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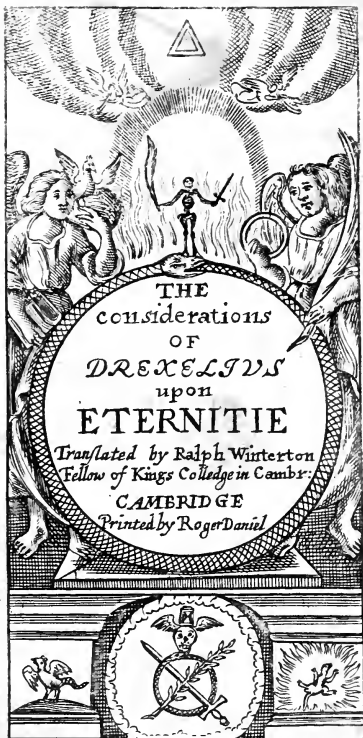




William







THE  
considerations  
OF  
DREXELIUS  
upon  
ETERNITIE

*Translated by Ralph Winterton  
Fellow of Kings Colledge in Cambr:*

CAMBRIDGE

*Printed by Roger Daniel*

*Printed and sold by Ric. Chiswell at the Royle  
& Crowne in S<sup>t</sup> Pauls Church yard. 1689.*

THE  
Considerations  
OF  
*DREXELIUS*  
UPON  
ETERNITY.

---

Translated by *Ralph Winter-*  
*ton*, Fellow of *King's Col-*  
*ledge in Cambridge*, 1632.

---

L O N D O N,

Printed for *Richard Chiswell*, and are to  
be Sold by *Richard Parker*, at the Sign  
of the *Unicorn*, under the *Piazza* of the  
*Royal Exchange*, in *Cornhill*, 1689.





To the Right Worshipful  
and truly Religious *Esquire*,  
Mr. E. BENLOWES  
of *Brent-Hall* in *Essex*,

R. W.

Wisheth Internal, External, and  
Eternal Happiness.

**I** *was well answered by him, who being asked, What this life was, said thus, It is nothing else but the Meditation of Death. If a Man should ask me, What time is, I think I might fitly answer thus, It is nothing else but the Meditation of Eternity. Our Life is but a Postling unto Death, and our Time a short days sail unto Eternity. In this Time of life we are as Pilgrims and Strangers, travelling towards our Coelestial Country. We are as Sailors, bound for the Haven of Eternity. But we must run through many troubles before we can come to our journeys end: We must sail through salt and bitter waters, and pass through the Gulf of Death, before we can come to Land. There is a Land which is called, The Land of the Living; and there is a Land which is called, The Land*

## The Epistle

of Horror and Despair: *There is a twofold Eternity; either of the Blessed, or of the Cursed: There is a twofold Life after Death; either in Eternal joys, or Eternal punishments. It is good therefore in this short life, to think upon that Life which never shall have end: It is good whilst we are on the way to think upon our Journeys end: It is good in Time, whilst we are sailing, to have an eye still upon our Compass, and think upon Eternity. To think upon Eternity, is a Sovereign Preservative, to keep us from falling into Sin: To think upon Eternal joys, sweetens the salt and bitter waters of Sorrows and Afflictions: To think upon Eternal Punishments, makes us not to set our hearts upon Temporal Delights and Pleasures. Heaven is here on Earth in part enjoyed, whilst we raise up our thoughts to meditate upon it: And Hell may for ever be escaped, if by serious and frequent thoughts thereof, here in this life, we descend into it. Such thoughts as these moved Drexelius to write these CONSIDERATIONS, and me also to translate them. He wrote upon a general subject; and every Man may challenge a part in it. What he wrote, he intended for a publick benefit; and so did I in the Translation of it. I hope He and His shall find never the worse entertainment, because He is a Stranger, and*

COME



## Dedictory.

come from beyond Seas. It is the honour of our Nation to be kind and courteous unto Strangers. He was commended unto me by a Traveller, a most religious and learned Gentleman. ( Be not angry with me, Mr. Benlowes, if I say, He was as like you as can be in every respect: for indeed he was ) bred and brought up in the Romish Religion, and sent beyond Seas to be confirmed in it, but yet brought home again by divine providence and restored to his Mother the Church of England, for the Conversion, I hope, of many, singled out of all his kindred to be a most zealous Protestant; born to good Fortunes, and yet not given to Pleasures, wedded to his Books and Devotions, spending what some call idle time in the best company for the edifying himself or others; counting nothing good which he possesseth, but only that which he doth good withal; taking more care to lay out his money for the good of others, than others in laying up money for themselves. To conclude, A Gentleman of whom I may most truly say, That his Conversation is in heaven, his Discourse on things above, and his thoughts upon Eternity. Upon such a mans commendation as this, I could not but take a liking to the party commended, and the more I grew acquainted with him, I liked him. It is the counsel of Horace.

## The Epistle.

Tu quem commendes etiam atque etiam  
aspice: ne mox  
Incutiant aliena tibi commissa pudorem.

*Believe me, Mr. Benlowes, I have had such experience of this party, whom here I commend unto you, that I dare confidently say, If you entertain him into your service, you shall never repent you of it. Philip of Macedon appointed one every morning to salute him with a Memento of Mortality: Drexelius his office shall be, if you please, To be your Remembrancer, and every Morning, Noon, and Evening, to round you in the ear with a Memento of Eternity. But I know, that is so often in your thoughts, that you need not any to put you in Remembrance of it. Neither yet do I intend here, though I have a fair occasion, to run over the Catalogue of your Christian Vertues, specially that part of Christian twins, your Piety and Temperance, with your Charity and Bounty. For the first, they that daily converse with you, cannot but see how you converse with them. The other pair go along with you wheresoever you go, and though you desire to hide them, cannot be concealed; in special, many poor Scholars, godly and devout Ministers in the University and abroad, of several Colledges, have had a feeling themselves of them, and cannot but make them*  
conspi-

## Dedictory.

conspicuous, very palpable to others. These shall praise you in your absence: for my part, I do not love to praise a Man to his face. But if the living hold their peace, the dead shall rise up and praise you, I mean, those many and excellent Books, together with other rare monuments purchased at a great price, which without any solicitation at all, out of meer affection you bore to Saint John's Colledge in Cambridge; where you were sometimes a Student, you have bestowed on their Library: Their Library, but the most magnificent work, and Eternal Monument of the Meccenas of our age, John Lord Bishop of Lincoln, and true lover of Learning and Patron of Scholars. And now it appears, Mr. Bentowes, that you have less need of Drexelius his service than before. But howsoever, I pray you, entertain him: Let him have but the honour to wear your Cognizance, and both He and I, will put it upon the file of Thankful Remembrance, and register it for a singular act of your Beneficence. Pardon my boldness in this: and command me in what liberal service you please,

Ralph Winton.

From Kings Coll.

June 1. 1632.

The

The Epistle to the  
R E A D E R.

**I**F any Man, more curious in censuring what is done for a common good, rather than studious himself to promote it, should question me for meddling in another Mans profession, I might answer him in his own kind by way of question, as *Menedemus* in *Terence* answered *Chremes* finding fault with him, *Tantumne abs re tua est otii tibi, Aliena ut cures, eaque nihil que ad te attinent?* Hast thou so much leisure as to meddle with that which nothing concerns thee?

But to satisfy thee ( Courteous Reader ) who intendest, I know, with the *Bee* to gather *Honey* out of this garden of *Eternity*, and not *woyson* with the *Spider* ; I hold it fit to acquaint thee with the true occasion that moved me to translate this book. No *Divine* I am indeed, neither yet can I be if I would never so fain : I would I were but worthy the name of a *Physician* ! But howsoever being destinated by the statutes of my private *Colledge* to the study of *Physick*, in the first place I thought good to spend some time in *Arithmetick*, as being a necessary instrument and help in my *Profession* :

## To the Reader.

tion: In which I made some progress, first from Numeration, Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication, Division, Reduction, to the Golden Rule, or the Rule of Three, The Rule of Falshood, The Rule of Proportion, and the Rules of Society, and the like. But the knowledge of this cost me dear, that I was forced to leave the study of it: For many nights together I was constrained against my will to practise Numeration oftner than I would, telling the clock, I could take but little rest. Whereupon I resolved with my self to leave the Arithmetick School, and so I went unto the Physick and Musick Schools, imploring at one and the same time Hippocrates and the like. For at that time I turned the first book of Hippocrates his Aphorisms into verses, hoping to procure rest by Physick and the Musick of Poetical Numbers; which I found some rest indeed; (And therefore since, I have well nigh finished at these hours the other six books; which, if God permit, may ere long see light.) But though I found some rest, yet I did not sleep so soundly as at other times. So I went to the Temple of Hippocrates and the Musick, and betook my self unto the Sanctuary, wherein of David divine Arithmetick, which consisteth in the due numbring of the days of his short life, by comparing them with  
the

## To the Reader.

the years of *Eternity*: And so I fell upon translating this book of *Eternity*. And this I found by daily experience to be the best *Hypnoticon*, that ever I used; for it brought me to rest better than if I had taken *Diacodion*. Thus I found the old saying true, *where Philosophy ends, there Physick begins; and where Physick ends, there Divinity begins*; which I interpret thus (as I found it true by experience: ) *When Philosophy by accident had done me harm, and Physick could do me little good, I found perfect help in Divinity*. And having found so much good by this book my self, I could not be so envious as not impart it unto others for a *Sovereign Medicine*, to procure quiet sleep. Neither is it good for that only (but far unlike to other medicines, which are only good for some one disease, and falling into unskilful hands oftentimes do more harm than good ) it is a *Medicine* fitting all *Ages, Complexions, Conditions, Places, Parts, Diseases, Spiritual, and Corporal* whosoever: It is a *Medicine Preservative, Curative, Restorative*: It is an *Antidote* against the *poysen* of sin: It is *Diastammum* to drive out the fiery darts of *Satan*: It is *Catholicon* to purge out all ill humours. It is better than *Exhilarans Galeni*, to chear the Heart oppressed with *Melancholy*: It is an *Acopon* for all weariness,  
an

## To the Reader.

an *Anodynon* for all pains, a *Panchreston* profitable for all things, or *All-good*. It is *Panacea*, *Hearts-ease*, *All heal*. It is a rich *Treasury* for *Englishmen*. A *store-house* for the diseased, and, *The ready way* to long life, even to blessed *Eternity*. Let no Man now challenge me for usurping another Mans Office, or trespassing upon *Divines*. I cannot see but *Divines* and *Physicians* may well agree together: Both are busied about curing of *Diseases* either *Spiritual* or *Corporal*: And here is a *Medicine* for both. Take it and use it, *Christian Reader*; and thou shalt find by thine own experience that it hath all the *Virtues* above mentioned.

So I commend thee to the *Physician* both of *Body and Soul*, and heartily desire thy *Temporal* and *Eternal* Health and Welfare.

Ralph Winterton.

From Kings Coll.

June 1. 1632.

A Upon

## Upon this Book of Eternity.

**T**O reach *Eternity* our thoughts first  
climbe  
On the successive steps and stairs of *Time*.  
And, what is *Time*? It is by *Poets* call'd,  
And by most *Painters* represented bald:  
But *Poets* and the *Painters* are too bold,  
For *Time* was never yet a *Minute* old:  
Nor yet, God *Saturn*-like, doth it devour  
The issue which it breeds: For every hour  
Were then a Murderer. But while we strain,  
And all created Natures for to gain  
*Time* to their Inch of being; in the strife  
They quite burn out the *Taper* of their life.  
But what's *Eternity*? Good Reader, look,  
Not on my *Verses*, but upon this *Book*:  
Which I do wish (and yet no harm) may be  
To all e'relasting, Stationer, but to thee.

Richard Williams.

Upon



## Upon this Book of Eternity.

**L**ook on the *Glass* of Mans *Mortality*;  
Behold the *Mirror* of *Eternity*.  
This *Book* is both; Herein behold thy face;  
It waxeth old; thy *Glass* doth run apace.  
It is appointed all Men once to die;  
And after *Death* succeeds *Eternity*.  
This *Life's* no *Life*, which *Time* doth comprehend,  
But that's true *Life* indeed, which knows  
no end:  
This *Book* will reach thee so to *live* and *die*,  
That thou may'st live unto *Eternity*.

Thomas Gouge.

---

## Upon this Book of Eternity.

**T**his *Book's* a *Nautick Chard*; which  
kept in *Eye*,  
Doth point at th' *Haven* of blest *Eternity*.  
[ O blessed *Heaven!* ] At which if thou  
wouldst *Land*.  
Let not this *Chard* depart out of thine  
hand.

S. I.  
THE



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C O N T E N T S.

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Considera-



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B

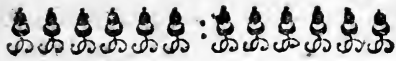
THE

The word of God most High is the  
fountain of wisdom and her wayes are  
everlasting commandments. Eccl:1. 5.



The infant playes with fate and Na-  
ture the fool with Eternitie: but y<sup>e</sup> wise  
man shall have dominion over the starres.





# Considerations

Upon

# ETERNITY.

## THE FIRST CONSIDERATION,

*What Eternity is ?*

**S**imonides being asked by *Cicero*  
*Hiero King of Sicily, What lib. I.*  
*God was,* desired one day *de Nat.*  
 to consider upon it : and after *Deor.*  
 one day past, having not yet  
 found it out, desired yet two days more to  
 consider further upon it ; and after two  
 days, he desired three : and to conclude  
 at length he had no answer to return unto  
 the King but this, That the more he  
 thought upon it, the more still he might ;  
 for the further he busied himself in the  
 search thereof, the further he was from  
 finding

## 2 *The first Consideration*

finding it. The thing that we are here now to consider upon is *Eternity*: and the first question that offers it self unto our consideration is, *what Eternity is?*

*Lib. 5. Boetius* saith, That it is altogether and at once, the intire and perfect possession of a life that

never shall have an end. And let no man take it ill, if we say that it cannot be known, and that the more we search into it, the more we lose our selves in the search of it. For how can that be defined which hath no bounds or limits? If any man urge us further and desire us to shadow it out, at least by some, though obscure, description: our answer is, That it may easier be done by declaring what it is not, rather than what it is; so

doth *Plato* concerning God:

*In Timæo.* what God is, saith he, that I know not? What he is not, that I know. So *Augustine* Bishop of

*Hippo*, in his sixty fourth Sermon upon the words of our Lord, describeth the true beatitude which is in Heaven, by removing from it the very thought of all evil.

We may more easily find, saith he, what is not there, than what is. In Heaven there is neither grief, nor sorrow, nor penury, nor defect, nor disease, nor death, nor any evil.

So may we say concerning *Eternity*. For whatsoever

whatsoever in this life we either see with our eyes, or let in by our outward senses, that is not Eternal. For 2 Cor. the things that are seen, saith 4. 18. St. Paul, are temporal; but the things which are not seen are Eternal. Hence every man may say, This my joy, these my pleasures and delights, this treasure, this honour, this stately building, this life of mine, all is *Transitory*, nothing *Eternal*. A man can point at nothing which shall not perish and have an end. Indeed the ignorant multitude use to speak after this manner. This structure is for *Eternity*, this Monument is everlasting. And the impatient Man is wont to complain that his pains are without end. But these *Eternities* are very short, and a Man may easily in words comprehend them: Say what thou canst of the true *Eternity*, thou must needs come far short of it.

So saith *Augustine*; Thou sayest In *Psal.* of *Eternity* whatsoever thou wilt: 65.

But therefore thou sayest whatsoever thou wilt, because thou canst not say all, say what thou wilt: But therefore thou must needs say something, that still thou mayest have something to think which thou canst not say. *Trismegistus* saith, That the Soul is the Horizon of In *As-* Time and *Eternity*: For, in that *clep.*

## 4 *The first Consideration*

it is immortal, it is partaker of *Eternity*; and in that it is infused by God into the Body, it is partaker of *Time*. But before we proceed any further, for orders sake let us see what Men of former times, *Romans*, *Græcians*, *Egyptians*, and others have thought of *Eternity*. For they acknowledged it for certain, and represented it divers ways.

---

### C H A P. I.

*What Men of former times have thought of Eternity; and how they have represented it.*

**F**irst of all, they have represented *Eternity* by a *Ring*, or a *Circle*, which hath neither beginning nor ending, which is proper only to *God's Eternity*: seeing therefore that God is *Eternal*, and his duration is properly called *Eternity*, the *Egyptians* used to signify God by a *Circle*. And the *Persians* thought they honoured God most, when going up to the top of the highest Tower, they called him the *Circle of Heaven*. And it was a custom among the *Turks* (as *Pierius* teacheth at large) to cry out every morning from an high Tower, *God always was, and always will be*; and then to salute their *Mahomet*.  
The

The *Sarazens* also used to call God a *Circle*. *Mercurius Trimegistus*, whom I named before, the most memorable amongst Philosophers, ( who wrote more Books than any mortal Man beside, if we may believe *Seleucus*, and *Menecus* ) said, That God was an intellectual *Sphere*, whose *Centre* is every where, and *Circumference* no where : because God's Majesty and immensity are terminated no where. For this cause the Ancients built unto their gods Temples for figure round. So *Numa Pompilius* is said to have consecrated to *Vesta* a round Table at Rome. So *Augustus Cesar*, in the name of *Agrippa*, dedicated to all the gods a round Temple, and called it *Pantheon*. Hereupon *Pythagoras*, to shew God's *Eternity*, taught his Scholars to worship him, turning their bodies round about. And there was a Statute made by *Numa*, ( as *Briffonius* witnesseth ) That they which were about to worship God, should turn themselves round. Therefore God is according to the Ancients, a *Circle*, but a *Circle* without a *Periphery* or *Circumference*, whose *Centre* is every where; because God is the beginning and end of all things. Whereupon *Job* most justly cries out, *Behold, God is great, and we know him not, neither can the number of his years be searched out.*

*Job* 36.  
26.

## 6 *The first Consideration*

Again, they have represented *Eternity* by a *Sphere* and a *Globe*. Therefore *Faustina* the Empress had many stampt after this figure and superscription; There was a *Globe* on which the Empress sat stretching forth one hand, and holding in the other a *Scepter* with this Inscription, E T E R N I T Y. Hence it was that many of the Ancients thought the World to be *Eternal*, because it was *Round*, whom Saint *Basil* answers very fitly, *Let the world be a Circle; but the beginning of the Circle is the Centre.*

In the third place they have represented *Eternity* by a *Seat*: by which is signified *Eternal Rest*. The *Nasamones*, a certain People of *Africa*, for the most part did not only breath out their last sitting upon a *Seat*, but also desired to be buried after that position, as having then attained to *Eternity*, and a long cessation from all their labours: As in many places at this day Kings and Emperors are found sitting in *Vaults* under *Earth*, in silence and mournful Majesty. And it was usual with the *Romans* to support with such like the molten statues of their deceased Emperors, as having then the fruition of *Eternity*. Some there are that thus reason with themselves oftentimes. Behold, I have been a long time held and oppressed with  
cares

cares and labours: But now why do I not take some respite? Why do I not make some pause? Why do I not rest from my labours? I have laboured long enough: let others labour as much as I have done; for my part I'll rest now and take mine ease. So they set up their seats, and promise unto themselves days of rest: but (alas!) they are of no long continuance. They set up their seats, and embrace their ease; but neither in due time nor place. Oh! how truly and devoutly doth that Golden Book, of the Imitation of Christ, give us a pull by the ear, in these words, *Dispose and order all things according to thine own will, and the lust of thine own eyes, and yet thou shalt never find, but thou shalt always suffer one thing, or other, either willingly or by constraint, and so thou shalt always find a Cross.* The whole life of Christ was a Cross, and Martyrdom; and dost thou seek rest and pleasure? Therefore we must set up our seat in Heaven, and not here, for here amongst so many troubles it can never stand quiet; and though all other things should spare, yet death at length will overturn. There is no true rest to be hoped for, but that which is *Eternal*. But if there be any rest in this life, this is it. For a Man to com-

## 8 *The first Consideration*

mit himself, and all that is his to the will of God, to put his whole trust and confidence in him, and to account all other things beside, but vain. So are

*Ecclus.* we taught in *Ecclesiasticus*; *Trust*  
11. 21. *in God, and abide in thy peace.*

Without this rest of the Soul all other things are meer troubles. a meer Sea of tempestuous Waves, and the very presence of Hell. But I return to the Ancients.

In the fourth place they have represented *Eternity* by the *Sun* and the *Moon*. The *Sun* reviveth every day, although it seems every day to die, and to be buried. It always riseth again, although every night it

setteth. The *Moon* also hath her increase after every wane. *Catullus* hath pretty verses to this purpose.

*The Sun doth set: the Sun doth rise again.*

*The Day doth close; the Day doth break again.*

*Once set our Sun, again it riseth never:*

*Once close our Day of Life, it's Night forever.*

In Hell there is *Eternal night*, but without sleep. There they sleep not, because they slept here, where they should have watched: there they watch, because here they



they slept in their sins ; indeed not long, but longer they would if they could, yea *Eternally*. But it is far otherwise with those that are in Heaven : For a perpetual light shall shine forth to the Saints, and *Eternity* of time, there is rest ; there is pleasure after long labours and watchings.

In the fifth place, they have represented *Eternity* by the *Basilisk*. The *Basilisk* is the most venomous of all Creatures, and it alone of all others ( as *Horus Nilivus* saith ) cannot be killed by humane force ; yea it is so virulent, that it killeth herbs with the very breath of it, that it puts to flight all other creatures with the hissing of it, and that it makes all birds suddenly silent upon the first presence of it. *Ælianus* reports, that in the desert of *Africa* a certain beast fell down being tired, and that the Serpents came together as it were to a feast, to devour the carcase, and that they presently ran all away, and hid themselves in the Sand, upon the sight of the *Basilisk*. *Eternity*, whether of joy or of torment, cannot be shortned or diminished, much less taken away or avoided. Neither is it strange, if it affright all that are in their right wits, with the very thought of it. Infinite are the windings of this *Basilisk* ; unmeasurable and untwinable are the *Orbs* and *Circuits* of it. Oh Dragon

## 10 *The first Consideration*

to be trembled at! Let us divert a little to our selves. It comes to pass sometimes when a Man descends into himself, and rips up his Conscience by confession, that he finds many Serpents Nests, and whole broods of Vipers, and thereupon much marvelleth in himself, saying, Whence is there so much venome in my breast? Whence are so many fat Snakes, so many grievous and deadly sins? Whence is there so great an host of Lizards? Whence so many filthy and lustful cogitations? I am afraid my self at such a numerous and pestilent brood. But marvel not; we shall easily shew thee the cause thereof. A moist and a rude place is very apt to breed Serpents. Lo then, there is a double cause; the moisture of the place, and the negligence of them that should look to it. So it is in the Soul of Man; if we spend all our care upon our Body, handling it delicately, feeding it daintily, pampering it with feasts, and effeminating it with pleasures, it must needs be confessed, that the Soul, the inhabitant thereof, hath her dwelling in a moist place. Add hither slothfulness, and neglect of Divine Duties. Let no care be had at all of Salvation; so the body be sound, and it goeth well with it, let no regard be had what happens to the Soul: let confession of sins be seldom made unto  
God,

God, and when it is, but in a negligent manner : what marvel then, if a multitude of Serpents and poysonous vermine breed there ? But (O good Christian Brother ) let the *Basilisk* enter into thy breast, that is, the cogitation of *Eternity*, and thou shalt presently perceive that these venomous beasts will soon vanish away. Thou confessest that thy heart doth abound with these Snakes : It is a sign therefore thou seldom thinkest upon *Eternity*. Amend therefore : and now at length begin to think upon this with thy self, *That which delighteth is but Momentary, but that which tormenteth is Eternal.*

In the sixth place, they have represented *Eternity* after this manner. There is a *vast den*, full of Horrors : round about which a *Serpent* winds it self, and in the winding bites it self by the Tail. At the right hand of the den stands a *young man* of a beautiful and pleasant countenance, holding in his right hand a *bow* and *two arrows*, and in his left hand an *Harp*. In the very entrance of the Den sits an *old man* opposite, and having his eyes very intent upon his *Table-Book* ; according as the *Cœlestial Globe* by its motion, or the young man standing by, dictates unto him, so he writes. At the left hand of the den sits a *grave Matron*, grey-headed, and having her eyes  
always :

## 12. *The first Consideration*

always busied. At the mouth of the den there are *four stairs*, each higher than other: The first is of *Iron*, the second of *Brass*, the third of *Silver*, and the fourth of *Gold*. On these are little Children running up and down and playing, and never fear the danger of falling. This is the *Picture*: The meaning is this. The *Den* signifies the incomprehensibility of *Eternity*: The *Serpent* that twines it self about it, *Time*; The *Young man*, God; in whose hand is *Heaven*, *Earth*, and *Hell*. On *Earth*, and in *Hell* are the *Arrows* of the Lord fastened; but in *Heaven*, there is nothing but *Joy*, and the sound of the *Harp*. The *Old Man* is *Fate*, or rather, that which God hath decreed from all *Eternity*. The *Matron*, *Nature*: The *Stairs*, distinct *Times* and *Ages*: The *Children* running up and down the *Stairs*, do signifie things created, especially *Man*, who is sporting in matters of *Salvation*, and playing and jesting in the very entrance of *Eternity*. Alack, alack! O mortal Men, we have played too long amidst these dangers; We are very near unto *Eternity*, even in the very entrance of it, whilest we live: Let but death lightly touch us, and we are presently swallowed up of *Eternity*. Death need not use any great power, or fight long against us; we are thrown down headlong in a moment,  
and

and tumble down these Stairs into the Ocean of *Eternity*. Bethink your selves well, you that play upon these Stairs, and think upon any thing rather than upon *Eternity*; It may be to day or to morrow you may be translated from *Time* to *Eternity*.

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## C H A P. II.

*The secret sense and meaning of Scripture is unfolded.*

**A**FTER the Chapter of the *Type* and *Picture* of *Eternity*, the Holy Scripture of Divine Truth shall not unfitly follow. When *Nebuchadnezzar*, King of *Babylon*, had cast the three *Hebrew* Children into the fiery Furnace for refusing to obey his impious command; the flame is said to have ascended nine and forty cubits above the Furnace. A strange thing: But not without a *Mystery*. What? Did any Man accurately measure the height thereof? Did any Man ascend and apply unto it a rule, to take the just measure of it? Was it just nine and forty cubits, neither more nor less? Why not fifty? For we use to number thus: Twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, though the number be somewhat more or less. Here in this place there wants but one of fifty. Surely there is a *Mystery* in

## 14 The first Consideration

it, and some secret meaning. The number of fifty was wont to signifie the year of *Jubilee*. But the flames in the fiery furnace of Hell, although they rage both against Body and Soul, and infinitely exceed all the torments of this life, yet they shall never extend so far as the year of grace and *Jubilee*. In Hell there is no year of *Jubilee*, no pardon, no end of torments. *Now, now*, is the time of *Jubilee*; not every hundred or fifty years, but every hour and every moment. *Now* one part of an hour may obtain pardon here, which all *Eternity* cannot hereafter. *Now* is the time, that in one little and short day we may have more debts forgiven us, than in the fire of Hell in all years and times to come hereafter.

Let us add hither another explication of Divine Scripture. When the *Joshua* People of God did pass over *Jordan*, the waters which came down toward the Sea of the plain (which is now called the dead Sea) failed until there were none left. And *Eclus* in *Ecclesiasticus* it is said, *There is that buyeth much for a little*. These two Testimonies of Scripture *Galfrid* joyneth together, and thereupon discourseth thus. If *Eternal* bitterness be due unto thee, and thou maist escape

escape it by tasting of *Temporal*, certainly thou hast redeemed *much for a little*. I confess, it is a Sea indeed in which thou failest, but yet a *dead Sea*: and how much art thou bound to give thanks unto God, who, whereas thou hast deserved to be overwhelmed in the salt, roaring and un-navigable Sea, hath of his great mercy toward thee, suffered thee rather to sail in the *dead Sea*. (O blessed change!) That so by the *dead Sea* thou mayest pass into the *land of the living*! This Writer compares all the adversities of this *life* to the *dead Sea*, and *Eternal* punishment to the *salt and unchangeable Sea*. No Man can escape them, he must needs fall into the one, or in the other. What dost thou, O Man? (cries out Saint *Chrysoftom*,) Art thou about to ascend up to Heaven, and dost thou ask me whether there be any difficulties by the way? Whatsoever we do, this *dead Sea* we must pass over: we may, if we will, arrive at the Haven of Tranquillity, and *Eternal* Happiness.

The Word of God most high is the *Eccles.*  
*Fountain of wisdom, and her wayes* 1. 5.  
*are everlasting commandments.*

Through this *dead Sea* there is no other way into the Region of the living, but the way of God's Commandments. We have a most clear place of Scripture for it:

If

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*Mat. 19.* If thou wilt enter into life, keep  
17. the Commandments : This is  
the only way to *Eternity*. If a

*Corneli-*  
*us à La-*  
*pide.* man should ask a Divine of our  
times this question, *What is E-*  
*ternity?* His answer will be, It  
is a *Circle* running back into it

self, whose *Centre* is *Always*, and *Cir-*  
*cumference* *No where*, that is, which never  
shall have end. *What is Eternity?* It is an

*Volvi-*  
*tur, &*  
*volve-*  
*tur in*  
*omne*  
*volubi-*  
*lis æ-*  
*vum.* *Orb* every way round, and like  
itself, in which there is neither  
beginning nor end. *What is*

*Eternity?* It is a *Wheel*,  
*A wheel that turns, a wheel that*  
*turneth ever,*

*A wheel that turns, and will leave*  
*turning never.*

*What is Eternity?* It is a year  
continually wheeling about,  
which returns again to the same point  
from whence it began, and still wheels  
about again. *What is Eternity?* It is an

*ever-running Fountain*, whither the Waters  
after many turnings flow back again, that  
they may always flow. *What is Eternity?*

It is an *ever-living Spring*, from whence  
Waters continually flow, either the most  
sweet Waters of *Benediction* and blessing,  
or the most bitter Waters of *Malediction*  
and cursing. *What is Eternity?* It is a

*Labyrinth*



*Labyrinth* which hath innumerable turnings and windings, which always lead them round that enter in, carrying them from turning to turning, and so losing them. *What is Eternity?* It is a *pit without bottom*, whose turnings and revolutions are endless. *What is Eternity?* It is a *Spiral Line*, but without beginning; which hath Circles and windings one within another, but without ending. *What is Eternity?* It is a *Snake bowed back unto it self* orbicularly, holding the Tail in the Mouth, which in its end doth again begin, and never ceaseth to begin. *What is Eternity?* It is a *duration always present*, it is one perpetual day, which is not divided into that which is past, and that which is to come. *What is Eternity?* It is an *Age of Ages*, as *Dionysius* saith, never expiring, but always like it self, without changing. *What is Eternity?* It is a beginning without beginning, middle, or end. It is a beginning, continuing, never ending, always beginning. In which the Blessed always begin a blessed Life, and always abound with new pleasures: in which the Damned always die, and after all death and struggling with death, always begin again to die and struggle with death. As long as God shall be God, so long shall the blessed be blessed, so long shall they reign  
and,

## 18 *The first Consideration*

and triumph: so long shall the damned also fry in Hell, and yelling cry, *We are tormented in this flame*, being still to be tormented and tortured for ever.

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### C H A P. III.

*Why the place of Eternity is called a Mansion.*

**J**OH<sup>N</sup>, *Patriarch of Alexandria*, a very devout and godly Man, was often wont to go to visit the sick, and took with him, for his Companion, *Troilus* a Bishop, which had more care of his Mony than of the sick. The *Patriarch* whispereth him in the Ear, and said, I pray thee, Brother, let us help the Friends of Christ. Whereupon *Troilus*, like a crafty Companion, concealing the disease of his mind, to wit, his Covetousness, bad his Servant give to the Poor all the Mony, which at that time he had about him, to buy other things withal. Not long after it happened that he fell into a Fever, which his Covetousness had caused: whereof the *Patriarch of Alexandria* hearing, and easily guessing at the cause of his disease, went to visit him, and carried with him as much Silver, as he had not long before given to the sick: and after a little conference with him, he said thus,

thus, I did but jest with thee the other day, when I wished thee to bestow something to the relief of the sick; and it was because my servant had not Mony about him. But behold here, in good earnest I restore unto thee the Mony which thou laidst out for my sake, and I thank thee for it. When *Troilus* saw the Mony told, his Fever began to leave him, and his heat to abate, and in every part he found himself much better; whereupon finding himself gather strength, he rose up to Dinner, and sat down to Table. About noon-tide when Dinner was ended, and the Table removed, he went to sleep, and sweetly took his ease, and dreamed that he saw a very stately Edifice, and in the *frontispiece* thereof over the Gate, this inscription, *Mansio Æterna & Requies Troili Episcopi*; In English thus, *The Eternal Mansion and Resting place of Bishop Troilus*. He was very much delighted with this dream. But not long after he had another Vision that troubled him. For there came one with a company of Workmen, and gave them a strict charge, saying, Take away that Inscription, and put this in the place there, *Mansio Æterna & Requies Johannis Archiepiscopi Alexandriae, emptæ libris triginta argenti*: In English thus, *The Eternal Mansion and Resting*

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*Resting place of John Archbishop of Alexandria, which he bought for thirty pounds.* With this Vision he was very much affrighted: but he made a very good use of it. For presently, of an hard and covetous Man, he became liberal and charitable, especially to such as were in need. So much did the very dream of an *Eternal Mansion* prevail with him.

But Oh ye rather blessed Mansions, and therefore blessed, because *Eternal*! Oh, how exceedingly doth Christ desire that we should loath and forsake these our Tabernacles, and ruinous Houses, and with earnest desire make haste unto those *Eternal Mansions*! *In my Fathers house*, saith he, *are many Mansions*: No Man is kept back from thence but by himself. The place excludes no Man: for it is exceeding large. Time shuts out no Man: for there is a Mansion, and that Mansion is *Eternal*.

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### A Prayer.

**O** Eternal and merciful God, O Eternal Truth, O true Love, O beloved Eternity; So cure our blindness, that by these present and short sorrows we may be brought to know, and so escape the future, *horrible,*

horrible, and Eternal punishments. Direct us, and teach us so to possess things perishing and Temporal, that finally we lose not the things which are Eternal. Teach us so to lament for our sins committed, that we may escape Eternal punishments. Teach us so to behave our selves in the House of our Pilgrimage, that we be not shut out of the Eternal Mansions. Teach us so to make our progress in the way, that at length we may be received into our Country.

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The perpetuall hills did bowe, his  
wayes are everlasting. Habac: 3.6.



The Salamander, the Basilisk, the Phenix, the  
golden ring, the fiery mountain, may here-  
upon earth put us in minde of Eternitie:  
but onely blessed Eternitie: can make  
us eternall in heaven.

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THE SECOND  
CONSIDERATION

Upon  
E T E R N I T Y.

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*In what things Nature representeth Eternity.*

**T**HE Idolaters themselves therefore have acknowledged an *Eternity* such as it was, and have described it also by certain signs: For God hath manifested it unto them, *so that they are without excuse.* How much dearer therefore, and in what great esteem ought the consideration thereof to be amongst all Christians, to whom *Eternity* is better represented, and in a more lively manner! Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art, that being often put in mind of *Eternity*, doth as often let it slip out of thy memory. Thou hast often in thy sight and before thine eyes, *Rings and Circles, Spheres and Globes, Sun and Moon*: If thou

Rom. 1.  
20.  
Rom. 2:  
1.  
C lookest

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lookest upon any of these, they will put thee in mind of *Eternity*. Nature her self like a good Mother hath exposed them to publick view, that, when we see them, or hear of them, we might be invited to meditate upon *Eternity*.

*Solinus* reports that there is a Stone in *Arcadia* called *Asbestos*, which being once set on fire doth continually burn: Wherefore in times past they were wont in Temples and Sepulchres to make  
*Lib. 21.* Lamps of it: of which *St. Augustine* maketh mention. I add  
*de Civit. cap. 5.* that *Pliny*, *Volateranus*, *Dioscorides*, and many others tell strange wonders of a certain kind of *Line* or *Flax*, which is called by divers names: For some call it *Linum Asbestinum*, others *Carystium*, others *Indicum*, and others *Linum vivum*.

This is not only not consumed by fire, but also is purged and cleansed; wherefore the dead Bodies of Kings heretofore, when they were to be put into the fire, and to be burned, used to be wrapped about with a Linnen cloth made thereof, to keep their ashes from confusion, and to distinguish them from others. Of such Flax *Nero* had a Towel, which he esteemed of more price than Gold and precious Stones. Behold, *Nature* her self, like a *Mistress* and Guide,  
 leader



lendeth thee by the hand, and pointeth thee to a thing which the fire hath no power to consume. So shall all the damned burn, but never shall burn out. They shall always burn, but never be consumed; they shall seek for death in the flames, but shall not find it. Therefore justly doth one cry out, *O wo Eternal, that never shall have end! O end without end! O death more grievous than all death. Always to die, and never to be quite dead!* So saith divine *Isaiah*, *Their fire never shall be quenched*: And the Angel in the *Revelation*, *They shall desire to die: and death shall flee from them.*

That the Salamander for a little time can indure, and live in the fire, beside *Aristotle*, *Pliny*, *Galen*, *Ælian*, *Dioscorides*, *S. Augustine* also himself believed. This creature is very cold, and generated of showers; the Sun and drought are death to it; Therefore, according to *Pliny*, it endures in the flame like Ice. Of the Skin thereof lights are made for perpetual burning Lamps. God who made the Salamander of Earth and Clay, hath of his goodness formed Man, though of the same matter, yet of a more excellent and noble nature. He hath made him a little lower than the Angels, *Psal. 8. 4.* He hath assigned un-

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to him after this life the fellowship of the same Kingdom with the Angels. But man<sup>n</sup> being in honour had no understanding, and was compared unto the beasts that perish, *Psal.* 49. 20. By his own malice he made himself such a *Salamander*, that must always live or always die in *Eternal flames*. In those fiery prisons of Hell, all things are *Eternal*; but these six things especially.

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### C H A P. I.

*What things are Eternal in Hell.*

**T**HE damned himself is *Eternal* and dyeth not. No Man can make an end of himself, or another. *They shall seek death, and shall not find it, Rev.* 9. 6. Yea the very desire of death, in as much as their desire cannot be satisfied, shall greatly increase their torments.

2. *The Prison* itself is *Eternal*; It can never fall to ruin, it can never be broken down, it can never be digged through. It is barred up with rocks and mountains; The locks and bars are so firm and strong, that none can get out. If any of the damned should by God's permission before the day of judgment come out from thence, yet still he should carry an Hell about him,

him, and never be free from torment.

3. *The fire there is Eternal.* Christ himself in *Matthew* saith as much expressly; *Matth. 25. 41.* Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, or fire *Eternal*. Dost thou hear this word, *Eternal*; The anger of the Lord doth kindle this fire, and it shall never be put out. To this beareth *Isaiah* witness, saying, *The breath of the Lord like a stream of Brimstone doth kindle it, it shall burn night and day, and shall not be quenched, the smoke thereof shall ascend up for ever and ever,* *Isaiah 30. 33.*

*Isaiah 66. 24.* *Rev. 14. 11.* *Eternal punishments, and Eternal Life are* *Relates*, as *St. Augustine* speaketh; and *Relates* are of like continuance: To say therefore, that *Eternal Life* shall be without end, - and *Eternal punishment* shall have an end, is very absurd. Who therefore will defer his conversion?

4. As the things mentioned before are *Eternal*, so is the *Worm*, and conscience tormented with deep despair for the life past, *Isa. 66. 24.* *Their worms shall not die:* So prophesied *Isaiah*. The Poets of old translated this out of Holy Writ into their Fables: For what is that *Tityus*, of whom *Virgil* feigneth, That a flying *Vulture* every day gnaws and tears his *Liver*, which is

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every night again repaired and made up, that every day the *Vulture* may have more prey to gnaw upon? What is the *Vulture* but the *Worm* we speak of? And what is the *Liver*, but the *Conscience* always gnawed, and tormented?

5. To this *Eternity* of Hell belongeth also the *last sentence*, and the *last Degree* pronounced by Christ the Judge: A decree (Alas!) irrevocable, immutable, *Eternal*. There is no *Appealing* from it; If the sentence be once pronounced by the mouth of this Judge, it stands irrevocable for all *Eternity*. In Hell there is no redemption, not any, no not any; but *Eternal* desperation. The Blood of Christ when it was newly poured out on the *Mount of Golgotha*, though of infinite efficacy for satisfaction, yet reacheth not unto the damned. *If the yoke of the Lord, saith Saint Bernard, be a yoke of Repentance, you think that in itself it is not sweet: But this you must know, That it is most sweet, if it be compared with the fire of which it is said, Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, Mat. 25 41.*

6. The *Punishment* or *Pain of loss* also, as they call it, is *Eternal*, being the privation of the sight of God for ever, which together with all the other torments of the damned shall never have end: because  
there

there can be no place for satisfaction. For although these torments shall continue infinite millions of years, yet there shall not one day, no nor one hour, no nor so much as a moment of rest and respite be granted. There shall be vicissitude and variety of torments, but to their greater pain and grief. Christ often foretold it by *Matthew* in plain words, *Mat. 8. 12.* *The children of the Kingdom shall be cast out into utter darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth: weeping, for heat; and gnashing of teeth, for cold.* How then can Man be so forgetful of himself and God? How can he so degenerate into a beast? Yea rather, how can he become like a rock, or a stone, so senseless, as when he shall think upon the unsufferable and unutterable torments of Hell, which never shall have end, then not to fear and tremble, and say with himself thus, I am for certain in the way to *Eternity*, and I know not how soon I may come to my journey's end: I sit on the stairs of *Eternity*, and every little thrust is ready to plunge me into the bottomless pit? But if it seem so grievous and intolerable for a man to lye, though but for one night, on a soft Feather-bed, and never sleep or close his eyes, but to sigh and groan for pain in his head, or any other member for the

## 30 *The second Consideration*

tooth-ach, or for the stone : If the night seems long, and the day a great way off, and the Sun to slack his coming : And yet, as I said, he lies upon a good Feather-bed, and if he will have but a little patience, he may hope to find ease in the day, and help from the Physician, Alack, Alack! how intolerable shall it be to lie night and day in the fire, for a thousand and a thousand, and again, I say, a thousand years ! How intolerable shall it be, there to watch, to hunger, to thirst, to burn, to be tormented extreamly in every part, and not to hope for any rest, or so much as a drop of cold Water ; but to be always in despair, and so to fry and to be tortured for infinite millions of ages, and to be so far from finding any end, as never to be able to

hope for any end ! There, saith

*De Thomas*, one hours punishment shall be more grievous, than an hundred years here in the most bitter punishment that can be. There is no rest, no consolation

to the damned, Psal. 6. 1. *O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.* Psal. 25. 7. *Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions.* Unless thou wilt have mercy, O God, I must needs perish.

CHAP. II.

*why Hell is Eternal.*

**H**ere ariseth a question, which is worthy to be known of all Men, How it can be, that God, who is good and merciful, and whose mercy is over all his works, should notwithstanding punish even one mortal sin, committed, it may be, in a moment, and in thought only; how he should punish such a sin, I say, for all *Eternity*; and so punish it, that it shall deserve still always to be punished: and though millions of years be passed, yet it shall never be said, This sin hath been sufficiently punished, it is enough, he hath made satisfaction for the wicked thought, by which he hath offended God.

What then? Hath God for one sin, and that in thought only, decreed the punishment of everlasting fire? What equality is there in this, for a *momentary* sin, to appoint an *Eternal* punishment? Why doth blessed *David* cry out, *O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good, and his mercy endureth for ever!* Psal. 106. 1. 107. 1. 118. 1. 136. 1. and why doth he repeat it twenty seven times, if God be so severe? To this *S. Augustin, Gregory, Thomas Aquinas*, and others answer, That in every mortal

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mortal sin the offence of its own nature is infinite, because it is an injury against the infinite Majesty of God. Again, He that dyeth guilty of a mortal sin without repentance, doth as much as if he should sin *Eternally*: For if he might live *Eternally*, he would sin *Eternally*: He hath not lost a will to sin, but life in which to sin, still being ready to sin, if he might live still; So he doth not cease to sin, but doth cease to live. Further it is to be considered, That a damned Person can never make satisfaction, though he should pay never so much; For being an enemy, and not in favour with God, his payment is not worthy acceptance; seeing that he himself is not accepted with him. Neither indeed, to speak truly, can he be said to pay any thing; because he doth nothing, but suffers only punishment, and that against his will. We will make the matter yet more plain by a familiar example. Suppose a man should borrow of his neighbour a thousand Crowns, and for the use thereof make over the Rent of his House unto him for ever. It may be in twenty years he may thus repay the sum of Money borrowed; But what then? Is he fully discharged of all the debt? Doth there remain nothing to be paid? The principal remains still as due to be paid,



as if there had been nothing at all paid. For this is the nature of such lones, that although the yearly use be paid, still the principal remains entire, and due to be paid. So it is with the damned; For although they should pay never so much; yet they can never get out of debt: They are debtors still, and ever shall be, *Isa. 1. 31.* *The strong shall be as tow, and the maker of it as a spark; they shall both burn together, and none shall quench them.*

*Suetonius* reports of *Tiberius Cæsar*, that being Petitioned unto by a certain offender to hasten his punishment, and to grant him a speedy dispatch, he made him this answer, *Nondum tecum in gratiam redii*, Stay Sir, *You and I are not yet friends.* *Christ* is a most just Judge, no Tyrant, no *Tiberius*. And yet if one of the damned after a thousand years burning in Hell should beg and intreat for a speedy death, he would answer after the same manner, *Nondum tecum in gratiam redii*, Stay, *You and I are not yet friends.* If after a thousand years more he should ask the same thing, he should receive the same answer, *Nondum tecum in gratiam redii*, Stay, *You and I are not yet friends.* If after an hundred thousand years yet more, yea millions of years, he should ask again, again

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he should receive the same answer, *Non-dum tecum in gratiam redii*, Stay, You and I are not yet friends. The time was, I offered to be thy friend; but thou wouldst not; yea, thy Father, but thou wouldst not. I offered thee my grace a-thousand and a-thousand times; but thou rejectedst it. This I knew right well, and I held my peace, and further expected, forty, fifty, sixty years, to see if thou wouldst change thy mind and course of life. But there followed no serious or true repentance. *Thou hast set at nought all my counsel, and wouldst none of my reproof. Thou hast hated instruction, and hast cast my words behind thee,* Prov. 1. 25 Psal. 50. 17. Eat therefore the fruit of thine own ways, and be filled with thy own counsels. Prov. 1. 26. *I will laugh at thy destruction for ever: neither shall my justice after infinite ages give thee any answer but this.* *Nendum tecum in gratiam redii*, Stay, You and I are not yet friends. O God which art in Heaven! O sin which throwest men headlong into hell, the hell of torments, and into the bottomless pit of *Eternal pain!* But *righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy judgments.* Psal. 119. 137. Just and right it is, that he which would not by repentance accept of mercy when it was offered, should by punishment be tormented, and

and have justice without mercy for ever.

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## C H A P. III.

*Other motives to the consideration of Eternity, drawn from Nature.*

**B**UT I return to the School of *Nature*, to consider further upon *Eternity*. There are found *hot Baths* in certain Mountains and Rocks, whose waters in running make such a noise and murmuring, that the diseased persons that resort thither for cure, if at that entrance into the *Bath*, they do but imagine they hear musical Instruments, and an harmonious consort, they have their ears so dulled with the continual noise thereof, that the musick which at first was sweet unto them, becomes at length, by their imagination working upon it, very loathsome, and a torment unto them: But if they imagine they hear a Drum, or any other loud sounding instrument, they at length grow almost mad with the noise thereof daily molesting and troubling them. From whence also we are led, as it were by the hand, to the consideration of *Eternity*. The weeping and wailing, yelling and crying which is heard at the first entrance of hells mouth under those infernal

moun-

### 36. *The second Consideration.*

mountains shall never cease, but shall torment the damned without end, and be no whit mitigated by time and long-sufferance. But on the contrary the Blessed in Heaven shall without weariness hear the *Thrice Holy* sung, *Holy, Holy, Holy*; yea, and the more they hear it, the more they shall be delighted with the sound thereof. Christ in his Conference with the Women of *Samarita*, makes often mention of *Eternity*, and life everlasting. *Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst: But the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life, John 4. 14.* I would we did thirst with the Woman of *Samarita* after those waters, and earnestly pray for them: *O Lord give me of this water, that I thirst not, John 4. 15.* Give me, O Christ, though but a drop of this water, that is, some thirst and desire after *Eternal* life. In the year after the Nativity of our Lord fourscore and one (as *Saetonius, Dion,* and *Plinius Secundus* tell at large) on the first day of *November*, about seven of the Clock, at the Mountain *Vesuvius* in *Campania*, there was an horrible eruption of fire, before which there went an unusual drought, and grievous Earthquakes. There was also heard a noise under Earth, as if it had been thunder. The Sea roared and  
made.

made a noise; the Heaven thundred as if mountains had in conflict met together; great stones were seen to fall; the Air was filled with smoak and fire mixt together; the Sun did hide his head. Whereupon it was thought by many that the World was almost at an end, and that the last day was come, wherein all should be consumed with fire: For there was such abundance of ashes scattered up and down over Land and Sea, and in the Air, that there was much hurt done amongst Men and Cattle, and in the Fields, that Fish and Fowl were destroyed, that two Cities, the name of the one was *Herculanum*, and the name of the other *Pompeii*, were utterly ruined. These and such other like *Caverns* in the Earth, with *Precipices* and *fiery mountains* always flaming, but never going out, are lively examples given us by God, to put us in mind of the fire of Hell, in which the Bodies of the cursed shall be always burning, but never be burnt out. Concerning this you may read *Tertullian*, *Minutius*, and *Pacian*. See, O man, how providently even Nature her self doth go before thee, and as it were lead thee by the hand to the contemplation of *Eternity*.

*Tertul. Apol. c 48. Minut. in Oct. Pacian. de penitent. & confess.*

### 38 *The second Consideration*

To conclude, This *Time* of ours carrieth with it some sign and print of *Eternity*. Nature fain would have us learn the thing signified by the sign, and take a scantling of *Eternity* by the little *module* and measure of time. It is the saying *In Sent.* of *St. Augustine*, *This is the difference* between things *Temporal* and *Eternal*: We love things *Temporal* more before we have them, and esteem them not so much when we have them: for the soul cannot be satisfied but with true and secure *Eternity*, and joy which is *Eternal* and incorruptible. But things *Eternal*, when they are actually *possessed*, are much more loved than before when they were only desired and hoped for: For neither could *Faith* believe, nor *Hope* expect so much as *Charity* and *Love* shall find when once we shall be admitted to possession. Why then doth not Earth seem vile in our eyes, especially when we must ere long forsake it? And why do we not with ardent desire lift up our eyes to Heaven where we shall inherit a Kingdom, and that *Eternal*.



*Thou art weighed in the ballances and  
art found wanting. Dan: 5. 27.*



*That man regardeth not Eternitie,  
who weigheth his money more  
accurately then his life .*



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THE THIRD  
CONSIDERATION

Upon  
ETERNITY.

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*Wherein the old Romans principally placed their Eternity.*

**P***linius Secundus* thought *Epist. 2.*  
those Men happy, which *ad Tat.*  
either did things worthy  
to be wrote, or wrote things worthy to be  
read; but those men of all most happy,  
which could do both. So the *Romans*  
thought they might three manner of ways  
eternize their fame, and transmit their  
names unto posterity. First they wrote  
many excellent things; *many* excellent in-  
deed, but *not all*, not all chaste, not all  
holy: They committed to writing their  
own blemishes, their dishonest loves, and  
filthy lusts; But this was no honest or Kings  
high way to *Eternity*. How many Books  
have died before their Authors, and accor-  
ding to *Plato*, have been like unto the Gar-  
dens

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dens of *Adonis*: as soon dead as sprung up! They pleased not long which quickly pleased. But suppose the Books of all the *Romans* should out-live time, and be always extant and exposed to publick view, yet they should not be able to give life unto their Authors.

Again, the *Romans* did not only write, but also did many brave works worthy to be recorded by the pens of eloquent and learned men, and these works were of divers kinds. They sought *Eternity* in many things, but found it in nothing, as we are taught to believe. They were great (we do not deny it) in civil and warlike affairs, at home and abroad: admirable for their skill in Arts and Sciences: Magnificent and profuse in setting forth Shews, and bestowing Gifts: wonderful even to astonishment for stately Buildings, Tombs, Vaults, Monuments and Statues, as you may guess by these few particulars, which I will briefly run over.

*Augustus*, in his own name, and at his own proper charges, set forth Plays and Games four and twenty times, and at the charge of the common Treasury, three and twenty times: and never a one of those cost him under two Millions and five hundred thousand Crowns; and this so great a sum of Mony, I say, was all laid out  
upon

upon one shew. The very meanest and cheapest that ever *Augustus* set forth, came to a Million two hundred and fifty thousand Crowns.

*Nero* gilded over the whole *Theatre*; the Ornaments of the tyring House and Comical implements he made all of Gold: To these you may add square pieces of Wood or wooden Lots scattered amongst the People, which had for their Incriptions, whole Houses, Fields, Grounds, Farms, Slaves, Servants, Beasts, great sums of Silver, and many times Jewels a great number: To whosoever's Lot fell any one of these, he presently received according to the inscription.

The same *Nero* for a Donative to a common Soldier, commanded to be told two hundred and fifty thousand Crowns.

*Agrippina* (*Nero's* Mother) caused the like sum of Money to be laid upon a Table, thereby secretly reprehending and labouring to restrain her Sons profuseness. Whereupon *Nero* perceiving that he was toucht, commanded another sum to be added as great as the former, and said thus, *Nesci-  
evam me tam parum dedisse, I forgot my self  
in giving so little.*

The same *Nero* entertained at *Rome* for nine Months together King *Tiridates*, and was every day at cost for him twenty thousand

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and Crowns, which came in nine Months to five millions and forty thousand Crowns. And at his departure he gave him for a *Viaticum*, or to spend by the way, two millions and an half. What should I tell you of their stately and magnificent buildings ?

*Caligula* the Emperour made a Bridge over an Arm of the Sea, three Miles long.

There were Temples in *Rome* four hundred twenty four, most of them were magnificent.

*Domitian* spent upon the sole gilding of the Capitol, seven millions.

On the Stairs of the *Amphitheater*, which were made all of Stone, there might sit very conveniently, fourscore and seven thousand spectators; above, there might stand round about twelve thousand. In all fourscore and nineteen thousand.

Besides many others, there were twelve publick Baths made by the Emperour, where Men might bathe *gratis*.

In the hot Baths of *Antoninus*, there were of polished stone one thousand and six hundred seats, and there might so many men bathe themselves very conveniently.

In the Bath of *Hetruscus*, as *Pliny* saith, all were of Silver, the passages for the Water,

ter, the lips of the Bath, and the very floor it self. But I pass to other things.

At *Rome* there were almost as many Statues as Men, of no worse matter than Silver and Gold, beside infinite others of Brass, Marble, and Ivory.

*Domitian* had one of Gold in the Capitol, of an hundred pound weight.

*Commodus* and *Claudius* had also Statues of Gold, each of them being of a thousand pound weight. *Claudius* had also in the place at *Rome* called *Rostræ*, another of Silver. Hereupon there was a certain Officer appointed, who was called the Count of *Rome*, on whom there attended a great many Soldiers continually to guard and look to the great number of Statues.

The way which is called *Appia*, will exercise a nimble footman five days in running it over. It reached in length, from *Rome* to *Capua*; so broad, that two Coaches might meet, and never trouble one another; so solid and firm, as if it were all of one stone, in no place loose or broken up. There were also more ways like unto this. It is incredible what good Authors do write of their Conduits and Aquæducts.

*Claudius* the Emperour bestowed about one, seven Millions of Gold and a half; and there were maintained six hundred Men with the only keeping and looking to the

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the waters. These were great works indeed, but the Authors thereof in part deserved reprehension for their immoderate profuseness. There was at *Rome* one thing that surpassed their stately buildings, but (as for name, to say no worse, and to spare your ears) dishonourable, and not fit to be named. They had certain Vaults under earth built with Arches, you may call them the sinks of the City (they called them *Cloacas*) running with water, to carry away all the filth of the City. Of these there were so many, so large, and so long, that you may well reckon them amongst the wonders of the World. I need not instance any more: these which I have named are sufficient. He that is any thing conversant in Histories, or hath heard of the great power and wealth of the *Romans* in former ages, will easily believe my relation: if he will not believe me, let him believe the testimony of *Suetonius*, *Dion*, *Cassius*, *Pliny*, *Livy*, and others that have wrote of the *Roman* Monuments.

These things which I have reckoned up, are very laudable in themselves. But they governed their Common-wealth so prudently, that in War for the most part they were unconquerable, for Arts and Sciences excellent, for Vertue illustrious;

insomuch, that *Cyneas* an Ambassador sent from *Pyrrhus*, a very eloquent and intelligent man, when he had all in vain solicited the City to make a League with his Lord and Master, which League could not stand with the honour of the *Romans*, upon his return told the King, That he thought the City to be a *Temple*, and all the *Senators, Kings*. Herein the *Romans* were highly to be commended: but in this they were much overseen (though otherwise very prudent men) in placing their *Eternity* in such things as neither could give unto them nor had in themselves *Eternity*. If the *Romans* had made choice of *Saint Augustine* for their guide in the way to *Eternity*, he would have shewed them a more certain and readier way. For what saith he? *We do not account those Emperours happy which have reigned long, or which have often triumphed as Conquerors over their Enemies, or which have treasured up much wealth. These things often kappen to those that have no right or title to the Kingdom which is Eternal.* Who then in *Saint Augustine's* opinion are to be accounted truly happy? Hearken, O ye Emperours, O ye Kings and Princes: You shall in *Saint Augustine's* sense obtain true and *Eternal* happiness, by the observation of these Rules following.

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1. The Rule of *Justice*. By ruling justly, and hating the very vizard and painted face of injustice.

2. The Rule of *Modesty*. By not being puffed up by the vain applauses, acclamations and titles of honour, but by remembering your selves to be but men.

3. The Rule of the *Fear* and *Love* of *God*. By propagating by all means the true Worship of God; by subjecting all humane power to his Divine Majesty; by serving him in *fear* and *love*.

4. The *Desire* of *Heaven*. By setting your love and affection upon the Kingdom which is *Eternal*, where one shall not envy anothers power.

5. The Rule of *Facility*, and *readiness* to *forgive*. By being swift to forgive, and slow to punish, but when the glory of God, and the necessity of the Common-wealth calleth for it.

6. *Mercy* and *Liberality*. By tempering the severity of the Laws by the Oyl of *Mercy*, and the sweet odour of beneficency.

7. *Continency*. By not giving the Reins to *Luxury*, but by bridling your appetites and concupiscences; and the more liberty you have, the less abusing it unto licentiousness.

8. *Moderation* of *Passions*. By choosing rather



rather to get the conquest over evil Passions, than by domineering over Nations.

9. The study of *Humility* and *Prayer*. By doing all these, not for vain-glory, but for the glory of God, and the attainment of *Eternal* felicity: and again, by never neglecting that most noble sacrifice of *Humility* and *Prayer*.

These Rules or Laws hath St. *Augustine* fixed upon the double gates of the World, are a glass fit for Princes to look into. But, O ye *Romans*, how far have ye gone astray from the way that leadeth unto the gates whereon these Laws are fixed! Not to speak of other things, you have instead of one and the only true God, brought in innumerable others, to worship them which are no Gods. For *Rome* seemed to make it a great matter of Religion, to refuse no falsity; and when she ruleth almost over all Nations, to serve and follow the errors of all Nations.

But to let these things pass also: how vain and ridiculous a thing is it for them, to leave behind them all their *Eternity* in Parchments and Papers, in Marble and other Stone, in Theaters and Pyramids, in Monuments and Tombs! What is now become of their *Eternity* which was sometime carved in Stone? The same hath

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happened unto *Rome*, which also befel *Jerusalem*. The Disciples pointing at the buildings of the Temple at *Jerusalem*, said unto our Saviour Christ, *Master, See what manner of stones, and what buildings are here!* Mark 13. 1. Whereupon Christ answered and said, *See ye all these buildings? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down,* Matth. 24. 2. So there is nothing *Eternal* in this World. And where is now old *Rome*? If this question be demanded: the answer may be this, *Here it was.* Where are they that built it? *They are dead and gone.* There is not so much as their Ashes left of them. And ere long we must all go the same way, become like a shadow, return unto dust, and be resolved into nothing. Oh the poor and mean condition of mortal Men, even at the greatest! Oh the instability and frailty of the strongest Men, even in the prime of all their strength! For what is now become of all those things, or where are they? *They are quite vanished away.* Where is their Money, which they heaped up beyond belief? *'Tis scattered abroad.* Where are their stately and lofty buildings? *They are not to be seen.* Such are all things else, though to us they seem never so great, nothing else but a meer shadow, and a dream,  
if

if they be compared with *Eternity*, and those things which are *Eternal*. The foundation on which the whole fabrick of vanishing glory is set up, is too weak and mouldering, and made but of Clay, Stone and Marble cannot be ingraven with Characters and Inscriptions of *Eternity*. Well saith *Lactantius*, *The works of mortal men are mortal*. That there was a *Babylon*, a *Troy*, a *Carthage*, and a *Rome*, we believe: But if we will believe no more than we see, there be scarce any reliques or ruinous parts of them remaining, to persuade us that there were such Cities. So the seven wonders of the world, so *Nero's* golden Palace, *Diocletian's* hot Baths, *Antoninus* his Baths, *Severus* his *Séptizonium*, *Julius* his *Colossus*, *Pompey's* Amphitheater, have no footstep or print of them remaining; no, scarce upon Record, or registered in Books. And how far have all of these come short of *Eternity*.

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C H A P. I.

*How far the Romans have gone astray from the true way of Eternity.*

**A**T *Nazareth*, in a certain Conclave, called by the name of the Blessed Virgin, there is in one place mention made

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of a Kingdom, *Of which Kingdom there shall be no end*, Luk. 1. 33. Such was not the Kingdom of *Solomon*: for that lasted but four hundred years, even to the Captivity of *Babylon*. Such was not the Kingdom of the *Romans*, neither of the *Persians*, nor yet of the *Grecians*. For where are now those Kingdoms in former times most flourishing? Where are those most ancient Monarchies; How great was *Nebuchadnezzar* in *Chaldea* and *Syria*, and after him *Belshazzar*? From them the Scepter was translated unto the *Medes* and *Persians*, to *Cyrus* and *Darius*. Neither continued it there long. From thence it was translated into *Greece*, to *Alexander*, surnamed the *Great*, King of *Macedon*, for a long time most victorious and fortunate. But as warlike valour decayed, so fortune failed. And so the Scepter was translated into *Italy* to *Julius Caesar*, and *Octavianus Augustus*. What is become of all these Kings? Where are they? But thou, O Christian man, seek that Kingdom, *Of which Kingdom there shall be no end*. *Numantia*, *Athens*, *Carthage*, and *Sparta*, all are come to an end, they are utterly perished. But as for the Kingdom which is above, *Of that there shall be no end*. The King that ruleth there is *Eternal*, and those that live in that Kingdom are *Eternal*. *The Lord shall reign for ever and ever*, Exod. 15. 14. On which words,

words, saith Origen, Dost thou think that the Lord shall reign for ever and ever? Yea, he shall reign for ever and ever, and beyond that too. Say what thou canst, thou shalt still come short of the duration of his Kingdom: the Prophet will still add something, as for example, after for ever, yet more, and ever, or, beyond that too. And yet, saith Isidore, though this Kingdom be Eternal, though infinite, though every way blessed, though it be promised to us, not a word of that. For what man is there of a thousand that spends the least part of a day in meditating upon that? that ever once makes mention of that? that ever instructs his Wife, his Children, and his Servants concerning that? We prattle much of all other things; but as for Heaven there is scarce any mention made of that; or if there be, surely it is very rare. In setting forth the commendation of his own Country, every man is a nimble-tongued Orator: But as for that which is our true Country indeed, we blush and are almost ashamed, being too modest in commending that. For it is come to pass in these days, by the disuse of holy conference, that men think themselves not witty nor facetious enough, unless they speak idle and unprofitable words, and make foolish jests: nay that is not all, unless their

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cheeks swell, and their lips run over with filthy and unfavoury speeches. Oh ! This is to go astray quite out of the way. But let our hearts and mouths be filled with the praise and desire of things *Eternal* ; let our thoughts and words always run after them : we have no other way to true glory, but this ; and there is no true glory, but that which is *Eternal*.

The chief Priests and the Pharisees amongst the Jews, to overthrow Christ's power ( as they thought ) and to eternize their politick Government , assembled themselves together in Council : and by their foolish wisdom ( as it proved ) made

Decrees to their own hurt. *Augst.* gantly speaketh St. *Augustine* of them, Consulting and Deliberating together in full Court : The chief Priests, saith he, and the Pharisees took counsel together what they should do for their own good, and yet they said not, *Let us believe.* The wicked and ungodly men sought more how to hurt and to destroy, than how to provide for their own security, that they might be saved. And yet they were in fear and in counsel : For they said, *What do we ? For this man doth many Miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him. And the Romans shall come, and take away both our Place and Nation.*

*Nation*, John 11. 47, 48. They were afraid to lose things *Temporal*, and never thought upon the life which is *Eternal*: and so they lost both. Such is the vanity, and affected mockery of our foolish cogitations. What are we? and what is all that we call ours? *To day* we flourish like a flower, we are well spoken of, we please, and are in favour with men: But (alas!) *to-morrow* our flower will fade, we shall be ill spoken of, and out of favour with God and Man: Man whom hitherto we pleased; and God, whom we never studied for to please. We neglect Heaven, and keep not Earth: We get not the favour of God, and lose the Worlds favour. And so we are most deplorately miserable, and destitute on both sides. If death would but spare those that are the happy ones of this World, it may be they might find here some glory: some, I say, such as it is; for there is none true but that which is in Heaven, and *Eternal*. But (alas!) death spares no Man; sees in the dark, and is not seen; and watches his time when he may set upon us, when we think not of him. What shall become of us? Whither will he carry us, if here we have lived wickedly? To the bar of Christs judgment, and from thence to the pit of Hell: and from thence there is no re-

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demption. Nobility from thence sets no man free: Power delivers no man. The applause of men formerly given, yields there no comfort. Let us here seek the favour of God and his glory. That is the true glory which is got by the shunning of vain glory: and there is no true glory but that which is *Eternal*.

*Solomon* in the *Proverbs* describeth *Wisdom* like a Queen, attended by two waiting-maids, *Eternity* and *Glory*; the first on the right hand, the second on the left. *Glory* is nothing worth, if there be not joyned with it *Eternity*; that which all we Christians do expect. For here we have no continuing City, but we seek one to come, *Eternal* in the heavens. The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance, Heb. 13: 14. 2 Cor. 5: 1. Psal. 112. 6. To give an Alms to a poor Man, to moderate a greedy appetite, to resist an enemy of chastity, these are works that require not much pains, or time for the doing: and yet the remembrance of these, together with their reward, shall be *Eternal*. What a small thing was it that *Mary Magdalen* bestowed upon our Saviours feet! How quickly had she done it! And yet it is made known throughout the whole world, Matth. 26. 13. Some others, it may be, would have admired.



mired other things in her, her cherry cheeks, her comely countenance, the pleasant flower of her youth, her rare grace, her great riches, her affability and courtesie, and such like. These were not the things which Christ commends in her; but it was the office which she performed unto his feet. The thing it self was not great: and yet it was a means to procure for her *Eternal* glory, and a never dying name. *It shall be preacht throughout the whole world*: This is the Testimony of Christ. This work of hers was not engraven in Marble, nor cast in Brass, nor promulged in the Market place, nor proclaimed with a Drum and a Trumpet: and yet it hath continued for a memorial of her to this day, and so shall for ever; and *It shall be preached throughout the whole world*. If you consider the *Action* it self, *Judas Iscariot* the covetous Purse-bearer found fault with it: *Simon* the swelling and proud Pharisee condemned it: If the *matter*, it was but an Ointment, at the most not worth above thirty small pieces of Gold: If the *place*; it was private: If the *witnesses* present; they were but few: If the *person*; she was a Woman, and one infamous: And yet for all these, *It shall be preached throughout the whole world*. How many Emperors have advanced their Colours

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Colours displayed, their victorious and triumphant Eagles, and set up their Standards in their Enemies Camp! How many warlike Captains have led popular Armies, and commanded them worthily! How many provident Governours have ruled their people very wisely! How many Kings have erected rare Monuments, and Statues, and built Castles and Cities! How many learned Men have wasted their brains in new Inventions, and have like *Chymicks*, distilled them into *Receivers* of Paper! And to what end all this? To keep their names in continual remembrance, and to be recorded amongst worthy and memorable Men. And yet notwithstanding they lodge in the bed of silence, and lie buried in the grave of oblivion. But one good work that the righteous doth, shall be had in everlasting remembrance: Time and envy shall never deface and conceal it; the wisest Men, Captains, Prelates, and Kings themselves, shall with reverence read and hear it. *It shall be preached throughout the whole world.*

The only way then to immortality and true *Eternity* is, to live well, and so to die well. Go to now, ye *Romans*, if ye will seek *Eternity* in Statues and Marble monuments: but you shall never find it there. L

for my part will wish rather with *St. Hierome*, in the life of *Paul the Eremite*, Oh remember, saith he, *Hierome* a sinner, who if God had given him the choice, would have preferred the poor Cloak of *Paul* with his good works, before the Scarlet Robes of Kings with their Kingdoms. Let us Christians here, whilst we have time, make over our Riches; for fear lest we lose them, let us send them before us into another world: Heaven stands open, ready to receive them. We need not doubt of the safe carriage: the Carriers are very faithful and trusty; but they are the poor and needy of this world. We make over unto them here by way of exchange a few things of little value, being to receive in heaven an exceeding Eternal weight of glory, 2 Cor. 4. 17. For so hath Christ promised upon the performance of this precept. *I say unto you, Make to your selves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness: that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.* But let us pass from the *Romans* unto others.

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### CHAP. II.

*A better way than the former which the Romans followed to Eternity.*

**D***arius* the King of the *Persians*, most notable for his slaughter, had in his Army ten thousand *Persians*, which he therefore called immortal  
*Cal.* (as *Cælius Rhodiginus* interpre-  
*Rho-* teth it ) not because he thought  
*digin.* they should never die, ( for  
*lib. 8.* where are there any such? ) but  
*cap. 2.* because as any of the number  
*l. 25.* was diminished by sword or sick-  
*cap. 1.* ness, it was presently made up; so that still there was neither more nor less than ten thousand. Thus *Darius* framed unto himself a kind of immortality and *Eternity*: But ( alas! ) it was a very short one; for within a little space, he and all his Army utterly perished. *The Presidents and Princes assembled together unto Darius, and said thus unto him, King Darius, Live for ever, Dan. 6. 6.* Alas, How vain was this wish, and how short this *Eternity*? We live but seventy or eighty years at the most: we are but in a Dream, if we think to live here for ever. Not without cause therefore *Xerxes*, ( when for the conquering and subjugating

Greece (as *Herodotus* reports) he carried with him out of *Asia* two great Armies both by Sea and Land (in number three and twenty hundred thousand, seventeen thousand, and six hundred, besides others that attended upon Soldiers) upon a day taking his prospect from a Mountain, and beholding his Soldiers, fell a weeping: and being asked the reason why, he said: it was, Because after a matter of fifty or sixty years, of so many hundred thousand Men so elect and strong, scarce one should be found alive.

We may Dream, and feign unto our selves, I know not what *Eternities*: But in the mean time *we must needs die and are as water spilt upon the ground.* 2 Sam. 14. 14.

Another and better type of *Eternity* was found out at *Constantinople*, in the year of our Lord 459. The Church of *Constantinople*, in the time when *Gennadius* was Bishop, was augmented by a new and noble foundation of a Monastery of *Acæmets* dedicated to Saint *John Baptist*. These *Acæmets* were so called for not sleeping, because they were never all at once to sleep, but still to be exercised in their course night and day in singing praises unto God. These *Acæmets* were divided after this manner into three Companies:

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panies: so that when the first company had made an end of singing divine praises, the second should begin; and when the second had made an end, the third should begin. By means of this godly institution, the City had in some sort heaven within it self always sounding with the praises of God; or at least a Type or Representation of the *Eternity* in Heaven, where God shall be praised for all *Eternity*, with great delight and cheerfulness, and without all weariness. Therefore hath the *Psalmist* good cause to cry out, *Blessed are they which dwell in thy house, they will still be praising Thee,* Psal. 84. 4. Then shall all the blessed say, as *Peter* did upon the Mountain, *It is good for us to be here,* Matth. 17.

*Bernard* 4. For, as *St. Bernard* speaketh, *Eternity* is true riches without measure: but he adds this withal, It is not found, unless it be sought with perseverance.

*Serm. 2.*  
*de Om.*  
*S. S.*

But how shall we so seek that we may obtain it? Hear what the good Father saith: By *Poverty*, by *Meekness*, and by *Tears*, there is renewed in the Soul the stamp and image of *Eternity*, which comprehendeth all times. First, *Poverty* is the way to *Eternity*. *Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,* Matth. 5. 3.

Where

Where poor men are dispersed and forsaken, there is the heart and the Money locked up together in the Chest: Where Money is expended according to the Rules of *Avarice*, there is no affect or love of poverty, there is no desire or love of *Eternity*. Secondly, *Meekness*: By *Meekness* we make our selves secure of things present, and have an assurance of things to come. *Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth*, Mat. 5. 5. If any man ask, What shall we say of him that is void of *Meekness* and *Patience*, that can scarce at any time speak a mild word? What gains he by his implacable impatience? What doth it profit him to rage and fret with indignation, to make outcries and tumults, to shew his will to do mischief, though he cannot effect what he wou'd; or to conclude, to salute no man civilly, as if he were an enemy to all humanity and affability? What shall we say of such a man? If there be any such, he is sure to suffer loss of goods or good name or both. For the riches which he hath, he possesseth not, but keeps them like a dog, whose property is to bark at a man, to fly upon him, and to bite him: as for his good name, if he have any, he shall not augment it by the title of impatience: and as for Heaven, he loseth that before he hath taken possession.

## 64 *The third Consideration*

possession of it. Thirdly, *Tears*. For by weeping and mourning we redeem the time past, we recover what we prodigally spent by sinning. But this mourning and sorrow must not last for an hour only, or for a day: for this is nothing else but to do as he did, who at his Mothers death put on mourning-clothes, forced for the present a few Tears, and so went along after the bier, and left her not till he saw her buried; but the same day, or the next day after, wiped away all Tears from his Eyes, changed his weeping into laughing, cast off his mourning clothes, and put on colours. This is not to mourn in good earnest, to make an end of mourning so suddenly. But this we do (alas!) too often. To day we make publick confession of our sins to God, and hear Absolution; we repent us of our sins, and receive the holy Communion: and within a day after we sin again with delight, and without fear, and oftentimes more grievously than before. We detest for the present the wicked course of our life past; and we return again to the same pass. We forswear the sins which we formerly committed; and again the same day we commit the same. So with the same tongue we proclaim Christ innocent, and crucifie him afresh, as if we were the true Brothers



of *Pontius Pilate*, who with one and the same mouth did both absolve him and condemn him, confessing that he *found no cause of death in him*, Luke 23. 22, 24. and yet adjudging him to be crucified. We are very fickle and inconstant, but in nothing more constant than in the repetition of a vicious course of Life. Alas! alas! we carry too much of the *Moon*, that is, Inconstancy in our breast. Sometimes we are so zealous and so holy, that we will not admit of a cheerful countenance, for fear lest it should hinder our sanctity and devotion: we look demurely, casting our eyes down to the ground, and knit the brows, as being angry with our selves, when we find in our selves the least remissness or coldness in holy duties. But this sanctity and devotion doth never continue long: after a while we begin to hate even piety itself: and the stream being turned, we turn again to our former riot and intemperance; and we are as ready to dissolve the knot of friendship made betwixt God and us, as at the first we were unwilling to have it knit. At length *Piety*, attended with *sorrow* and *repentance*, presents her self again unto us, and puts to flight lasciviousness, until the time comes that we begin to *repent* us of our *repentance*. So we seldom continue long in any honest and godly course, for  
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it seems unto us too laborious : and at every light beck we row down the stream of our former uncleanness. Such is the inconstancy of our life, that it presents unto our minds all sorts of pleasures and vices. We make an outward shew of adoring virtue ! but in heart and mind we fall down and worship vice ; a most laborious kind of service. This is not the way unto *Eternity*, unless it be of punishment and torments which shall have no end.

Let us single out one Christian man of many, and such a one especially as is most addicted to his pleasure ; let us carry him along with us to the mouth of a Furnace red hot and flaming ; and then let us begin to question him after this manner : How much pleasure wouldst thou ask to continue burning in this Furnace for one day ? He will answer to this undoubtedly , I would not be tormented in these flames for one day, to gain the whole world and all the pleasures in the world. But let us propound another condition unto him. What reward wouldst thou ask to endure this fire only for half a day ? Propound what reward you will, there is nothing so delicate, so precious, so dear unto me, which I would be willing to buy at so dear a price, as these torments. But to try once more, What reward and pleasure wouldst thou ask.

ask to go into this furnace, and to stay there but one hour? His answer certainly will be this, Let the most covetous and impudent man in the world ask what he can, that is not to be compared with the unutterable and unsufferable scorchings and torments of this fire, though they should last but for one hour. If these answers be good and agreeable to right reason, How comes it to pass, O God, that for a little gain, and that but vile, for deceitful honour, and that fugitive, for filthy pleasures, and that not long, so many men so little regard *Eternal* punishment in Hell-fire! We cannot be persuaded with any reward, no, though it be to gain a whole world to stay but for one hour in fire *Temporal*: and yet, if either gain at any time invited us, or if honour smileth upon us, or pleasure allureth us, we never fear Hell and fire *Eternal*. But thou wilt say, I hope for better; God is merciful, and his goodness will not suffer me to despair, or to be terrified with the fear of evil to come. So indeed we are wont to speak: and the words in themselves are not impious, if our works were pious. But for the most part our works are such, that if we rightly consider them, we have little cause to hope for mercy. It is a very dangerous and foolish part, for a man to live in a constant course of ungodliness

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and to hope for *Eternity* amongst the blessed. Alas! one sin is sufficient to condemn us. Knowest thou not what Christ hath threatened in the Gospel? *Whosoever shall say unto his brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire,* Matth. 5. 22. Knowest thou not what Christ hath forbidden? *Whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath committed Adultery with her already in his heart,* v. 28. Knowest thou not what Christ hath premonished? *Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven: but he which doth the Will of my Father which is in heaven.* Matth. 7. 21. Knowest thou not that Christ shall shut many out of the gate? *He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me: And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.* Matth. 10. 37, 38. Knowest thou not what Christ hath openly and plainly said, and again repeated? *Many be called, but few chosen:* Matth. 20. 16. and 22. *Few indeed, yea very few.* Knowest thou not how often Christ hath exhorted to amendment of life? *Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven,* Matth. 18. 3. *If thy hands or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: It is better for thee to enter into life, halt and maimed, rather than having*

two hands, or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire, v. 8. Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish, Luke 13. 3. And not long after, Strive to enter in at the straight gate : for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able, ver. 24. Knowest thou not how expressly St. Paul recites up all those things that hinder us from entering into that blessed Eternity? The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanness, Lasciviousness, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Heresies, Envyings, Murders, Drunkenness, Revellings, and such like : of the which I tell you before, as I have told you in time past, That they which do such things, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21. Now if any Man be guilty to himself of any one of these sins here reckoned up, and is not so grieved for it, that he seeks by all means possible to avoid it for the time to come, he may sing to himself if he will, this vain Spero, I hope, and I hope : but this mans hope is indeed none at all, but mere rashness and presumption. For a man to adventure the danger of stripes and blows, is an evil that may be born. To lose at play an hundred or a thousand Florens, is a great misfortune, but may be endured. To lay his  
head

## 70 *The third Consideration*

head at stake, and to bring his life in danger, is a bad adventure; but at the worst it is but loss of life, and that loss is not of all other the greatest. But to hazard the eternal salvation both of body and soul, by living at uncertainties, by hoping in words, and despairing in works, nullifying hope by a wicked and ungodly life: this is the most extreamest of all evils: this is the most grievous misfortune a man can fall into: this is most pernicious rashness and holdness: this is extream folly and madness. *Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you, Psal. 50. 22.*

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### CHAP. III.

*That the way of Eternity is diligently and carefully to be sought after.*

**L**ET every Christian man therefore often ask himself, and others also which are in the place of God, this question, What shall I do that I may obtain blessed *Eternity*, or *Eternal* blessedness? Am I in the right way that leadeth unto *Eternity*? Something I do indeed, but it is but very little, and not worth speaking of, I thirst and breath after the joys which are immortal and *Eternal*: but few are my works, cold and imperfect at the best, and altogether

altogether unworthy of an *Eternal* reward. I think it long till I arrive at the haven. but I am afraid of the troublesome waves and tempests by the way? when as yet notwithstanding that is the safest and best way unto heaven, which is most rough and narrow. This is the very Truth it self of Gods mouth pronounceth, and Christ proclaimeth, saying, *Enter ye in at the strait gate: For wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be (alack! too many) that go in thereat. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life; and few there be (alack! too few) that find it, Matth. 17. 13, 14. Again, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: For many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able, Luk. 13. 24.* Oh what a fearful word is that, **M A N Y**; and that **F E W**! How should it make us tremble! But we miserable men deceive our selves, rashly promising unto our selves *Eternity*: and yet I cannot tell whether we may be more truly said to hope, or to dream, that we shall be reckoned amongst those few before mentioned. Would to God *now*, even *now* whilest it is the *accepted time*, and the *day of Salvation*, 2 Cor. 6. 2. we would have a diligent and an intent eye upon *Eternity*, and reason thus with our selves:

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Alas!

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Alas ! What is all this that I suffer ; Or, that I see others suffer ? It is nothing if it be compared with *Eternity*. What if I could reckon up as many labours and perils as Saint *Paul* himself did undergo. as they are by him set down in his second Epistle to the *Corinthians*, and the eleventh Chapter ? 2 *Cor.* 11. 27. If I should endure *hunger* and *thirst*, enmities and injuries, sickness and poverty ? Yea more, what if I were *stoned* with Saint *Paul*, and *beaten with rods* ? What if I *suffered shipwreck* ? ver. 25. All these are nothing to punishments *Eternal*. Therefore in all adversity, I must thus think with my self, I shall *see an end of all*, Psal. 119. 96.

The Prophet *Daniel* having reckoned up sundry calamities, at length addeth these words, *Even to the time of the end : because it is yet for a time appointed*, Dan. 11. 35. Come hither, come hither, all ye that are in affliction, in sorrow, need, sickness, or any other calamity. Why do ye drown your selves in your own tears ? Why do ye make your life bitter unto you with impatience and complaining ? Here is comfort for you, great comfort drawn from the time of that suffering. Are divers calamities upon you ? Be not cast down : have a good courage : they shall continue only *for a time* ; Do ye suffer contumely and reproach ?



proach? Are ye wearied with injuries? Are others troubles multiplied upon you? cease to lament; all these shall last but *for a time*; they shall not last *for ever*; your sighing shall have an end.

Tears may distil from your eyes *for a time*; but sighs and groans shall not arise from your hearts *for ever*. The time is at hand, when you shall be delivered from all grief; and be translated unto everlasting happiness. This is most clear by that in *Ecclesiasticus*, *A patient man will bear for a time, and afterward joy shall spring up unto him*, Ecclus. 1. 23. But ye also which think your selves the only happy men on earth, and the darlings of the world, know thus much, and be not proud, neither lift up your horn; All your seeming happiness (for it is no more at the best) hath but short and narrow bounds and limits, and is quickly passed over. Your triumphing is but *for a time*; your golden dreams last but *for a time*; after a time, and that not long, death will command you to put off fortunes painted vizard, and stand among the croud. Then shall ye truly appear so much the more unhappy, by how much the more ye seemed to your selves before, in your own foolish imaginations, most happy. Therefore whether sorrow or joy, all is but *for a time* in this world.

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It is *Eternity* alone which is not concluded within any bounds of time. Whether therefore the body suffer or the mind; whether we lose riches or honours; whether our patience be exercised by sorrow or grief, cares, or any afflictions, inward or outward, all is but painted and momentany, if we think upon *Eternal* punishments. For when fifty thousand years shall be passed after the day of Judgment, there shall still remain fifty thousand Millions of years; and when those likewise are passed there shall still remain more and more, and yet more Millions of years, and there shall never be an end. But who thinks upon these things? who weighs and considers them well with himself? Sometimes we seem to have favour of things *Eternal*: but we are tossed up and down with the motions and thoughts of things past, and things future; our heart wavereth, and is full of vanity. Who will establish it, and set it in a sure place, that it may stand a while, and standing admire, and admiring be raviſht with the splendor of *Eternity*, which always stands, and never passeth away? Well did *Myrogenes*, when *Eustachius* Archbishop of *Jerusalem* sent gifts unto him, he did very well, I say in refusing them, and

*Auguſt.*  
*lib. II.*  
*conf. cap.*  
*II.*

and saying, Do but one thing for me, Only pray for me, that I may be delivered from *Eternal* torment. Neither

was *Tully* out of the way when he said, No humane thing can seem great unto a wise man, who hath the knowledg of all *Eternity*, and of the magnitude of the whole

world. But *Francis*, the Author of the Order of the *Franciscans*, hath a saying far better than that of *Tully*, The pleasure that is here, saith he, is but short; but the punishment that shall be hereafter, is infinite: The labour that is here, is but small; but the glory which shall be hereafter, is *Eternal*. Take your choice. Many are called, few chosen, but all rewarded according to their works.

Let us hasten our repentance therefore, whilest we have time. It is better, saith *Guericus*, to be purged by water than by fire, and it is far easier. Now is the time for repentance; Let our timely

repentance therefore prevent punishment. Whosoever is afraid of the hoar frost, the snow shall fall upon him; he which feareth the lesser detriment, shall suffer a greater, he which will not undergo the light burden of Repentance, shall be forced to undergo the most heavy burthen and most

*Tull.**Tusc.**quest.**lib. 3.**Guerr.**Serm.**de Puri.*

## 76 *The third Consideration*

grievous punishment of Hell. *S. Gregory* hath a saying to this purpose ; Some, saith he, whilst they are afraid of *Temporal* punishments, run themselves upon *Eternal* punishment. Hither we may add that of *Pacian* ; Remember, saith he, that in Hell there is no place for confession of sins, no place for Repentance ; for then it is too late to repent, and the time is past. Make fast therefore whilst you are in the way. We are afraid of *Temporal* fire, and the *Executioners* hands ; but what are these to the claws of tormenting

*Ambr.* *Devils*, and the *Everlasting* fire  
*cap. 8.* of Hell? The Counsel of Saint  
*adVirg.* *Ambrose* to a lapsed Virgin fits  
*laps.* well in this place.

True Repentance , saith he, ought not to be in word only, but in deed ; and this is true Repentance indeed , if thou settest before thine eyes from what glory thou art fallen ; and considerest with thy self out of what Book thy name is blotted ; and believest that now thou art near unto utter darkness , where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth without end. And when thou art certainly perswaded that these things are true, as indeed they are, seeing that the Soul that sinneth is in danger of Hell-fire, and there is no means after Baptism left to escape, but only Re-  
 pentance ;

penitance ; be content to suffer any labour, and to undergo any affliction, to be freed from *Eternal* punishment. The diseases of the Body move the sick man to purge the Body : Let the diseases of our Souls move us also to take the purgation of repentance : let the desire of our Salvation move us : let the fear of *Eternal* death and *Eternal* torments move us : let the hope of attaining *Eternal* life and *Eternal* glory move us. Let us embrace that which purgeth the Soul, and let us eschew that which polluteth it. And nothing defiles the Soul more than a filthy Body. Faithful is this counsel of Saint *Ambrose*, and worthy of us to be embraced.

O Christ Jesus, grant unto us that we may so possess things transitory and *temporal*, that finally we lose not the things which are *Eternal* : and give us grace to walk in their steps, and to follow their good example, of whom Saint *Augustine* speaketh ; Many there are, saith he, that willingly come under the yoke, and of proud and haughty men, become humble and lowly, desiring to be what before they despised, and hating to be what before they were ; passing by, like strangers, things present, and making haste with greediness after things to come. They pant in their running towards their *Eternal* Country,

78 *The third Consideration, &c.*

preferring Abstinence before Fulness, Watching before Sleep, and Poverty before Riches, accounting labour in the conquest of vices to be but pleasure, loving their enemies, passing by injuries; and all for the hope of an *Eternal* reward. And who then would not suffer any extremity and labour, to purchase unto themselves an *Eternal* reward?

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THE

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I have considered the dayes of old  
the yeares of antient times. Ps: 76. 5



Thy arrows pass by me the voice of thy Thunder  
is round about me the arrows of present pun-  
ishments fly over my head, the voice of that  
horrible thunder, go ye cursed into Eternall fire.  
is like a wheel that will alwaies turne .



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THE FOURTH  
CONSIDERATION

Upon

ETERNITY.

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*How holy David meditated upon Eternity,  
and how we should imitate him.*

**T**HAT God should punish the *Apo-*  
*state Angels* and Men condemned  
at the last day, with *Eternal* pu-  
nishments, this hath seemed so strange to  
some and so incredible, that *Origen* him-  
self ( a man otherwise of an admirable wit  
and excellent learning, very well skilled  
in Scripture, hath been so bold as to  
teach, That the Devils and the Damned  
after a certain time, when they shall be  
sufficiently purged by the fire from their  
sins, shall at length be restored  
to grace. But *St. Augustine* and  
others convince him and con-  
demn him of this his error.  
Yet notwithstanding this error  
hath found in the world many

*Lib. 2<sup>o</sup>.  
De civi-  
tate Dei,  
cap. 23<sup>o</sup>.  
&c.*

favourers.

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favourers. Certain Hereticks called the *Aniti*, have disseminated and scattered it throughout *Spain*, by divers their interpretations. Some thought that all the damned, others that Christians only, others that Catholicks only, others that those only that had been more liberal than others in giving of alms, should be delivered at length out of Hell. Though *St. Augustine* hath not refuted these their errors, yet the holy writ hath done it plainly and openly. *Matth. 25. 41. Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire: And again, ver. 46. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life Eternal.* Here no Glosses or Interpretations will serve their turn to defend their errors. -Wherefore the Divine *Psalmist* King *David*, though he delighted much in the consideration of both times, that which was past, and that which was to come. *Mine eyes, (saith he) prevent the night-watches: Psal. 119. 148.* and again in another place, *Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak. Psal. 77. 4.* What was it, Blessed Prophet, that thus broke thy sleep? What business hadst thou to do so early, before day-light? What caused thee so to keep silence, and to be troubled in mind? Hear what he saith, *I have considered the days.*

days of old, and the years of ancient times, and the years of Eternity I have had in my mind, Psal. 77. 5. Lo, this was the thing that broke his sleep, when he compared the years that were past with the years that were to come, and with Eternity. Neither did he thus in the day only, but *I call to remembrance*, saith he, *my song in the night: I commune with my own heart, and my spirit made diligent search*, ver. 6. And what moved him to this nightly exercise? *Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? is his mercy clean gone for ever?* See how he fears and trembles at the very consideration of Eternity, how he is afraid of Gods judgments, lest God should punish them with Eternal punishment. And what is the end and effect of this Meditation? *And I said, this is mine infirmity: But I will remember, &c. or, Now I will begin.* So in an instant, at the very same minute, he became better than he was, and delayed not, neither did he defer his Repentance, and put it off till worse years; But, saith he, *Now I will begin*, now I will live a more godly life than I have done. He saith not, After such an hour, or after such a day; but, *Now even now.* I, will some men say, if I were as David was: If I could meditate of Eternity as blessed David did, it may

## 84 *The fourth Consideration*

may be then I would readily and with alacrity say with *David*, *Now I will begin*: But I am so intangled with daily cares, so hindred with worldly business, so distracted into divers parts one way or other, that I cannot. I live amongst men; I see and hear much evil; I have no time or leisure once to have so good a thought in mind as the thought of *Eternity*. When we meet together in company to make merry, amidst our sports, and amongst our cups, we never confer about such grave points: our minds wander up and down about many things, and cannot then fix themselves upon the consideration of *Eternity*. At our feast and merry-meetings, we take our cups, and please our selves in making jests: Thoughts of *Eternity* are too severe, too sad and melancholick to be entertained by us; we banish such out of our company. We enquire what news out of *Italy*, or *France*, or *Spain*. That which you tell us of so often concerning Heaven and Hell, is now old, and grown stale. We know it well enough already, what need you repeat it so often, till we loath it? So by this means there is no place or time left once to think upon *Eternity*. O Christian Brother, it is true indeed which thou sayest, I cannot deny it. But I could wish thou wouldst be as  
ready.

ready and forward to amend thy fault, as to confess it. It is too clear and manifest, we see it with our eyes, that there is little or no care in the World of *Eternity*, although one thing or other every day still puts us in mind of it.

The Book of the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of *Rome* at the Consecration of their Bishops doth appoint these words to be recited, *Annos Æternos in mente habe*, *Keep still in mind the years of Eternity*; or *Think upon Eternity*. For when the Pope new Elect, in a solemn manner is carried along to *St. Peter's Church*, there goes one before him, having in his hand burning flax, and shaking it, he repeateth thrice these words, *Pater Sancte, sic transit gloria mundi, Holy Father, so the glory of the World passeth away*. It were a devout and godly practice, if we did every day at the beginning and end of all our actions, say unto our selves these words, *Annos Æternos in mente habe, Think upon Eternity*. But especially when we are tempted unto any sin, when the Devil suggests and puts into our minds ill thoughts, and when our Conscience is in danger of being wounded, O then *Think upon Eternity*.

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### C H A P. I.

*Divers admonitions to think upon Eternity.*

**P**hilip King of Macedon appointed a certain noble young man to salute him thrice every morning after this manner, *Philippus, homo es; Remember, Philip, Thou art but a man*; that being put daily in mind of his mortality, he might carry himself towards mortal men like a mortal man. Much more ought every good Christian man, and true member of the Catholick Church, to be a monitor unto himself and with due consideration thrice at the least every day say to himself, *Eternity, Eternity, Eternity! Why so? Set thine house in order* (saith the Prophet to King *Hezekias*;) *For thou shalt die and not live.* There will come an evening for certain, after which thou shalt see no morning; or there will come a morning; after which thou shalt see no evening. Have an especial care therefore in all thy actions, that thou woundest not thy Conscience; and trust not too far to those things that perish, for fear lest thou thy self together with them dost likewise perish, and finally lose the things that are *Eternal*.

It is a custom in *Germany*, and not to be disliked, in the evening when a Candle

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is first lighted, or brought into a room, to say, *Deus det nobis lucem Aeternam*, God grant unto us light Eternal. We shall do well to imitate the *Germans* in this custom: or rather it is already in use and hath been long ago in many Parts of this Kingdom, to say, *God grant us the light of Heaven*. It is very good daily to put us in mind of *Eternity*.

There is likewise a kind of *Eternity* in slavery and imprisonment, but infamous and horrible. It is a cruel punishment and worse than death it self in some mens judgment, to be condemned to perpetual imprisonment, or to be a perpetual Gally-slave.

Those which are oppressed with sickness or other sorrows, do likewise imagine with themselves, that even in their sufferings there is a kind of *Eternity*. Whence it comes to pass that we often hear them utter such distempered speeches as these, *Will this last always? Shall I still without end be nailed fast to my bed? Shall I suffer these pains and sorrows perpetually? Shall I always be thus vexed and tormented? Alack! these Eternities are but short, and soon come to an end*. But if it be so grievous to flesh and blood to endure slavery or imprisonment here on earth, though but for a moment (for our life is no longer, according to *David's*

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*vid's* measure, but a span, which is very short) what care and diligence, and what circumspection ought we to use, that we be not cast into the prison of hell, and into the fathomless pit, where there is slavery and imprisonment, pain and torment, to be endured throughout all ages, beyond all times, even to all *Eternity*.

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### C H A P. II.

*That Eternity transcends all numbers of Arithmetick.*

**T**HERE is a very common and well known Arithmetick, which Children are taught when they first go to School; and this is it. Suppose there was a Mountain of very fine Sand as big as the whole Earth, or rather much bigger: then suppose that every year an Angel should take from this Mountain one, and but one grain of Sand; how many thousand, and thousand, and again I say thousand, yea how many hundred thousand and yet more, how many thousand millions of years must there needs pass, before it can be perceived that the mountain is grown less, or any whit diminished? Let a man that is skilful in Arithmetick sit down, and begin to cast, how many years must pass before the  
moun-



mountain, or half the mountain be removed by the Angel. Certainly we cannot conceive that ever he shall be able to cast up the total number of the sand. But herein are we mistaken: for although we cannot conceive it possible to be done, yet it may be done. But *Eternity* exceeds this number of years beyond all comparison, it is most certain: for *between a thing finite and a thing infinite there is no comparison, no proportion.* *Eternity* hath no limits, no terms, no bounds, none at all. But suppose the damned should burn in Hell no longer, than till the Mountain by grain after grain, year after year, should by the Angel be quite removed: yet what an incomprehensible number of years must first pass, before they can expect to see the day of deliverance! But (alas!) there is no such day to be expected; their torments shall have no end: After that incomprehensible number of years, it shall be truly said, Now beginneth their *Eternity*, their *Eternity* is not in any part expired, they are as far from the end of their torments as they were at the beginning. After a thousand years, yea after a hundred thousand years, there shall not be an end, or middle, or beginning of *Eternity*: for the measure of *Eternity* is *Always*. The same art of Arithmetick about the business of *Eternity*,



suffer us not to be plunged headlong into the bottomless pit, to be tormented with the damned for all *Eternity*.

But yet if God would but say unto the damned, let the earth be covered with most fine sand, and let the world be filled therewith, and let it be heaped up so high as heaven, and then let an Angel come once in every thousand years, and take one grain of sand out of this heap; when after so many thousand years as there be grains of sand, the Angel shall have removed the whole heap, then will I deliver you out of Hell: O how would the damned exult and rejoyce, and not think themselves damned! But (alas) after so many thousands of years there remain yet more, and more, and infinite more to all *Eternity*, even for ever and ever. This is that heavy weight that so presseth the damned. Let every one therefore that sinneth, consider with himself, and again, I say, let him consider, that unless he repent, he shall be pressed and groan under this heavy weight of *Eternity*.

*Gulielmus Peraldus*, Bishop of *Lions*, a very religious and learned man, hath another manner of reckoning, meditating upon the innumerable number of years throughout which the damned shall be tormented. If the damned, saith he, should every day distil from their eyes but one small tear,  
and

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and those tears should be added together day after day, they would at length far exceed the drops of the Ocean: for they have their number and measure; and it is easie with God to say, So many are the drops of the Ocean and no more; but the tears of the damned exceed all number and measure. Alas! Alas! How little do we think upon these things! How freely and wilfully do we sin, and make our selves guilty of *Eternal* punishment, and that oftentimes for a very little short and filthy pleasure.

Yet there remains one way more, of casting up this numberless number of years: Suppose there were a schedule of Parchment a span broad, but so long that it would begirt and incircle the whole Globe of the Earth: and suppose it were written all over very close with figures of 9, from one end to another: who so skilful an Arithmetician, that can tell the number thereof? What Mountain so great, that consisteth of so many grains of dust of sand? What Ocean so vast, that containeth within it so many drops of water? And yet this is nothing to *Eternity*: it stretcheth it self further than so; it knows no bounds; it is extended beyond all measure. But how far is it extended? It is extended infinitely and without end. If thy heart (O Christian

stian Man ) be not turned into a stone, it cannot but melt at the consideration of these things, and the very thought of the bottomless pit and *Eternal* punishment will make thee fear and tremble. If there be any sense in thee, here it will shew it self. But as I said before, too few think upon these things ; and too many live so secure of their salvation, as if there were no Heaven, no God, no Hell, nor *Eternity*. Every day they heap up sin upon sin, as if they laboured and studied to make their last day to exceed the former, for the measure and number of their sins : and so they pass unto *Eternity* sporting and playing, as if they went to prison but a few weeks or days. Such men as these, saith St. *Gregory*, when they should be mourning for their sins, they are dancing for their pleasure ; and when they should be seriously meditating upon death, they run laughing unto execution. This is blindness indeed, this is oblivious madness. For this short life which is but the shadow of *Eternity*, we labour beyond all measure ; but for the life which is *Eternal*, and most happy, we scarce take any pains at all : And yet the not obtaining of this life is the incurring of *Eternal* death ; which as it is a torment more grievous than all the torments of this life, so in this it is most grievous, that there is no  
rest

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rest or mitigation of pain, no not for one short hour in the infinite space of all *Eternity*.

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### C H A P. III.

*What effect and fruit the consideration of Eternity bringeth forth.*

**A**ND this is it that hath made so many good Christians, and so many holy *Martyrs* so prompt and ready to suffer any torments, and any kind of death, that even in their greatest pains, when they lay wallowing in their own blood, they were most stout and couragious, and with a constant look and chearful countenance insulted over their Tormentors. *They had the years of Eternity in mind.* This is it that hath made the world seem distasteful and unpleasant unto many, insomuch that they have taken their leave of all pleasures, and embraced and entertained a severe and strict course of life, giving themselves wholly to reading, meditation and prayer, and such holy duties, minding heaven, and heavenly things. *They had the years of Eternity in mind.* The thought of *Eternity* will make all things in this life seem easie and pleasant, though to flesh and blood they seem most grievous and unpleasant.

It

It makes all labours seem light and very short. Prayer, study, watching, and such like holy duties it commends unto us, and makes them seem amiable. It seasons and sweetens hunger and thirst. It mitigates the sense of pinching poverty. It makes all manner of crosses in this life not only tolerable, but also grateful and comfortable. Whosoever hath the years of *Eternity* in mind, and imprints them within, deeper and deeper by daily meditation, shunneth no labour, neither is daunted with any losses. Offer him a Kingdom, offer him all the delights and pleasures in the World: and he will not change his poor estate and condition for them. Such a man as this is never complaining; he endures all things, he submits himself to all. For thus he thinks with himself, what a small thing is this or that, that or this, and of how short continuance! I will therefore endure it patiently; it will not last always. It is but for an hour, and that a very short one, that mine enemies here oppress me. Well, go to ye detractors, bite me still, if ye will, ye enviers; I will not run from you. This is your hour and the power of darkness: But I expect the day of the Lord, and the day of *Eternity*; and why should I afflict and torment my self with sorrow and lamentation? All this life

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is but a death of one hour : The victory is not difficult ; but the triumph is *Eternal*. Why should I be afraid of the raging waves of this troublesome world ? I have sight of the haven already. Now it rains and thunders upon the heads of the good and godly ; but the storm will shortly blow over. But upon his enemies God shall always rain fire and brimstone, storm and tempest : this shall be their portion to drink, Dan. 12.2. *And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth ( so prophesieth Daniel ) shall awake ; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.* In the old Law God commanded Moses, saying, *Numb. 10. 2. Make thee two trumpets of silver, of an whole piece shalt thou make them, v. 4. If they blow but with one trumpet, then the Princes, which are the heads of the thousands of Israel shall gather themselves unto thee. When ye blow an alarm, then the Camp shall go forwards.* Unto these two trumpets we may compare these two words, NOW and ALWAYS. This is the law of the world, NOW let us be merry ; *now* let us rejoyce ; *now* let us enjoy our goods, while we have them : come, let us *now* crown our selves with roses, before they be withered ; *now* let us leave in every place the signs and footsteps of our joy. They that attend only to the sound of this Trumpet, they that have ears  
to



to hear nothing but this NOW, they live for the most part so, as if they were no ALWAYS for to follow. Therefore they do not remove the camp; amidst their pleasures they wilfully forget that they are here but Pilgrims and strangers: whithersoever the wanton flesh inviteth them they go with greediness: they are busied altogether in heaping up riches and following pleasures: and the sound of this NOW doth so obtund and dull their ears, that they are ~~deaf~~ deaf to all good counsels and precepts: and they will not so much as lend an ear to that ALWAYS which shall follow. But them which open their ears to hear, and their hearts to understand, when the Church soundeth both trumpets, ( as it often doth ) and thereupon seriously consider with themselves, and compare together this short NOW with that infinite and everlasting ALWAYS, they will use no delay, but presently remove the camp: they live here as Pilgrims and strangers: they have their loyns girt; they remember that they are in a journey; they send their riches and pleasures before them into their Country which is above; they chuse rather to enjoy them ALWAYS in Heaven, than NOW for a short time upon earth. Certain it is, whosoever heareth attentively, and mindeth seriously the Alarm of these

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Trumpets, and thereupon compareth together things present with things future, and things transitory with things *Eternal*, he will presently make himself ready to depart, he will prepare himself a place of burial, he will lay out his winding-sheet, he will send for his bier, and furnish himself with all things necessary for his journey, remembering still in every place, that he is passing on the way to *Eternity*, and conferring with himself every day after this manner: How shall I be able to give an account unto God for all my thoughts, words and deeds? and, When shall I give up my account? and what sentence will he pass upon me? NOW therefore will I die unto my self, that I may ALWAYS live unto my self and unto God. Well is it with that man, which timely and daily thus thinketh upon *Eternity*. Whatsoever we do, we are passing on our way, and we do not know how short it is, unto the gate which leadeth unto *Eternity*. At the last hour of our life death shall bring us unto this gate, and compel us to enter. Let us therefore so live, as if we were always expecting death, that if it should please God at any time to visit us with sickness, the fore-runner of death, we may entertain it cheerfully, and bear it patiently, lifting up our eyes unto Christ hanging upon the  
Cross,

Cross, the true and perfect pattern of Patience: and when the time of our dissolution draweth near, praying thus; Lord Jesu stand by me and comfort me; Lord Jesu be present with thy servant that putteth his trust in thee; Lord Jesu make me partaker of thy victory, Lord Jesu receive my spirit, and lead me through the darksome valley and shadow of death, lead me and forsake me not until thou hast brought my soul into the land of the living, O thou most potent conquerour of death, O thou which art my light, life, and salvation.

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To him be glory both now and  
for ever Amen. 2. Pet. 3. 18.



Because man shall go to his Eternall  
habitation. Eccclus :  
Alas ? how vnlike are the houses of Eternitie  
one of them we must inhabit: we must either  
for ever rejoyce in heaven or for ever  
burne in hell .

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THE FIFTH  
CONSIDERATION:  
Upon  
E T E R N I T Y.

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*How others, even wicked men themselves, have meditated upon Eternity.*

**T**HE old History of the Fathers telleth us of a religious Man, that reading upon the ninetieth Psalm came at length, having not thought of it, to these words, *For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday, when it is past,* and here stuck: For he could not conceive a reason, why a thousand years and one day should be compared together. Whereupon they say there a little bird was sent by God, which so ravisht the Man with her sweet singing, that though he heard her sing a very great while together yet he thought the time very short, scarce a short hour long. *The wind bloweth where it listeth,* Joh. 3. 8. Not good men only have with holy *David* meditated upon E-

F 4           ternity,

ternity, but even wicked men also, and those oftentimes against their will.

*Benedictus Rbenanus* reports of a vain and ungodly fellow, a very epicure and mere workling, which never used to fast or watch; one that could not endure the want of any thing, but especially sleep: Upon a certain night, it seemeth, this fellow could not sleep as he was wont, being much troubled with unusual dreams: so he turneth himself upon his bed from one side to another, and could not by any means get any rest; then he wished it were day. But here the wind of the Lord began to blow, though it were in a strange land: for good thoughts were very rare in this man. Being weary with watching, and finding no ease or rest at all, thus he began to think with himself; Would any be hired upon any condition to lye thus, two or three years together in darkness, without the company of friends, though his sickness were not very grievous? Would he be content to want his sports and plays so long? Would he be content to be bound to his bed, though it were a feather-bed, or a bed of Down, and never stir abroad to see any sights, or shews, or make merrery with his friends? I think no man would. And shall alone amongst all men enjoy rest and pleasure by an especial priviledge,  
and

and have no end of grief and sorrow? Surely no. Will I, nill I, needs I must some time or other lye down upon the bed of sickness, unless I be suddenly taken away by death, which God forbid. (*This was a good wind, these were good cogitations*) But what bed shall I have next, when death shall thrust me out of this? My body must rot under earth: For this is the condition of all Men after death. But what shall become of my soul in another World? Surely all Men do not go to the same place after death. Do not some go one way, and some another? Is there not an Hell as well as an Heaven? Wo and alas? What kind of bed shall the damned find in Hell? How many years shall they lie there? In what year after their first entrance shall the flames cease and be put out? Assuredly Christ doth not only in word threaten to cast the wicked into everlasting fire, but will also cast them indeed. This thing is certain and very manifest. Therefore the damned shall burn in Hell for ever. Therefore a thousand, and a thousand, and again I say a thousand years will not suffice to purge away the sins of this short life. Therefore they shall never see the sun any more, nor Heaven, nor God, being most miserable *Eternally* and without end. With such

thoughts as these this man became so vigilant and watchful, and proceeded so far, that night and day he could not be at rest, but *Eternity* did still run in his mind. Fain indeed he would have shaken off the thoughts thereof, as gnawing worms; but he could not. Therefore he followed sports and pastimes, went to merry meetings, sought out companions like himself, and sate oftentimes so long at his cups, that he laid his Conscience asleep, and so seemed to take some rest: but when he came again unto himself, his Conscience being awakened did presently accuse him, and suggest unto him afresh sorrowful thoughts of *Eternity*. Thus finding no rest, he resolved at length to amend his manners, and to betake himself to a better course of life. And thus he began to reason with himself, Miserable man that I am, what do I here? I so enjoy the world, that indeed I enjoy it not; I suffer many things I would not; I want many things which fain I would have: I serve like a slave, but who will pay me my wages! I see well enough how the world rewardeth those that love it, and do all their lives nothing else but serve it. But suppose I had the fruition of all the delights and pleasures in the world that my heart could wish: what certainty can



I have how long they shall last? I am not certain whether I shall live till to morrow or no: Daily funerals sufficiently prove this. Oh *Eternity*, if thou wert not! Oh *Eternity*, if thy place be not in Heaven, though it be on a soft Down-bed: thou canst not but be bitter and unpleasant. It is true indeed, it is a hard matter to withdraw our selves away from those things whereunto we are accustomed, whether it be feasting, or drinking, or company keeping, or such like: But whilst we delay and defer the time, death may prevent us, and take us away from all these. Why then dost thou delay? why dost thou not impose an honest and happy necessity upon thy self, why dost thou not resolve thus presently with thy self? Well, I will be another Man than I have been, if it please God I live. This life lasteth not long: But *Eternity* endureth for ever. I must walk now in a new way; I am resolved upon it; and *Now* I begin. Where art thou blessed *Eternity*? I am seeking for thee, I am travelling towards thee.

To conclude, he did as he said, he took his leave of the world, he changed the course of his life; and so lived and died an honest and godly Man.

Oh *Eternity*, how few are they that  
think

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think thus seriously upon thee? But certainly there are very few, scarce any that weigh and consider well with themselves what they are, and so continue and persist in that consideration. We seek earnestly after all other things, only *Eternity* seemeth vile unto us, and not worth the looking after. Our thoughts run after riches, and yet the possession of them is very uncertain; we know not how soon they shall forsake us, or we them. We are ambitious after honours: and yet they are slippery, and soon slide away from us. We are in love with pleasures: and yet they have sorrow and bitterness in their latter end. We desire rest: but it is of no long continuance. We knit the knot of friendship with others: but it is such as death shall quickly dissolve. We are never well but when we are conversing with others: but our conversation is never in Heaven, where it should be. We seek for abundance: but it is there where it will soon fail. But surely if we did more often and seriously think upon *Eternity*, we should not have such a fervent desire after things of so short a continuance. I call Saint *Bernard* to witness, who saith thus, *He that longeth after things Eternal cannot but loath things transitory.*

There are that have often in their  
mouths

mouths I know not what *Eternity*, that will promise and swear, and make good resolutions of amendment, and say thus; As long as I live, I will beware of such a place, or such a place, where I have formerly been tempted to sin; I will never come near such a Man, or such a Woman; or such a one that was my companion in evil, I will never come near him as long as I live. As long as I live, I will never go to such and such meetings, where there useth to be gluttony and drunkenness, dancing, chambering and wantonness, and such like. It shall suffice me that I have been there once, and again, and perhaps oftner; that I have done as the company did, that I have sinned with such and such. These are good resolutions: In this I commend thee, O Man; Because sin is to be feared, thou dost well in purposing to avoid the occasion of sinning: and I could wish thou wert as religious in observing what thou hast promised, as thou art ready to promise. But (alas!) after a day or two, yea an hour or two, too forgetful of thy promise and good resolution, thou dost again the very same thing which lately thou didst detest, abhor and forswear. Therefore before thou makest a vow or promise unto God, it is good to use due consideration and foresight; and when

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when thou hast made a vow or promise unto God, it is necessary to use after care and Christian fortitude in performance. Thou must promise nothing rashly and unadvisedly unto God: But what thou hast promised thou must religiously and constantly keep and observe. How severe God is in punishing such as break their vows and promises, we are sufficiently taught by the woful experience and lamentable example of others.

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### C H A P. I.

*The comparison of mans labor and the spiders one with another.*

**T**Here is another *Eternity*, and that the worst of all, which those men promise to themselves, which will needs erect unto themselves an heaven out of heaven, and be blessed before they be dead. *Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men, saith the Prophet Isaiah, Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell we are at agreement, Isaiah 28. 14, 15. O ye mad men! How vain, and none at all, is this your Eternity! There is nothing permanent and perpetual in this prison. Elegantly doth the Kingly Prophet declare this;*

this; Psal. 90. 9. *We spend our years,* saith he, *as a tale that is told, &c. We spend our years in musing, like the Spider,* (for so some read it.) He could not have declared it better, and in fewer words. For what are all our years but a continual musing, and wearisome exercise? All the time of our life is consumed and wasted away with vain labours, many sorrows, sundry fears, often suspicions, and innumerable troubles: Even as the Spider spendeth her self in the weaving of her web. Our labours are continual, linked one unto another; our sighs and groans continual, partly in the pursuing of our profits and pleasures, and partly in the removing and eschewing those things which we count evil. We do many things, we undertake many labours, troublesome and grievous to be born, and mean-while (alas! such is our folly) we perceive not that we do but weave the Spiders web, taking a great deal of pains, with little success, to no end or purpose. *We spend our years in musing like the Spider.* It is a great deal of pains and care that the Spider taketh in weaving of her web, she runneth much and often up and down, she fetcheth a compass this way and that way, and returneth often to the same point, she spendeth her self in a multitude  
of

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of fine-spun threads, to make her self a round Cabinet ; she exenterateth her self, and worketh out her own bowels, to make an artificial and curious piece of work, which when it is made, is apt to be blown away with every puff of wind ; she hangeth it up aloft, she fastneth it to the roof of the house, she strengthneth it with many a thread, wheeling often round about, not sparing her own bowels, but spending them willingly upon her work. And when she hath done all this, spun her fine threads, weaved them one within another, wrought her self a fine Canopy, hanged it aloft, and thinketh all is sure ; on a sudden in the twinkling of an eye, with a light sweep of a beesome all falleth to the ground, and so her labour perisheth. But here is not all : Poor Spider ! she is either killed in her own web, or else she is taken in her own snare, haled to death and troden underfoot. Thus the silly *Animal* may be truly said, either to weave her own winding sheet, or to make a snare to hang her self. Just so do many men, like the Spider, waste and consume themselves to get preferment, to enjoy pleasures, to gather riches, to keep them, and to increase them. In such projects they spend all their wit, and oftentimes the healths of their bodies, running up and down, labouring

bouring and sweating, carking and caring: wearying themselves, and weakening their bodies, even as the Spider doth by spinning out of her own bowels. And when they have done all this, they have but weaved the Spiders Web to catch Flies. Yea, oftentimes they are caught in their own nets, they are instruments of their own mischief. The days of mirth which they promise to themselves, prove oftentimes the days of mourning: That which they call their palace, becometh their burying place, *So we spend our years in musing like the Spider: I say, in musing,* for the most part: For we often purpose to do many things, and do them not. And what we do most an end were better undone. Those things which we pursue with such greediness, for the most part flie from us; and those things which we contend for with such earnestness, we seldom attain to: But suppose we did, (Alas!) they have no perpetuity. *So the covenant with death shall be disannulled, and the agreement which hell shall not stand,* Isa. 28. 18. We all consume away and die: and which is worst of all, we blindly rush headlong into *Eternity*, from whence there is no return.

*Guerricus* hearing these words read in the Church out of the Book of *Genesis*,  
Gen.

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Gen. 5. 5. *And all the days that Adam lived, were nine hundred and thirty years: And he died.* 8. *And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years: And he died.* 11. *And all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years: And he died.* And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: And he died, &c. Hearing, I say these words read, the very conceit of death wrought so strongly upon him, and made so deep an impression in his mind, that he retired himself from the world, and gave himself wholly to his devotions, that so he might die the death of the godly, and arrive more safely at the haven of *Eternal felicity*, which is no where to be found in this world.

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### C H A P. II.

*What is the best Question in the World?*

**S**AINT *Matthew* telleth us of a young Man that came unto Christ, and propounded a question unto him, *Mat. 19. 16.* And Saint *Mark* describeth the manner of his coming to our Saviour, and his good carriage: For, saith he, *There came one running and kneeling to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit*



inherit Eternal Life? Mark 10. 17. And our Saviours answer was. *Thou knowest the Commandments: If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments,* Matth. 19. 17. At Philippi a City of Macedonia, the keeper of the Prison came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and moved this question unto them, *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* This was a very good question; A better and more profitable could not be moved. But, O good God, where is this question now in the world? The world is full of other questions: but this is scarce any where to be heard. Most men do now adays betray themselves by their own questions, and bring to light, and so make others witnesses of their simplicity, or curiosity, or some such hidden disease of mind. He which maketh diligent search and enquiry where the best wine is to be sold, doth sufficiently declare what he loves best, and where his chiefest care is. Another asketh such questions as a modest Man would blush to hear: And this man shews that his heart is full, and that out of the abundance thereof his mouth speaketh. All mens mouths in all places are full of questions, such as these are: But it is a rare thing to hear one Man ask another this question, *Do you think this is the way to heaven?* It is a fault

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fault common to every vicious Man, but more proper to the libidinous and lustful, the luxurious and riotous Man, though he be plunged into the deep, and begins to sink, and to be overwhelmed, yet seldom or never to enter into a serious consideration with himself, and with a sincere mind ask himself this question, Shall I ever think to obtain *Eternal* felicity by this course of life? Is this the way to heaven? But of all men those especially least think upon such questions as these, those I say, that live a soft life, fare deliciously, and wallow in pleasures, that feel little or no sorrow and affliction, or if they do at any time feel never so little, labour what they can to be senseless of it. To suffer, they count the greatest of all evils. If it goes well with them, they care not how it fares with others. If it be well with them for the present, they take no care what shall follow after. They never once think upon *Eternity*. This is their daily ditty, *The Heaven of Heavens is the Lords, but the earth he hath given to the sons of Men.* They want neither strength of body or mind, by which to escape the hands of Men. But God hath long hands, he shall surely find them out, they must appear before him who is the Judge of all the world; they cannot escape his judgment; they shall surely

surely suffer *Eternal* punishments for their wickedness and their offences. But if God in his secret judgment casteth away any man as a reprobate and suffereth him to live after his own lust and pleasure, he giveth him his portion of prosperity and felicity in this life, he spareth him here, that he may punish him hereafter. And if at any time he doth any thing that is good, he presently receiveth his reward. Of such unhappy-happy Men the kingly prophet thus speaketh, Psal, 73. 5. *They are not in trouble as other Men; neither are they plagued like other Men,* Psal. 106. 39. *They go a whoring with their own inventions.* And this is a most miserable estate and condition of life, if there be any. For who God hath predestinated to bring him into the way of *Eternal* happiness, he spareth him not here in this life, but scourgeth him daily. I might bring infinite examples to prove this: I will name but one; but the like, I think, hath not been seen or heard of in many ages.

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### C H A P. III.

*How God punisheth here, that he may spare hereafter. A strange example, the like hath scarce at any time been heard of.*

**I**N the year of our Lord, one thousand one hundred eighty five, *Andronicus* Emperour of the East being overcome and taken prisoner by *Isaac Angelo*, had two heavy iron chains put about his neck, was laden with fetters and shackles, and was most barbarously and despitefully used, and at length in this manner was brought before the forenamed *Isaac*. Before whom complaining of his hard usage, he was delivered over to the multitude to be abused at their pleasure. They being set on fire with anger, thought it a fine thing to be revenged of their enemy: And thus they used him. They buffeted him, they bastinadoed him, they pulled him by the beard, they twicht his hair from his head, they dasht out his teeth, they dragged him in publick, they made him a laughing-stock, they suffered women to beat him with their fists. Then they cut off his right hand; and being thus maimed, they thrust him into the dungeon of thieves and robbers without either meat or drink or any other thing that was necessary, or any one to  
look

look after him. After a few days they put out one of his eyes and being thus shamefully mangled, having one eye put out, and one hand cut off, they put upon him a very sorry short coat, shaved his head, set him upon a scabbed Camel with his face towards the tail, put upon his head a Crown of Garlick, made him hold in his hand the Camels tail instead of a Scepter, and so they carried him through the market place very leisurely with great pomp and triumph. And here the most impudent, base and vile amongst the people, like savages, after an inhumane sort fell upon him, nothing at all considering that not past three days before he was no less than an Emperour, Crowned with a royal Diadem, commended, worshipped, honoured, yea and adored of all men. Nothing at all regarding the oath of Allegiance, they raged and were mad upon him, and their rage and madness fitted every man with instruments of mischief against him. Some struck him on the head with clubs, others filled his nostrils with dirt, others squeezed sponges upon his face, first soaked in the excrements of man and beast, others run him into the sides with spits. Some threw stones, others threw dirt at him: some called him mad dog, others called him fool and blockhead. An impudent women  
running

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running out of a kitchen with a kettle of scalding water in her hand, poured it upon his head as he passed by. There was none which did not some mischief or other to him. At length they brought him to the Theatre to make him a laughing-stock, took him down from the Camel, and hanged him up by the heels between two pillars. Thus the poor Emperor having suffered a thousand indignities; yet he bore them patiently, carrying himself like a man and a true Christian Champion. He was never heard all the while to lament, or cry out of his hard fortune: for it had been to no purpose. He was all the while casting up his account, which he was to make unto God, and begging pardon for his sins. He was heard to say nothing but only this, and this he said often, *Domine miserere, Domine miserere*, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy.

Unhappy *Andronicus*, which wast compelled to suffer such things! But happy in this, that thou didst suffer them so patiently, as being the just reward of sin.

When he was hanged up, one would have thought their malice should have ceased: but they spared him not then, as long as he lived. For they rent his coat from his body: and tossed him up and down with their hands. tearing him in  
pieces

pieces with their nails. One more cruel than the rest run his sword through his belly, and guts, as he was hanging. Two others, to try whose sword was sharpest, thrust him through the back, leaning upon their swords with both their hands. Here the most miserable unhappy Emperour with much ado lifted up his maimed hand to his mouth, to put out the blood, as some thought, from the fresh and bleeding wound, and so ended his life miserably. After some few days he was taken down from the gibbet, and thrown under one of the arches of the Theatre like a beast, till some that had more humanity in them than the rest, removed him; but yet notwithstanding he was not suffered to be buried. O *Andronicus*! O thou Emperor of the East! How much wast thou bound unto God, whose will it was that for a few days thou shouldest suffer such things, that thou mightest not perish for ever! Thou wast miserable for a short time, that thou mightest not be miserable for all *Eternity*. I make no doubt but thou hadst the years of *Eternity* in mind, seeing that thou didst suffer such things so constantly & courageously.

*Nicetas Choniates* is mine Author, from whom I borrowed this lamentable history; and he lived about the same time, when this happened.

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Let us Christians keep always in mind the years of *Eternity*. So whatsoever adversity or affliction happeneth, we shall more easily bear it. Every thing is short, if we compare it with *Eternity*. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding, and Eternal weight of glory, 2 Cor. 4. 17. Hereupon St. *Augustine* crieth out, and prayeth so earnestly, *Domine, hic ure, hic seca, modo in aeternum parcas*: Lord, sear me here, lance me here, so thou sparest me hereafter. And *Fulgentius*, though a most holy man, drawing near unto his death, threescore and ten days before he died, was often heard to cry out, *Domine, da mihi modo patientiam, & postea indulgentiam*; Lord, grant me patience here, and ease hereafter. These were his words and prayers even to the last gasp. Certain it is, God spareth them least of all, whom he determineth to take unto himself to dwell with him throughout all *Eternity*.





We have a building of God an house  
not made with hands Eternall in  
the heavens 2: Cor: 5. 1..



Let none wonder at my habitation I have  
here a most large palace, when I thinke  
upon the everlasting prisons of hell and  
the Eternall Mansions of heaven ..

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THE SIXTH  
CONSIDERATION

Upon  
E T E R N I T Y.

---

*How the holy Scripture in many places teacheth us to meditate upon Eternity.*

**T**HE Kingly Prophet, speaking of the Wicked, saith, That they *walk in every side, or in a circuit*; Psal. 12. 8: This is their manner of life: they go from feast to feast, from delights to delights, from wickedness to wickedness, This is their Circuit. And when they think they have almost finished their Circuit of wickedness, and gone over the round of their lust, they begin again, returning still to their former course, till death stealeth upon them before they be aware.

The Children of *Job* made this law amongst themselves, to feast one another round, every one in his course. The good Man their Father observed and knew very well, that this their feasting round, could

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not be without sin: And therefore he sent, and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all, Job 1. 5. As therefore the wicked delight and rejoyce in going the circuit of their pleasure: So God shall appoint them a circuit to go, but it shall be a circuit of torments, and that perpetual and *Eternal*. Blessed David foresaw this likewise: For saith he, *Thine arrows went abroad: The voice of thy thunder was heard in the Heaven, or, round about.* Psal. 77. 17, 18. Famine, War, Pestilence, Sorrows, Diseases, Calamities, Death it self, and all adversities whatsoever that happen before the first death, are the Arrows of the Lord; but they flie over; they have wings, and they quickly flie from one to another. But the voice of this thunder, the voice of his anger and fury shall continually roar in the prison of Hell, and like a wheel run round without wearing, for all *Eternity*. This wheel, as if it were filled with Gunpowder, when it hath once taken fire, shall burn for ever and ever. *A fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest Hell,* Deut. 32. 22. There is also another circuit, and that likewise is *Eternal*: from unutterable cold to intolerable heat, and from heat back again to cold, Job 24. 19. *Drought and heat consume*

sume the snow waters, (so saith Job) and so doth the grave those that have sinned. St. Matthew signifieth it more expressly by the gnashing of teeth, and weeping of eyes. Matth. 12. 13. That we may more fully set out this horrible and incomprehensible wheel, order requireth that we shew how the Church agreeth with the holy Scripture in this, as the holy Fathers agree with the Church. We have here divers good admonitions from all these, which if we attend unto, we cannot easily let *Eternity* slip out of our memory.

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## C H A P. I.

*The Answers of the holy Fathers and the Church about this.*

**O**F all the holy Fathers which have lived in divers ages, we should do well to hearken unto five especially, *Augustine, Chrysoptom, Gregory, Bernard, Laurentius, Justinianus.*

The first question here ( which yet may seem a vain and foolish one ) is, Which is easier, and more tolerable, to suffer pain in the head, eyes or teeth; to be troubled with the stone; to be pained with the wind Cholick, or *Iliaca Passio*, or any other acute disease; neither to sleep night

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or day, but to be tormented continually without any respite for three days together. The question now is, I say, Which is easier, whether to suffer the pains now mentioned, or else to eat a piece of fish which is made bitter by the breaking of the Gall. This may seem a very ridiculous and most idle question. For, how much bitter is it to it eat such a whole fish, rather than suffer those so grievous torments though but one day! The bitterness of the fish will not endanger a Mans life, nor make him sick, but leave only a bitter tast in the mouth, which is unpleasing to it. It is truly answered. And yet how many thousands of men make choice rather of the former! For, how often doth the Preacher teach and exhort, cry out and speak plainly! Christian brethren, consider well with your selves, and look about you? the *Eternal* salvation of your souls is in question: If you walk this way, you must assuredly look for *Eternal* torments: Christ hath shewed you another way both by his life and doctrine. Return therefore and repent, you have gone long enough astray. You may if you will have entrance into Heaven; if you be shut out it is your own fault: God is not wanting to those that are willing. It is true indeed, There is some bitterness in using abstinence

nence and fasting, in confessing of sins, in keeping the body under, in setting a strict watch over thy senses, in conquering ones self, in living chastly and continently: This is no easie task: But, let it be what it will, we must suffer it. *Luke 24. 25. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory?* Let not a little and short labour terrifie us. It is but for a few years, or it may be but a few days, that we are to do and suffer valiantly; but our joy and rest shall be *Eternal*. He overcometh all, whosoever overcometh and conquereth himself, containeth himself, and resisteth his evil and violent passions, and all this for Christ, for Heaven, for blessed *Eternity*. Christ after his Resurrection found his Disciples eating fish broiled upon the coals: To teach them how great things they should afterwards suffer: and that they were not to think of a soft and easie life, but that they were to be stoned, whipped, crucified, have their skin pulled over their ears; that this was the way to a joyful Resurrection, and to the participation and fellowship of *Eternity* with the blessed; that all other things were small and of no worth in comparison of immortality, and that blessedness, which yet eye hath never seen. These things are often spoken of, but they

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are little regarded. This fish birter with the over-flowing of the gall, that is worldly crosses and the sufferings of this life, is often set before us: but it goeth against our stomach, we cannot endure to taste of it. *Eternity* is a thing we often hear of, we often read of, it is continually preached unto us, and often repeated: but we either hear not, or believe not, or regard not, or if we do for a time, the cares of the world soon put it out of our minds, and we bury it in oblivion. But again, the Conscience often plays the Preacher, and recals to our mind these wholsom lessons, is instant, dehorts, reproveth; but prevails nothing. All is in vain. For many are so obstinate and perverse, that neither the Preacher nor their own Conscience can work upon them. But some are so impudent, that they will set themselves in opposition, and reply thus, *Let it go well with us here and we care not; we neither know nor care what shall come hereafter; we are all for present profits and pleasures: no man returneth again from the dead; neither was it ever known that any one came back again out of Hell. Come therefore, let us eat, drink, and be merry, let us enjoy our goods and take our pleasure.* These are the worldlings Ditties: but let *S. Augustine* determine this question, *Melius est, modica*

*amari-*



*amaritudo in faucibus, quam Aeternum tormentum in viceribus.* Better it is, saith he, to suffer a little bitterness in the mouth, than *Eternal* torments in the inward parts. It is far better to suffer for our offences here in this World, than the World to come. Far better it is for threescore years and ten, continually together here on earth, to be punished with most grievous punishments, than to suffer the torments of Hell for one day, yea for one hour hereafter. But let us hear what another of the Fathers saith.

Saint *Chrystome* propounds the second question after this manner; Suppose one night in an hundred years a man should have a sweet & pleasant dream, and be after punished an hundred years for it, would he think such a dream were to be desired? And yet saith the Father, as a dream is to an hundred years, so is this present life to the life to come, yea rather it is much less; And as a drop is to the main Ocean, so are a thousand years unto *Eternity.* And in another place.

What is there, saith he, to be compared unto *Eternity*? What are a thousand years in comparison of infinite ages which are yet for to come? Are they not like unto

*Hom. 20.*

*ad Pop.*

*Antioc.*

*Hom. 28.*

*in Epist.*

*ad Hebr.*

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the least drop of a bucket compared to a bottomless Well? Look for no end of torments after this life, unless thou repentest before thou departest out of this life: for after death there is no place of repentance, no shedding of tears will profit thee, or do thee any good. Though a Man in Hell should gnash his teeth, and blare out his scorched tongue, he shall not obtain so much as a drop of cold water. Grant then that a Man should enjoy pleasures all his life long, what is that to infinite ages which are yet for to come? Here in this life all things good and bad have at length an end; but the punishments that shall be suffered hereafter shall have no end. Set fire on the body here, and the soul will soon depart: but after the resurrection, when the body shall be from thenceforth immortal and incorruptible, the Soul of the damned shall always burn, and not consume in Hell-fire. They shall rise again, incorruptible indeed: but how? Not to receive a Crown of incorruptible glory, but to suffer *Eternal* torments. But let us hear what another of the Fathers saith.

Saint *Gregory* maketh answer to this common question; Will not drunkenness sooner steal upon a Man in the Wine cellar, standing by the hoghead, than in the

Parlour sitting at the table? The spouse of Christ triumpheth in the words of Solomon, he brought me to the Banqueting-house ( or as some read it, He brought me into his Wine-cellar ) and his banner over me was love, or, He hath set his banner of love over me. Upon which words St. Gregory discoursing saith thus, By the Wine-cellar what can we better or more fitly conceived, than the secret contemplation of Eternity? For truly whosoever doth seriously consider with himself upon Eternity, and let this consideration sink deep into his mind, he may truly rejoyce, and triumph with the Spouse, saying, He hath set his banners of love over me: For he will keep better order in his love, loving himself less, God more, and even his enemies also for Gods sake. But such is the nature of this profound consideration, that it will presently make a Man drunk. Make him drunk? How? With the drunkenness of the best desires, such as will lead him to amendment of life, carry him to his heavenly Country, and bring him at length to joys Eternal. It was said in the Apostles teeth, that they were drunk with wine: and so they were indeed; but it was with wine out of this Cellar. St. Gregory hath many excellent considerations and sayings upon Eternity: amongst others he hath  
 this,

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this, which is a very short one and a true one, *Momentum quod delectat, Æternum quod cruciat*, That which delighteth is momentary, but that which tormenteth is Eternal. Here I could wish with Job, Job 19. 23, 24. *O that these words were written! O that they were printed in a Book! That they were graven with a pen of Iron!* These words, I say, that which delighteth is momentary, but that which tormenteth is Eternal. The Book in which this should be written, is the *heart* of man; the *pen* of iron with which it should be written, is *serious meditation*; the *Ink* with which it should be written, is the *Blood* of Christ. And these words so imprinted and ingraven in the breast, are then especially to be called to mind, and to be often repeated, when pleasure fawneth, when lust provoketh, when luxury inviteth, when the flesh rebelleth, and the spirit faileth, when there is occasion of sin offered, and danger of falling into sin. But let us hear what another of the Fathers saith.

In the fourth place comes *St. Bernard*: He shall answer to the question here to be propounded. In the lives of men there is such difference, that almost now so many men so many judgments concerning afflictions. There are found some so grievously and continually afflicted, that they are  
ready

ready to fall down under the cross, as being too heavy for them to bear. One is oppressed with poverty, another is afflicted with sickness, another is overcharged with secret debts, another is tormented with cares, another is grieved and vexed with injuries and slanders: every man thinketh that most grievous which in present he suffereth. And many times it cometh to pass that such as are faint-hearted and impatient, wish for death, run into the water, and make hast to the halter, thinking thereby to find an end of all their griefs and sorrows, whereas indeed that supposed end becomes to them, but the beginning of their sorrows, and such sorrows as never shall have end. But with the good and godly it is not so: They patiently endure all, submitting themselves in all things to God's good will and pleasure. They neither desire to die quickly, nor yet to live long. Is it God's will they shall die? They also are willing. Will he have them die quickly? They are willing to that also. Will he have them live yet longer? They are not against that. What God willeth, that they will: what he willeth not, neither will they. Beside these two kinds of Men, there is a third, and that is the greatest part of men, that desire to live long: And there is almost no Man so old,

but

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but he hopes and desires to live yet another year. These Men are never heard to say, they have lived long enough. Death maketh too much hast with them, he cometh to them too soon, yea and before his time. Here now the question may be moved; Who live? or who shall live longer? *St. Bernard* in his seventeenth Sermon upon the 91 Psalm, upon these words, *With long life will I satisfie him*, breaketh forth into this admiration, What is so long as that which is *Eternal*? What is so long as that which shall have no end? *Life Eternal* is the good end which we are all to aim at, and this end is without end. And further he adds, That is the true day indeed after which there follows no night, where there is *Eternal* verity, and true *Eternity*, and therefore true and *Eternal* society. So then the question may be determined thus, That those only shall live a long life truly so called, whosoever shall never die, but always live in heaven; And again, That those shall die in a lingring death (alas! too lingring a death) whosoever shall always die, but ever live in Hell: for they shall live only there to be tormented always. Let us hear but one more, and so conclude.

*Laurentius Justinianus* shall resolve the last question for us. There are, saith he,  
many

many things in this World which nature hath so appropriated and assigned to some one certain place, that they are not to be found in another place, unless it be in part. Of some flowers which grow in the new-found world we have only the seed: Of some living Creatures there are brought over into us only the Skins. Now *Eternity* is a thing so proper to another World, that it is not to be found in this; only the seed thereof we may have even in this World. And what are the seeds of *Eternity*? They are faith *Laurentius*, *Contempt of a manself*, *the gift of Charity*, and *the taste of Christ's works*. *To contemn others*, is a Tree that overspreadeth the whole World whose Wood is Fuel for the Fire of Hell. *To contemn himself* is a very small seed, scarce known in the world: Christ brought it down from Heaven with him who made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a *Servant*, and became obedient, not to the Stable only, or the Manger, but even to mount *Calvary*, unto death, even the death of the Cross, unto the grave, yea even unto Hell, ver. 9. *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him*. Behold, this little seed is grown up and spread in breadth, and is become the highest of all trees. The same Author, speaking of *Charity*, saith thus, The measure of our glory and *Eternal*

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nal reward shall be according to the measure of our *Charity*. For, *To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little*, Luk. 7. 47. He obtaineth less *grace*, whosoever hath less *Charity*: And where there is less *grace*, there also shall be less *glory*. So then it is most true, The more thou lovest God, the more thou heapest up unto thy self *Eternal* rewards. The whole Law is *love*, but it must be pure, chaste, and holy. I have done with the second, which is *Charity*. I come to the third, which is *The taste of Christs words*. It is a common and witty saying in the Rhetorick Schools, *He is to be thought a good proficient who can relish Tully's works*: We may say as much in the Shool of Christianity, *He hath made a good progress in Religion and Virtue, who can relish Christs works, who likes the taste of Christs doctrine and example*. But whosoever findeth no taste almost at all, no relish in the words and works of Christ; whosoever is not moved, affected, and delighted with those things which belong unto the mind, and Christian piety to Heaven, and *Eternal* felicity; but on the contrary findeth much sweetness in eating, drinking, walking, laughing, jesting and playing: the same Man may say with sorrow enough, too truly, *How little seed of Eternity have I within me, O my God!* Or rather



rather, *I have none at all.* For when I descend into my self, I see manifestly what spirit is within me, and whither my affection carrieth me. To spend whole nights in dancing, feasting, revelling, quaffing, dicing and carding, hearing foolish and idle tales, reading impure Books, calling for, and laughing at amorous Songs, playing the good fellow, and doing as the company doth; Oh! this never offendeth me, this is pleasing and delightful to me: But to hear of Christ and his life, to hear of Holy Men that lived formerly, who were much given to watching, fasting, and prayer, or to read of their lives, that makes no musick in my ears, and this is an eye-sore unto me: I can neither hear nor see: I stop mine ears, and close mine eyes for fear lest they should be offended. To hear a Sermon of an hour long, it is death unto me, and therefore I seldom come to Church: or if I do sometimes, I drive away the time, either sleeping or prating. There are too many such men in the world: but of such it may be truly said, that they have no taste or relish at all of the works of Christ. But now let us hear the judgment of the Church concerning *Eternity.*

The memory of *Eternity* is so precious in the esteem of the Church, that there is  
no

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no Psalm, no Prayer, no Hymn but closeth with it, *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. As it was in the beginning, that is, before all beginning from all Eternity, without any beginning is now, and ever shall be, world without end, that is, throughout all ages; infinite, innumerable, incomprehensible ages; to all Eternity.* But let us leave the little rivers, and make haste to the fountain.

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### C H A P. II.

*Clear Testimonies of Divine Scripture concerning Eternity.*

**I** Will produce only three witnesses, a *Prophet*, an *Apostle*, and an *Evangelist*.

How many and how great are the sighs and groans of poor, abject and despised Men! we may hear them every day. One or other every where is complaining, *Wo is me poor man, I have few or no friends at all; I am disrespected: I am scorned and trampled under foot almost by all. Have patience a little, O man, suffer for a while; the day of comfort will rise at length, though it seem long first. Remember*

her Gods promise in the Prophe- *Baruch*  
 sie of *Baruch*, *Cast about thee a* 3. 2.  
*double garment of the righteous-*  
*ness which cometh from God, and set a Dia-*  
*dem on thy head of the glory of the Everlast-*  
*ing.*

Others there are that accuse Nature, complaining still that she hath given too long a life to ravens and too short a great deal unto Man. Hear thus much, you that are still complaining of the shortness of mans life, This life is short indeed : but when this short and vain life shall end, there remains another life which never shall have an end: If ye will not believe me, yet believe *St. Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 2. For we know, saith *St. Paul*, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, Eternal in the heavens. What great loss is it then, if this earthly tabernacle of our body be dissolved, when as we have a Royal Palace prepared for us, which is not subject to dissolution? To the testimony of the *Prophet* and the *Apostle*, let us add the testimony of the *Evangelist* *St. Matthew*, in whose Gospel we may read these words of our Saviour, *Matth.* 18. 8. *If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee; It is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed,*  
*rather*

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rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire - And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: It is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire. O fire! O Hell! O Eternity! Time is nothing, if it be compared with Eternity; shortness of life, and so loss of time is no loss at all, but great gain, if thereby we gain Eternity. Christ hath promised it, and St. Matthew hath recorded it, and sealed it in these words of our Saviour, Matth. 19. 29. *Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life.* Is it not clear enough that this promise is of blessed Eternity, when we have security given us of receiving an hundred-fold reward? Again, Christ according to the same Evangelist forewarning of the latter judgement, three times makes mention of Eternity expressly in these words, Matth. 25. 41, 46. *everlasting fire, or eternal fire, everlasting or eternal punishment, and life eternal.*

Seeing therefore the holy Fathers, the Church, and the sacred Scripture do so many ways propound unto us the serious consideration of Eternity; it is our part  
and

and duty, as many of us as look for *Eternal* life in Heaven, it is our part and duty seriously to meditate thus with our selves every one : O my God ! How seldom have I heretofore thought upon *Eternity* ! or if I have thought upon it , in what a cold, and negligent manner have I done it, notwithstanding every day, yea every hour and minute I draw nearer and nearer unto *Eternity* ? But for the time to come by the assistance of thy *grace* I will mind it more carefully than heretofore I have done ; and if at any time through thy bounty, riches shall increase, I will not set my heart upon them : though the world should smile upon me, though I should want no temporal thing that my heart can desire, though I should seem to flow in never so much abundance, yet will I still remember *Eternity*. In the midst of my prosperity these shall be my thoughts. But how long shall this last ? Will this fair weather never change ? Will this comfortable Sun always shine upon me ? Or if I should live in prosperity all the days of my life, what shall it profit me after death ? After this sweet but short, pleasing but perilous, unhappy happiness, there shall shortly follow *Eternity*, *Eternity*. But if the World goes ill with me, if it frown upon me, if I meet with many crosses, troubles and afflictions, if misfortunes

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run s befall me, if they rush upon me like waves, one on the neck of another, if I be turmoiled and tossed up and down, then these shall be my daily thoughts. Well, let the World have its course, I am content to bear it, Gods will be done. Let the sea be troubled, let the waves thereof roar, let the Winds of afflictions blow, let the waters of sorrows rush upon me, let the clouds of tentations threaten rain and thunder, let the darkness of grief and heaviness compass me about, yea though the foundations of the World should seem to shake, yet will I not be afraid. These storms will blow over, these Winds will be laid, these Waves will fall, this tempest cannot last long, and these clouds shall be dispelled. Whatsoever I suffer here shall shortly have an end, I shall not suffer *Eternally*, Come the worst that can come, death will put an end to all my sorrows and miseries. But no storm to that storm of Fire and Brimstone which the damned shall suffer in Hell *Eternally* and without end. All things here shall have an end, but the torments there shall have no end. Whatsoever is not within the circle of *Eternity*, is short, swift, and momentary, it is but a shadow, but a dream, so saith St. Chrysostome, It is but a *Modicum* or a *thing of nothing, a little, a very little, for a little while,*  
 yea

yea, a very little while. Often doth our Saviour beat upon this, speaking to his Disciples. All his own suffering, yea his most bitter death upon the cross, he calleth but a little. All the sufferings, punishments, and violent deaths of the Apostles, al but a little: And why should not I also think it but a little, whatsoever here I suffer, though I should suffer it an hundred yeas together; *Heb. 7. 27.* For yet a little while, and he that should come, will come, and will not tarry. I will therefore suffer patiently whatsoever can happen, and account one thing only necessary, and that is, To do nothing against my Conscience, and displeasing unto God. For all is safe and sure with him who is certain and sure of blessed *Eternity.*

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C H A P. I I I.

*This life in respect of that which is to come, is but as a Drop to the Ocean, a little Stone to the Sand upon the Sea shore, a Center to the Circle, a Modicum, a little, a very little time, a Minute to Eternity. And such are the sufferings of this life in respect of the joys that shall be hereafter.*

**M**ost true it is, whatsoever labour or sorrow we suffer in this life, it is  
H but

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but a *Modicum*, or for a little while. It is the saying of St. *Augustine*, *This Modicum or little while seems long unto us, because it is not yet all past and gone: But when it shall come to an end, then shall we perceive and understand what a little while this Modicum was.* The wisest of Men being to shew the vanity and shortness of this present life, though it should be lengthned to an hundred years, which few men can reach unto; makes choice of the most minute things in the World, whereby to express it, and set it forth by way of resemblance. For thus we read expressly in *Ecclesiasticus*, *The number of a mans days at the most are an hundred years. As a drop of water unto the sea, and a gravel stone in comparison of the sand; so are a thousand years to the days of Eternity, Eccclus. 18. 9, 10.* And why then do ye rejoyce in this, ye long lived Men, that ye have lived an hundred years? All our years are, What are they? They are *as a drop of water unto the sea, and a gravel stone, in comparison of the sand.* And what is a little Stone to those exceeding high Mountains of Sand? And what is a small drop of Water to the deep and fathomless Sea? Such are fifty, sixty, yea, an hundred years. (Hear this, ye old Men.) They are but a *Modicum*, a very little while, but a *Minute* of time, indeed nothing



nothing at all to the days of *Eternity*. And yet, foolish and miserable Men, we are overjoyed with this little Stone, this small drop. Our life is indeed *a little stone*, but no Jewel, no precious Stone; it is made of no better matter than Sand. Our life is a *drop*, but not of sweet and fresh Water; it is salt and brackish as the Sea-water is. *For all his days are sorrows, and his travel grief; yea, his heart taketh no rest in the night:* So saith the *Preacher*, *Eccles. 2. 23.* It is the counsel of *St. Augustine*, Recal to mind, saith he, the years that are past, from *Adam* to this present day: Run over all the Scripture; it is but almost yesterday since he fell, and was thrust out of *Paradise*. For where are those times that are past? Certainly, if thou hadst lived all the time since *Adam* was thrust out of *Paradise*, even unto this present, thou wouldst perceive and confess, That thy life was not long, which is so soon fled away. For what is any Man's life? Add as many years as thou wilt, imagine the longest old age. What is it? Is it not as a Morning blast? All this is most true. I pray you tell me, where is *Adam* now? Where is *Cain*? Where is long lived *Methuselah*? Where is *Noah*? Where is *Sim*? Where is *Eber*? Where is most obedient *Abraham*? Where is *Jacob*?

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where is *Joseph*? They are dead and gone; their time is past: We may say of them, *Vixerunt, fuerunt Troes*; *Once they were, now they are not.* Thus our life passeth away; thus the glory of the World passeth away. O morning dew! O meer vanity! What is it that we do so desire here? What so long as to be hoped or wished for here? Short it is, a *Modicum* it is, it is vile and nothing worth, it is but a small point whatsoever thine eye beholdeth here. It is a true saying of *Gregory the Great*: The longest measure of our life, is but a point; or it is a short line that begins, continues, and ends in a point. *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,* 1 Cor. 15. 52. all things shall have an end. *I have seen an end of all perfection, but thy commandment is exceeding broad,* Psal. 119. 69. Why then do we account any time long? For that which is past, now is not; that which is to come, yet is not; and what is the present? The Glass is always running, and the Clock never stands still; the hour passeth away by flying minutes. What is flown by, is past and gone; what is yet behind, is still to come: But where is the time which we use to call long? *Bernard* makes often mention of that most true and excellent saying of *St. Jerome*, (and, Reader, it is worth observing) *No Labour*  
ought

ought to seem long unto us, no time long, in which we are seeking after eternal glory.

And yet though the Life of Man be but very short in comparison of *Eternity*, there is none of the damned that can justly accuse God for not granting him a longer life. They must condemn themselves for not living better. *There is no inquisition in the Grave* (saith *Syracides*) whether thou hast lived ten or an hundred, or a thousand years, *Ecclus. 41. 4.*

In Hell it is no time to complain of shortness of life. Every Man hath lived long enough, if he hath lived godly enough.

Here, Christian Brother, I will deal more boldly and plainly with thee, and lay the matter so open, that thou shalt see it clearly presented before thine eyes. Thou sayest, That thou doest often think upon Heaven, and that thou hast an earnest and longing desire after *Eternity*. Sayest thou so? I hear thee, but I do not believe thee; neither would I have thee believe me, if I should say so of my self. For how can it be, O good Christian Brother, how can it be, that thou or I should think so often, and so seriously upon Heaven, and have such a longing desire (as we say we have) after *Eternity*, and yet be so lukewarm, yea, stone-cold, in Matters of Religion?

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so slow and backward to that which is good, so prone and forward to that which is evil, so ready and willing to all manner of wantonness, so querulous and complaining, so slothful and negligent: Where we should be angry, there are we too patient; and where we should be patient and courageous, there are we too faint-hearted and pusillanimous. In the fire of every light affliction, our patience melts and consumes away; nay, we are often cast down with a word, we are blown down with the breath of Man's Mouth; but never are we more impatient and desperate, than when our wills are crossed. I might speak here of the hot *Apoftems* of lust, wherewith our hearts are often inflamed and swoln, and likewise of the devouring *Cancer* of Envy, which often eats into our Breasts, and makes our Flesh consume away; but I pass them by.

Notwithstanding what hath been said, we good and godly Men, as we profess ourselves, and would have others think us to be, are too timorous where we should be bold, and too bold where we should be timorous. Glory in nothing more than in this, That we have often in our minds the hearty desires, the joys of *Eternity*. Believe it, it is not credible, that the thoughts

thoughts of Heaven and *Eternity* should be so often in our minds as we speak of, and yet mean while that we should live no better than we do. Did I say, it is not credible? Nay I say, it is impossible. And thus I shall declare it.

The Patriarch *Jacob* served his uncle *Laban* for his Daughter *Rachel* seven years, *And they seemed to him but a few dayes for the love that he bare to her*, Gen. 29. 20. . . .  
 Hearest thou this whosoever thou art that so complaineest? Thou servest no impostor or deceiver as *Laban* was, but God thy maker, and him that will surely keep his covenant and promise. Thou servest not for a Wife, but for the Kingdom of heaven: not for the beauty and sight of a wife, but for the beatifical vision and *Eternal* sight of God: not for the delight and pleasure of a wife, but for celestial and *Eternal* delights and pleasures. And yet doth the trouble of one winters day oftentimes so cast thee down, that suddenly all thy love towards God and thy desire after heaven begins to wax cold in thee. As soon as the storm of adversity begins, thou breakest forth into most bitter complaints; thou callest Heaven and Earth to witness, thou breatheest nothing but revenge; yea oftentimes, I believe, thou sparest not God himself, but callest his justice into  
 H 4. question.

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question. At other times when pleasure with her fawning allurements hath once enticed thee, she doth so bewitch thee and take away thy memory, that thou quite forgettest to serve God, and so runnest headlong into the *Labyrinth* of sin, which hath a fair entrance, at least seemingly, but leadeth thee the next way to destruction. Is this the vigilancy which thou so much talkest of? Is this thy heroical fortitude and love of God? How wilt thou serve God seven years, as *Jacob* did *Laban*, when (alas!) thou canst not endure the labour and sorrow of one short day? *Mark* 14. 37. *O Simon, Simon, sleepest thou? couldst thou not watch one hour with thy Lord and Master?* but hear further concerning the Patriarch *Jacob*: He being beguiled by his Uncle *Laban*, who gave him blear-eyed *Leah* instead of beautiful *Rachel*, served him yet seven years more for his Daughter *Rachel*, whom he dearly loved: and no doubt but those seven years also seemed unto him but as a few days for the exceeding great love that he had unto her. And it is very likely that oftentimes when he was weary at his work he had an eye unto *Rachel's* beauty, and said thus with himself, (Surely, for her beauty) She is worthy for whom I should suffer seven years hard service; and, if need were,

were, I would not stick to serve yet seven years more. Such was the affection that he bore unto *Rachel*, that it made him scarce sensible of any labour.

Hearst thou this, thou who goest for a Soldier of Christ? Conceivest thou this, understandest thou this? How then canst thou still murmur against God? Thou art bid to serve God for God's sake, that so thou mayest at length enter into God's *Eternal* rest; Thou art exhorted to tolerance and patience here, that so thou mayest be made partaker of immortality with the blessed hereafter: And yet sleepest thou, O sluggard? Hast thou not an ear to hear? Art thou still complaining? Do but reckon up the years which thou hast spent in the service of God, and see whether thou hast served God faithfully and painfully twenty years, as *Jacob* did *Laban*, I am afraid thou wilt come short in thy reckoning: Hast thou served God so many Months? I tell thee, I make question of it. Number the nights that thou hast spent in watching and praying, recount the days which thou hast spent in holy exercises, and see if thou canst truly say unto God as *Jacob* did to *Laban*, *In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night, and my sleep departed from mine eyes. Thus have I been twenty years in thy house: I*

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served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattel; Gen. 31. 40, 41. Tell me, Christian Man, hast thou served God thustwenty years? Thou knowest thy wages if thou serveest God; Not *Laban's* daughters, nor flocks of sheep; God himself shall be the reward of thy service: Thou shalt be blessed both in soul and body; It shall be well with thee on every side; Thou shalt enjoy all manner of delights; great delights without either lacking or loathing, and without end. Thou shalt swim in the bottomless *Ocean* of pleasures: And yet ( behold ) thy hands are slack to every good work; Thy feet are slow to go to Church; thy heart consumes away with envy, flames with anger and revenge, aboundeth with the vermine of filthy thoughts, and is quite dead through slothfulness and impatience. Is this thy serving of God? Is this the way, thinkest thou, to Heaven, to immortal life, to *Eternal* blessedness? Surely it is not. Why dost thou not rather as *Jacob* did, when thou art weary with any labour which thou undergest in the service of God, when the World goes ill with thee, when adversity presseth thee, prosperity seduceth thee, and labours burthen thee, lift up thine eyes to Heaven, behold *Rachel*, who is promised unto thee, and thus comfort



up thy self. Be not troubled, O my soul: Behold thy *Rachel*, thy *Rachel*, which is in heaven, fair *Rachel*, comely *Rachel*; *Rachel* that is all beautiful, not having any one blemish about her! Behold heaven, and the house of thy *Eternal* rest and pleasure! Be content to suffer for a while, a little sorrow, and some pains: For thou shalt shortly be where thy *Rachel* is; and there thou shalt be the more joyful and blessed, by how much the more thou art here sorrowful and afflicted: There shall thy rest be the more pleasant and joyful, by how much the more thy life here is heavy and painful. Well then, be of good courage, shew Christian fortitude and patience. *Eternity*, blessed *Eternity* is more worth, infinitely more worth, than all that we can do or suffer: If thus, O Christian brother, thou wouldest animate and encourage thy self, if with such eyes thou wouldest oftner look up to Heaven, if with such affection thou wouldest daily think upon *Eternity*; believe it, all the days of service here on earth would seem but few, for the great love which thou wouldest have unto *Eternity*; Thou wouldest count all labour easie, all troubles welcome, all losses gain. This I will say, and there-  
with.

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with I will conclude, The more a Man thinks upon the *Eternity* of the World to come, the more care he will take here to lead a godly life in this present World.

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THE

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Thus saith the high and loftie one  
that inhabiteth Eternitie .



Adam lost Eternitie, Christ regained it:  
to this the Angels invite us from this the  
devils with draw us : have a care  
whether thou followest .

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THE SEVENTH  
CONSIDERATION

Upon

ETERNITY.

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*How Christians use to Paint Eternity.*

**H**E that is to go through an House in the dark must go warily and leisurely, step after step, and he must grope for the Wall. If Man's understanding will be prying into *Eternity*, if he thinks here in this life to enter into it, he is much deceived: The way is dark and full of difficulties. He may hurt himself by the way, but he shall never here attain unto it. The way thither is but short indeed: but when a Man is once in, there is no coming out again. And yet though no mortal Man can so conceive of *Eternity*, that he can certainly say what it is, notwithstanding the infiniteness thereof is shadowed out by certain Pictures and Resemblances, in such manner that every Man may have a glimpse of it. Whatsoever

ever

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ever we speak or write concerning *Eternity*, howsoever we set it out in colours; all is but a shadow, yea a shadow of shadows: No *Orator* in the World can with all his *Rhetorick*, sufficiently express it; No *Limner* with all his curious Art and Skill can set it forth to the life. If all times that ever were and ever shall be should be put together, they would infinitely come short of *Eternity*: The latitude thereof is not to be measured, neither by hours, nor days, nor weeks, nor months, nor years, nor *Lustra's*, nor *Olympiads*, nor *Indictions*, nor *Jubilees*, nor *Ages*, nor *Plato's years*, nor by the most slow motions of the *Eighth Sphere*, though these were multiplied by a thousand, or a million, or the greatest multiplier or *Number numbering* that can be imagined. Neither can it be measured by any *Number numbered*, as by the Stars of Heaven, the Sands of the Sea, the Grass of the Field, the Drops of the River, and such like. The number of *Eternity* is past finding out.

The Sailers use to sound the depth of the Sea by a Plummet and a Line: Let us also let down the Plummet and Line of our humble and reverent cogitations, to sound the depth of *Eternity*, which yet is past finding out. But if we will go by this *Map*, if we will sail by this *Card*, if  
 we

we will view well this *Picture*, we shall come much nearer finding it, than otherwise we should.

*Christ as a Child*, taken as it were from the Manger and the Cradle, almost quite naked, and without clothes, *stands in the clouds*: on his shoulders he bears a Cross: in the clouds there is this inscription, *E-T-E-R-N-I-T-Y*: beneath *Christ's feet*, down upon the Earth there is the *Skeliton* of a Man, or nothing but the Bones of a Man without Hair or Skin, only he hath a Beard to be known by: in his left hand he holdeth a piece of *Parchment*, in which these words are written, *Momen- Gregor. taneum quod delectat*: That which delighteth is momentary: in his right hand he holdeth up an *Apple*. Near unto him there standeth a *Raven* pecking a shell-fish, with this subscription, *Cras, Cras, To Morrow, To Morrow*. The earth opens her mouth, and flames of fire break forth and tend aloft, in which these words are written, *Æternum Gregor. quod cruciat*, That which tormenteth is Eternal. *Christ* coming down from the Clouds *Two* adore with bended knees of divers Sex, in the place of all Mankind. Behind them there is a running *Hour Glass*, or a *Dial* measuring hours by the running of water, called a *Clepsydra*; and a *Book* lying

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lying wide open. On one Page there is written, *They spend their days in mirth, and in a moment go down to the grave,* Job 21. 13. On the other Page, *who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Rom. 7. 24. Before them stand *Two* heavenly Angels, which embrace them with their Arms; and pointing at Christ bid them lift up their Eyes unto him. This is the *Picture*: The meaning followeth,

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### C H A P. I.

#### *Christ inviting.*

**C**Hrist the *Eternal* Son of the *Eternal* God came into this World, clad with no other Garment than we, that is, stark naked. The Garment of immortality and innocency we lost by *Adam's* disobedience. And now (alas!) how miserably arrayed do we come into this World? Christ together with us, yea for us, suffereth punishment and yet was not guilty of any sin. But what meaneth this *Cross* upon the *Shoulders* of the Son of God? It is a Bed on which he slept in death, *Golgotha* was his Chamber. The *Thorns* his Pillow, and the *Cross* his Bed. Which many religious Men of former times well considering



sidering with themselves, have voluntarily and freely chosen to lie hard and take little rest, that at the day of Resurrection they might rise joyfully to rest *Eternal*. Some, as we may read, have made the Earth their Mattress, Sackcloth their Sheet, and a Stone their Bouldster. And many there are which do so still to this day. But I leave them, and return to Christ. He suffered *death*, even that most bitter and shameful *death of the Cross*. To what end? That he might save us from death *Eternal*. Dye we must all of us; but our death is but short. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye the Soul is snatched from the Body, and this is all that which we call *Death*. But it is not so with them in Hell: Their torments far exceed all the sorrows and pangs of death, not only because they are more grievous for their quality, but also because they are of longer continuance beyond all comparison; for they are *Eternal*. So then their torments are, always to be tormented; and their death, to dye always. And from this death hath Christ the Son of God delivered us; the *Child* that we see described walking amidst the Clouds. Under his Feet is a bare *Skeleton*, or the bare Bones of a Man, which by all signs we may gather to be our fore-father *Adam's*. Harken  
ye

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ye Children, and ye Childrens Children, harken unto the words of your Fore-father *Adam* thus speaking unto you.

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### C H A P. II.

#### *Adam lamenting.*

**O** My Children, happy then indeed, if your Fore-father had known his own happiness, but now miserable, and that even in this, because mine. By me were you destroyed before you were begotten; by me were you damned before you were brought forth. I fain would be as God, and by that means I am left scarce a Man. Before you could perish, you all perished in me. I my self do not know, whether you may better call me a Father, or a Tyrant, and a Murderer. I cannot wonder or complain justly that you are so vicious and so sinful; for you learned it of me. I am sorry that you are so disobedient; but this you learned also of me. I was first disobedient unto God that made me. The Angels in Heaven blush and are ashamed to see your Gluttony and Intemperance; but this is your Father's fault. Your pride hath made you odious and detestable before  
God;

God ; but this Monster first conquered and triumphed over me, and so Pride became more proud than she was before. This is the inheritance you receive from me, nothing else but an heap of miseries. God indeed of his free good will gave unto me by a sure promise Heaven for an Inheritance, and intailed it upon you : But I have undone you all, cut off the In-tail, and prodigally made away all for one bit. I valued my Wife and an Apple more than you all, more than Heaven, more than God. A cursed and unhappy Dinner, for which I deserved to Sup in Hell many thousand years after. I lived in *Paradise*, a Garden full of all delight and pleasure beyond imagination : God gave me the free use of all things therein, only the fruit of one Tree was forbidden me. I was Lord of all the Creatures, I was wise and beautiful, strong and lusty. I abounded with all manner of delights. The Air was then as temperate as could be desired ; the Clouds were clad in bright blue : the Heaven smiled upon us ; the Sun did shine so pure, that nothing could be more. All things seem'd to gratifie us at our new Marriage. Our eyes could behold nothing but that which was flourishing and pleasing to them. Our ears were continually filled with musick,  
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the Birds those nimble Choristers of the Air ever warbling out their pleasant Ditties. The Earth of it self brought forth odoriferous Cinnamon and Saffron. I was compassed about with pleasures on every side. I lived free and remote from all care, sorrow, fear, labour, sickness, and death. I seemed to be a God upon Earth. The Angels in Heaven rejoiced to see my happiness; there was none that did envy me, but my self; but because I obeyed not the voice of God, all these evils fell upon me.

I was driven out of *Paradise*, banished from the sight of God, and for shame I hid my Face. Labour, sorrow, mourning, fears, tears, calamities, a thousand miseries seized upon me, and quite wearied me out: You feel it, as many as are of my Family; and that which seemeth to be the end of all temporal misery and sorrow, is oftentimes the beginning of Eternal.

O my Children, learn by your own woful experience, learn by your own loss and mine; learn, I say, to be wise at length. I will give you but one Lesson, and it is but in three words, which you shall do well to learn by heart, and that is, *To hate sin*. Behold! Do you not see a *grievous flame* breaking out hard by  
me?

me? It hath burnt ever since sin first entred into the World, and shall never be put out. All other punishments are but light, and shall shortly have an end; but the damned shall be tormented in this flame, for ever and ever. Now, if we will, we may escape it. Heaven is set open to all; but there is no coming to it, but by the way of Repentance, and the gate of the Cross. He that walketh in this way, and entreth in at this Gate, may be certain of his Salvation, and eternal joy in the Kingdom of Heaven, where he shall have an everlasting habitation. This is the counsel of *Adam* to his Children, I say it is *Adam's* counsel,

*Who falling once, did make his children all  
Both guilty of his punishment and fall.*

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### C H A P. III.

*The Ravens croaking.*

**N**EAR unto the *Skeleton* of the *Proto-plast*, or the bare Bones of the first Man that God made, is the *Raven's* place in the Picture, which maketh very much for the representation of *Eternity* to the life. It is a well-known saying of *Saint Augustine*, *Cras, Cras*, that is, *To Morrow, To*

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*To morrow*, is the voice of the Raven: Mourn therefore like a Dove, and beat thy breast. The chiefest cause, that I conceive, why most Men lose their part and portion of *Blessed Eternity*, is, because they seek it not *To day*, but defer the seeking of it till *To morrow*. For what is more frequent or ordinary, than putting off repentance till *To morrow*, *To morrow*, which God doth know we are uncertain, whether we shall live to see or no? But that we may not seem to put it off without some fair pretence, we make many fair promises unto God.

*I will To morrow, that I will,  
I will be sure to do it;*

*To morrow comes, To morrow goes;  
And still thou art to do it.*

*Thus still repentance is deferr'd  
From one day to another:*

*Until the day of Death is come,  
And Judgement is the other.*

But the day of promise is so long a coming, that the day of Death often preventeth it, and we are suddenly snatch'd away, and swallowed up of *Eternity*, and so plunged into the gulf; miserable Men that we are, into the gulf of everlasting horror and despair. This is it that undoeth

eth many, saith *S Augustine*; whilest they cry, *Cras, Cras, To morrow, To morrow*, the gate is suddenly shut against them. Therefore the son of *Sirach* often calleth upon us to this purpose, *Make no tarrying to turn unto the Lord, and put not off from day to day: For suddenly shall the wrath of God come forth, and in thy security thou shalt be destroyed, and perish in the day of vengeance, Eccles 5. 7.* It was truly said of *Seneca*, that *Roman Philosopher*, A great part of our life we spend in doing ill; the greatest part in doing nothing; but all in doing another thing, rather than that we should. Not unlike to *Archimedes*, who when *Syracuse* was taken, was sitting secure at home, and drawing Circles with his Compass in the Dust. For do we not see most Men, when the Eternal Salvation of their Souls is in question, handling their Dust, and stretching themselves to their furthest compass, fet upon the Tenter-hooks, as it were, and distracted with Law-suits, Money-matters, worldly busineses, and labors that shall no hing profit them at the last? *Eternity* is a thing they never once think of, or else very seldom, and then but slight'y for a snatch and away, as *Dogs* are said to lap at *Nilus*, *Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, but one*

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thing is needful, *Luk.* 10. 41. and that is *Beatitude* or *Blessedness*: Not that on *Earth*, which such as it is, is yet but *short*; but that in *Heaven*, which is *Eternal*.

Before we take any business in hand, we commonly examine it at this well known rule, saying, *Is it worth my pains, Shall I get my Bread by it?* Should not a *Christian Man* rather in the beginning of every work, sit down and say with himself, *Shall I gain Heaven by it? Will it any thing further me in the way to Blessed Eternity?* We do not love to trouble our heads with such *Queries* as these; we put off the hearing of them till another time; we do adjourn it from one time to another, and another, and still another; and at the last day of the *Term*, we will grant a hearing. Foolish men; When at last we are not able to labor, then we first begin to think of labor. When we must needs depart out of this *World*, then we begin to think upon another *World*. When we can live no longer here, then we begin to think of the life to come hereafter. When the hour-glass of our short time is run out, then we begin to think of *Eternity*. When there is no time left for repentance, then presently we will repent. When the *Gate* is shut, then we knock. But this is the



the fault of all sinners in general, still to defer their repentance from day to day. Every sinner is ready to say, (saith S. Augustine) *I cannot now, I will another time, Alas! Alas! If another time, why not now?*

Dionysius, King of Sicily, disrobing Apollo of his Cloth of Gold, said thus, *Nec aestati nec hyemi vestis haec convenit. It is a wear neither fit for Winter nor Summer.* In summer it is too heavy, and in Winter it is too cold. So do many (saith S. Ambrose) play with God, and deceive their own Souls. They say, Let a young Man live according to the fashion of the World; let him drink and dance; let him go to the Horse-race, and to the Wrestlers; let him go a coursing in the fields with his companions. It is for old men to stay at home, and not to stir abroad, unless it be to Church. This is too melancholy a life for a young Man. But when they grow old, what do they then; Then are they old and sickly, weak and feeble: You must not look for these things of them at that age; their strength will not permit: It is not with them as formerly it hath been; you must give them leave to take their ease; let them have a care of their health: This is all they have to do.

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Thus we let the Summer and Winter of our age pass away, and never once think of the Eternal Spring. But let us remember our selves, and *as we have opportunity let us do good, Gal. 6. 10.* But let not our song be any more, with the Black Raven, *Cras, Cras, To morrow, To morrow,* and so let, *To day,* and *To morrow,* and the next, and so our whole life pass away, and *Eternity* overtake us before we are aware. *To morrow* is not, *To day* only is ours. So saith S. James, *Go to now, ye that say, To day, or to morrow, we will go into such a City, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain; whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is our life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away, Jam. 4. 13.* It was a very good answer that *Messodamus* gave one, inviting him to a feast the next day, (as it is reported by *Guido Bituricensis*) My friend, saith he, why dost thou invite me against *to morrow*? I durst not for these many years secure my self, that I should live one day; for I have expected death every hour. No man is sufficiently armed against death, unless he be always prepared to entertain it. What is it else, but rashness and folly, folly and madness, and indeed meer contempt of *Eternity*, for a Man to lie down in ease upon

upon a Feather-bed, to sleep secure, snorting and snorting, and to lodge an enemy, a deadly Enemy, all t'ie while, sin, in his very bosom? Sudden deaths are very common and ordinary amongst us. How many have we heard of, that went to Bed well over night, for ought any Man could tell, and were found dead in the morning! I will not say carried away out of their Beds, and cast into Hell fire; whether it be so or no, God knoweth. Have we not seen and known some that have been suddenly struck, fain sick, and died in the space of an hour? Within an hour, ye a less than an hour, sound and sick, quick and dead? And yet do we ( rash and foolish men ) procrastinate it from day to day. ( that is nothing ) from year to year do we defer our repentance, and the amendment of our lives; and death mean time unexpected seisseth upon us, and delivereth us up unto *Eternity*. *S. Augustine*, correcting in himself such lingering and dangerous delay, such lenitude and backwardness of mind and will to repent, saith thus, *I felt and found how I was held intangled, and I uttered such lamentable complaints as these, Quamdiu, quamdiu, Cras & Cras? Quare non hæc hora finis turpitudinis meæ? How long shall I defer, and still cry, To morrow, To morrow?*

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*Why do I not now begin, even this very present hour? Why do I not break off my sinful course, and begin to live better? Thus I speak and fell a weeping for very contrition of heart.*

Anthony the Great (as S. Jerome witnesseth) when he used exhortations to the people to stir them up to godliness and vertue, was wont to wish them always to keep in mind, and often meditate upon that saying of the Apostle, *Sol non occidat super iracundiam vestram.* Let not the Sun go down upon your wrath. And this prohibition he did not restrain to wrath only, but made it general: Let not the Sun go down upon your wrath, hatred, malice, envy, lust, or any other sin, lest it depart from you as a witness against you.

John, Patriarch of Alexandria, had a certain controversie with one Nicetas, a chief Man of that City. The matter was to be tried at Law, John was for the poor, Nicetas for his money. But for peace sake there was a private meeting and hearing appointed, to see if they could come to some composition and agreement. They met, they fell to words, they were hot at it, a great deal of choler and stomach was shown on both parts, neither would yield a jot, neither would depart an inch from his right. A great conflict there was  
be-

between them, many hours spent to little purpose: They were further off from Agreement, at length, than before; for neither would yield to Conditions propounded by either. Well, it grew late, they departed more offended and displeas'd one with another, than before, and so left the suit pendent. *Nicetas* thought it a hard case to part with his money, and the Patriarch seem'd to be in the right, and to stand out in the Cause of God, and the Poor. But yet when *Nicetas* was gone, the Good Bishop weigh'd the matter better with himself, and condemn'd himself for his pertinacy; and though he was in a good Cause, and knew it also, yet said, Can I think that God will be well pleas'd with this implacable wrath, and wilful stubbornness? The night draweth on: And shall I suffer the Sun to go down upon my wrath? That is impious, and not according to the counsel of the Apostle. So the good Prelate could not be at rest till he had sent unto *Nicetas*: For he out of hand sent Messengers of good esteem, and gave them this charge, that they should say no more to him but only this *Domine, Sol ad occasum est*, that is, *Sir, the Sun is going down*. Upon the hearing of which message, there was such a sudden alteration wrought in *Nicetas*, that his

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high stomach came down presently, he began to melt, his eyes did stand full swoln with tears, and he had much ado to keep them in. Out of doors he ran presently after the Messengers ( for he made haste to speak with the Patriarch ) and coming to him in humble manner, saluted him thus, *Holy Father, I will be ruled by you in this, or in any other matter.* Whereupon the Patriarch made him very welcome; so they embraced each other very lovingly, and became good friends. Great surely was the virtue, and speedy was the operation of these few words, *The Sun is going down*: For presently upon the hearing thereof, a peace was concluded betwixt them, which was sought for before with multitude of words, but could not be effected. So do thou, whosoever thou art that knowest thy self guilty of any grievous sin, if not before, towards the evening, at least, call to mind those operative words, *The Sun is going down*. For what knowest thou, whether thou shalt rise again with the Sun, or no? And if thou dost in the night without Repentance, it is a question in which *Eternity* thou shalt have thy part, whether of the blessed, or of the cursed. Wherefore do what thou hast to do quickly, *The Sun is going down*. But have a care it go not down upon thy lust  
or

or luxury, envy or blasphemy, detraction or theft, or upon any other grievous sin unrepented of. Good God! What a thing is this? If there be but a stain in a garment, a spot in the face, a blot in a cap, we presently use some means to take it out, or wash it off. Are these such eyesores to us? And yet are we so blind within, that we cannot see our manifold corruptions and pollutions? or do we see and suffer them? Can we suffer them, and not be troubled at them? Are we troubled, and yet seek no means to expiate and purge them out? When we are polluted at any time with the stain of sin, we should labour presently to take it out; the sooner it is done, the better and the easier it is. Therefore, saith *S. Ambrose*, *we ought to be careful to repent*: But that is not all, our repentance must be also speedy, for fear lest the Heavenly Husbandman in the Gospel, that planted a Fig-tree in his Vineyard, come and seek for fruit, and finding none, say unto the Dresser of his Vineyard, *Cut it down*. If the sentence be once past, there is no avoiding the fatal blow; down it must. If therefore we find our selves once wounded with sin, let us look for help in time. The brute beasts which have no understanding, will teach us so much

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providence. The harts of *Candy* or *Crete*, as soon as they are struck, run presently to their *Distamnum* or *Dittany*: The Swallows, to cure the blindness of their young ones eyes, flie to fetch their *Che-lidonium* or *Celandine*: The Dog, when he is sick, maketh haste to his *Grass*, to give him a vomit: The Toad fighting with the Spider, as soon as she feeleth her self begin to swell, crawleth to her *Plantane*, and so is recovered.

These by a natural instinct, know their own proper Medicines, and upon all occasions, presently make recourse unto them. But we poor miserable Men, more unreasonable, and without understanding, than the Beasts, are wounded every day, and that many times deadly; and yet notwithstanding we seek for no Medicine to cure our Spiritual Diseases. We use the same diet we were wont to do; we talk as freely and merrily as ever we did; we go to Bed at our accustomed hour, and sleep according to our old compass. But *Repentance* is the Physick that goeth against our stomachs, *Contrition* cutteth us to the heart, *Confession* seemeth bitter in our mouths: We chuse rather to continue sick, then to be cured. This is our miserable condition; so foolish are we, and void of understanding, either not knowing,



knowing, or at least, not embracing that which would make for our Eternal good.

If we would give ear unto the counsel of the *Heavenly Angels*, which seem in the Picture according to their description, to give direction unto us, and are indeed appointed by God, as *Ministring Spirits* for our Good; If we would, I say, give ear unto their counsel, then certainly we should neither suffer our eyes to sleep, nor our eye-lids to slumber, neither the temples of our Heads, to take any rest, until our peace and reconciliation were made with God. They put us still in mind, that our day is almost spent, that the night draws on, that our glass is near running out, that death is at hand, and after death cometh judgement: But we securely walk on in our old way. Let the day spend, let the night draw on, let the glass run out; come death, follow judgment; We are not troubled at it, we care not, we regard not, no warning of the *Angels* will serve our turn.

*We sweetly sleep, and never dream of this.  
Unhappy Man whosoever thou art!*

—Potes hoc sub casu ducere somnos?  
*And canst thou sleep in such a case as this?*

Canst

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Canst thou go to Bed, with a Conscience thus laden with sin? Canst thou take any rest when thou liest in danger of Eternal Death? Canst thou lodge in the same Bed with the Brother of Death, and enter sleep into thy bosom? I can, I tell thee, that I can, and find no harm at all by it. Be not too confident; that may happen in the space of one hour, which hath not happened in a thousand. Thou art not past danger; for consider with thy self how long thou hast to live. There is no great distance betwixt thy Soul and Death, Hell and *Eternity*. It is gone in a breath. Thou mayest most truly say every hour, I am within one degree of Death, within one foot, yea, within one inch. Death need not spend all his Quivers upon thee: One Arrow, the head of one Arrow shall wound thee to the heart, and make such a large orifice, that blood and spirits, and life and all, shall suddenly run out together. Either thou livest in a malignant and corrupt Air, or else thou art troubled with distillations, falling down from thy Head upon thy Lungs, or else there is some obstruction in the Veins, or in the Liver, or else the Vital Spirits are suffocated, or else the Pulsation of the Arteries is intercepted, or else the Animal Spirits run  
back

back to their Head, and there are either frozen to death, or else drowned. One way or other thou possessest to the end of thy short race; and presently thou art but a dead Man, carried away to *Eternity* in the turning of a hand, before thou couldst imagine or think upon it. There are a thousand ways to bring a Man to his end: I do not speak of lingering Deaths, before which there goes some *warning*, but of sudden Deaths that summon us, arrest us, and carry us away all in a moment. He dies *suddenly* that dies unpreparedly. Death is not sudden, if it be foreseen and always expected. That is *sudden death* which was unpremeditated; and unpremeditated death is the worst of all deaths: And from such sudden death, *Good Lord deliver us*. It is good counsel for every one, let him be of what age he will, for no age is privileged more than another: Death hath a general commission which extends to all places, persons, ages, there is none exempt. It is good counsel then, I say, for every one at all times, and in all places, and in all companies, to expect death, and to think every day, yea, every hour to be his last: Then let him die, when please God, he shall not die suddenly.

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How many Men have we heard of; whose light hath suddenly been put out, and life taken away, either by a fall, or the Halter, or Poyson, or Sword, or Fire, or Water, or Lions paws, or Boars tusks, or Horse heels, and a thousand more ways than these! As many Senses as we have, (that number is nothing.) As many parts and members as we have, (and yet that is nothing.) As many pores as there be in all the parts of our Body put together, so many windows are there for death to creep in at, to steal upon us, and suddenly cut our throats. *Thou wast born* (saith Saint Augustine) *that is sure: For thou shalt surely die. And in this that thy death is certain, the day also of thy death is uncertain.* None of us knows how near he draws unto his end: *I know not* (saith Job, chap. 32. 12) *how long I shall live, and how soon my Maker may take me away; or* (as our Translation hath it) *I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing, my Maker would soon take me away.* In the midst of our life, we are near unto death: For we always carry it in our bosom; and who can tell, whether he shall live till the evening or no? This murderer and man-stealer (for so I call Death) hath a thousand ways to hurt us, as by thunder and lightning, storms and tempest, fire and water, &c.

instruments of mischief he hath of all sorts, as Guns, Bows, Arrows, Slings, Spears, Darts, Swords, and what not? We need not be beholding to former ages for examples of sudden deaths. Alack! we have too many in our own days. Have not we our selves known many, that laying themselves down to sleep, have fallen in such a dead sleep, that they are not to be awaked again, till they shall hear the sound of the Trumpet at the last day? Death doth not always send his Heralds and Summoners before, to tell us of his coming, but often steals upon us unexpected; and as he finds us, so he takes us, whether prepared or unprepared. *Watch therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour, Matth. 25. 13.* There is a kind of Repentance indeed in Hell: But neither is it true, neither will it profit any thing at all, For it is joyned with everlasting, and tormenting horror and despair. *Now, now is the acceptable time of Repentance, now whilest it is called to day, Heb. 3. 13.* *Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance, Matth. 3. 8.* *The night cometh when no man can work, Joh. 9. 4.* Work therefore while it is day. The day, saith *Origen*, is the time of this life; which may seem long unto us, but indeed is very short, if it be compared with *Eternity*.

And

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And after this short day of this present life, there follows the day of *Eternity*, which is infinite long, and hath no night to come after it.

O Man, whosoever thou art, think upon these things; but thou especially, whosoever findest thy self guilty of any grievous sin. Repent and amend, remember *Eternity*, and think upon the day of Death. It is uncertain in what place Death will expect thee; do thou therefore expect Death in every place. As the Lord shall find thee when he calls for thee, so shall he also pass sentence upon thee.

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Whatsoever thou takest in hand  
remember the end, and thou shalt never  
doe amiss Eccles: 7. 36.



To think upon Eternitie and not to  
amend ons manners is to bid heaven  
fare well and to joyn hands with hell.



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THE EIGHTH  
CONSIDERATION

Upon

ETERNITY.

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*How Christians ought not only to look upon the Emblems and Pictures of Eternity, but come home and look within themselves, and seriously meditate upon the thing it self.*

**O**rders requires now, that leaving the *Psalmist*, and the rest, who have described unto us *Eternity*, we should descend into our selves, keep at home, and stay within. He is a great way from home, from himself, and from his own salvation, whosoever hath an eye to that only which is transitory, and forgetteth that which is Eternal.

The Lawyers know well enough that a Man will not let go his right and title, though it be but in a matter of three-half-pence, if it be a perpetuity, and to be yearly paid for ever. Yea, it is thought

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a great Rent, if a Man be bound to pay, though but three farthings yearly, to his Land-lord, as long as the World endures. In such esteem are perpetuities, though in things little worth, though but three Pepper-corns. If thou art so solicitous and eager in pursuing thy right of three-half-pence, how comes it to pass, O Man, that thou art so negligent and careless in seeking after the Inheritance of an Eternal Kingdom, which may be had at a few years purchase? Thou sellest out with thy Brother for three-half-pence, thou goest to Law with him, thou makest it a long suit: In the mean time, thou sufferest others to carry away the Inheritance of the Kingdom of Heaven. What is the reason? Is it so little worth? Is it not worth looking after? It seems thou thinkest so, or else thou wouldst labor for it more than thou dost. Thou art much cumbered about other things; thou thinkest all pains little enough; thou art never weary of seeking after them: But as for *Eternity*, that thou thinkest to be a great way off, and therefore thou art scarce ever at leisure so much as once to think upon it; or, if thou art any time at leisure, then thou hast no mind to it. O! It is a grievous thing, and very wearisome to be always looking after that which yet is not

*here*

here ever throughly to be looked into. Who would trouble his head, and weary his mind about it? We are all for the present. Give us present possession; that is the thing we desire, that is the thing we delight in: There is some content in that.

See our folly and want of discretion. What blindness is this, or rather is it not madness, to look for certainty where none is, and where it is, never to look for it? In a business concerning our temporal and uncertain riches, we love to be certain, we will have good security, which yet, at the best, is very uncertain. But concerning Eternal and certain riches, we make our selves so certain, that we look for no assurance; we are so secure, that we look for no security, which yet, if we would, we might have as good as could be desired. Does any Man lend money without a Bill, or a Bond, or a Pledge? Every Man hath this presently in his mouth, I love to be certain; I desire good security; I will go safely to work; I will not put the matter to hazard. Things present and certain, when we hold the balance, always weigh down things future and uncertain. Better say we, (as the Proverb goes) is one Bird in the hand, than two in the bush. And, I had rather see a Wren in a Cage,  
than

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*than an Eagle in the Clouds.* We are of *Plautus* his mind, we carry our eyes in our hands, and believe no more than we see. What fond and foolish Men are we, that seek for certainty of such things as are most uncertain, which deceive us most when we make our selves most sure of them, which make themselves wings and flie away, whilest we think we have them fast enough in our hands! But, be it known unto all Christian people, what assurance and security Christ, the King of Heaven will give: What assurance, I say, of Eternal Life, Christ will give unto all those that will enter Bond for performance of Covenants. *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments.* Matth. 19. 17. *Si vis ad vitam ingredi, serva mandata.* The Condition of this Obligation is such, That if thou keepest the Commandments, thou shalt enter into life, Life Eternal: But if thou breakest the Commandments, in as much as thou breakest them, then this Obligation shall be void, and of none effect. For whosoever breaketh one of these Commandments, and deferreth his repentance, and doth not the same hour wherein he hath sinned, seek reconciliation and peace with God, whom he hath offended; he is in danger to lose himself, and all that he

he hath, and manifestly hazardeth the Eternal Salvation both of Soul and Body. There is but three fingers breadth, or rather but an inch between him and death. For he hath within himself the matter of a thousand diseases, and causes, of death: And yet rash and foolish Man, he persisteth and continueth still without fear or wit in the state of damnation; in which state, if it should please God to take him away suddenly, he is in danger to perish everlastingly. Is it not a bold and foolish part, for a Man to adventure all that he hath at a cast, and hazard the loss of Eternal Riches, when he may easily keep them?

If a Man should suffer in Hell but so many torments, as he hath lived hours, or but so many torments as he hath committed sins all his life; this might seem somewhat the more tolerable. If it were so, that in Hell there were any end of torments, after the expiration of any certain number of years, Men would make no end of sinning, all the days of their life. The enemies of God would increase every day more and more. For albeit they know that the torments in Hell, are so many in number, that they cannot be numbred; so long for continuance, that they cannot be measured; so grievous  
for

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for quality, that they cannot be endured, but with such infinite pain, that every minute of an hour shall seem a whole year. Notwithstanding all this, Men are nothing deterred from sin, but walk on boldly, or rather run headlong to their own destruction.

If all the torments that can be inflicted or imagined, should be heaped together upon the head of a Man for an hundred years together, they would not come near the punishments of Hell for one year, no, not for a day, nor yet an hour. All the punishments that Thieves, Robbers, Murderers, and such Malefactors suffer, though grievous for the time, yet they are quickly ended; in three or four days they are over, or in the compass of a week at most; but the torments of the damned are not for a year, or an age, but for ever. God shall ever punish them, because he can never punish them enough, though he punish them to all *Eternity*.

## C H A P. I.

*Eternity doth not only cut off all comfort and ease, but even all hope also.*

**I**N this life we have *Hope* for our comforter in all calamities and distresses, which hath a sovereign virtue to mitigate and assuage all pains and sorrows. And God of his great mercy, for the most part, in all adversities, still leaveth a Man some *Hope* to help and succor. The sick Man as long as he lives, he still lives, in *Hope*: As long as there is life. there is *Hope*. But after this life ended, there remaineth to the damned no more any *Hope* of comfort. *Hope*, the last comforter of all, taketh her flight, and Eternal Desperation seiseth upon them. The Prophet *Daniel* speaketh of an Angel coming down from Heaven, and saying, *Hew the Tree down and destroy it, cut off her boughs, shake off her leaves, and scatter her fruit abroad, yet leave the stump of the Roots thereof in the Earth, Dan. 4. 23.* Upon which words saith *St. Ambrose*, *The leaves and the fruit are shaken off, but the root is preserved;* that is, Delights here are taken from us, and punishments are inflicted upon us, but yet *Hope* is not taken away from us. **E**ehold!

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hold ! The Root is preserved, *Hope* is left behind. In Hell it hath no rooting. Behold the day cometh, (cryeth the Prophet *Malachy*) that shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch, And *Job* lamenting cryeth out, *I am gone, and my hope hath been removed like a tree, Job 19.10.* The hope, or, The expectation of the wicked shall perish, so saith *Solomon, Prov. 10.28.* Therefore whilst there is time and place for *Hope*, let us have *Hope*; but let us *Hope* for such things as we ought. All humane things are vain and uncertain. The Heathen Poet tells us so much in these Verses,

*Omnia sunt hominum tenui pendentia filo,  
Et subito casu quæ valere ruunt.*

*All humane things hang by a slender thread,  
What stands most strong, is quickly ruined.*

We must not therefore place our *Hope*, trust, and confidence in such things. Saint *Bernard* sheweth us a better way in these words, *Faith* saith, God hath prepared for the faithful, great and unconceivable good things And *Hope* saith, He hath reserved them, and laid them up for thee. And *Charity* saith, in the third place, *I make haste,*  
and



and think it long till I come to them. True Hope, as St. Gregory affirmeth, raiseth up the mind to the thought of *Eternity*, and taketh away the sense of all outward crosses and troubles. True Hope makes us to understand, that all worldly things are vain, but a *Modicum*, but for a *moment*. But, O that moment, on which all *Eternity* doth depend! The day of death, and the hour of the extream and last agony, is properly that moment, and that precious jewel; for buying whereof, the wise Merchant sel eth all that he hath. But few know the worth of this jewel. About Eternal Salvation, saith St. Jerome, every Man is negligent. But what is the reason that men are so negligent in a thing of such great moment? Poor men! We are troubled with weak and ill eyes. We see well enough near at hand, but we can scarce perceive any-thing afar off. I do not speak of such as are come to mans estate, or such as are grown old. Boys and Girls when they are new taken from their Cradle, before they have all their teeth come forth, learn the first elements of vices, they smutch their fingers presently with the soil of covetousness; and after a while, they have an insatiable desire after getting riches; they learn to make good Markets for themselves;

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selves; if they meet with a good penny-worth, they presently lay hold upon it, their hand is presently in the purse, either laying out for gain, or receiving in gain; they know how to make the best use and advantage of their money; they get an insight into the mysteries of divers trades; they will be talking of merchandise, they will learn good judgment of Wines; they will tell you what fashion and cut is in use beyond sea, *Juvenal* the Poet in his Satyrs, gave these a lash long ago.

*This old Wives teach Boys in their Infancy,  
And Girls do learn before their ABC.*

*Hence is vice  
Of every vice.*

Hence cometh our gross ignorance, and forgetfulness of things Eternal. Young and old, all do overvalue their Money; but as for Heaven and *Eternity*, they know not, neither will they understand the true worth of them. But let us proceed.

C H A P. II.

*Eternity is a Sea, and a three-headed Hydra:  
but it is also a Fountain of all Joy.*

**I** Would fain ask thee, O Christian Man, whosoever thou art that hearest Sermons often, but seldom, it may be, with attention and devotion; thee especially fain would I ask one question. Suppose thou shouldst take in hand to lade out all the Water in the Sea, into a small River near adjoining, which runneth back again into the Sea continually, as fast as it is cast out. Suppose thou shouldst use no other Ladle but a very small Spoon to cast it out withal: Now tell me, How long dost thou think thou shouldst be in draining of the Sea: Or again, Suppose thou shouldst draw it out with a Bucket as big as an Hog-head; and as fast as thou drawest, pour it out into another Channel. Answer me, In how many years dost thou think thou shouldst be able to draw the Sea dry? To sit scorching and frying in the flames of Hell fire so many yeas, I know thou wilt say, were a grievous and wretched torment; and yet the damned would think it well with them, if it were so: They would like the condition well, and

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not think the time long, so that they had any assurance, that at length their torments should have an end, and not extend to all *Eternity*.

We read in Heathenish Authors of old time, a thing more strange than true, of a certain *Hydra* or *Snake*, which (as they feigned) had three heads, and as soon as one was cut off, had two shoot up in the place thereof. But if this *Hydra* be any where to be found, it is in Hell; where there is a threefold *Eternity*, which like the *Hydra* stretcheth out her long neck with three heads that is, *The pain of loss, the pain of sense, and the worm of Conscience that ne'er dieth*. What miserable and improvident Men are we, that having but a short journey to go, but full of dangers all the way, go on notwithstanding so merrily and sportingly, as if we were walking all the while through *Paradise*, or a most pleasant *Garden*, free from all fear of *Enemies*; and in the end of our walk, presently to be received and admitted as Citizens into our Heavenly Countrey, a place of all security! For can we be ignorant? if we be, it is our own fault. But we cannot be ignorant, that at length we shall come to the two Gates of *Eternity*, the one of the blessed, the other of the damned: And enter we must at one of them, that

that is certain; at which, God knows, it is accordingly as we shall behave and carry our selves by the way.

*Laurentius Justinianus*, wondering at the merry madness of such Travellers, breaks forth into this exclamation, *O the lamentable condition of mortal Men, which go on exulting all the way, whilest they are but exiles, or banished men from their own Country!* Let us not settle our minds upon any vain joys, and fond toys by the way, whilest we are travelling towards our Country; but let us so run our race, that at the end thereof, we may obtain admittance in at the Gate, which is the entrance to Eternal Blessedness. God hath indeed created us rather unto joys and pleasures, than unto labors and sorrow; but we are much mistaken, both of the time and place: It is not here, it shall be hereafter. Joys are prepared in Heaven; but none but the good and faithful servants shall enter into them. And by what means may a man obtain entrance? Knowest thou not what Christ said? *The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence; and the violent take it by force,* Matth. 11. 12. Think now thus with thy self, Am I this violent Man? Is this the violence here spoken of, To eat, to drink, to rise up to play, to lie down, to take my ease? It is not certainly. Fight

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we must, but it must be the good fight, like Christian Champions; Run we must, but so, that we may obtain; Strive we must, but to enter in at the strait Gate. Labor we must, and offer violence to the Kingdom of Heaven; but it must be in due time and place. Now whilst we have time here, whilst we are on the way, whilst we have life and strength, that when we come to the point of death, and so pass the Horizon of this World, and depart into another, never to return back again; when we shall be translated from *Time to Eternity*, then at the last we may have joy for our life past, and hope for that which is to come. Let us labor therefore, let us labor, I say, and offer violence to our selves, fighting against our own forward wills and affections: So shall we obtain by the mercy of God, everlasting rest for short labor, and eternal glory for a few days travel.

True and solid joy is not here to be found in vain delights and pleasures, but in Heaven, where there is joy and pleasure for evermore. *God prepared a gourd; and made it come over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief, Jonah 4. 6.* So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd. And what is all the pleasure, or rather vanity of this present World?

World? Is it not like *Jonah's* gourd flourishing for a time, and yielding a comfortable shadow? Rich Men have their gourd also, that is, their riches, under the shadow whereof they rejoyce with exceeding great joy. Drunkards and Gluttons have their gourds also, that is, great Tables and delicious fare, under the shadow whereof they are merry and joyful. Voluptuous Men also have their gourds too, that is, their unlawful pleasures, under the shadow whereof they lie down and sport themselves. But (alas!) sorrow follows after such joy, and suddenly overtakes it. Their mirth is soon turned into mourning; and their delights and pleasures end in gall and bitterness. For what became of *Jonah's* gourd? *God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered.* Now tell me, *Jonah*, where is thy gourd? What is become of it? Where is now thy exceeding great joy? They are both gone together, thy gourd is withered, and thy joy is ended. Such are our vain delights and pleasures, such is our joy, rather shadows of things than any thing indeed, they pass away suddenly, and become like *Jonah's* gourd that soon withered. The joy of this World is but for a moment, but the joy of the life to come is for all *Eternity.*

## C H A P. III.

*Here is declared by a most memorable example, How sweet and precious the taste of Eternity is.*

**T**HIS knew *Theodorus* very well, one born of Christian Parents; and, as it seems, he learned it betimes, when for years he was but a youth, but an old Man for judgment and discretion. For on a great festival day, kept throughout all *Egypt*, there being a great feast at his Fathers house, and many invited thereunto; when some were eating and drinking, others laughing and playing, and others sporting and dancing; he amidst all these jollities, retired himself to his inward Closet, finding himself wounded to the heart, but with a chaste arrow. For thus he began to expostulate with himself. Unhappy *Theodore*? What would it profit thee, if thou shouldst gain the whole World? Many things thou hast indeed, but canst thou tell how long thou shalt enjoy them? Thou livest in abundance now; thou maist feast it, and make n erry; thou maist laugh and be far, thou maist rejoyce and skip for joy. But art thou sure how long this shall last? I should like it well, if



it would last always. But what shall I do? Shall I for the enjoying of these short and transitory pleasures & delights, deprive my self of those joys which are Eternal? Tell me, *Theodore*, is this according to Christian Religion, to frame unto our selves an Heaven here on Earth, and think to pass from delights to delights, from Temporal to Eternal: Either I am much deceived, or else Christ shewed unto us another way unto the Kingdom of Heaven, and that is through many tribulations. Therefore have no more to do with worldly vanities, but prefer Eternal joys before Temporal. Thus he said, and fell a weeping. So then he retired himself into a withdrawing-room, and there prostrating himself upon the Earth, he prayed after this manner. *Eternal God, my heart is naked and open before thee, I send up my sighs as humble Orators and Petitioners unto thee: I know not what to ask, nor how. Only this one thing I beg at thy hands, That thou wilt not suffer me to die an Eternal Death. Lord, thou knowest that I love thee, and that I desire to be with thee, that I may sing Eternal praises unto thee: Lord have mercy upon me.* Whilst he was thus praying, in comes his Mother, on a sudden, and presently perceiveth by the redness and moistness of his eyes, that he had been a weeping; and thereupon she  
 said,

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saith, *My Son, What is the matter with thee? Why weepest thou? Why mournest thou? Why keepest thou out of sight to day? Why dost thou not come to the Table? The rest are all there: Thy company is desired: Come away.* But Theodore answered, and said, *I pray you, good Mother, have me excused; I find my self somewhat ill at stomach, I pray you do not urge me to eat or drink against my stomach.* So with a fair and colourable pretence he sent away his Mother; then being alone, he conferred with God and himself about *Eternity*, and strictly examined all the course of his life saying unto himself, *What am I? or, What have I been? How hath it been with me heretofore? or, How shall it be with me hereafter, if I lose my part and fellowship in the Kingdom of Heaven and Blessed Eternity? There are divers ways to Heaven: Some go one way, some another; it is no matter which way we go, so we come thither. But because all ways are not alike, neither are all natures alike, every Man ought to chuse that way which is most convenient. There is a short way, and a long; a safe way, and a dangerous. If then I be afraid to go a long and dangerous way, there is a shorter and a safer, which if I shall chuse, without all doubt, I shall have the Angels for my companions and comforters, and they will also rejoyce.*

*Well,*

Well, Theodore, defer a while, but not too long, and do not yield too much. I hope I shall one day grow a strong Man, and then I shall be better able to deal with mine enemies, for I shall find those that are strong: But what if they be easie, flattering, fawning, and such as will even weep for me? The truth is, I am most afraid of such. But pluck up a good heart, Man, and though by nature thou art flexible and easily moved, yet pray unto Christ, and he will make thee strong and immovable. But what if thy Mother falls a weeping, beseecheth thee with her tears trickling down her cheeks? What if she hangs about thy neck; and desires thee to spare thy self? What if she shews thee her breasts which gave thee suck? will not all these move thee? Here remember what St. Jerome saith, Notwithstanding all these importunities, run with speed unto the Standard of Christs Cross. It is a virtue and praise-worthy to be cruel in such a case as this. It is the portion and inheritance of thy Mother the Church, to stand under the Cross of Christ: So did Mary, the Mother of Christ; and so must thou, if thou wilt have God thy Father in Heaven; and the Church, thy Mother, on Earth: And so thou wilt do, if thou beest a true son and no bastard. But must I do it now in my youth, in the flower of mine age! that is hard: So it is, indeed, to flesh and blood

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blood. But experience teacheth it, that God is not well pleased with late service; for late services are seldom good. Therefore they do well, that begin to serve God betimes, that seek him early, and that remember him in the days of their youth, and learn to submit their tender necks unto the yoke of Christ. But I have been brought up tenderly, I have been fed with dainties; and shall I now enter upon a strict and rigid course of Life, and bid adieu to all my pleasures? Shall I be able to endure it? I hope I shall. But, how long? For a year or two? That is not enough: I must go further, and continue to the end, even as long as I live. Therefore weigh and consider the matter well with thy self, before thou resolvest; and either never begin, or else continue to the end. I will by God's assistance; for I hope he will not leave me alone to strive with these difficulties, which of my self I shall not be able to overcome. But it is a hard matter to strive against custome. I have hitherto lived like a Nobleman, and a Freeman; and shall I now live like a Poor-man, and a Slave? Or, if I do, how long shall I live so? If I put on the Poor-man's person, and act in the Theatre of this World, when shall I put it off? At the end of the last Act. And how far is it thither? As long as it is to the last breath. Thy part is not ended till thou art to depart out of this life.

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If thou once comest forth in the Poor-man's dress, there is no putting it off again: Thou must not once think of thy Silks, Sattens, and Velvets. Purple and fine Linnen thou must not wear, until thou beest clothed with the Robe of Immortality and Glory.

Theodore, What thinkest thou? Shalt thou be able to hold out to the last Act? I will strive what I can, and comfort my self by the example of other good Actors that have gone before me. And whom shall I chuse rather to follow and imitate than Christ, the Son of God, who voluntarily became poor, and made himself of no reputation, humbling himself above measure, to do and suffer like a servant, being Lord of all? And shall not I do and suffer any thing after his example? Shall not I take up the Cross and follow him? Am I better than he? Why should I be afraid to follow, when I have such a Leader? For who is it? Who bids me follow him? It is the voice of Man that I hear; but it is the Will of God, whom I ought to obey, because he commands. But this is too high a point of Philosophy, for a Man to forsake his riches, and to embrace poverty. And what wilt thou do, Theodore? Resolve with thy self what to do.

Why do I thus long doubt, and dispute within my self? Why do I waver thus between hope and fear? Have I not the example  
of

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of my Lord before mine eyes? Did not he suffer many things not to be uttered? Was not he nailed to the Cross, and despitefully used? He forsook his heavenly Treasures, and came poor into this World. His birth, life, and death shew it. At his birth he wanted a Cradle; in his life he had not where to hide his Head; and at his death he had not wherewithal to cover his Body. Naked came he into this World, and naked he went out. How was it with him in his life? He was fain to flee from one place to another. He was often wearied with travel, scorched with heat, and dry for thirst. He was as indefatigable in doing, as he was patient in suffering, and both in an high degree. Was ever any one so well bent to poverty, so patient in labors, and so gentle and mild when he was reproached? And should I be ashamed of such a Leader? Should I blush to be called one of his followers? Shall not I be content to be such as my Lord and Saviour will have me to be? I am ready, for love of him, to suffer hunger, thirst, cold, nakedness, poverty, and such like. I am willing, for his sake, to be bound, burnt, and cut in pieces. These sufferings are but short, they cannot continue long. But the joys or torments of Eternity are long indeed; for they shall never have end. Therefore farewell all the World, and the things that are in it, I care not for you, I regard you not;

Farewel,

*Farewel, I say; but welcome, Eternity, whensoever thou comest: Thou art the only thing that I seek after; my Soul longeth after thee; there is nothing that I desire in comparison of thee.*

With the heat of such Cogitations his Soul was so set on fire, that it was inflamed with the love of *Eternity*, which the Blessed shall enjoy in Heaven. Therefore he resolved to take leave of his Parents, to forsake his riches, and bid adieu to his delights for ever. He did not resolve hastily, but continued in his resolution constantly. He was not soon hot, and soon cold; he was not altered all on the sudden; he did not pass from one extream to another; he did not strive for the highest pitch at the first, but rose up by degrees, and became one of *Pachonius* his Scholars. You have heard the Prologue; but there follows no Tragedy after it: For, contrary to the Law of a Tragedy, we have a sorrowful beginning, but a joyful ending. He came forth with a *Lacrymæ*, but went off with a *Plaudite*: At his *Intrat*, there was weeping for grief; but at his *Exit*, there was clapping of hands for joy. Thus have ye heard the life and death of *Theodorus*, whose Soul fed, as it were, upon thoughts of *Eternity*, and was delighted therewith as with marrow and fatness. He was not

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of the Worlds mind, which counteth *Eternity* but a Fable; but refused not himself to become a Fable and a by-word in the World, being perswaded fully of a *Blessed Eternity*, and earnestly desiring and thirsting to have a part in it.

Christian Brethren, shall I speak a free word, but a true? Or, not I, but *Theodorus*. Most men live so, as if there were no such thing as *Eternity*, as if it were but a meer Fable and a feigned thing. But what do I tell you of *Theodorus*? Will you hear what *St. Peter* saith? *The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of men ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? 2 Pet. 3. 10.* But where are those men now a-days, by whose holy conversation and godliness a man may judge that they believe *St. Peter*, that the day of the Lord is coming, and that *Eternity* shall follow after? But if you will not believe *St. Peter*, hear what Truth it self saith, *Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat, Mat. 7. 13.* Certainly men would not go in at the  
broad



broad gate of destruction, if they did think they should come out no more, if they did once dream of *Eternity*. But, as I said before, most Men make *Eternity* but a feigned thing, a witty invention to keep Men in awe, and a good honest fable. And yet how many are apt to say, We believe that there is a *Blessed Eternity* after this life, we hope to have part in it, we have a desire and longing after it! But (a'as!) how little is their faith! how vain is their hope! how cold is their desire! Present pleasures, money in the hand, the allurements of the flesh steal away the hearts of many, and by little and little, make the desire and love of *Eternity* grow quite cold in them, as if they had drowned and buried it in the grave of oblivion. We hear it often read and preached: *Thus saith the Lord, This is the Commandment of the Lord: And as often as we hear it, we still neglect it. Say the Lord what he will, command what he will, our old way pleaseth us best, We will walk after our own devices and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart. Therefore thus saith the Lord, Ask ye now amongst the Heathen, who hath heard such horrible things? Jer. 18. 12, 13.* Had the people which knew no God, but known these secrets of *Eternity*, certainly they never would have contemned and neglected them. Go to now, O ye sons of  
Men,

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*Men, because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my hands, and no Man regarded, I will also laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you, Prov. 1. 24, 26, 27. When Eternity shall suddenly overtake you. If Death seise upon you in this miserable state and condition, there is then no hope of mercy: The Gate is presently shut, there is no opening of it: The sentence of condemnation is past, there is no repealing of it. Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels, Matth. 25. 41.*

Watch therefore, good Christians, watch. I say; The Judge stands at the Gate. That may happen in a minute, that you may be sorry for, for all *Eternity*. *Anthony the Great*, in a certain Sermon which he made to the people, spake thus unto them. *Dearly beloved Brethren, in matters of this life we have a care to make good bargains, we will be sure to have a pennyworth for a penny. I lay out, for instance, so much money, and I have the worth of it in wares; I give so many crowns, and I have so many bushels of Wheat; so many pounds, and I have so many quarters of Malt. But we are not so wise in Heavenly matters; we will not*  
give

give things Temporal, in exchange for things Eternal. Eternal life is a thing not worth looking after, we much undervalue it, we will scarce give any thing for it, we will not take any pains or labor to obtain it. And yet what is our labor, suppose the greatest we can undergo? If it be compared unto life Eternal the reward of it, it will not amount to so much as one half-penny, in respect and reference to a Million of Gold. For what saith the *Psalmist*, *The days of our life are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength, labour and sorrow, Psal. 90. 10.* But suppose a Man should live an hundred years, to speak with the most, and all that while serve God zealously, and faithfully, were it not time well spent to gain *Eternity*? were not the labor well bestowed, to purchase a Kingdom? I do not mean a Kingdom to continue for an hundred years only, but throughout all ages; not an Earthly Kingdom, but the Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, Christian Brethren, be not puffed up with vain glory, be not ambitious after worldly honour, be not wearied out with well-doing, be not cast down with afflictions, do not sink under the burden of the Cross, but bear it patiently and chearfully, *Rejoycing*, with the Apostles, *that ye*  
*are*

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are counted worthy to suffer. Rom. 5. 3. For I reckon, saith St. Paul, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us, Rom. 8. 18. Let no Man when he hath forsaken the World, think that he hath forsaken any great matter. For what is Earth in Comparison of Heaven? It is but a Centre to the Circle, a Minute to *Eternity*, a Drop to the Sea, and a Grain of Dust to the Dry Land. What are our riches? Fading and uncertain moveables. We are soon taken from them, or they from us. Though with much ado we keep them as long as we live, yet whether we will or no, we must part with them when we die; we cannot carry them to our Graves. Why do we not then make a vertue of necessity? Why do we not willingly part with them, whilst they are ours, seeing that shortly we must part with them, whether we will or not, when Death attacheth us for a debt due to Nature, and then they can be no longer ours? Why do we not lay them out like good Merchants for the *Margarite* or precious Pearl of Eternal life? Thus sweetly goes on *Athanasius*; But I must leave him, and draw to a conclusion.

*Pachonius* was wont, whensoever he felt any unlawful thoughts or desires arise in his mind, to drive them away with the remembrance

membrance of *Eternity*; and if at any time he perceived them to rebel again, he still repel'd them by meditating seriously upon *Eternity*, the Eternal punishments of the damned, the torments without end, the fire that never goes out, and the worm that never dieth. And here I will conclude this Consideration with the Exhortation of the same *Pachonius*. *Before all things, saith he, let us every day think upon the last day; let us in time remember Eternity; let us every minute we have to live, so live, as if we lived in fear of Everlasting Torments; that so by the Mercy of God in Jesus Christ, we may for ever escape them.*

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Good Master what good thing shall I doe  
that I may have Eternall life!  
Math. 19. 10



It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of  
a needle, then for a rich man to enter into  
the Kingdome of God. The love of <sup>riches</sup> & of Eter-  
nitie are scarce resident in one hart.

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THE NINTH  
CONSIDERATION

Upon

*ETERNITY.*

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*The first Conclusion.*

**N**O Man living is able in word to express, or in thought to conceive the infinite space of *Eternity*. Between a true Man, and a painted Man, true fire and painted fire, there is a great deal of difference; and yet these are in some kind one like unto another. But between our common fire and the fire of Hell, between the sorrows of this life, and the pains of Hell, there is no comparison, no proportion at all. For this life, and the sorrows of this life, are measured by space of Time; but the life to come, and the sorrows thereof cannot be measured by any thing but only *Eternity*, which also is without measure. This doth our Saviour most elegantly express in the Gospel of *S. John*, by the Parable of the

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Vine branch, if a Man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered, and Men gather them, and call them into the fire, and they are burned, *John 15. 6.* In these words is *Eternity* briefly and plainly described: For mark the words well; they run not in the future, *He shall be cast forth, and shall wither, and Men shall gather them, and shall cast them into the fire, and they shall be burned;* I say they run not in the future, but all in the present tense, *He is cast forth and withered, and Men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. They are burned.* This is the state and condition of the damned, *They are burned,* that is, *always burning.* When a thousand years are past and gone, as it was in the beginning, so it is still, *They are burned:* And when a thousand and a thousand more yet are gone, as it was, so it is, *They are burned.* And if after certain millions of years the question be asked, What is now the state and condition of the damned? What do they? What suffer they? How fares it with them? There can be no other answer made but this, *They are burned, still burning, continually, inutterably, Eternally,* from one age to another, even for ever and ever. Upon this place excellently saith *St. Augustine*, One of these two must needs be the condition of the  
Vine-



Vinebranch, either it must abide in the Vine, or else be cast into the fire; if not in the Vine, then certainly in the fire. But that it may not be cast into the fire, let it still abide in the Vine.

*The second Conclusion.*

**I**F those Men which do still continue in their sins, did but know how near they are unto *Eternity*, and everlasting torments; if they did consider well with themselves, how that *God* in a moment, in a breath, in the *twinkling* of an eye ( as we speak ) may suddenly take them away in their sins, and deliver them up unto death; then surely, if they had it, they would give all *Spain*, all the treasures of *Asia*, all the Gold of *India*, yea all the World to obtain but one hour to confess their sins, to repent them of the same, and to ask *God* pardon and forgiveness : They would not, certainly they would not, still hug and embrace their sins, they would not every day multiply them as they do, they would not lodge them every night in their bosom, and ly snorting in them, *Matth. 16. 27.* For what is a Man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Though thou lovest every thing else in the World, yet, O Man, have a care to keep

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thy soul. It were needless here to reckon up a *Catalogue* of the Martyrs of Christ in all ages. There are whole books of them in great volumes: they are recorded to all posterity, and their names shall be had in everlasting remembrance. But the greatest honor that we can do them is to follow their good example, to learn of them Christian fortitude and magnanimity, to fear God more than Man, *Matth.* 10. 28. *God which is able to destroy both body and soul in Hell, rather than Man which can only kill the body, but is not able to kill the soul*; to love God more than all the World; to be willing to part with all for Christ, to lose all to save our souls, and gain *Eternity*. I will conclude here with that excellent exhortation of *St. Augustine*; What then shall we do, brethren? What? What else but whilst we have time amend our lives, where we have done amiss, do so no more; become new Men; That what is threatned and shall certainly come upon wicked and ungodly Men, may not fall upon us; not because we shall not be, but because we shall not be like unto them: Whatsoever is written in the Scripture, is written for our learning, it is the voice of God. Observe and make good use of what you read: Whatsoever we suffer in this life is but the gentle rod of our most mer-

merciful Father, who correcteth us here as his dear children, that we be not tormented with the damned hereafter. Why then do the light afflictions of this life seem so grievous unto us? Why do we even tremble, and quake for fear, when we do but hear of them? The most grievous sufferings of this life, if we judge aright of them, in comparison of everlasting fire, are very small, yea indeed none at all.

*The third Conclusion.*

**A**mongst Christians, God knoweth, there are a great many, that either believe there is neither Heaven nor Hell, or else if they did truly believe it, they would certainly live otherwise than they do. As concerning such Men, the question may be very fitly asked, *Luke 18. 8. When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith upon the earth?* Some there are that would fain be thought to be true Believers; They confess it indeed with their mouths, but dissemble with their double hearts; If their words may be believed, they may go for true Believers; but if their lives be examined, they may be thought to be no better than Infidels. They never think upon *Eternity*, or very seldom; and when they do, they do but think upon it and there

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is all; it is gone in a thought, they never weigh well with themselves what it is, they never seriously meditate upon it, they never rouse their understanding to be intent upon it, they never bend their wills and affections to seek after it, they never imprint it in their deep cogitations that so they may remember it. They scarce begin to think upon it, but their minds are presently somewhere else, their thoughts go a wandring, their imagination is working upon somewhat else. And if at any time some sparks of devotion and godly desires arise in their hearts, they are presently quenched and choaked with cares of this World, with multitude of business, with *profits* or *pleasures*, and such like. And thus miserable Men they stop their ears, and close their eyes, and without fear or understanding they run hoodwinked in the way that leadeth to *Eternal* death. It is observed by the holy Fathers of the *Glutton* in the Gospel, that he never lifted up his eyes till he was in torments; All his life long they were shut against the poor and against all godliness: He opened them not till he was in Hell, when it was too late. And it is no marvel that so many Men run blindfold to the house of slaughter, and *Eternal* sorrow: for the way is very broad and pleasant, smooth  
and

and plain, a Man can hardly go out of it, there is no fear of losing himself till he comes to the end thereof. Then he shall perceive that all the while he was travelling, he was quite out of the right way: then I say, when there is no returning back again. Many would like this way well; if there were no end thereof: For, though it rids merrily, it ends miserably: and therefore they do wisely, that leave the great road, and travel on in the rough way; that choose rather to go through briers and thorns unto an *Eternal Paradise*, than through a pleasant *Paradise* to an *Eternal Prison*; that resolve with themselves to break through all difficulties; counting it better to go on weeping and mourning, in the narrow way of salvation, rather than laughing and rejoicing in the broad way of destruction. Most true it is which *Job* speaketh, *As the cloud is consumed, and vanished away; so he that goeth down to the grave, shall come up no more: He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more,* Job 7. 9.

*The fourth Conclusion.*

**W**Hosoever useth to descend into a deep and serious consideration of

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*Eternity*, he will be so far from living licentiously and wantonly, that you shall hardly ever see him laughing heartily. It hath been observed of as many as have been raised from the dead, and turned again unto life, that they were scarce ever seen to laugh at all. In particular it hath been observed of *Lazarus of Bethany*, whom Christ loved. He and they, as many as have been raised from the dead, might truly say with the *Preacher*, *I said of laughter, It is mad; and of mirth, What doth it? Eccles. 2. 2.* Not without cause in this doth *Cyril of Alexandria* confess himself to be fearful; For he saith thus, I am afraid of Hell and the punishments thereof, because they have no end; I am afraid of the devouring worm, because it never dieth. *O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end! Deut. 32. 19.* Whosoever is not better by the consideration of *Eternity*, (I dare boldly say, and think I may say it truly) either he hath no faith at all; or if he hath any faith, he hath no heart at all; or at the best it is but an heart that is dead and without all sense. It was the witty saying of a learned Man, That marriage was a short and a sweet song, but that it had a doleful close: So we may most truly say of all the pleasures that we  
take

take in sin, that it is a short and a merry song, but it ends in mourning and lamentation; or rather it is a song *short for time*, and *sweet for tune* as long as it lasteth; for it runs much upon *quavers*, and *semiquavers* of mirth and jubilation. But the *time* suddenly changeth, and the *tune* is altered; for there follows without any *rest* the *larges* and *longs* of sorrow and lamentation; which cannot be measured by any *time*. For the torments of Hell are *Eternal*. *Oh Eternity, Eternity, Eternity!*

*The fifth Conclusion.*

**W**Hensoever we speak of *Eternity*, we speak always with the least, but we can never speak too much of it. Whatsoever is said comes short of it. No words can utter it, no figures can number it, no time can measure it. For *Eternity* is of this nature; take from it what you will, it is still the same. It is neither increased by addition, nor diminished by subtraction. Suppose there were subtracted from it so many years as there are stars in the firmament, drops in the sea, sands on the shore, leaves on the trees, grass in the fields, motes in the Sun, dust on the earth: What remains? As much as there was before the *Subtraction*. Suppose there were so many

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years

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years added to it: What then is the *Result*? The same that it was before the *Addition*. The *total sum* is neither more nor less, than what it was, that is, *Eternity*.

As long as God is, so long shall the damned be tormented. This we have shadowed out before by some similitudes and resemblances, unto which we will add one more out of *Benaventure*. If one of the damned, saith he, should weep after this manner, that he should let fall but one tear in an hundred years, and those tears should be kept together so many hundred years till they would equal the drops of the sea: Alas! Alas! (Not to speak of the sea) How many millions of years must needs pass before they can make one little river! or if they should at length make a whole sea of water: yet even then it might truly be said, *Now Eternity beginneth*. And if he should weep again after the same manner till he made another sea; yet then also it might be said again as truly as before, *Now Eternity beginneth*: and so on forwards for ever. Let no Man once doubt of the truth hereof; for between that which is finite and that which is infinite there is no proportion. But this seems wonderful and strange unto us, because our imagination cannot conceive it: It cannot reach unto that which is so far remote;



more; It cannot penetrate into that which is infinite, for that is impenetrable. And that is the reason that our understanding is so hardly drawn to the consideration of *Eternity*; because it blusheth in a sort, and is ashamed, or else for indignation cannot endure to tire it self in the search of that which cannot be found out. But let us put away this foolish and shameful modesty, and let us force our understanding to the due and serious contemplation of *Eternity*, and let it be our daily exercise to be still meditating upon such similitudes, as may in some short shadow it out, and represent it unto us: And so shall we never do amiss. Say what we can, think what we will, imagine so many millions of millions of years as it is possible for the mind of Man to conceive, we shall still come short of the measure, and length of *Eternity*: The years of *Eternity* are more, far more, yea infinitely more. This is certain, and without all controversie.

The Prophet *Daniel* signifieth the incomprehensible dimension and length of *Eternity* in these words, *They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever, Dan. 12. 3.* Mark these words, *For ever and ever.* As if he should have said, No words are sufficient

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to express the nature of *Eternity*. It is *for ever and ever*: Here is all that I can say of it: Though more might be said in respect of its own nature, yet I am not able to say more. Observe his *Auxesis*, or his *augmentation* of it by *multiplication*: *For ever*, that is, for *Eternity*: But he thinketh that not sufficient, and therefore he doubles it, *and ever*. And yet in the Latin it is expressed more fully, in these words, *In perpetuas Æternitates, To perpetual Eternities*, Mark here, he saith not, *In Æternitatem, To Eternity* barely in the *Singular number*; but *In Æternitates, To Eternities* in the *Plural*, as if one were not enough: Neither doth he rest here in less-nitely, saying *To Eternities*, nor yet doth he add any finite term, because none can express it, but an infinite, *Perpetuas, Perpetual*; *In perpetuas Æternitates, To perpetual or Infinite Eternities*. Now if one *Eternity* is without end, what are two? what are ten? what are an hundred? what are infinite? If we should multiply the great year or years a thousand times, it would not amount to the least fraction of the numberless number of *Eternity*. They say that the Eight *Cœlestial Orb* or *Sphere* is moved wonderful leisurely beyond all comparison: For though it be daily wheeled about by the rapid motion of the *Primum mobile,*

*mobile*, yet it finisheth not its own proper circuit but once in thirty six thousand years, and this space of time they call, *The great year, or Plato's year*. But compare this with *Eternity*, and it will appear to be but a moment, but an instant, but a minute, indeed nothing at all. It is a true saying of *Boetius*, that an instant, or point of time, and ten thousand years, compared together, keep better proportion, than ten thousand years and *Eternity*. But hear what *St. John* saith, *Little children, it is the last time, or the last hour*, 1 *John* 2. 18. And this he said one thousand six hundred years ago. It is most true therefore what *S. Augustine* saith, whatsoever hath an end, that thing is but short. *Eternity* is a *Word* consisting but of four syllables, but it is a *thing* without end. Therefore set thy love upon *Eternity*. Let *Christ* be thy end, and thou shalt reign with *Christ* without end.

*The sixth Conclusion.*

**I**T is not to be believed that any Man that hath but the least smack of true Religion can be so far carried away by his impotent and unruly passions (if he be not as bad as a beast, ) ruled meerly by sense, and serving only his sensual appetite; For  
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The wicked and ungodly man, even then when he is almost swallowed up in the deep pit, wherinto his sins have plunged him headlong; even then, I say, doth but laugh at it, regards it not, is not a jot troubled at it; It is not to be believed, I say, that any Man that hath any Religion at all in him, can be so far carried away by his headstrong and unbridled passions, but if he will spend a part of an hour every day in meditating upon *Eternity*, yea if he will but once in a week seriously think upon it, he will mend his manners, he will change the course of his life to better, he will certainly become a new Man: Of a proud Man, he will become humble and lowly; of an angry Man, he will become mild and gentle; Of an unclean Man, he will become chaste and continent; of a drunken Man, he will become sober and temperate. He will put on, not the outward, but the inward habit of a true religious and godly Man. He will become such a one, not in clothes and outward expression, but in heart, and inward affection. Neither will he rashly and unadvisedly, slightly and negligently, upon a spurt all at once on the sudden pass from one extremity to another: (such alterations are not good, neither will they continue long) But he will again and again weigh the matter

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ter well with himself, he will consider well upon it, he will fasten his serious thoughts upon it, he will often revolve in mind, *Eternity, Eternity, Eternity*, that shall never have end, end never, never end; which shall last throughout innumerable, incomprehensible, infinite ages. This will he do with consideration and attention, and often ruminat upon it, as beasts chew the cud. Meat though never so good and wholesome, if it be not chewed in the teeth, prepared in the mouth, digested in the stomach, turned into blood, and distributed by the veins into all the parts of the body, turns to poyson rather than to nourishment, begets all manner of diseases, is retained perhaps sometime in the body, but doth more harm than good, were a great deal better out than in. Even so the thoughts of Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell are good and wholesome, godly and holy, but none more than the thought of *Eternity*, which may worthily be called the *Quintessence*. But as it is with meat, not the taking of it meerly into the mouth, but the good digesting of it in the stomach, the turning of it into good blood in the Liver, and the distributing of it into all the parts by the veins, nourisheth the body: So it is with those precious thoughts of *Death, Judgment, Heaven, Hell, and Eternity*: not the  
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bare thinking upon them, but serious thinking upon them with our selves, setting apart all cares and worldly distractions, the ponderings of them well in our hearts, and the often ruminating upon them, this is it that feedeth and nourisheth the soul. If this be not done, the rest is to little purpose: without this even the reading of the holy Scriptures is fruitless, the hearing of the word preached is unprofitable. Many hear Sermons often, read the Scripture over and over again, and yet are little bettered by it, because they do not meditate upon what they have both read and heard. When they hear, what comes in at one ear goes out at the other: when they read, the eye is no sooner off from the book, but what was read is soon slipt out of memory. Before they can practise what they have heard or read, they have quite forgotten what they should do. Therefore if we will read or hear with profit, we must spend some time in meditating and pondering with our selves what we have read and heard. This lesson we may learn of the blessed Virgin the mother of our Lord, Luk. 2. 19. *But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.*

*The seventh Conclusion.*

**F**EW or none believe, or else do not well understand and weigh with themselves these words of Christ, *Matth. 7. 13.* Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: *14.* Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. This again our Saviour repeats by the mouth of *St. Luke, Luke 13. 21.* Strive to enter in at the strait gate; For many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. *August.* Whosoever laughs at this faith, and therefore will not believe because he doth not see; when that shall come to pass which he did not believe, he shall blush and be confounded, he shall be confounded and separated from the blessed; he shall be separated from the blessed, and have his portion with the damned.

*Hieronymus Plautus* reports of a certain, Woman, that hearing *Bertoldus* a powerful Man in the Pulpit inveigh very vehemently and bitterly against a sin that she knew her self guilty of, fell down dead in the Church; and after a while by the blessing of God upon the Prayers of the Congregation  
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coming again unto her self, related unto them what she had seen in this trance, saying thus, Methought I stood before God's Tribunal, and threescore thousand souls more with me, called together from all the parts of the World, to receive their final sentence: And they were all condemned and adjudged to *Eternal* torments, but only thee. Oh! what a fearful thing was this! I should hardly believe this womans relation, but that I believe Christs asseveration in the Gospel, *Matth. 7. 13. Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat; And again, v. 14. Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* It may seem strange to flesh and blood that God the Father of Mercies should pass the sentence of condemnation upon so many, I do not say threescore thousand, but threescore thousand thousand? And what Man would believe it, were he not perswaded of the truth thereof, upon the consideration of the sovereign and infinite Majesty of God which is offended; the unutterable malice of sin which is committed, and many evident testimonies of Scripture by which it is plainly proved; *Job trembles at it, saying, Job 10. 22. A land of darkness, as darkness it self, and of the shadow of death, without*



without any order, and where the light is as darkness, or according to the Latin, where there is no order, and where everlasting horror dwelleth. St. Matthew affirms as much in the words of our Saviour, *Matth. 25. 41.* Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire. Let us consider these things well with our selves, and whilest we have time let us wash away our sins with the tears of repentance, for fear lest God suddenly snatch us away, and give us our portion to drink with hypocrites in the bottomless pit of Hell, where there is nothing but weeping and gnashing of teeth, where the worm never dieth; and the fire never goes out, from whence there is no redemption, no redemption, I say, and again I say, no redemption; No, not any comfort at all, not so much as a little drop of cold water. If the godly themselves, who are in the state of grace and in the favour of God, whose minds and wills be good, if they, I say, could sufficiently conceive from what grievous torments they shall be delivered at the day of judgment, and into what unutterable and unconceivable joys they shall enter, without doubt they would use no delay, they would not let an hour pass, but out of hand they would take their leave of all Vanities, forsake the World, and leave the dead to look after the dead: But as for  
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themselves, they would be daily and hourly well employed about their Masters business, always studying to please God, ever lauding and praising him for his goodness and mercy towards them, in blessing them in part here in this World, and giving them an assured promise of everlasting blessedness in the World to come, for delivering them from the torments of Hell, and giving them entrance into the joys of Heaven. It is the saying of *St. Gregory*, The evils of this present life seem the more hard unto us the less we think upon the good which shall follow hereafter. And because we consider not the exceeding great rewards which are laid up for us, therefore we count the afflictions of this World grievous to be born: whereas if we did lift up our minds, and raise our thoughts to the contemplation of those things which are *Eternal*, and not subject to any change; if we would have an eye unto them, and set our hearts upon *them*, we would certainly count the sufferings of this life, and whatsoever hath an end, to be as nothing; and again, *joy in tribulation* is a song in the night: For although we are outwardly afflicted with the sense of sorrows *Temporal*, yet we are inwardly comforted with the hope of joys *Eternal*.

Much after the same manner reasoneth

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St. *Augustine* : If thou wouldest but attend, saith he, unto what thou shalt hereafter receive, thou wouldest count all the suffering of this present life to be but light, & altogether unworthy of the glory which shall be revealed. For brethren, ( to speak of the worth of things ) for *Eternal rest* a Man should be content to undergo *Eternal labor*, and for *Eternal joy* willingly suffer *Eternal sorrow* : But if the labor and sorrow were *Eternal*, when should a Man come to rest and joy *Eternal* ? Therefore upon necessity thy *tribulation* must be but *Temporal*, that so at length thou maist receive a reward which shall be *Eternal*. For hang up the scales, and put *Eternity* in one, and a thousand years in the other : what do I say, a thousand years, yea ten thousand, yea an hundred thousand, and yet more, a thousand thousand, they are all too light to weigh with *Eternity* ; there is no comparison betwixt them. And yet further, to make them more light ; As they are but *Temporal*, so likewise they are but short, and of no continuance, they last but for a few winter-days, when they are at the shortest, or rather but for one day, and that a short one ; the day of this life which is soon past, and they are gone. Though a Man therefore should suffer all his life long, even to the last breath, though he should suffer,

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suffer, I say, labors, griefs, sorrows, imprisonment, scourge, hunger, thirst, all his life long, even to the last breath, yet his sufferings are but short, because his life is but short. For *the days of our pilgrimage are but few, though evil, as Jacob told Pharaoh, Gen. 47. 9. And Job 14. 1. Man that is born of a Woman is of few days; though as Job complaineth, full of trouble. And Psal. 39. 5. Behold, saith David, thou hast made my days as an hand breadth, (and that is but a short measure, and yet he goeth further) and mine age is as nothing before thee.* And as our *Life is short, so is our Affliction light, but it worketh for us a far more exceeding and Eternal weight of glory, 2 Cor. 4.* When this *short life and light labour* is ended, we shall inherit *everlasting life, an Eternal Kingdom, and felicity without end: We shall be made equal to the Angels, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, Rom. 8. 17.* Oh! For how little labour, how great a reward! and again, *St. Augustine* in another place, *The thoughts of God are very deep.* Where is the thought of God; and what is his purpose; He letteth the rains loose for the present, but afterwards he will draw them in. Do not rejoyce and sport thy self, like the fish in the water, which having got the bait in her mouth, playeth up and down, but being  
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struck with the hook in the jaws, may be pulled up at the fishers pleasure. The time which seems long unto thee is indeed but short, very short. For what is the life of Man compared with *Eternity*? Wouldest thou be patient and long suffering? Consider Gods *Eternity*: Dost thou only consider thine own days, which are but few and short, and dost thou think that in them all things shall be fulfilled? That the wicked should be condemned, and the godly crowned? Wouldest thou have all these things fulfilled in thy few and short days? God shall fulfil them in his own time. God is *Eternal*. God is patient and long-suffering: And thou sayest, But I cannot be patient and long-suffering, because I am not *Eternal*. But thou mayest be - if thou wilt: For do but joyn thy heart to Gods *Eternity*, and thou shalt be *Eternal* with him. If thou beest a good Christian, and well instructed in the fear of the Lord, thou wilt certainly conclude, God hath reserved all unto his own judgment. The good and godly Men are troubled and afflicted: For God chastiseth them as his own Children. But the wicked and ungodly Men come into no such trouble and affliction: For God casteth them off, and condemneth them as aliens. A certain Man hath two sons; He chastiseth the one, and letteth the

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the other go without any chastisement: The one, if he goes never so little awry is presently buffeted, whipped and scourged; the other, let him do never so ill, he never hears of it, he is not so much as once rebuked for it. What is the reason: He that is punished, is the fathers heir; and he that goes unpunished is disinherited. For what should the Father do? He sees there is no hope of him, and that he is past grace, and therefore he lets him alone to do what he listeth. But yet notwithstanding, the son which is ever and anon punished for the least offence, will be ready to bemoan and deplore his own case, and count his brother happy which goeth unpunished. He will, I say, unless God hath given him a wise and understanding heart, to know what maketh for his own good. He will be apt to say in his heart, My brother followeth all ill courses, taketh his pleasure, wasteth his means, doth what seemeth good in his own eyes, is ever breaking my fathers commandment, and hath never an ill word for it. But the case is otherwise with me: If I be but out of sight never so little while, if I go but to the next door, if I do but step aside, stir but a foot, but an inch beyond my bounds, presently I am called in question, Sirrah, where have you been; there is no hope of pardon, I am sure

sure to smart for it. This is my case. And I say, Thou art in a far better case than thy brother; and if thou beest not a fool, thou wilt think so too: For in that thou art corrected, it is a sign that thou art best beloved. If thou thinkest only upon thy present state, it cannot but seem grievous unto thee; But if thou hast an eye to the Inheritance which is reserved for thee, again it cannot but seem joyous unto thee. For the assurance of thy future reward will quite take away the sense of the present smart.

Hitherto may be added out of the same holy Father that which followeth, as the summ of all that hitherto hath been said. How great and wonderful is the mercy of God! He saith not, Labour thou for ten hundred thousand years together; nor yet one thousand years, nor yet, five hundred years. But what? Labour whilest thou livest; it is but for a few years; after that thou shalt have rest, such rest as shall have no end. Consider this well with thy self, Thou art enjoyned to labour but for a few years, and amidst thy labour art not without some joy, not a day passeth in which thou mayest not receive comfort and consolation. But rejoyce not thou after the manner of the World, but as the Apostle exhorteth, *Phil. 4. 4. Rejoyce*

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in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoyce: Rejoyce in Christ, Rejoyce in his Word, Rejoyce in his Law. For it is true which the Apostle saith, 2 Cor. 4. 17. *Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and Eternal weight of Glory.* Consider what a small price thou art to give, but the husk of an Acorn, for everlasting treasures: The husk of thy short labour, for rest Eternal. Hast thou joy for a time? Do not trust too much to it. Art thou sad and sorrowful for a time? Do not despair of joy and comfort. Neither let prosperity puff thee up, nor adversity cast thee down. God hath promised unto thee *Eternal Life*; Therefore contemn *Temporal felicity*. He hath threatned *Eternal Fire*; Therefore contemn all *Temporal sorrows*.

To conclude then with the same Divine Author, Let us therefore be in love with *Eternal Life*; and thereby we shall come to know how much we ought to labour for the obtaining of it; for we see that those Men which are lovers of this present life, which is but temporal, and shall shortly have an end, labour with might and main to preserve and prolong it as long as they can. And yet they cannot escape death; for that at one time or other will seize upon them. All that they can hope for, is  
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but to put it off for a little time. When death approacheth, then every one is labouring and seeking to hide himself, ready to give and part with any thing that he hath to redeem his life. He sends for the Physician, he will be ruled by him in any thing, he will take any thing at his hands, he will suffer any thing, Purging, Bleeding, Cupping, Scarifying, and what not? You see what charge a Man will be at, and what pains he will voluntarily endure, to live here though but for a short time; and yet he will scarce be at any charge, or take any pains, after this life ended to live for ever. Brethren, it should not be so. If there be such labouring and watching, such sending and going, such running and riding, such spending and paying, such doing and suffering, to live here a while longer; What should we not willingly do and suffer to live for ever? And if they be accounted wise, which labour by all means they can to put off death a while longer, being loth to lose a few days; What fools are they which live so, that finally they lose the day of *Eternity*.

Think upon those things well with your selves, O mortal Men, and foresee the day of *Eternity*, whether of joy or of torment, before it cometh. For although all other things pass away, yet *Eterni-*

ty still remaineth, and shall never pass away.

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C H A P. I.

*The Punishment of Eternal Death.*

**T**HE *Messenians* had a certain Prison or Dungeon under earth void of air and light, and full of Hellish horror; which as it was a most dismal place, so had it also a glorious title; for it was called the *Treasure-house*. This Prison or Dungeon had no Doors at all to it, only one mouth, at which the Prisoners were let down by a Rope; and so it was stopped up again with a great stone. Into this *Treasure house* was *Philopæmon* that great Emperour of *Greece* cast, and there by Poyson he ended his life; God hath also his *Treasure house* under earth, if I may so speak: But, I pray you, what a one is it? It is of most wicked and ungodly, desperate and damned Men.

*Actiolinus* a Tyrant of *Padua*, (as *Jovius* reporteth) had many Prisons so infamous for all kind of miseries and torments, that whosoever were cast thereinto counted their life misery, and their death happiness. Death might come in there  
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without knocking, he was so welcome unto them, and so long looked for. For this was their hard usage, they were laden with Irons, starved with hunger, poysoned with stench, eaten up with vermine, and so in a most miserable manner they lived, and dyed at length a long and lingering death. There every one was judged most miserable, but he that was dead and could feel no misery. Whilest they lived it was a punishment worse than death to have their habitation amongst the dead. For the dead bodies lay on heaps rotting amongst the living in such manner, that it might be truly said there, that the dead killed the living.

But the very worst of these Prisons is a *Paradise*, and a most pleasant place, if it be compared with the infernal Prison of Hell. Whatsoever misery was suffered in *Actiolinus* his Prison, in this regard it was tolerable, because it was of no long continuance, being to last no longer than a short life, and quite vanishing away at the hour of death. But the Treasure-house of the damned, which is Gods Prison, is void of all comfort: The torments thereof are intolerable, because they are *Eternal*. Death cannot enter in there, neither can those that are entred get out again: But they shall be tormented for

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*evermore.* For *evermore*? What a fearful thing is this; They shall be tormented for *evermore.* It was a most true saying of *Cassiodorus.* As no mortal Man can apprehend or understand what the *Eternal reward* is, so neither can any Man conceive or imagine what that *Eternal torment* is.

The *Persians* had a Prison into which a Man might enter easily, but being once in, could get out no more; or if he did, yet very hardly. And therefore it was called *Lethe*, or *Oblivion.* It is an easie matter to descend down into Hell; but to ascend up again it is altogether impossible. Was every any heard to return from Hell? This Prison of Hell is not without just cause called *Lethe*, or *Oblivion.* For God is so unmindful of the damned, that he will never remember them to have mercy upon them. Hell is called the Land of *Oblivion* or *Forgetfulness*, and that for two reasons (as a godly and Learned Writer observeth) First, Because, saith he, they remember God no more for their good, neither have they any memory at all of things past, but such as doth afflict and torment them. All their pomp and glory, pleasures and delights, are quite forgotten, or else not remembered without grief and sorrow. Secondly, To those that are in this horrid Region, and Lake of fire, God hath

hath forgotten to be gracious, and merciful, neither will he send his Angels at any time to minister unto them the least comfort: If once in, there is no coming out again. For what said Abraham unto the rich Glutton frying in Hell; and desiring him to send Lazarus to cool his tongue with a drop of water? *Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you, cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence, Luk. 16. 26.* Oh gulf full of horror and despair! Oh Eternity of torments, the very thought whereof is able to make a stout Man quake and tremble! The wicked and ungodly Men dig their own Graves, and dwell therein for evermore: But what manner of Graves do they dig; They dig as deep as Hell, where the rich Glutton was buried, from whence he lifted up his eyes in torments and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom, *Luke 16. 23.* to his greater torment. Oh what a terrible deep is this! O what a fearful Grave is this! Who lieth here? He that suffered Lazarus to lye at his Gate, having no compassion on him. How is it with him now? He lodgeth in flames of Fire instead of his soft Bed: he is scalded with thirst, and his sweet Cups are taken from his mouth; his Table is removed, and he hath no other

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Food but Fire and Brimstone ; he is not now dancing and exulting for joy, but gnashing his teeth for hellish desperation. They that are shut up in Prison here in this World , have hope for their comfort ; it may be they shall be delivered, and redeemed out of Prison: But from Hell there is no deliverance, no redemption, no not so much as any hope at all, but Eternal desperation.

It is a short, but a terrible Sermon that God Preacheth by the Prophet *Ezekiel* in these words, *Say to the Forrest of the South, Hear the word of the Lord, Behold, I will kindle a Fire in thee, and it shall devour every green Tree in thee, and every dry Tree: the flaming Flame shall not be quenched, Ezek. 20. 47.* How many tall Cedars, how many wicked and ungodly Men flourish and wax green in this life for prosperous success in all outward things, and yet are dry and withered for want of virtue ! Hear this therefore every green, and yet dry and withered Tree, *I will kindle a Fire, saith the Lord, and the flaming Flame shall not be quenched.* In Hell, whither you make such great haste, there are no Holy-days, no Festivals, no set times in which the Fire shall cease burning. There is Eternal grief, Eternal death, Eternal sorrow, without the mixture of the least comfort

comfort. Night and day there is no rest, no sleep at all, but continually watching and waking for grief, and anguish, and intolerable torments in everlasting Fire. There shall you always have your being, that you may always be tormented: There shall you always live, that you may always die. If you will not believe me, believe *St. Augustine*, whose words are these; The ungodly, saith he, shall live in torments: but they which live in torments shall desire, if it were possible, that their life were ended. But death hears them not, there is none to take away their life; their life shall never end, because their torment shall never end. But what saith the Scripture? The Scripture doth not so much as call it life. For life is a name of comfort: but what comfort can there be imagined in tortures and torments, frying and broiling in everlasting Fire? But what doth the Scripture call it; *The Second death*, that is, a death which followeth after the first and natural death which is common to all Men. But how can the second death be called a death, seeing that he that hath part therein never dieth? We may better indeed express what it is not, rather than what it is. As it cannot properly be called a death, so it may be truly said that it is no life: And as concerning

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cerning them that have part therein, as they cannot properly be said ever to die, so again it may be most truly said that they never live. For so to live, that a Man shall always live in sorrow and torments. is not to live. Therefore that life is no life; but the only life indeed is that life which is blessed; and that life only is blessed, which is Eternal. Again, we have another place in the same Father to this purpose: if the soul liveth in Eternal torments, tormented with the unclean spirits, this is rather to be called Eternal death, than Eternal life. For there is no greater or worse death, than that death which never dieth.

St. *Gregory* also giveth the like Testimony. In Hell, saith he, there shall be death without death, and without end, because death ever liveth, and the end ever beginneth: there death shall never die. Oh death, how much sweeter wert thou if thou wouldst take away life, and not compel those to live, who would fain die! Ever so it is, the number of the years in Hell are without number. It passeth the skill of the best *Arithmetician* to find out the number thereof. God himself knoweth no end thereof. After a Thousand Thousand Millions of years past, there are still as many more to come, and  
when.



when those also are past, there are yet as many more to come; and still they are as far from the last as they were at the first. It is now above five thousand years since *Cain* that slew his Brother *Abel*, was cast into the Lake that burneth with Fire and Brimstone; and yet the number of the years throughout which still he is to be tormented, is as great still as it was the first day of his torment; and after certain Millions of years, the years of his torments for their number shall be nothing diminished: It shall be all one as if he were cast into the Fire but this present hour. And though the rich Glutton mentioned in the Gospel, be tormented two thousand years together, yet still he doth burn, and shall burn for ever; neither shall he obtain so much as a little drop of water, though he use never so much intreaty, not so much as a little drop of water to cool his inflamed tongue.

These things we often hear of, and when we hear of them, we do but laugh at them. Certainly we count it but a light matter to burn in Eternal Fire. Here a Man might well ask the Question, *Where are your tears, O mortal Men, ye that are given so much to laughing?* This is our condition: A small loss if it be but a matter of three half pence, will wring  
great

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great store of tears from us } but as for an infinite and irrecoverable loss, that we can brook easily, we can digest that with laughter. When we are cited to appear at the Barr of an earthly Judge, then we quake and tremble: but as we are going to Gods Tribunal, ( for every day we rid some of our way, we walk on, step after step, will we, nill we; and ( yet as we are going ) we sport by the way. When we go to Sea, we are afraid of Shipwrack: But without either fear or wit we lanch into the deep Sea of *Eternity*, and make but a laughing matter of it.

It is the wish of *St. Bernard*, Oh that Men were wise! that they were wise! Oh that they were wise! What then, holy *Bernard*? Oh, then would the Image of *Eternity* begin to be reformed in them; Then would they order things present wisely, judge of things past understandingly, and foresee things to come providently.

Here we have *St. Paul's* command to the *Ephesians*, and not his wish only, for his words run in the *Imperative mood*, and not in the *Optative*: Brethren, See that ye walk circumspectly, not as Fools but as Wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil, *1 P<sup>h</sup>. c. 15, 16.* The great business of our salvation, ought circumspectly,

ly, diligently, and carefully to be regarded of us. It is the most foolish thing in the World for a Man having but little time allotted him, to spend it prodigally in vain delights, whereas he should like a thrifty Merchant employ it rather for his best advantage, to purchase a portion in blessed *Eternity*. If we think to gain Heaven by sporting, playing, and idling, we are much deceived. To be telling of tales, or giving ear unto them when they are told; to be given to our ease, and spend our time in idleness; to be calling for our Cups, and sit so long at them till we cannot stand. This is not to redeem the time. But this is truly to redeem the time, to give our selves to labour and study, prayer and meditation; not for a spurt and away, but to hold on in this course constantly unto the end; This, I say, is truly to redeem the time. It is the counsel of *St. Augustine*, to steal some time from our worldly business. Will any man sue thee at the Common Law? Be content, saith he, to lose something, that thou mayest be at leisure to serve God, and not follow Suits: for that which thou lovest, is the gaining of time. For as thou givest thy money and buyest Bread; so be content to lose thy money, that thou mayest buy rest, and opportunity to serve God:  
for

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for this is indeed truly to redeem the time.

So ought we to spare for no cost, but willingly part with any thing to gain an opportunity of doing good, seeing that the days are evil. The days of this life are full of sorrows, griefs, dangers, and temptations; which ever and anon take from us the opportunity of doing good; so saith *Anselme*. But if we let slip the opportunity of doing good when it is offered, and let our days consume away in meer purposes of amendment of life, without bringing them to good effect: from henceforth it is in vain to look for any opportunity of doing good; we shall not obtain one minute of time; our loss is altogether irrecoverable. Our life, saith *Nazianzen*, is like a *Mart* or a *Fair*: When the day appointed is once over, there is no more buying any commodities. If then we will buy any thing, we must do it quickly, whilst the *Fair* lasts: We must live godlily, whilst we have time to live. We must serve God, whilst we are strong and able. The Preacher often beats upon this, *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, Eccles. 9. 19.* The Apostle often spurs us on to lay hold upon opportunity, and make good use of our time. *As therefore we have opportunity,*  
let

let us do good to all Men, Gal. 6. 10. For now it is high time to awake out of sleep, Rom. 13. 11. Thou sleepest, saith St. Ambrose, but thy time sleepeth not, it runneth apace, yea it flies with wings. Happy he, happy they that think upon these things, to do thereafter; that live so, as at the point of death they will desire to have lived; to do such things, as they will rejoyce to have done when they are Translated to *Eternity*. A light neglect now will prove an *Eternal* loss. What soever we think, speak, or do, once thought, spoke, or done, it is *Eternal*, it abideth for ever.

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## CHAP. II.

### *The reward of Eternal Life.*

**T**He life in Heaven is life indeed, and the most perfect and absolute life of all others, in that it is *animal*, in that it is *humane*, in that it is *angelical*, yea in that it is *Divine*. There lives the *Memory*, by the perfect remembrance of all things that are past: There lives the *Understanding*, by the knowledge and Vision of God: There lives the *Will*, and enjoyeth all manner of good, without fear of losing it.

In

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In like manner liveth there the *Appetites*, both that which is called *Concupiscible*, and that which is called *Irascible*. There live all the *Senses*, and are filled with delights. There is heard no sighing, no lamentation, no grief or sorrow, nor so much as the least sign thereof. There is the most sincere and pure song of joy, without the mixture of the least drop of the Gall of bitterness and sorrow. Let the *eyes* be silent, they never saw the like; let the *ears* be silent, they never heard the like; let thy *heart* be silent, it could never conceive the like to this life. This life includeth within it self all pleasures, riches, honours,

*August.  
de Civi-  
tate Dei,  
cap. 30.*

and all the delights of all lives, senses, and faculties. *St. Augustine* as it were set on Fire with the fervent desire of this life, breaketh forth into these words. How great happiness

shall be there, where there is the presence of no evil, and the absence of no good? where we shall be continually praising God, who is all in all; *Blessed are they that dwell in thy House; they will be still praising thee, Psal. 84. 4.* All the faculties of our souls and members of our bodies being made incorruptible, shall be ever setting forth the praise of God. There shall be true glory and praise indeed,

deed, where neither he that doth give praise and glory can be deceived, nor he to whom it is given can be flattered. There shall be true honour indeed, which shall be denied to none that is worthy, nor bestowed upon any that is unworthy, yea, which none that is unworthy shall desire or seek after; where none that is unworthy shall be permitted to abide. There he which is the giver of virtue, shall be the reward thereof: for he hath promised himself; and what could he promise greater and better than himself? The Prophet *Jeremy* is witness of this his promise, in these words, *I will be their God, and they shall be my People, Jerem. 31. 33:* I will be unto them whatsoever with honesty can be desired, I will be unto them life, and health, and food, and plenty, and glory, and honour, and peace, and every good thing: For this is the meaning of these words, *God shall be all in all*, He shall be the end of our desires. And one great good there is to be found in that blessed City of God, which is not elsewhere to be found, and that is this, That no inferiour there shall envy his superiour, but they shall be like members of the natural body compacted together in a friendly and peaceable manner, where the finger desireth not to be the eye, nor the

foot

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foot the head, but every member is content with his own place. And a little after saith the same Father, there shall we keep an Eternal Sabbath of rest, and there

*August.*  
*de Civitat. Dei.* shall we taste and see how sweet the Lord is, we shall be filled with his goodness, when he shall be all in all. O God my God!

Thou art Love and Charity, Truth and Verity, true *Eternity* and *Eternal Felicity*.

Another speaketh unto this life, by way of *Apostrophe*, after this manner, in thee there is no corruption, nor defect, nor old Age, nor anger; but perpetual peace, and solemn glory, and everlasting joy, and continual solemnity. There is joy and exultation, there is an Eternal spring. There is always the flower and grace of youth and perfect health.

*Non est in te Heri nec Hesternum:*

*Sed est idem Hodiernum.*

*Tibi salus, tibi vita,*

*Tibi pax est insita:*

*Tibi Deus omnia* That is,  
*Yesterday was with thee never;*  
*But to day is present ever:*  
*Thou hast peace that ever lasteth,*  
*Health and life that never wasteth;*  
*God is all in all.*



*Glorious things are spoken of thee, O City of God, Psal. 87. 3. In thee have their habitation all those that rejoyce; in thee there is no fear; in thee no sorrow. All desires are turned to joys. Whatsoever a Man can wish for is present with thee: Whatsoever can be desired, is in thee in abundance. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy House; and thou shalt make them drink of the River of thy pleasures, Psal. 36. 8. For with thee is the Fountain of Life; in thy light shall we see light, 9. When we shall see thee in thy self, and thee in us, and our selves in thee, living in everlasting felicity, and enjoying the beatifical vision of thee for ever.*

And though this felicity be everlasting; yet a Man may obtain it in a short time, and with little labour. *I have compassion on the multitude, saith our Saviour, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat, Mark 8. 2. Sweet Saviour, dost thou count it such a matter for us to abide with thee three days, and eat nothing? and why, sweet Jesus, dost thou not rather tell us of the days of Eternity, and the everlasting joys wherewith we shall be abundantly satisfied in the Kingdom of Heaven? God taketh notice of the least service that we perform, and*  
it

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it is precious in his sight: He telleth the very hairs of our heads; and much more then will he tell the drops of blood that are spilt for his sake, and put them up in the Bottle of his remembrance.

We may therefore very well cry out with St. *Hierom*, Oh! How great a blessedness is this, to receive great things for small, and Eternal things for Temporal; and further to have the Lord our Debtor! But thou wilt be ready to say, it goes hard to be in sufferings every day; and though all other things might easily be endured, yet death is terrible. Christian Brother, I am ashamed to hear thee say so, it is foolishly spoken, and like a Child. Knowest thou not thus much? I know that I ascend to descend, flourish to wither, am young to grow old, live to die, and die to live blessed *Eternally*. *Trust therefore in the Lord for ever; For in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength, Isa. 26. 4.*

Again, St. *Augustine* comes into my mind, who upon the Words of our Lord saith thus, Our Lord and Saviour concluded with these words, saying, *These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life Eternal, Matth. 25. 46.* It is life Eternal that is here promised. Because Men love to live here upon earth, therefore life is promised unto them :

them : And because they are much afraid to die, therefore death Eternal is threatened unto them. What wouldest thou have? Life; Well, thou shalt have it. What art thou afraid of? Is it Death? Well, thou shalt not suffer it. But they which shall be tormented in Hell Fire, shall have a desire to die; and death shall fly from them. *To live long* therefore is no great matter; yea more, *To live always*, is no great matter; but *To live blessed*, that is a thing to be desired, that is a great matter indeed.

Therefore thou shalt live in Heaven, and shalt never die; there shalt thou live blessed for evermore; for neither shalt thou suffer any evil; neither shalt thou be in fear of suffering it; for there it is impossible to suffer any evil. There shalt thou possess whatsoever thou canst desire; and what thou possessest, thou shalt desire still to possess: Thou canst not be cast out of possession, and this shall satisfy thee. It was there, that *David* did expect to have his thirst quenched, and his hunger satisfied. *In thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are Pleasures for evermore, Psal. 15. 11.* And again, *My soul thirsteth after thee, Psal. 141. 6.* And yet again, *As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied,*  
when

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*when I awake, with thy likeness, Psal. 17. 15.*  
 This is a new and a strange voice for a King: He hath his Table well furnished with all kinds of Dishes; and yet as if he were hunger-starved he hopes to be filled at anothers Table; his own Bread and his own Wine would not serve his turn, to appease his hunger, or to quench his thirst. There was other Bread that he had a mind to, and other Liquor that he so thirsted after, the Bread of Heaven, and the Water of Life. For what is the plenty and abundance of all the Kings of the Earth? It is nothing else but meer want. And what is the dainty Fare at their great Tables? It is but like the Peggars Pitcher, if it be compared with the Fatneſs of Gods Houſe, and his Heavenly Table. Come Eat and Drink, and be filled, my beloved, ſhall the King of Heaven ſay; this Feaſt of mine ſhall never be ended; there ſhall come no ſorrow after it; as it is *To day*, ſo it ſhall be *For ever and ever*. Neither can *St. Auguſtine* here contain himſelf, but he breaks forth again into this Exclamation, Oh life of lives ſurpaſſing all life! Oh everlaſting life! Oh life bleſſed for ever! Where there is joy without ſorrow, reſt without labour, riches without loſs, health without ſickneſs (there is no ſuch matter in this life) abundance without defect,

defect, life without death, perpetuity without corruptibility, beatitude without calamity; where all good Men are in perfect charity, where all knowledge is in all things, and though all things; where the Majesty of God is seen in presence, where the mind of the beholders is filled with the bread of life: They always behold Gods presence, and still they desire to behold it; they desire to behold it, and yet without anxiety; they are satisfied with it, and yet without satiety.

And that thou mayest understand and know, good Christian Brother, that this superexcellent Glory, these coelestial Riches, this Heavenly Kingdom is to be bought, hear what the same St. *Augustine* saith, I have to sell, saith God, I have to sell; come and buy *Ecclis.* it. Lord, what is it that thou 5. 7. hast to sell? I have rest; Come and buy it. What is the price of it? The price is labor. And how much labor is Eternal rest worth? If thou wilt speak the truth and judge aright, Eternal rest is worth Eternal labor. It is true indeed; but do not fear: For God is merciful. For should thy labor be Eternal, thou shouldst never attain to rest Eternal; but that thou mayest attain at length to rest Eternal, therefore thy labor shall not be Eternal;

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Eternal; not but that it is worth so much, but that thou mayest at length get the possession of it. Indeed it is worth the price, though it be labour Eternal; but that it may be purchased and possessed, it is necessary that the price thereof be but labour Temporal. Therefore Christian Brethren, let us rouse up our selves, and stir up one another with this exhortation of St. *Augustine*, which here followeth.

Let us set before our eyes the life which is Eternal, and let us well consider the nature of it, which we shall come the better to understand, by removing from it, whatsoever we account troublesome in this life. For it is easier to find what it is not, rather than what it is. - And yet it is set to sale. Thou mayest buy it if thou wilt. Thou shalt not need to be much troubled or turmoiled about it, for the greatness of the price. The price is whatsoever thou hast, and no more. Never examine what thou hast, but consider what thou art. It is worth thy buying, though thou givest thy self for it. Give thy self, and thou shalt have it. What? Art thou to sell thy self? Art thou to buy thy self? Behold, such as thou art, if thou canst be content to give thy self thou shalt have it. But thou wilt be ready to say it may be, Alack! I am a wicked Man; and such

such a Man perhaps will not be received for good payment: If thou beest not already good, do but give thy self, and by so doing thou shalt become good, and go for current. Do but make a faithful promise to give thy self; and this shall make thee good: And being made good thou art a price of thy self good enough: And thou shalt have, as I said, not only health, safety, life, and such like as shall have an end; but also thou shalt be freed from many miseries: Thou shalt neither be wearied, nor stand in need of rest, thou shalt neither hunger, nor thirst, neither increase nor decrease, neither grow young nor wax old, because there is no being born there; for there is full growth and stature, and the entire and perfect number of years. There is no number like unto it: For as it hath no need of being augmented, so is there no need of being diminished. Behold what excellent things are spoken of it! And yet I cannot come near telling thee what it is, or what good things are treasured up in it: For, it is written, *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entred into the heart of Man,* 2 Cor. 2. 9. And how should my mouth be able to utter what the heart of Man is not able to conceive?

And because we have gone along  
N through

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through St. *Augustine's* Books, as it were through so many pleasant Gardens, and are now brought at length to the *Cœlestial Paradise*, let us seal and confirm what hitherto hath been spoken by the testimony of the same Father. If we were every day, saith he, to suffer all torments, yea the torments of Hell it self, and that for a long time together, to the end that we might behold Christ in his Glory, and have communion and fellowship with the Saints; were it not worth our pains and sufferings! who would not suffer any sorrow to be made partaker of so much good, and so great Glory? Let the Devils then lie in wait for me, let them assault with temptations; let my body be brought down with fasting, let my flesh be kept under with pressure; let me be wearied with labours, let my moisture be dried up with watching; let one Man clamour against me, let another disquiet me, let me be bowed together with cold, let me be set on fire with heat; let my conscience murmur, let my head ache, let my breast be inflamed, let my stomach be troubled with ventosities, let my countenance wax pale and bleak, let me be full of infirmities; let my life consume away with grief, and my years with mourning; let rottenness enter into my bones, and let it spring up like



a Fountain under my feet; let all these miseries come upon me, so that I may have rest and consolation in the day of tribulation, and ascend up unto the people of the Lord. For, What shall be the Glory of the just, and how great shall the joy of the Saints be, when every face shall shine as the Sun! When the Lord shall begin to reckon up his people in their distinct orders, in his Fathers Kingdom; and when he shall render unto every Man according to his works, the rewards which he hath promised, that is, *Heavenly* for *Earthly*, and *Eternal* for *Temporal*.

Think therefore upon the days of old, and call to mind the years which are yet for to come. Think upon *Eternity*, O Man, think upon *Eternity*; think upon the *Eternity* of Torment, and the *Eternity* of Joy, which is to follow after this short life ended, and I dare warrant thee, thou wilt never complain of any Adversity; thou wilt never let slip out of thy mouth such a word as this, *This is too grievous*, or, *This is intolerable*, or, *This is too hard*: Thou wilt, I dare say, count all things easie and tolerable whatsoever can happen in this life, and thou wilt never be better blessed, than when thou art most afflicted.

It is reported by *John Moschus* of one  
N 2 *Olympius*,

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*Olympius*, an old Man of singular patience ( who lived cloystered up in a Monastery near unto *Jordan* ) that he had his mind so bent and fixt continually upon *Eternity*, that he had scarce any sense or feeling at all of any temporal sorrow or misery. For, ( as he goes on with his story ) upon a time, as it happened, a certain Religious Man turned out of his way to visit him, and finding him in a dark Cell, a place, as he thought, uninhabitable by reason of heat and swarms of Gnats and other Flies ; not without much admiration spake thus unto him. And canst thou, *Olympius*, endure to live in such a close Room, so exceeding hot, and so much pressed with Gnats, and swarms of flies ? Eut what did *Olympius* answer ? And dost thou wonder at this ? I tell thee, my Son, all these are but light matters ? I count them tolerable, that so I may escape Eternal torments, which are intolerable. I can endure to be stung by Gnats, that so I may not feel the sting of Conscience, and the gnawing of the worm that never dieth. This heat which thou so complainest of I can suffer easily, when I think upon the *Eternal fire* of Hell, which is unsufferable. These troubles, if I may so call them, are but short, and shall have an end ; but the torments in Hell are without end. Whereupon said the other,  
Cer-

Certainly, *Olympius*, thou art led by the spirit of wisdom and truth; so wisely and truly hast thou answered. I would there were more of thy mind, that would think thus seriously upon these things; then certainly there would be more than there are now adays, that would after thy example patiently suffer and endure all things.

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C H A P. III.

*The conclusion of all.*

**Z***euxis*, the most Famous for his skill amongst all the Ancient Painters that we have heard of, was observed to be very slow at his work, and to let no piece of his go abroad into the World to be seen of Men, till he had turned it over, and over, this side and that side, again and again, to see if he could spy any fault in it: And being upon a time asked the reason why he was so curious, why so long in drawing his lines, and so slow in the use of his Pencil, he made this answer, I am long a doing whatsoever I take in hand, because what I Paint, I Paint for *Eternity*. And thus stands the case with all, we Paint also for *Eternity*. Whatsoever we do, it so belongs unto *Eternity*, that a Man may truly say of

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it thus, I write, I read, I sing, I pray, I labor, whatsoever I do, whatsoever I say, whatsoever I think, all is for *Eternity*. Now if this be the nature of our thoughts, words and deeds, if they shall remain for all *Eternity*, we had need have a care what we think, speak or do; it concerns us to look about us, to mind our business, not to go negligently and sleepily about our work, not to let any thing go out of our hands rude and imperfect, but to polish and perfect it with all the care, skill, and industry that we can use. We Paint with *Zeuxis* for *Eternity*. When we have done our works, they are presently transmitted to *Eternity*, to be viewed by a most judicious and all-seeing eye, that no fault can escape; and being viewed and censured, they are to be committed either to be *Eternally* punished, or *Eternally* rewarded. What I have said before, I here say again, because it cannot be said too often, though I should say it a thousand times; whatsoever we think, speak, or do, once thought, spake, or done, it is *Eternal*, it abideth for ever.

Will you hear what *St. Gregory* saith? In all our actions we must use great care and circumspection, we must well weigh and consider with our selves, what it is that we take in hand, and to what end we do

do it, that our minds be not set upon any thing that is *Temporal*, but upon those things which are *Eternal*. Therefore in all thy actions labour to be perfect. Pray for *Eternity*, study for *Eternity*, suffer for *Eternity*, contend for *Eternity*, labor for *Eternity*. So live to God, that thou mayest live with God; so live on Earth, that thou mayest live in Heaven; so live for *Eternity*, that thou mayest live to *Eternity*.

Hear also what *St. Bernard* saith. Our works do not pass away as soon as they are done (as they may seem to do) but as Seeds sown in time they rise up to all *Eternity*. The foolish Man which hath no understanding, will wonder to see such a plentiful increase rise up of such little Seeds, be it good or be it evil, according to the nature of the Seed which is sown. But he that is wise will ponder these things, and count no sin little: For he hath an eye still not to that which is present, but to that which is to come; not to that which is sown, but to that which is reaped; not to that which is done in time, but to that which remains to all *Eternity*.

Oh the dangerous and miserable madness of the Sons of *Adam*! God created us unto the possession of infinite and *Eternal* goods: And why are we carried  
 . . . . . N 4 . . . . . then.

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then with the whole bent of our affections, to those things which are flitting and vanishing? God made us heirs of Heaven and Eternal possessions: And why do we so miserably intangle our selves in our vanities, and run headlong to destruction? Let us be wise in time, let us look well to our steps, let us make speed on the way of *Eternity*: Let us so live that we may live to *Eternity*. The way thither is short and narrow, but the term thereof is very large.

But O miserable and foolish Men that we are! We fain would obtain Eternal life, but we are loth to tread in the way that leads to it: We fain would be there; but we will not take pains to go thither. Every Man desires to be blessed. There is no Man, saith *St. Augustine*, of what condition or degree soever he be, but have a desire after that life which is blessed for ever. Therefore that life is the common Haven at which all Men desire to arrive; but all Men know not how to steer their course aright. It is a thing which all Men without controversie would fain possess; but how to compass it, what course to take, which way to go, that is the point they cannot agree upon. We may seek it long enough upon Earth; and it is a Question, whether we shall ever find it  
or

or no. Not that I condemn the seeking of it, but the not seeking of it in the right place. One is of opinion that the Soldiers life is most blessed. But another denies that, and says, the life of the Husband-Man is most blessed. And again, - this another denies, and says, that the Lawyers life is most blessed; and he gives his reason for it: For the Lawyer is worshipped by the people, and is much sought unto, he is ever taking of fees and pleading causes.

And again, this another denies, and sayes, the Judges life is most blessed: For he hath power of hearing causes and deciding them. And yet again, another denies this, and says, the Merchants life is most blessed: For he sees divers Countries, learns many fashions, gathers together much Wealth. You see, dearly beloved, in so many several kinds of lives there is not any one to be found, that will please all. But the life blessed for ever, that is it which pleaseth all.

Blessedness therefore is not to be expected here, but is to be sought for elsewhere, and never to be found out, but by a good and godly death. Ungodly Men themselves desire to die the death of the Godly, but they will not live the life of the Godly: For to die well is the way to felicity; but

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to live well is matter of labor ; and yet that is not to be obtained without this. *Eternity* depends upon death, and there is no dying well without living well. Chuse which thou wilt, life or death. If thou livest well, thou canst not but die well ; and it shall be well with thee for ever ; If thou livest not well, thou canst not hope to die well, but it will be ill with thee for ever.

Not many years ago a Man of a good House, having more wit in his head, than Religion in his heart, being asked what he thought of the strict lives of the Religious, and the loose lives of the licentious, which he esteemed best, answered thus, I could wish to live like the licentious, but to die like the Religious. Some wit there might be in his answer, but I am sure there was little Religion in it. He had spoke like a Christian-Man, if he had said thus, I desire to live the life of the Religious, that my end may be like his. *Balaam* could say, *Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his, Numb. 23. 10.* But he had said a great deal better, if he had said thus, *Let me live the life of the righteous, that I may die the death of the righteous, and that my last end may be like his.* For whosoever liveth the life of the Godly, shall be sure to die the death of the Godly:

And



And whosoever liveth the life of the ungodly, shall be sure to die the death of the ungodly: Once he shall die, but that once shall be always, and that always for ever and ever.

A certain Soldier being called in question by *Laniachus* a Centurion, for some misdemeanor or other committed in the Camp, earnestly desired pardon for that once, and promised never to offend in the like kind again: But the Centurion made him this answer, *In bello, bone vir, non licebit bis peccare: Oh Sir, know you thus much, there is no offending in War twice.* But in death (alas!) there is no offending once; there is no hope of pardon, once dead and always dead. He that dies once ill, is damned for ever. There is no returning again to life, to amend what is done amiss. There is no appealing from the sentence of condemnation, if it be once passed. As death leaves a Man, so judgment findeth him; and as judgment leaves him, so *Eternity* findeth him.

It is the saying of *Iphicrates*, that it is a shame for an Emperour at any time to say with the fool, *Non putâram, I did not think it:* But it is a greater shame for a Christian Man to say, *Non putâram, I did not think* there had been such a difference between a chaste life, and a voluptuous life,

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life, *I did not think* that *Eternity* was to follow after this life, *I did not think* that I should have died so suddenly. Alas! alas! How sleepily do we go about the business of *Eternity*! Whereas the nature of this mortal life of ours is such, that we cannot be certain at any time that we shall live for any time, no not so much as for one minute, whenas we know for certain that we must depart from hence, and yet are most uncertain at what hour we shall depart; and when that hour shall come, then also we shall seem not so much to have lived, as to have posted unto death in a moment. Here we are but as sojourners in a strange Land, and not as Citizens in our own Country; we are but Tenants at will, and not Free-holders: Will we, nill we, we must depart, *For here we have no continuing City, but we seek one to come,* Heb. 13. 14.

The holy Prophet *Baruch* asketh this question, *Where are the Princes of the Heathen become, and such as ruled the Beasts upon the Earth, that hoarded up Silver and Gold, and made no end of their getting? Baruch 3. 16, 17.* Do they retain and keep their Kingdoms and their glory still? Not so; For thus saith the Prophet, answering his own question, *They are vanished, and gone down to the Grave, and others*  
are

*are come up in their steads. They are vanis-  
ed, saith the Prophet ; For they were but  
sojourners and no Citizens ; they are gone  
and others are come up in their steads ; their  
Houses are let out to others, and they are  
cast out themselves, and gone down to the  
Grave. But if the question be asked again,  
Where are the Princes of Heaven, whose  
dwelling is above the seventh Sphere,  
where are they ? It may be answered like-  
wise, that They are also vanisbed, and others  
are come up in their steads ; but they are  
translated to the Kingdom of Heaven,  
there to abide for ever, without all fear of  
being dispossessed.*

*Let us Crown our selves with Rose-buds,  
Wisd. 2. 8. Sing those Men of most loose  
and deplorable lives. Why with Rose-  
buds ? Because the beauty and smell of  
them is gone in one day, and they are wi-  
thered : And such fading Crowns do best  
become those which shall shortly perish.  
But as for the Blessed, it is not so with  
them, but they are Crowned with Jewels  
and precious Stones, whose beauty never  
fadeth. The Woman mentioned in the  
Revelation had upon her head a Crown, not  
of Rose-buds of the Garden, not of Jew-  
els of the Sea, but of the Stars of Heaven.  
As then the Heavenly orbs are incorrupti-  
ble, so likewise they that inhabit them are  
incor-*

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incorruptible, they are not subject to any change, they are immortal. - *The Righteous live for evermore*, *Wisd.* 5. 15. All worldly things are transitory, but heavenly things are everlasting. - Here are we wearied with labour, but there shall we be refreshed with Eternal rest. Why do we seek for rest before our labour is ended? We are yet upon the Stage: Therefore we must act our parts: We have to deal with potent Enemies; therefore we must be always prepared to Fight: we are still in our race; therefore we must hold out to the last. Let us then so act our parts, that the Angels may rejoice to be spectators: Let us so Fight that we may win the Crown; let us so run, that we may obtain.

Well, saith *St. Gregory*, if we well consider with our selves what and how great things are promised unto us in Heaven, all things on earth will seem vile unto us: For what tongue can sufficiently express, or what heart conceive, how great the joys be in that City which is above? Where we shall bear a part in the heavenly *Quire* with Angels evermore lauding and praising God; where we shall be in God's presence, and see him face to face; where we shall behold light incomprehensible; where we shall have the priviledge of heavenly Saints  
and;

and Citizens, to be for ever incorruptible. Methinks I find my mind inflamed and set on Fire, whilst I am speaking of these joys, and methinks it should set on fire all that hear it. Methinks it should so work upon us all, that even now we should most earnestly and ardently desire to be there, where we hope to be for ever hereafter. But thus much we must know, that there is no coming there without much labor. It is not I, but *Paul* the Preacher that saith it, *A Man is not Crowned, except he strive lawfully*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 5. Let then the greatness of the reward encourage us and prick us forward; and let not the labor and pains, the short labor, and the little pains, hinder us or keep us back. We must go on, and we must go on with perseverance; we must not so much consider the roughness of the way, as the blessed *Eternity* which is the end thereof. And this the same holy Father declares most excellently, saying, This is a special badge and cognizance of the elect, that they know how to carry themselves in the way of this present life in such manner, that by the certainty of hope they are assured, that they have attained unto a great pitch, inasmuch as they see all transitory things far beneath them, and for the love of *Eternity* trample all sublunary things under

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der their feet. And this is it which the Lord speaketh by the mouth of his holy Prophet, saying unto every soul that followeth him, *I will lift thee up above the high places of the Earth.* For as for losses, reproaches, poverty, disgrace, and such like, these are, as I may so call them, the lower places of the earth, which the lovers of this World, as they walk through the plain of the broad way, do not love to come near, but keep off as far as is possible. But as for gain and profit, the fawning and flattering of inferiors, abundance of riches, honors, and places of dignity, these are the high places of the earth, which whosoever is worldly-minded, and hath setled his affections on things here below, he, I say, esteemeth highly; because to him they seem great: But whosoever is heavenly minded, and hath setled his affections on things above, he, I say, esteemeth them not; because to him they seem what they are, that is, vile and base. For as it is with a Man going up an high Mountain, still the higher he goes, the lower he sees the earth beneath him: So it is with him whose conversation is in Heaven; the higher he mounts from the earth with the wings of pious cogitations, the farther he flies from the earth with the wings of his affections. He knows that all  
the

the glory of this World is nothing, and therefore his thoughts and affections are altogether upon another World. This is the Man that is *lifted up above the high places of the Earth.*

You have heard what St. *Gregory* saith; It will not be amiss in the next place to hear likewise what St. *Augustine* saith, What is that? It is a Lesson worth our learning. That which we must lose, saith he, one time or other upon necessity, it is wisdom to distribute abroad in time, that we may purchase thereby the reward of *Eternity.* *Moses* lived long in-

deed, he lived in health; but *Dent.*  
at length he died. *Methuselah* 34. 5.  
lived longer than he; but it fol- *Gen. 5.*  
lows, *And he died.* This is, or 27.  
shall be every mans Epitaph,

*Et mortuus est, And he died. For we must needs die, and are as water spilt upon the ground, 2 Sam. 14. 14.* But the soul is immortal, it is *Eternal*, it shall live for ever, either in *Eternal glory*, or else in *Eternal torments.* Here our lot is cast in which *Eternity* we shall have part, and there is no revoking it. Oh blessed *Eternity*, oh *Eternal* blessedness! How comes it to pass that seldom or never we think upon thee; or if we do at any time, we do it but upon the by? How comes it to pass,

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pass, that we do not labor more for thee, that we do not seek for thee, that we are not solicitous for thee. O Lord God, open thou our eyes, that we may see and know what *Eternity* is, both that of glory, and that other of torment, and how infinite both; how blessed the one, and how miserable the other. Thou hast created us unto thee, thou hast created us unto *Eternity*: For thou art *Eternity*. Thou wouldest have us be partakers of thy *Eternity*; Lord, let it be according to thy will. Thou hast said it; Lord, let it be according to thy word, Thou hast promised; Lord, make good thy promise; Make us partakers of thy *Eternity*. Grant that we may spend the short moment of time granted to us here in this life; Grant, we beseech thee, that we may spend it in such a Religious and Godly manner, as Men that labour for *Eternity*, contend for *Eternity*, suffer for *Eternity*. To this end cause thy Ministers often to call upon us to think still upon *Eternity*; make us call one upon another in every place to think upon *Eternity*, that so by thy mercy we may Reign with thee, O *Eternity*, and as many as it is possible may be kept from perishing everlastingly. Hear this ye *Christians* all hear it ye *Pagans*, hear it ye *Kings* and *Princes*, hear it ye *Germans*,  
hear



hear it ye *French*, hear it ye *English*, yea, let all the World hear it. *There can be no sufficient security, where there is danger of losing Eternity.*

Oh long, Oh profound, Oh bottomless, Oh Eternal Eternity! Blessed are they, O Lord, that dwell in thy House; they shall be still praising thee, *Psal. 84. 4.* They shall praise thee throughout infinite myriads of Ages.

*Moses* being near unto his death, commending unto God in his Prayers his people *Israel*: and blessing them, thus took his leave of the Tribe of *Asher*, and said, *Let Asher be blessed with Children; let him be acceptable to his Brethren, and let him dip his foot in Oyl. Thy shoes shall be Iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be. There is none like unto the God of Jesurun, who rideth upon the Heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the Sky. The Eternal God is the refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms, Dent. 33, 24, 25, 26, 27.* Thus God stretcheth forth the arms of his power throughout Heaven infinitely: And by his arms all the World, all time, and all things in the World are directed, guided and governed. So God from the beginning, yea, from the Eternity of his predestination, hath carried in his breast all the Godly, and doth protect them

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them daily and hourly, and as it were embraceth them with his arms. Ascend therefore, O my soul, and have no more to do with earth and clay. Stretch forth thy self, and ascend up unto him that rideth upon the Heavens; ascend up unto thy God, whose dwelling is in the highest Mountains, those Mountains of *Eternity*: There shalt thou sit in safety, and behold the earth beneath: and so shalt thou plainly perceive how little and of none esteem all things are here below, which now either solícite thee with love, or terrifie thee with fear; thou shalt plainly perceive what a small thing it is, whatsoever is contained within the *Centre* of the World, that little *Globe* or *point* of earth; thou shalt plainly perceive how that all things created are *vain, weak, short, vile, yea, vanity* it self, yea, rather meer nothing in respect of God and of *Eternity*. Therefore seek thou after the only true and soveraign good, and regard not other things. Trust in God, rely on him, open thy heart wide to entertain him; tread under the feet of thy affections whatsoever is under the Sun and Moon, whatsoever allureth thee with smiles, or terrifieth thee with frowns, think upon *Eternity*, and always keep in mind that excellent saying of *St. Hierome*, no labor must seem hard,

no time must seem long, all the while we are seeking after Eternal glory.

It is reported by *St. Hierome*, that there was upon a time a certain Camel haunted by an evil Spirit, which being brought before *Hilarion*, a devout and godly Man, began to rage in such a strange and terrible manner, as if it would presently have devoured him: But the Holy Man nothing afraid, spake thus unto the evil Spirit, Do not think to fright me, thou evil Spirit, although that thou hast got a Camel on thy back; it is all one to me whether thou comest in a Camels skin, or in a Foxes skin: And presently the fierce Camel fell down before him, and became very tame and gentle, to the great laughter of all those that stood by. Such are all flatteries, fawnings, allurements, and tentations of this World; such are all fears, frowns, frights, and terrors. What dost thou hope for? What dost thou fear? What dost thou love? He that rideth upon the Heavens is thy helper; he shall embrace thee with his everlasting arms. With those arms of his he is able to fetter all thine Enemies, whether they fawn or frown upon thee; he is able at a beck to squeeze them in pieces like so many flies, and break them in pieces like a Potters Vessel. Doth the pleasure then of lust,  
or

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or gluttony, or intemperance sollicite thee? That is nothing: Be not moved at it, pass it by, regard it not; think rather upon the pleasures which are Eternal. Art thou terrified with threats, oppressed with sorrows, passed by with contempt, afflicted with sickness, tired out with poverty? All these are a matter of nothing. The more violent these are, the shorter while they will last: Despise them, lift up thine eyes unto the Hills, from whence cometh my help, look up to Heaven, *think upon Eternity, There shall no evil happen unto the just, Prov. 2. 21.*

*Horat. Si fractus illibatur orbis,  
Carm. Impavidum serient ruinae.  
lib. 3.*

*Od. 3. The just Man shall not be afraid,  
Though Heaven fall upon his head.*

Therefore the just Man is never sorrowful: no tribulation doth ever assault him. But are not the tribulations of the just many? Yea, but yet they make nothing of them. That only they count evil, which is Eternal, which separateth a Man from God, as sin doth, and eternal death which is the wages of sin. The Preacher of the Gentiles bids us *Look not at things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.*

seen. Why so? For, saith he, *The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are Eternal.* The things which are not seen, the things which are Eternal, those are the things which are great indeed, whether they be good, or whether they be evil.

But whilst we look only at the things which are seen, and seldom or never at the things which are not seen, what do we make of our selves but great and foolish Boys? Great, but yet foolish; at the best but Boys. If the Ice fall out of our hands, we presently fall a crying, and yet that is such a things that we cannot hold long: We are frighted at shadows, and dream of great matters; we spend our selves on such things as not only shall shortly pass away for certain, but are already passing away: For it is not said, *The figure, or the fashion of this World shall pass away, in the Future: 1 Cor. 7. 31.* But, *The Fashion of this World passeth away, in the Present.* It is passing away already. As all the goods which we enjoy here are but transitory, so all the evils which we suffer here are but transitory; that cannot continue long. Those things which are not seen, and those only have a permanent state, they know no end, they have no term, they are not subject to any change, they are

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are firm, they are immoveable, they are Eternal. I repeat it again, what I said a little before, for it deserves to be repeated a thousand and a thousand times; no labor must seem hard, no time must seem long, all the while we are seeking after Eternal Glory.

*Symphorianus*, a Christian young Man after that he was almost scourged to death, as he was dragged to Execution at *Augustodunum*, met his Mother upon the way; But how? Not tearing the hair from her head, or rending her Cloaths, or laying open her Breasts, or making grievous lamentations, as the manner of foolish women is to do: But carrying her self like an Heroical and Christian Lady. For she cryed out, and called unto her Son, and said, *Son, my Son, I say, remember life Eternal, look up to Heaven, lift up thine eyes to him that reigneth there. Life is not taken from thee, but is exchanged for a better.* At which words of his Mother, the young Man was so exceedingly animared, that he went willingly to Execution, and cheerfully like a stout Champion laid down his head upon the block, and exposed his throat to the fatal Ax.

Hear this, O Christians all, and remember your selves. This is the case of every Man living; we are on our way to death;

death ; we go not so fast, it may be, as *Symphorianus* did ; but yet we are all going, and we have not far to go. The Noble Armies of Martyrs which are gone before us, they call unto us from Heaven, and say as the Christian and couragious Mother said unto her Son, as he was going to Execution, *Remember life Eternal, look up to Heaven, and list up your eyes to him that reigneth there.* Carry thy self therefore like a *Symphorian*, whosoever profest thy self to be a Christian. Do not hang back, be not loth to go, withdraw not thy neck from the Yoke, nor thy shoulders from the Cross ; be not afraid to suffer for Christ, be not afraid to die for Christ, be not afraid to eat Fire, or to devour the Sword for the name of Christ. Here shew thy self a Man, take good courage, pull up a good heart. And when thou art at any time tempted, when thou art grieved, when thou art made sorrowful, when thou art vexed, when thou art despised, when thou art made a laughing-stock, when thou art disgraced, when thou art spoiled of thy Goods, when it is with thee as it was with *Job* upon the Dunghil, or, if it can be worse, then call to mind *Symphorian*, and a thousand more stout Christians such as he was, and learn of them Christian courage and magnanimity,

O. and

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and boldly and freely break forth into these words, and repeat them often: Whatsoever I suffer here, is but a *Modicum*, it is but short. Farewel then all the World, and all the things that are therein: And welcome to me, thou art welcome, **ETERNITY.**

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Of *Eternity* there is  
no  
**FINIS.**

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at 12

