Cause of all Changes and Alterations is God: for so said the Heathen man,

-----*Valet ima summit*

Mutare, & insignem attenuat Deus,
Obscura promens-----

But why borrow I weapons from the *Philistins* forge, when as there is enough for this, that may be drawn out of Gods Armory of the Scriptures? as *Psal. 75. 6, 7.* Promotion, says the Prophet, comes neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South; but God is the Judge, he puts down one, and sets up another. So also *Job 34. 29.* When he gives Quietness, who can make Trouble? and when he hides his face, who can behold him; whether it be done (says *Elihu*) against a Nation, or against

a particular man only? Again, Amos 5.8. He makes the Seven Stars and Orion, and turns the shadow of Death into the morning: The Lord is his Name.

The Oratour expresseth this well, by comparing Gods Omnipotency to the power of the Soul over the Members of the Body, which upon the least intimation of the Mind do turn and move about with all facility. Now God (says he) is the sole Mind of the Universe, and hath all parts and parcels thereof at his beck and pleasure, to be turn'd into any shape or form at his disposal,

Nay, it is no dishonour for God to cast the eye of his Providence upon the alteration even of the meanest things: for *who is like*, says the Psalmist, *to the Lord our God, who hath his dwelling on high, and yet humbles himself to behold the things in Heaven and Earth?* Not only to behold the things in Heaven, which is a great condescension to him, *whom the Heaven and the Heaven*
of

of Heavens cannot contain ; but also the things in Earth. Now how unworthy these are of his taking notice of , you may see by those diminutive expressions of them, compared with Gods greatness , Isa. 40. 15. where the Prophet says, Behold, the Nations are but as the drop of a Bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the Ballance ; Behold , he takes up the Isles as a very little thing. And if this be not low enough for them, he says further, v. 17. That all Nations before him are as nothing , and are counted to him as less than nothing. Now look what a wide difference there is betwixt the Sea and a Bucket of water, yea the drop of a Bucket ; or betwixt a heap of dust , and the small dust of the ballance ; betwixt very great and very little ; betwixt all things and nothing at all , yea less then nothing, (if less could be :) so vast is the disproportion betwixt God and all Nations, which are the greatest among all earthly things. And yet for all this, is
God

God pleased so far to extenuate his own greatness, and to take off from it, as to look after them, and run them about in their several stages from one point unto another.

And if you would have this truth to be made out further unto you, our Saviour doth it, *Mat. 10. 29.* by two several instances.

The one is of two Sparrows, which are little birds and of small value; but the *Greek* yet runs it more diminutively, *δύο σ. ὀλίγα* two little sparrows; and so they must needs be, for they were sold both even for a farthing; and this is price little enough. Yet the *Arabick* makes it less, and hath for it *Phals*, which is the least piece of money that can be; and accordingly expresses the two Mites spoken of, *Mark 12. 42.* (which makes but one Farthing) by *Phalsain* in the dual number, as a late and learned Expositor notes.

The other is of the Hairs upon our Heads, being a kind of Excrement belonging

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longing to our Bodies, and no integral or necessitous part of them, (as the Heart, Hands, and Feet are ;) and yet he tells us, that God numbers these, and takes such a particular account of them, that not one of them falls to the ground without his disposal.

In the vision of the Wheels we read of a wheel within a wheel. Now the wheel within is the wheel of Gods Providence, that turns about the wheels of all outward things, be they never so low and mean. For as God doth not labour in doing the greatest things, so neither doth he disdain, either to do or undo the least; but as he *made the small and great*, (says the book of *Wisdom*) so also doth he *care for both alike*. The Potter having power over his Clay, either to make of it a vessel of honour or dishonour, and being made, either to preserve it in that form and being he hath bestowed upon it, or else to deform and destroy it, since it is equitable that every one should do with his

own

own as he pleases. Nay, as he says of the gnat, that *Nusquam potentior natura quam in minimis* ; So may we say, that God doth no ways advance his Power and Wisdom more , than in ordering of the least accidents to be disposed of to his Glory, and the good of his Children. And so much for the *Principal Efficient* cause.

The *less Principal* follows ; which (as I said) is either *Impulsive* or *Instrumental*.

Now the *Impulsive* cause of all Changes and Alterations is the sin of man. This usher'd them in at the first , and so it doth still. For before *Adam* sinned, he enjoyed a Paradise of constant and uninterrupted happiness : but so soon as he sins against God , then follows a great change presently : For the Earth all fruitful before, now becomes barren, himself subject to labour , his Wife to Travail and Sorrow, and both to cares and troubles, to weakness and dissolution. And so it is also with Na-

tions and Kingdoms. If they be chang'd at any time, sin is the cause of it; and the greater their sin is, the greater usually is their change. Great sinnings are the floud-gates to let in great Alterations upon them. For it is not a bare sinning in a Nation, (from which there is none that could ever plead exemption) but a sinning in some high measure, that is an in-let to Changes in the highest kind. Which made *David* say, *Psal.* 107. 34. That a fruitful land is turn'd into barrenness for the wickedness of those that dwell therein; which the vulgar Latine reads, *Propter malitiam*, i. e. for the malicious wickedness of those that dwell therein; which notes a sin of a high nature, viz. such a one as is persisted in both against Knowledge and Conscience. And therefore it is a good observation which *Musculus* hath upon the words: *These strange Alterations*, says he, *of Nations and Kingdoms, are not for the sinning of them, (from which no Nation can be free) but for*

for their malicious sinning. And this you may see farther in *Jerusalem*, Ezek. 21. where we read of a very great Judgment that should befall her from the *Babylonian*, viz. Utter Destruction, expressed by the threefold Overturn wherewith God threatens her, v. 27. And v. 24 he laies down the Impulsive cause that mov'd him to it; and this is an impudent and shameless sinning against God: for they did not commit their sin in a corner, as those that were asham'd of it, but (brazen-faced Wretches as they were) they declar'd their sin as *Sodom*, and discover'd it openly in the face of the Sun: and this they did too, not only in one or two particular acts, but generally, says the Text, in all their doings.

Now there is some hope of a modest and bashful, but none at all of a shameless and obdurate sinner. Thus the Father, when his Son hath done amiss, yet is he well perswaded of his amendment, if he but see him blush upon his

reproving of him. But when like *Judah*, he hath once a Whores forehead, and refuses to be ashamed, then doth he give him over as a lost Child, and not to be recover'd.

So that from hence we see, that in what place soever we find such a Turn, such an Everſion as this, where all is turn'd upside down) there hath been without question some great *Averſio a Creatore ad Creaturam*, some great ſinning againſt God (as the Schoolmen call it.) Which was the reaſon that when the *Engliſh* were (now upon their quitting of *France*, in *Henry* the Sixth's days) demanded of the *French* by way of deriſion, when they would make their return thither; it was feelingly answered by one of our Nation thus,
When your ſins are greater than ours.

It is ſin then that ruines particular perſons, that ſubverts Families, that periods Kingdoms, that wheels about Governments, that overturns States, that diſjoynts Common-weals, and ſays un-

to them as to the proud waves, *Thus far ye shall go, and no farther.*

And so I have done with the Impulsive Cause, and come next to the Instrumental causes or means which God uses in effecting his Changes here; and they are two.

The first is the Motion and Influences of the Celestial Bodies.

And this will the better appear, if we consider their forcible workings upon the Mind of man. For though they cannot work immediately upon it, because it is immaterial; yet may they, and do work mediately upon it, as by the Body, which is the Instrument of the Soul to work by, and the Case wherein it is put up here for a time; and so make it either well or ill affected, according to the Bodies present temper. By which means it comes to pass many times, that not only the dispositions of particular men, but also of whole multitudes collected together in a Politick Body, are much alter'd and

chang'd, either to labour or Sloth, to Peace or Disquiet, to good or evil actings, according as they are inclin'd by the Motions of the Heavenly Bodies.

And that these Celestial Bodies have their energy upon all Sub'lunary things, is plain,

First, by Scripture; as *Job 38. 33.* where the Lord speaks thus to *Job*, *Know'st thou the Ordinances of Heaven? and canst thou set the dominion thereof in the Earth?* which implies,

1. That the Heavens have power and dominion in the Earth.

2. That this power of theirs is set them from Gods ordinance and appointment.

Secondly, by the constant Observation and Experience of all Ages. *Bo-dinus* the French Lawyer speaks well to this point; *Many erre* (says he) *greatly, who think the influence of the Celestial Spheres to be nothing, whenas their strength hath ever been most effectual, as in*

Sacred

Sacred Writ is to be seen: and he cites the 38. chap. of *Job* before-mentioned to prove the same. Adding further, *That many ancient Writers have noted the great Changes in Cities and Kingdoms upon the conjunction of the Superiour Planets, but to them only where they have been deputed of God to that end and purpose.* And that they have been instrumental towards the working of such effects, he shews by an induction of some particular instances: As, that before the translation of the *Roman* Sovereignty unto *Cæsar*, there was a great Conjunction of the Superiour Planets met together in *Scorpio*: which fell out again seven hundred years after, when the *Arabian* Legions received the Law of *Mahomet*, rebell'd against the *Greek* Emperours, and subdued the Eastern *Asia* from the *Christians*.

The same also came about again, *Anno Christi* 1464. after which *Ladamachus*, King of the *Tartars*, was by his Subjects thrust out of the Chair of
Sove-

Soveraignty ; and *Frederick* the Third driven out of *Hungary* by *Matthias Corvinus*, who from a Prisoner stept up to the Royal Throne, &c.

And *Alstedius* tells us, that the Conjunction of *Saturn* and *Jupiter* in *February*, 1642. did foretell and portend the revolution of some new Empire and Government to fall out after it in *Europe*. The effect whereof in part (it's like) we have seen in this Nation already, and may live (if God so dispose of us) to see further of it yet in time to come.

But to pass this, and to come to that daily and usual course of Gods proceedings with us in the world. Here methinks there should be few, (though of ordinary capacities among us) but (if we be a little observing) may see this truth made good by the eye of our own experience, which tells us, that the Earth is either Fruitful or Barren, and the Air either Wholsome or Infectious, sutable to that measure and manner of influence they receive from them. And

And therefore when God will at any time bring about some great change in the world, it is then easie to see how usually he fits his inferiour means, according to their severall natures, for the orderly transacting of it in those stations wherein he hath set them. As, when he will turn a fruitful Land into barrenness, and again, a barren Land into fruitfulness, (which he promis'd his own people, *Hos. 2. 21.*) there he tells them in what order he will work it: *I will hear* (says he) *the Heavens, and they shall hear the Earth, and they shall hear Jezreel.* For this is a sure rule, That the Supreme Cause of all doth not take away the natures and workings of Secondary Causes, but rather establish them: which is the reason of that Speech of God to *Job*, in the ordinary revolution of the times and seasons of the year, *Job 38. 31. Canst thou bind the sweet influences of the Pleiades, and loose the bonds of Orion?*

Now

Now the *Pleiades* are those we commonly call the Seven Stars, that have their influence on the earth, by producing sweet showres to the opening and refreshing of it, about the Spring of the year; and *Orion* is a Constellation most conspicuous in the Winter-season, as having a commissiary power to bind up the earth with Frosts. Again, *canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season*, (*i.e.* the twelve Signes successively after one another) *or guide Arcturus with his Sons?* (*i.e.* the Polar Star, as some will have it, with those *ignes minores* that wait upon him; or *Bootes*, as others.) It is not then so much the Earth, as the Heavens that give us either fruit, or withhold it; they being the first ordinary means, whereby God uses to work out alterations in sublunary things.

The second Instrumental cause of these strange Vicissitudes here below, is the Will of Man: for though it have not a liberty to Spiritual, yet all grant

it a liberty to external acts, and moral goodness. And this Liberty of Mans Will, doth God use as an under-wheel to turn about most of those Alterations that are in the world.

It is true, that Health and Sicknes, Peace and War, Plenty and Scarcity, Riches and Poverty, proceed from God as the principal Efficient cause; but yet for all this we deny not but that God makes use both of our selves and others, as to the means of bringing them about. The life of *Joseph* was checquer'd with variety of accidents: for he is now a Slave to the *Ismaelites*, and by and by a Prince in *Ægypt*. Now these although they proceeded from God as the Author, yet was the will of his Brethren, as the will of *Reuben* and *Judah*, the instruments of preserving his life, and the wills of his other Brethren the means of selling him into *Ægypt*.

Now because it is the Nature of Instruments to be subservient to the principal Agent, and to be determin'd by it;

it; therefore give me leave here by the way to fasten this exhortation upon you, That in all Changes whatsoever you will look beyond the Instruments of them, unto God the Principal Agent. For so did *Job* in his losses, beyond the plundering *Chaldeans* and *Sabeans*, unto *Dominus abstulit, The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away*; looking upon them as we use to do upon an *Index, tantum in ordine ad Librum*, only in order to the Book it self, *Et in transitu ad Deum*, in his passage unto God, who sets them a work, as to their natural powers and faculties, though to the evil of them no otherwise, than by ordering and over-ruling it to the good of his Children. And hence it is, that the wicked are called Gods Sword, as in the 17 *Psalms*, v. 13. *Deliver my Soul (says David) from the wicked which is thy Sword.* And so must we in all those Losses that befall us here; have in our eye not so much the Sword, as the Hand that holds it: which will be one means,

and

and a good one too, to bring us to *David's* calm temper in the 39 *Psal.* 19. who says in the like condition, *That he was dumb, and did not open his mouth, nor let fall an impatient word in it, because it was Gods doing: And therefore when Abishai would have taken away Shimei's life for cursing of David, No, (says he) Let him alone, Jussit enim Dominus, for the Lord hath bidden him curse; who then shall say, Wherefore hast thou done so? q. d. Who then dare expostulate with God, or call him to account about it, as if he were unrighteous in it; since evil men are but Swords in Gods hand, who, when he hath once done his work by them, will either put them up again into his Scabbard, and lay them by, or else so blunt the edge of their power, that it shall not cut, or else break them a pieces, and throw them quite away? And so much for the Efficient Causes of Vicissitudes.*

Next I shall speak to the Ends , or Final Causes of them.

And these are either *Ex parte Dei*, or *Nostri*; in respect of God , or our selves.

First, in respect of God ; and so the Principal End why God rings such Changes upon all earthly things , and will have them disposed of after so various a manner ; is to make them by it the more tunable to his own Glory, which by this means is exceedingly magnified and advanced : but especially in the Attributes of his Power, Truth, Wisdom, and Goodness.

1. In his Power and Omnipotency : that so he may let the world know, that the Finger of his Power is in all Transactions ; and that he can do whatsoever he will, both in Heaven and Earth; and yet changes not.

For why else did God work so many miraculous Changes in *Ægypt* by the hand of *Moses* ?

Why

Why turned he *Moses* Rod into a Serpent, and the *Ægyptian* waters into Blood?

Why their Dust into Lice and Flies, and their Light into Darkness for the space of three days together?

Why else Created he a new generation of Frogs and Locusts among them?

Why unheard-of Diseases upon themselves, and upon their Cattel?

Why destroyed he their Herbs and Fruit-trees with Hail, and their first-born with untimely death?

In a word, Why caused he the Red-sea to go out of its natural course and chanel, whereby it became a wall to the *Israelites*; and a grave to the *Ægyptians*?

Did not God all this to make known the glory of his power, in the preservation of the one and destruction of the other? Yes; *For this cause* (says God to *Moses*) *I have raised thee up, to shew in thee my power, and that my Name may be declared in all the earth.*

2. He advances also his Glory this way, by manifesting his Truth and Faithfulness : in that those things which are accidental in regard of us, and seem as impossible ; yet are they exactly brought to pass in their due times and seasons. As in the bringing of the *Israelites* out of *Ægypt* , wherein God was full as good as his word, and kept touch with them to a day in their Deliverance, as you may see, *Exod. 12. 41.* where we read, *That it came to pass in the end of four hundred and thirty years, even the self-same day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out of the land of Ægypt.* All *Pharaoh's* oppositions and tergiversations could not prorogue their Bondage so much as one day beyond the time prefixed of God, but serv'd only to fill up that *Interim*, or void space of time betwixt Gods Promise made to *Abraham* and his performance of it.

And if you ask by what intervals of time the truth of this promise came about

bout so punctually, Divines will tell you, That from *Abraham's* receiving of the promise, unto the birth of *Isaac*, were five and twenty years; sixty from thence to *Jacobs* birth; and to his death (which fell out presently upon their entrance into *Ægypt*) a hundred and thirty years. After which unto the death of *Levi*, who was *Ultimus Patriarcharum*, the last of the Patriarchs that survived, and in which space the *Israelites* were kindly entreated for *Joseph's* sake, were ninety four years; and a hundred and one and twenty more of cruel Bondage, until *Moses* came to deliver them from it in the Reign of *Pharaoh Cencres*.

All which particulars being gathered up together, do make up the compleat sum of four hundred and thirty years, and may serve to justifie God in all his sayings, and to clear his Truth in the least circumstance and punctilio of time, when it shall come to be judged.

For when once Gods appointed time is come to introduce a change , either for better or worse, among any people, then shall every breath of wind , how cross soever it seems to blow at the present , yet be so far from hindring Gods work in it , as that one way or other you shall find it in the sequel , to contribute its help and assistance to it.

3. God advances also his Glory this way , in the manifestation of his Wisdom and Goodness ; in that he makes a sweet harmony of so many different cords and changes , and frames a most admirable Order out of a seeming Disorder and Confusion.

Many and divers are the qualities of Herbs , yet if a skilful Simpler hath the mixing of them , he knows how to make of them a well-relish'd and wholesome Sallade : So, many were the interchangeable passages that happen'd to *Joseph* ; and had we the same, it may be we should think them very confused ones ; but yet let the Wisdom and Good-

Goodness of God but lay them together, and we shall presently find, as *Joseph* did, the close of them all in a sweet *Diapason*.

For though all things, as to us, are floating up and down, to and again, by chance as it were and accident;

Τῆ τάχῃ δὲ τῆς ἀπορίας πάντα καὶ ἀκίνητα, καὶ διὰ τῶν ἐναντίων ὁδεύον,

says *Gregory Nazianzen*; yet if we look to the order and appointment of Gods Providence, (which doth always most wisely contrive all events for the good of his Children) they are fixt and stable, howbeit they may seem to go contrary at the present.

And of Gods dealing in this kind we have *Job* an eminent example; who is to day the greatest man for Wealth and Honour in all the East, (and a Tablet of this his Greatness you may see in his 29 Chapter, which I desire you to read over at your leisure) wherein you shall find a whole *series* of worldly prosperity to wait upon him;) yet to morrow he is poor, even to a by-word

and proverb, *As poor as Job* : insomuch as he spends all the next Chapter in bemoaning his suddain change, beginning it with a *But* ; which though a small Monosyllable, yet as the Helm of a Ship turns about the Vessel any way, so doth this *But* turn about *Job*, and all his former Honour and Prosperity, into the extremest contempt and adversity. *But now*, says he, *they that are younger than I have me in derision, whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my Flock* ; and ending it with this doleful accent, verse last, *versa est cithara mea in luctum, & organum in vocem flentium* ; *My harp is turned into mourning, and my organ into the voice of those that weep.*

Yet all is well (we say) that ends well ; and so it was with *Job*, which makes Saint *James* say, by way of support unto Gods people in their afflictions, *Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord* ; i. e.

what

what good end God gave him in it ; for the next day God brings a great deal of Light out of this Darknes, by a wise and gracious disposing of all that evil to him for the best, in giving him twice as much as he had at the first, and blessing his later end more than his beginning,

So that although for a time all those sad Changes that befell *Job* , seem'd even to cross the ordinary course of Gods care and Providence to him ; yet in the conclusion you see how his Wisdom and Goodness cut them all out, and made them serve to his greater Honour and Abundance.

And so much for the Ends or Final Causes in respect of God.

They follow now in respect of our selves.

And these are two : first to confirm our Faith ; secondly to reform our Lives, and to work out by them good to his servants.

First, to confirm our Faith.

And so God brings many times great Changes into the world, to try, if amidst those shakings of outward things among us, we will be shaken in our Faith, or not. That as the Apostle speaks of Heresies, 1 Cor. 11. 19. *Oportet esse Hæreses, There must be Heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest*; so say I, *Oportet esse mutationes*, There must be Changes: and these not so much in respect of the things themselves, which are in their own natures liable to alteration and dissolution; as in respect of Gods end in it, that they which are approved and sincere in the Faith, may be manifested to be so, by their constancy and perseverance in it. That as there is a necessity of Fire to try Gold, whether it be true or else counterfeit; so also is there a necessity of Changes: for by these it will appear, whether we will measure our Religion by outward things, and in the loss or enjoyment of them
be

be lost in our Protestant Faith, yea or no.

There is nothing, Beloved, more discovers the Hypocrite than his *Ingenium versatile*, (as *Livy* said of *Cato*) than his turning humour in Religion: for which I do not say he shall be plagued in Hell, by being wheel'd about there continually without any relaxation, (though that may seem a punishment somewhat suitable to his Weathercock-disposition here upon earth;) no, *Hoc nimis Ethnicum*, This is too heathenish: but rather with the Prophet *David*, That he shall turn into Hell with all those that forget God, which is that portion of Hypocrites mentioned by our Saviour, *Matth.* 24. last.

For if an Apple be rotten at the coare, it will not hold long upon the Tree, but upon the least Wind will fall from it. And so it is with the rotten-hearted Hypocrite; if a little cross wind do but blow upon him, oh how soon doth he fall off from the Tree of Life,

Life, and become a wind-fall in his Religion, for the Devil that old Serpent to prey upon!

Every Cock-boat (you know) will bear up well enough in a calm sea: but that is a stout Vessel that can live in the most troubled water. And too too many there were in the Primitive times, that like *Dr. Pendleton* in *Queen Maries* days, boasted much of their Constancy in the Orthodox Faith during *Constantines* days, so long as God hedg'd about his Vineyard with Peace and Prosperity; but so soon as that Hedge was broken down, and erroneous, yea Heretical Doctrines were let in like so many Beasts of prey to devour, then how quickly did these prove Turncoats, and Apostates from the Faith!

But as for the true Christian, he is like a Rock,----*Mediis immotus in undis*; That although the waves are always swelling against him, yet is he the same man still in his Reformed Religion, and wavers not: or else like that House
built

built upon the Rock, against which the Floods came, and the Winds blew, but it fell not, because it was built upon a Rock.

And such a well-built house was *St. Basil*, who being threatned with death by *Valens*; if he would not advise further and turn *Arrian*, answer'd with this brave resolution, *I need not any further advice than I have taken already about this matter; for to morrow I shall be the same man that I am to day therein, and no other.*

And here know that some things are of Necessity, wherein we cannot but change, as in natural, civil, and moral things; and to change in these is only humane.

Others again are of Duty: and these either prohibited, or enjoyn'd.

I. Prohibited, as in evil and erroneous things: and to change here is pious and divine; and not to change, either Weakness or Obstinacy.

2. Enjoyn'd, as in sacred and religious: and to change here is impious and Diabolical; and not to change, true Christian Fortitude and Constancy.

Whatsoever things we see then wheeling about in the world, as Governments, Families and the like; nay, howsoever we may change our selves or be chang'd in some things of an indifferent nature, by those that have dominion over our Bodies and Estates; yet is there no man that hath dominion over our Faith; But this is Gods peculiar, and therefore in this we must not change.

It is not with saving Truths as it is with Clothes, which alter every year as the fashion doth: for *the fashion of the world passes away* (says St. John;) but true Religion is ever in fashion with good men, and alters not.

And herein we may justly take occasion to bewail the unsteadiness of some in these times, who are mere *Scepticks* in Religion, always conceiving some
new

new Opinions in it, and always in pain till they be deliver'd of their new conceptions, though never so *monstrous* and *deformed*.

That which was truth with them yesterday, is no such thing to day; and what is so to day, is otherwise to morrow; such Changelings there be in this last Age, who like the Moon do never appear the same two days together! *And I would to God, (says St. Ambrose,) that their change were no worse than that of the Moon; for she returns again within a little time to her full light, but these never.*

And he is blind that sees not this among us, (namely) how some turn every day to *Popish* Superstition, but more to *Anabaptistical* Fancies; some unto *Socinian* Blasphemies, but most unto *Atheistical* Notions, and all into Sensuality; this being the common Sewer into which all the former run, and are ultimately resolved.

But as St. Paul said to his *Galathians*,
so

so do I to such, O foolish Galathians, who hath bewitch'd you that you should not obey the Gospel? And it is a metaphor, says one, from Sorcerers, who use to cast a mist before the peoples eyes, that so they may not take a right view of what is presented to them: As if he had said, Who hath cast a mist before the eyes of your understandings, to make that appear unto you for truth which indeed is not? What? Are ye so foolish, that having begun in the Spirit, ye will be perfected in the Flesh? So, Are ye so foolish, that having begun in truth, ye will end in falshood? or can ye be so simple, as to exchange Gold for Dirt, Wheat for Chaff, and your pretious Faith, as St. Peter calls it, which is the substance of things hoped for, for Errours of all sorts, and mere shadows of Truth? I trow not. For if Errour (as our *Kingly Divine* said well) have any advantage, it consists in Novelty: or if Truth any, it consists in Constancy.

Was the Doctrine then of the Reformed Churches, and the Harmony of our Confessions grounded upon evident and pregnant Scriptures, maintain'd by the Orthodox and Primitive Fathers, and conveyed to us by the constant tradition of the Universal Church, the Faith of Christ once deliver'd to the Saints, and the Truth of God yesterday? why, so it is to day, and will be to-morrow also. And therefore to day in our profession of it we must be as yesterday, and to-morrow as this day: because as God is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever; so also is the Truth of God, That which was once so, will be so always, and cannot be otherwise.

Oh that we would then be exhorted in the *Apostles* words, *To stand fast in the Faith, to quit our selves like men, and be strong: and not to be as children, toss'd to and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine; but to be as men in understanding, stedfast and im-*
move-

moveable ; that so God may have cause to glory on our behalf ; as he did on *Jobs* ; *Hast thou consider'd* (says God to Satan) *my servant Job* ? So, hast thou consider'd such a servant of mine ? Seest thou to how many changes I have subjected him ? to changes in his Children, to changes in his Estate, to changes in his Liberty , to changes in his Friends and Acquaintance ? Nay, seest thou how many of his Brethren are chang'd of late, from a febrish distemper before , now into a sleepy Lethargy ? Seest thou how indifferent they are for their Religion round about him, and how many shaken reeds there are on every side of him ? And yet for all this, as my servant *Job* did, so doth he still hold his integrity. But enough of this.

Secondly, Gods end also in it is, To reform our Lives, and do us good by his so various dispensations towards us Hence we read, *Isa.* 30. 28. of a sieve of vanity ; wherein God says, he will
fift

sift the Nations, and shake them to and fro one after another, that so he may winnow them from that chaff of sin that is within them. For why was *Moab at ease from his youth?* why settled he upon his lees, and held still his corrupt taste? but because he was never disquieted, nor emptied from vessel to vessel, *Jer. 48. 11.* Thus a sedentary life we find very subject to Diseases; and a long standing Prosperity to a Nation, is like a standing Pool, whose water doth soon puddle and putrifie. And this is the reason of that speech of *David, Psal. 55. 19. Because they have no Changes therefore they fear not God;* making by it the unchecked prosperity of worldly men, a great occasion of their continuance in sin, and so an *Index* of Gods Wrath upon them, rather than of his special Favour to them.

And therefore now we have seen the Angel of God moving the waters of this Church and State by Intestine War, new Opinions in Religion, by Sects, divisions,

visions, and the like ; it will be good for us to meditate , how God hereby intends to purge us from that sinful filth that adheres to us, as our disrespect to Gods Ministers , and contempt of his Word , our Cruelty and Oppression, our Pride and Security, our Worldly-mindedness, and Hypocrisie.

Indeed men, who are the instruments of them , may have other ends in such Alterations , as to wreak their own spleen upon their Adversaries , to unhorse others , and get themselves into the Saddle either of Profit or Preferment ; (That as *Demetrius* the Silver-smith said, *We get our gains by this means ;* so say they , We get our Honours and Estates by these means , for if the waters had not been troubled , we had catch'd nothing :) or else to satisfy their own corrupt wills and pleasures ; as the Author to the *Hebrews* says of earthly parents , That they chasten their children after their own pleasure, but God who is the Supreme Agent , he doth it
for

for our profit, and not his own; there being no ends of gold and silver, no mere will or revenge in his end, but only our profit, and to take away the dross from the silver, that so he may bring forth (to use *Solomon's* expression) a *Vas electum* a chosen Vessel, as *St. Paul* was, and fit for the Finer.

Thus the Scripture tells us of *Joseph*, how he was pass'd over from his brethren to the *Ismaelites*, and from them to *Potiphar*; and his Brethren had one end in it, but God another: for they did it for evil against him, (as he tells them himself) and to get twenty Pieces by the sale of him; but as for God, he meant it to him for good, and to save much people alive.

And so also was Christ the Antitype of *Joseph*, thrust (as we say) from post to pillar, viz. from *Judas* to *Caiaphas*, from him to *Pilate*, from *Pilate* to *Herod*, from *Herod* back again to *Pilate*, and then into the hands of the clamorous and unreasonable multitude to be

fied ; and *Judas* had one end in Christs death, but God another. The end of *Judas* in it was to silver his bag with thirty pieces, but Gods end was to satisfie his own Justice, and to save Mankind by it.

So that let mens sinful ends in these Changes and Alterations be what they will , yet is Gods end in it the gaining of glory to himself, by his taking away that sin and corruption which he sees contracted in us by a long standing security. And if these changes of his be not as a gentle fire to purifie us , they shall be as a consuming fire to destroy us.

And so much for the Efficient and Final causes of Vicissitudes.

The *Uses* follow ; and they are three.

First, To take us off from our greedy desire of worldly things.

Secondly, To unpride us in a prosperous condition.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, To comfort and support us in an afflicted one.

And to this purpose there is a good saying of *Marcus Aurelius Antoninus*, the best of all the Heathen Emperours, which is this :

Meditate (says he) *with thy self how swiftly all things that subsist are carried away: for both the substances themselves are in a continual flux, and all actions in a perpetual change; yea the causes of them also, subject to a thousand alterations, neither is there any thing that can be said to be settled or at a stand.*

And from hence he draws this inference : *Art thou not then unwise , who for these things art either distracted with cares, puffed up too much with pride, or dejected with troubles ?*

And it may put many of us Christians to the blush, who seldom make so good use of it as this Heathen did, though we have a far clearer light than he had to guide us to it.

First then, the consideration of this point, *viz.* The great Vicissitude and Inconstancy of all earthly things, may serve to wean our hearts from the pleasing teat of this world, and to raise them up to that place where only fixed good is found.

Here we are all too apt with the rich fool to set down our rests, when (God knows) we have little or no cause so to do. *Nescis enim, ab nescis seruis quid vesper ferat*; Since we do not know what the midwifery of this evening, nay less, of this hour or moment may help to bring forth.

It may be a change of our Estates into Beggery, by Fire, Thieves, and the like; or else of our Liberty into Thralldome, or of our Health into Sicknes; all these successively wheeling about, until at last our great change come from Life to Death, and swallow up the rest, as the sea doth the waters that fall into it.

Alas !

Alas ! here we are subject to a thousand casualties ; but in Heaven, there, there we shall meet with no such alterations ; for that is a Kingdom that cannot be shaken as earthly Kingdoms are, either by War, Factions, all-eating time, or the like. No, but there is Peace without War, Quiet without Trouble, Freedom without Thralldome, Day without Night, Health without Sickness, and Life without Death : whereas here it is far otherwise ; for God takes away one it may be, with a Feaver, another with the Sword, as Saint *Augustine* reckons them up, Nay, *he cuts off the spirits of Princes* (says the *Psalmist* :) which *Junius* and *Tremelius* Translate by *Vindemiat*, i.e. he slips them off as a Vintager doth a Bunch of Grapes from a Tree, it is so quickly done. Even the highest enterprizes that the greatest Magnificos of the earth undertake, God doth but blow upon them a little with the breath of his displeasure, and how soon are they blasted and shrink away to nothing !

An example of this we have in *Xerxes*, who went against *Greece* with a Million of men, and as many Ships as covered the *Hellepont*; as if he would have subdued the Sea, have put a hook into her jaws, and have led her away in triumph: yet how soon was his overbold pride dashed in pieces by a handful of Greeks! One and the same day saw him both happy and miserable; using him as a tender and indulgent Mother in the morning, but in the evening as a cruel and hard Stepdame.

Oh the folly then of those that lye always sucking at these earthly flowers, which are as various in their shapes, as ever *Proteus* was, and constant in nothing save in their inconstancy!

It was the saying of *Maximilian* the Second, That every year of our life was a Climacterical year, and brought with it some great change or other.

And if every year be so changeable, what fools then are they that joyn land to land, and house to house, that they
may

may dwell alone in the earth ! yea what mean great men to pride it so much in their *Babels* here below , and out of a greedy desire of gain to run out of their own Channels , and to call their Lands by their own names ? For they that do thus , declare plainly that they think themselves to enjoy a settled estate here on earth , as if they should never see a change , or at least did not for the present look for in Heaven a better and more enduring substance, as the Author to the *Hebrews* speaks, *Heb. 12.34.*

And yet as the Prophet *Isaiah* complains, so may we, *Quis credidit auditui nostro ? who hath believed our report ?* or to whom is this truth of God revealed ? For it is strange to see how few among us do believe this , that both in our persons and estates we are so changeable.

But *this is their way*, says *David*, *this is their foolishness.*

For how soon did *Galba* start aside from the Empire, *Degustans Imperium,*
tast-

tasting it only, as *Jonathan* did the Honey with the end of his Spear ! How soon was *Haman* chang'd from the Mision of the Court , to be the hang-by of the world !

Again, how soon was *Nebuchadnezzar* chang'd, even from a Man to a Beast : and *Herod* from the highest of Men , to be Meat even for the lowest of Reptiles ?

And the prosperity of *Richard* the Third was so short (says our incomparable Historian) that it took end ere himself could well look over it.

There is not any thing then that we can call constant here on earth ; which makes the Authour to the *Hebrews*, speaking of *Abraham*, say, That he looked for a City having foundations : Upon which one gives us this Note ; That the Heavenly City can only be said to have properly a Foundation , whereas those Cities that are on earth, do shew plainly by their daily ruines, that they have no sure foundation to rest upon.

Oh

Oh let this be a means to take off the wheels of our Affections from their eager pursuit after earthly things , and set them upon things above , *where the moth cannot come at them , nor thieves break through to steal.* And let us look to that charge of the Apostle , 1 Tim. 6. 17. *Charge those that are rich in the world , that they trust not in uncertain Riches ; or rather in Riches which are Uncertainty it self in the abstract ; (for so the Greek runs it ; ἐν τῇ ἀσέβει . i.e. in the uncertainty of Riches.)* And that we may in no wise doubt of this their uncertainty, the Wise man prefixes a note of certainty before this uncertainty, *Certainly (says he) Riches make themselves wings , and fly away as an Eagle towards Heaven :* as if he should have said, *Certainly Riches and all worldly things are as uncertain as a Bird that is upon the wing : and therefore we must not set our hearts upon them ; but our daily prayer and practice must be , So to pass through things temporal, that so we*
do

do not loose those things that are eternal : or else with David. let us beseech God to incline our hearts unto his Testimonies, and not to Covetousness. Now this inclining our hearts unto Gods Testimonies, is nothing else but that holy and penitential change of Heart and Life, or else that turning unto God with all our hearts , which God calls for at our hands , and expects from us in all his changes, whether personal or else National ; which if he find in us then let what changes soever fall, they shall all work together for our good : but if not, we must then look to be as a rowling stone, and to have our daily turns and changes in this life from one degree of misery to another, until at last we turn into Hell, as *David* speaks, *with all those that forget God.*

Secondly, The consideration of this point may be a good antidote against Pride in a prosperous Condition , since God hath so ordered the Web of our
Lives,

Lives, as that Adversity as well as Prosperity is interwoven in it : For there is nothing that swells us up so much, as prospering here in worldly things ; and nothing again that is more effectual to assuage this swelling in us , than to consider the brevity and mutability it is subject to.

Now it swells us up with a high opinion either of our own Goodness above others, or else of our own Greatness.

I. Our prospering in worldly things swells us up with a high opinion of our own Goodness above others ; as

1. It makes us think our selves the only good men in Gods eye , because we are prosperous in the worlds ; whereas indeed, this can be no certain rule to measure out any such thing by, since the world and the prosperity of it is so variable and uncertain.

And therefore , when at any time God shall water us more than others with the lower springs of his earthly Blessings,

Blessings, we are not therefore to have an overweening conceit of our selves, and our own causes, above others, (as if God upon this ground had tyed his special love either to us or them:) For you know that when God would chuse a King for *Israel*, he chose him not by outward and perishing excellencies, for then he would have chosen in the room of *Saul*, *Eliab*, *Aminadab*, or *Shammah*, who were the three elder brothers of *David*, and men of goodly personages to look upon; yet God chose none of these, (says the Text) but *David* the youngest of them, though not so outwardly, yet inwardly glorious, being a man after his own heart.

It is the chief Argument the *Turks* use at this day, to prove themselves the only *Musselmen*, or true believers; We thrive (say they) and prosper in the world: for how hath our *Mahometanism* over-run all *Asia*, *Africk*, and the greater part of *Europe* too! And do
not

not they among us then reason more like *Turks* than *Christians*, who speak after this manner, Come, see how we bear down all before us, and ride upon the backs of the poor in triumph! Thus and thus do we prosper in the world, and do even what we list; and is not this an evident sign we are Gods Children, and that the right end of the staff is ours? Sure, if we were other than Gods peculiar people, he would not bless us so much as he doth.

But to these I answer, That these and such like are only *Bona Scabelli*, (as Divines distinguish well out of that place of *Isaiah*) and not *Bona Throni*, the Goods of Gods Footstool, (but earthen ware) and not the good things of his Throne, which are Grace and Glory; & therefore can set upon us only an earthly mark for men here to take notice of us, but not any heavenly cognizance for God to look upon us, as upon his dear and elect Children. For else it would easily follow, That the *Alchoran* were bet-

better than the *Bible*, and the *Turks* fancie better than our Faith of *Christianity*.

And were there no other signal place of Scripture for this, than that of the Prophet *David* in his 73. *Psalms*, (as indeed there are very many) this alone (methinks) were enough to impress this as a truth upon us, where he speaks of some that are not in trouble like other men, but pride compasseth them about as a chain, violence covers them as a garment, their eyes stand out with fatness, and they have more than their heart can wish; yet these (says he) *Ps. 12.* are the ungodly who prosper in the world. And the Prophet *Jeremy* makes bold to question with God about it, in these words, *Jer. 12. 1, 2. Wherefore, says he, doth the wicked prosper? and why are all they in wealth that rebelliously transgress? and he rests satisfied with this, verse 3. That God did by that prosperity of theirs fatten them as sheep to the slaughter, and prepare them for the*

the

the day of destruction. And this is that prosperity of fools that the Wise man speaks of, which will destroy them, *Prov. 1. 32.*

It is not then our thriving in Temporals, but in Spirituals, that speaks us and our Faith to be accepted of God.

For the truth of Grace or Religion, and the goodness of a mans Cause, is not measured by the Souldiers Sword, but by the Word of God, which is the Sword of the Spirit.

God Saints no man for his goodly Personage, for his Riches, for his politick head-piece of contriving, and bringing about his own worldly and sinister ends, or for his Arms and Conquests; for then *Saul* and *Cræsus*, *Ahitophel* and *Alexander* the Great had been high in Gods book: but he values Men only by their Spirituals, as their graces of Faith, Humility, Patience, Meekness, Obedience, and the like: and where he finds these, (how unfurnished soever they are otherwise) yet *these are mine*,

saith the Lord ; and in that day when I shall make up my Jewels , I will spare them , even as a Father doth his Son ; and then shall ye discern between the righteous and the wicked , betwixt him that feareth God , and him that feareth him not.

Indeed God may sometimes permit evil to prosper in the world, but never approve of it: for so acknowledges the Jewish Church, *Lament. 3. 35.* *To turn aside the right of a man before the face of the most High, or to subvert a man in his cause , the Lord approves it not.* And therefore to argue from Gods permission to his approbation, is a gross *Non sequitur*, nay more, a laying our iniquity on Gods back, as if he would take it well at our hands to be made a Pack-horse at every turn to bear all our execrable burdens, and were (as *David* speaks) such a one as our selves, to favour evil courses, or else to own them as his off-spring.

Which

Which made *Dionysius* the elder conclude Sacrilege to be no sin, when he had rob'd the Temple at *Locri*, because the Gods seem'd (as it were) to smile upon the action, in giving them fair Winds and Weather, both in their voyage thither and return back again.

But, as it was a great Blasphemy (says one) for the Devil to personate God, when he would be *similis Altissimo*; so is it greater to make God personate the Devil. And yet this he doth, that makes God patronize his evil, because he prospers in it; for this brings in God saying, That he will be like the Prince of Darkness, and makes the Holy Ghost to leave his Dove-like shape, and come only to us in the form of a greedy Raven or Vultur.

2. As our prospering in worldly things swells us up too high with an opinion of our own Goodness, and makes us think better of our selves than is meet; so also doth it on the other

side lift us up too far with thoughts of evil towards our brethren, and make us think worse of them, and the ways of God they walk in, than we should, by charging them as utterly deserted of God, because we see not now the same hedge of Gods favour about them as heretofore we did, but the stakes that then prop'd them up, are now thrown away as useles and unserviceable. Whereas Afflictions on this hand are every way as temporary and transient, as Prosperity was on the other; and being so, must needs be as a broken reed, or a reed of *Egypt*, wherewith we cannot exactly measure Gods Temple, nor the Spiritual estate of his Children.

It was a hard stumbling-block to the Prophet *David* for a time, when he says that his *feet were almost gone, and his footsteps had well-nigh slipt*, upon his sight of the wickeds prosperity; until he went into the Sanctuary of Gods Word, where he learnt to settle his wavering and distrustful thoughts: for
there

there he saw, that notwithstanding his outward afflictions, that God held him up under that sore temptation with his right hand, and would (in opposition to transitory goods, which are the proper blessings of the wicked, because they have no others but these to trust unto) guide him with that which should infinitely exceed them, to wit, his Counsel here, and his Glory hereafter.

And it was the great question so much agitated betwixt *Job* and his Friends, Whether those doleful changes that beset him were the cognizance of his insincerity to God, and of Gods disavour to him upon it, yea or no. His Friends taking advantage upon his present weakness and distemper, maintain it strongly against him in the affirmative, that they were: until at length God himself steps in to the rescue of the weaker side, and makes the conclusion (as all Logical conclusions do) to follow the weaker part, determining it for *Job* against his Opponents in the

Negative, and telling them, that they spake not of *Job*, nor of his proceedings towards him that which was right, *Job* last, verse 7.

Seneca a *Stoick* Philosopher, hath a set discourse to this purpose, *Cur bonis viris mala eveniant*, why the evils of this life most commonly fall out to good men: and he concludes it thus, That temporal evils are no sign of Gods hatred to them. For, dost thou think (says he) that the *Lacedemonians* hated their Children, when as they experimented their disposition to virtue by stripes in publick? No. So, do we think Gods Children in disfavour with him, because he lays here fore blows upon their Bodies and Estates by evil men, as his rods and scourges in it? No; for we see and feel many times (says an experimental patient of our own well) the deep lines and strokes of Gods hand upon us, when as we cannot by our skill in *Palmestry* decipher his meaning in it, no more than the

Mal-

Malteses could by the viper upon Saint *Pauls* hand judge of his condition to God-ward.

For God sometimes (that we may not thus judge) inverts humane order, and runs out his dealings towards us in the ordinary chanel of his universal Providence, Justice and Equity, by which he waters here all alike.

Indeed they may seem (I grant) to go counter to our apprehended rules of common right: yet are they always agreeing both with Gods secret and revealed will, though (like the Sun in its sphere) not perceptible to us, because too mysterious and dazzling: however, many pretend to interpret them by a blaze of fire lighted at the natural pride of their own private spirits, and that dimme twilight of knowledge which is in them; whenas they are altogether in the dark to the true light of Gods word and works herein.

And here take in the opinion also of *Epicſtetus* another *Stoick* and *Heathen*
G 4 man,

man, which speaks most Christianly to this point, namely, That all are not hated of God, who do wraastle here with variety of Miseries : but that there are with God good causes of it, though so secret that few can reach them.

And therefore, albeit we cannot see how these actings of God may stand with his tender love to his children, and so may conceive an ill opinion of them ; yet when we shall think seriously, that Gods thoughts and ways are not as ours, it will teach us to give them a more favourable interpretation.

For how dare humane rashness (says Saint *Bernard*) reprehend that which it cannot comprehend ; in giving demonstrative reason why worldly prosperity should be Virtues stepdame, and not her natural mother !

But (to close up this Discourse) you see here by what hath been said, that it is a great errour (howbeit now grown more than popular) to judge of persons

sons and causes by the events , whenas *all outward things* (says Solomon) *fall alike to all, neither can any judge of love or hatred by what is before him* : Prosperity and Adversity being but separable accidents to them , and no essential properties of them , because they are grounded upon worldly things, that have so loose and mouldring a foundation, as that a man cannot tell concerning them what a day may bring forth. Again,

2. As worldly prosperity swells us up with a high opinion of our own Goodness above others, so likewise of our own Greatness. And this makes us slight those that are under us, and deal hardly with them , (as to temporal things) which we would not do, if we once consider'd the mutability of it.

And therefore if at any time God shall give up unto us those we conceit our enemies , to be dealt with (if we will) by all harshness and extremity ; yet are not we then to trample upon them

them in the pride of our hearts, nor to adde more load to that which God hath already laid upon them ; but rather to take off from it what we can , and to use them with all gentleness and compassion, with all mildness and moderation, as considering our selves , that we are not here to live always as Gods upon earth , the same yesterday, to day and for ever : but what is the bitter cup of their portion to day , may be ours to morrow.

It speaks out but a coarse and ignoble spirit, to crow and insult over those that are down. The very Heathen thought it so, who had only the glimmering of Nature to guide them ; much more ought we Christians , whom the Apostle exhorts , that our *moderation may be known to all men*. That as the Apostle will have his *Corinthians* to use the world with a *tanquam* , as if they used it not ; so must they among us, that have wealth, power and authority, so use them, as if they used them not :
that

that so when they shall fail us, (as they will ere long, since the wind blows not always out of one and the same favourable quarter) we may then be able to say with comfort, That we never mis-employed those talents of Gods outward favour to us unto the pressure and destruction of our Brethren, but only to their relief and preservation.

The Prophet *David* in his *Tenth Psalm*, speaks of some, who *through the pride of their countenance do not seek after God, neither is God in all their thoughts.* But *their ways are always grievous; they puff at their enemies, and say in their hearts, they shall never be moved, nor be in adversity.*

And such were the *Babylonians*, who (besides their barbarous cruelty to the *Israelites* under captivity) added this above all, that they scoffed and jeered at them in their miseries, with *Sing us now one of the Songs of Sion.* So also were the *Edomites*, *v. 7.* who cryed over *Jerusalem* in the day of her visitation,

tation, *Rase it, rase it even to the foundations.*

And were we sure that the sun of our earthly Happiness would always stand still in this our *Gibeon*, it may be we might take liberty to do the like, and think we did well in it too. But when as we come to consider seriously, that there is no Solstice here upon earth, but so soon as the Sun is come to his furthest Summer-point in our Horizon, it is then presently vertical, and turning again to make winter-weather with us, how will this assuage that swelling of pride that is within us, and make us humble?

To this purpose there is a memorable History of *Caganus* King of the *Huns*, unto whom *Theodorus Medicus* being sent in an Embassy from *Mauritius* the Emperour, to divert those swarms of people wherewith *Caganus* at that time threatned to storm the Empire, he apply'd himself to him in these words; *Audi Cagane, utilem narrationem Seso-*
stris,

stris, &c. Hear, says he to *Caganus*, a profitable Narrative of *Sesoftris* King of *Ægypt*, who being lifted up too high with his great successes against his enemies, caused four Kings taken prisoners to draw his Triumphal Chariot, wherein one of them looked back with smiles to the wheel of the Chariot, and being demanded his reason for it, answered, *That he smiled to see the spcak of the wheel now at the top, to be presently at the bottom; and again, that which is now at the bottom, to be by and by at the top.* The very hearing whereof did so mollifie, and keep down the haughty Princes spirit, that it drew him a little to forbear his acts of hostility against the Emperour.

And from this Topick also of volubility, did *Cræsus* draw an argument to dissuade *Cyrus* from his intended inrode into *Scythia*: for if thou didst lead (says he) an immortal Army, then is there no need for thee to ask my advice in it; but if thou dost acknowledge
thy

thy self a man , and a leader of mortals , then think that there is a wheel of humane affairs that turns about continually , and suffers nothing here below to stand long upon the same bottom.

But this advice of *Cræsus* took no place with *Cyrus* ; If it had, he would have kept himself (as the *Tortoise* doth) *intra testudinem* , within his own shell, within his own dominions, and not have causelessly usurped upon the rightful possessions of others to his own destruction : for see the issue and event of it!

Even that God who is infinite in his Wisdom, and terrible in his Power and Justice, he that resists the proud , and looks upon them afar off ; He (I say) made the pride of *Cyrus* serve as a snare to take himself in, and to work his ruine : for he was no sooner entred *Scythia* , but he found by sad experience how unconstant the World was, not looking now upon him with that
smiling

smiling aspect it did before ; but the wind was now in another quarter , and (as the Wise man says of Riches, that *they make themselves wings and fly away*) so did his former prosperity betake herself now to her wings, and flew away, his whole Army being quite defeated, and himself slain by *Tomyris* Queen of *Scythia*.

A good example to make the secure wretch look about him , and to pull down the high looks of the proud.

And therefore when ever any flushing of pride begins to rise within thee, and to bud forth, as it is in *Ezekiel*, into violence , and oppression of others, then think thou hearest some Monitor calling unto thee, as King *Philips* Page did to him , *Memento te esse mortalem*, remember that thou art Mortal : so, remember that thou art changeable as well as others, and this will be an excellent means to keep it in.

For tell me, would *Cyrus*, think you, have invaded *Scythia* , had he thought
so

so sad a fate would have attended him in it ?

Or would *Pharaoh* have oppress'd the *Israelites* so much, had he thought that God would have tumbled him up and down so much as he did , from one plague to another, and at last made the sea his champion to revenge their injuries upon him ?

Or would *Joseph's* brethren have persecuted him as they did , if they had thought he should afterwards have been lord over them ?

Or the *Gileadites* have expelled *Jephtha* , had they known he would have been such a shelter against a storm, and of such use unto them against the *Ammonites* ?

Or (to say no more) would *Darius* have call'd *Alexander Philip's* boy in derision of him , had he known that he should have been conquered by him ?

No, little do proud men think that the water which is now in the float, will presently be in the ebbe ; and that
the

the spoak of the wheel which is now at the top, may quickly be at the bottom : and then he that is the greatest now among us , may come (how soon he knows not) to stand in need of the meanest creature whom he now despises.

It is wisdom then for every Christian, whenas he is at the top of the wheel, and may lord it over those that are beneath , yet not to overlook them with a scornful eye , but to let down his spirit, and (as the Apostle exhorts us) to condescend to men of low degree : For one scale is not always in depression. No, This were *dura infœlicitas* , a very hard and high measure of infelicity. Neither is the other always in elevation : This were *fœlicitas miseranda* , a happiness to be pitied. But the alternate wave of the beam keeps them both in awe , and especially the proud person, who seems unto me as a bird tied to a string, which if it fly too high, the hand draws in the string and pulls it
H down

down again. And so if we shall let out our spirits too high with pride, God hath then a line of vicissitude in his hand to pull us in at his pleasure.

The Prophet *David* said in his prosperity, that he should never be moved; his mountain was made so strong; yet God did but hide his face from him a little, and he was troubled.

Naturally then we are too apt to know no measure in a high fortune; but (as a person of Honour and Piety in this Nation said) although in the heat of summer we easily believe there will come after it a cold season of frost and snow, yet are we so stupid as in Prosperity not to consider of Adversity, though the one be as successive as the other. And this makes us to exalt ourselves so much above all that is called God. That as it is observable touching the Book of *Esther* (which is nothing else but a Declaration of acts done in reference to the Greatness, Power and Glory of *Ahasuerus* the *Persian* Monarch,

narch, as to the principal instrument of them) that in that whole Book the Name of God is not so much as mentioned at all: So doth it also commonly fall out, that while we are here in the ruff of our worldly Glory and Prosperity, we seldom or never speak of God, and as seldom think of him, but set our selves up in his room, as *Nebuchadnezzar* did, who spake too big, and too much of himself, saying, *Is not this great Babel that I have built for the house of my Kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?* As the fly said in the Apologue when it was got up to the top of the wheel, See what a dust I make! So, see what a dust makes this poor Worm, what a *Mying* there is with him in the height of his pride! nothing but *my Kingdom, my Power, and my Majesty*: but as for God, *Ne gry quidem*, There is not a word of him; He is not in all his thoughts.

And therefore how soon the house of his Kingdom fell upon his head, yea how short-liv'd the might of his power was, and the honour of his Majesty, you may see by the next verse, where it is said, That while the word was in the Kings mouth, there fell a voice from Heaven, saying, O Nebuchadnezzar, *to thee be it spoken, Thy Kingdom is departed from thee.*

The world then may well be compared to the Sea of glass which Saint John saw in his vision, *Revelat. 4. 6.* and there be also, that from the resemblance of the one to the other, interpret it thus. For

First, It resembles the Sea either for its ebbing and flowing; or else for the suddain change of it: for how soon is the face of the Sea alter'd? in one and the same hour (it may be) thou mayst see her smiling upon thy vessel, and frowning too; playing with it, and swallowing it up. *Noli igitur* (says the Moralist) *tranquillitati ejus credere, i. e.*

Do

Do not therefore trust too much to her smooth and calm looks; *in hoc enim momento mare evertitur*, for in one moment doth she appear wrinkled vwith billowvs, and turns about from a calm unto a storm.

Secondly, It resembles also glafs, and that either for its brittleness, because nothing is sooner broken: or else for its slipperiness, because he that walks upon glafs can have no sure footing; and therefore for any man to presume upon the steadiness of it, must needs be very dangerous.

That as the ancient *Romans* used to distinguish their days into *Dies albi*, and *Dies atri*, white and black days: so doth God, and there is no man but hath the later of these as well as the former, his black as well as his white days.

Oh the madness then of wicked men, vvho are alvvays plotting against the righteous, and gnashing upon them vvith their teeth! *At ridebit Deus*, says *David*, *But God shall laugh at them* for it:

and he gives this reason, *v. 13. because he sees that their day is coming, i. e. he sees clearly that their black and dismal day is coming upon them, though themselves will not see it through the pride and security of their spirits; yea, and he knows also punctually when it will be, though we know it not: for though to day may be fair and shining, yet may to morrow be dark and tempestuous with them; since we know not what a day may bring forth.*

Last of all, (because I am loath that my Sun should set in a cloud) The consideration of this point may serve as a good antidote against despair in an afflicted condition; or as a cordial to stay up our spirits in the saddest and most distressed times, and to teach us patience and contentedness in them: that so as in prosperity we should not say, we shall never be moved, so neither in adversity, that we shall never be delivered; when we shall consider, that what weight of affliction soever we lye under,

under, is not of a continuant, but of a changeable nature. And to this end we have the sure staff of Gods promise unto his children to lean upon, as in the tenth Chapter to the *Hebrews*, where he says thus, *Yet a little while*, or rather as it runs in the *Greck*, yet how very very little while, (with a double diminutive) *and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.* And in the precedent verse he tells them, they have need of patience, that they may receive this promise. And in the twelfth Chapter to the *Hebrews*, the Apostle takes up an exhortation to it from the Wise man, and makes a consolatory use of it to his *Hebrews*, withal taking them to task for their forgetfulness of it; *And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaks unto you, as unto children: My Son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint, or be not broken in mind (as others translate it) when thou art rebuked of him.* For we had (says he) *the fathers of the flesh, who verily*
H 4 *chastened*

chastened us a few days after their own pleasure, and we were patient under their rod, and gave them reverence, but God a few days only, for our profit. Shall we not then be much rather in subjection to him who is the father of spirits, and live?

Thus when *Boetius*, that Christian Consul and Martyr at *Rome*, was wrongfully deprived by *Theodoricus* of his Honours, Estate and Liberty, Philosophy brings in what we call Gods Providence, comforting him in these words:

I turn about my wheel continually, and delight to tumble things upside down; why then doth thy heart shrink within thee, when as this changeableness of mine is cause enough for thee to hope for better things?

And so also, when many of our Brethren were heretofore in Exile for their Religion in *Queen Maries* days, what (I pray) did that *Jewel* of our Church comfort them with, but onely this, *Hæc non durabunt, ætatem*; These will not endure

endure an Age? as indeed you know they did not, her Reign being not full out six years time.

And with the same consideration also should we chear up our selves now under that black cloud that hangs over the Church, that it will not endure an Age, but be as *Ephraim's* righteousness was, even as the morning cloud, or as the early dew that passes away.

To this end, it will not be amiss to note, how the afflictions of Gods people in the Scripture, are run out not by any long tract of time, as by an Age, Year, Month, Week, or the like; but by the shortest measures that can be, as by a Day: now a Day (you know) holds not long, but is quickly gone, even as a flying Bird, or a Poast that runneth by. And thus good *Hezekiah* calls the time of *Sennacheribs* rage against *Judah*, a Day of trouble, *Isa.* 37. v. 3.

Or if this be not enough, you have them then contracted within a lesser room, and measur'd onely by a Night, which

which is no more but the dark side of a natural Day, and therefore is a great deal shorter. And this made the Prophet *David* say, *Psal. 30. v. 5.* That *heaviness may endure for a Night, but joy cometh in the Morning.* The time then that heaviness shall endure to the Godly can be but a Night at the longest, but whether it shall be so long or no, the Prophet is very uncertain and unsatisfied, for which cause he expresses it here with a *Maybe, Heaviness may endure for a Night.*

But if this expression be not full enough to set forth the brevity of them, our *Saviour* doth it then by an Hour, which is shorter yet, and but the four and twentieth part of a natural Day; for so he calls the time of his persecution by the High Priests and Elders of the people, *Their hour, and the power of Darkness, Luke 22. 53.*

Or, if this be yet too long a space to set forth the brevity of their afflictions, and to give a through Comfort to Gods people,

people, their little continuance is then exprest by a Moment, which I am sure is short enough; so you have it *Isa. 54. v. 7. For a small moment (says God to his Church) have I forsaken thee, but with great mercy will I gather thee: And again, v. 8. In a little wrath I hid my Face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee.*

Or last of all, if any time can be shorter than this, it must then be the present time; yet such are the sufferings of Gods children, in *St. Pauls* account, but *the sufferings of the present time*, *Rom. 8. 18.* and a shorter time than this there cannot be. For as the *French* our Neighbours are said to be for their inconsiderateness, *Animalia sine præterito & futuro*, Creatures that have respect neither to time past nor time to come: so may we say of the present time, That it is as short a measure as can possibly be imagined, having in it nothing either of time past or

or future, the first of the two being dead already, and the later of them being not yet born unto us. And yet we see here for all this, that *St. Paul*, when he had cast up the account of all which he suffered in the cause of Christ, how he reckons and concludes it to be only the suffering of the present time, and not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed.

A

A Prayer.

A Lmighty God, who rulest the Sea of this World by thy power, and whose paths are in the roughest Waters; We the unworthiest of all thy Servants commit our frail Barks, with all that we have, to the Steerage of thee our great Pilot, and faithful Preserver: beseeching thee so to order by thy good hand of Providence all outward contingencies to us, that we may be able to bear up through them with a steady and even Course, against the several Storms we shall meet with in this passage to our blessed Harbour of Eternity. And however earthly things may like Watery Billows be every day rowling up and down in their vicissitudes about us; yet suffer, oh suffer not the Heavenly truth of our Reformed Religion to float about any longer so uncertainly among us,

nor our selves to be as Children toſs'd to
 and fro with every Wind of Doctrine.
 But let us be constant and unwavering in
 the profeſſion of that Holy Faith we have
 received; and (Thou that art the God of
 Truth) be graciously pleaſed to ſtay us up
 firmly in it by the ſacred Scriptures,
 which are thy Word of Truth, and the
 ſole Anchor of our Faith to reſt upon.
 Lord, pull in the Sails of our deſires to-
 wards fleeting and tranſitory ſubſtances :
 for who will caſt his eyes upon that which
 hath wings to flee away as an Eagle to-
 wards Heaven ! Ballaſt our Spirits with
 Humility in a prosperous condition; and
 when we have the higheſt and moſt plea-
 ſing Gale of the worlds favour for us,
 give us to ſtrike our ſpreading Sails of
 Pride, and to make our Lenity and Mode-
 ration to be known to all men, for the
 Lord is nigh at hand. But if thou in
 thy juſt judgment againſt us for our mani-
 fold and hainous ſins, ſhalt cauſe ſome
 croſs wind or other to blow upon us, and
 give us over to Shipvvrack in our tempo-
 rals ;

rals ; Supply then, we entreat thee, their want with thy spirituals of Patience, Faith, and other suffering graces ; That although the tempest be never so boisterous without , yet we may enjoy within a Christian calmness of Spirit, in a happy quietude and contentedness of mind with all thy dealings towards us , and not set down our rest upon the Creature , which is so restless with us, but amidst the sundry and various changes of the world, may there fix our Hearts, where onely true and unchangeable joys are to be found, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

F I N I S.





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By Richard H. Weston
Wing P. H. 68 (Copies)
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