





Library
of the
University of Toronto









PATIENCE. F. H. von Hove. sculp.

The ART of
PATIENCE
Hannah Pennell Sarah Firth
Balm of Gilead

UNDER ALL

Afflictions,

An APPENDIX to the ART of
CONTENTMENT,

By the AUTHOR of
The Whole Duty of Man.

*It is good that a Man should both hope, and quietly wait
for the Salvation of the Lord, Lam. 3. 26.*

The Second Impression with Additional Prayers
Suitable to the several Occasions.

L O N D O N :

Printed by R. Smith for C. Hoey, at the Three
Bibles in St. Paul's Church-Yard. M DC XC IV.

Licensed,

Octob. 14. 1693.

T H E
P R E F A C E.

THIS Tract meeting with so Candid a Reception, at its first Appearance, has Encouraged it to make a farther Essay; And what was omitted in the former Impression, is incerted in this: viz. The Prayers annexed to the several Sections, which doubtless will prove very acceptable and Practicall to the Contemplative. The Original Part of this Discourse, was Extracted from a Foundation, laid by a Learned and Reverend Prelate, upon whose Basis this Superstructure is Erected: He, like a Wise Master-Builder laid the Corner Stone, as a Pattern for others to imitate; and they which attain to his height of Perfection, shall enjoy what Christ said to his Disciples, In their Patience, they shall possess their own Souls.

Bp. Hall's Balm
of Gilead.

And indeed, we never wanted more Motives to excite us to this Duty, than now: When this Virtue appears so dissentaneous to most Dispositions: But I would to God those Turbulent Spirits would listen to the grave Council of St. Chrysostom, If with a Desire of Judging, thou wouldst needs be a Judge, I will shew thee the Judgment-Seat, which

The Preface.

shall be advantageous to thee, and no way touch thy Conscience; Let thy Mind and Thought sit down to give Sentence, call forth all thy Offences, and begin to say with thy self, Why hast thou done this or that.

This private Examining of Themselves would soon make these Publick Controllers, of all others, by plausible Pretences of Reformation; look nearer Home, and subdue that in themselves, they are apt to spy in others. St. Paul blamed their Course, whose manner was to go from House to House, Tit. i. 13. Esau, that lost the Blessing, was Hunting; but Jacob that enjoy'd it, and the Inheritance, kept at home, Gen. 17. 30. The Just Man, saith Solomon, first accuseth himself; And Judah spake humbly of an Offender, when he said, She is more Righteous than I, Gen. 38. 26.

But let such hot Spirits take along with them this Information, That Obedience is better than Sacrifice; and that he which giveth Grace to the Humble, is also said to resist the Proud: And they may be well assured, that this Counterfeit Coyn will prove dross when it comes to the Test. It is an easier Task for Malecontents to reprehend others, than to amend themselves; as those who have blemish'd Eyes, think the Sky ever cloudy. Nothing more common with troublesome Dispositions, which have not known the way of Peace, than to be ever Contending, seldom Contented.

The Elements, though in quality divers, yet they accord, for the Constitution of the Corporeal

The Preface.

Corporeal Nature : And I would to God that all who profess and call themselves Christians, would accord together for the Conservation of Church and State, That Peace may dwell in our Land : We are all sheep of that Fold, whereof Christ is the Shepherd ; Stones of that Building whereof he is the chief Corner Stone ; Branches of that Vine, whereof he is the Stock ; We have but one God for our Father that Created us ; one Saviour that Redeemed us ; and one Holy-Ghost our Sanctifier, that adorns us.

We are here but Pilgrims and Strangers, and we shall one day find, that a Peaceable Christian Life, with a good departure hence, shall bear a greater Value than all Temporal Enjoyments, can afford us ; In pursuance of which, let us all endeavour to learn these following Instructions, by which means we shall not only attain to be Schollars, but Proficients in this School of Patience, and acquire that Conquest over our unruly Passions, and inordinate Affections, but shall be enabled cheerfully to run with Patience the Race which is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith ; who for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the Shame, and is set down at the Right Hand of the Throne of God, Heb. 12. 1, 2. and therefore, beseech we God, That Mercy and Truth may meet together, that Righteousness and Peace may Kiss each other ; and that his Glory may dwell in our Land until we come to inhabit in the Land of Glory.

T H E

CONTENTS.

With a Prayer to every SECTION.

<i>ect.</i>	PageS
1. O F the Connexion between Humility, Meekness and Patience.	1
2. In time of Sickness.	12
3. Affliction of Conscience.	26
4. Remedies against Temptations.	47
5. Imbecillity of Grace.	56
6. Loss of Reputation.	62
7. Of Publick Calamities.	68
8. Loss of Friends.	80
9. Of Poverty.	85
10. Of Confinement.	91
11. In Exile.	97
12. Of Blindness and Deafness.	102
13. Of Sterility.	111
14. Want of Repose.	116
15. Of Gray Hairs.	121
16. Of Mortality.	130
17. Of Judgment.	143
18. Spiritual Conflicts.	149
19. Character of Patience.	157
The Close.	162

T H E

The ART of

PATIENCE

AND

Balm of Gilead

UNDER ALL

Afflictions.

S E C T. I.

*Of the Connexion between Humility; Meekness
and Patience.*

I. **G**OD, the Fountain of Goodness; from whom cometh Every Good and Perfect Gift, Jam. 1. 17. hath laid down such Rules and Precepts in Holy Scripture, that whoever is Diligent in the search, Shall find in them Eternal Life, John 5. 39. We are commanded to Follow Peace with all Men, and Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord;
Heb:

B

Heb. 12. 14. and to practice those Celestial Duties of *Humility, Meekness* and *Patience*.

2. **HUMILITY** is first a Duty we owe to *God*, which is to have such a Sense of our Unworthiness, and his Excellency, as may operate in us a lowly and unfeign'd Submission to Him : Now, this Submission is twofold ; *First*, To his Will ; *Secondly*, To his Wisdom. The Submission to his Will is of two sorts, Obedience and *Patience* : Obedience is our yielding up our selves with alacrity to do what his Divine Will and Pleasure command us ; and to enable us to perform This, *Humility* is exceeding necessary : And to acquire this Obedience, we must endeavour to possess our Hearts with the Sense of that great unspeakable Distance, between *God* and us. To consider Him a *God* of Infinite Majesty, Power and Glory ; and we poor Worms of the Earth : He of Infinite Purity and Holiness ; and we polluted and dead, in Trespasses and Sins : He of Power able to do all things ; and we nothing, but by his Divine Assistance.

3. A *Second* sort of Submission to his Will, is *Patience* ; the Subject-matter of our Discourse. This consists in suffering his Will, as that of Obedience did in acting it ; and is composed of a voluntary yielding to what ever Afflictions *God* is pleased to inflict upon us : In this, *Humility* is a great Assistant and renders things easie to us ; perswading us not to murmur, or repine at any thing *God* does ; but let what Afflictions soever come, though in the heaviest kind, we may be always ready to say, *Thy Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven* : And with old *Eli*, when that great Affliction came of *Gods* threatning the Destruction of his *Family*, the loss of the *Priesthood*, the Cutting off both his *Sons* in one Day ; yet considering it was the *Lord*, inabled him calmly to yield to 'em, saying, *Let him do what seemeth*

seemeth him good, 1 Sam. 3. 18. The same Effect it had on *David*, in his Affliction; *I was dumb, I opened not my Mouth, because thou didst it*, Psal. 39. 9. *God* doing it, silenc'd all Murmurings and Repinings in him: And it must operate the same Effect in us, in all our Afflictions, if we intend to acquire this Duty of *Patience*.

4. **T H E R E F O R E**, when ever *God* strikes, we are not only *Patiently* to endure his *Rod*, but kiss it also; that is, be truly thankful, that he is pleased not to *Give us over to our own Hearts Lusts*, Psal. 18. 12. But still continuing his tender Care over us; sending *Afflictions* as so many *Messengers*, to call us to himself. From whence we may learn, what an absurd Folly it is to murmur at those *Stripes*, which are design'd so graciously.

5. **T H I S** Duty is not compleated, by only a Quietness and Thankfulness under *Afflictions*; but there must be *Fruitfulness* also, or all the rest will be of no Advantage; which is the production of that, for which the *Afflictions* were sent; *viz.* the Amendment of our Lives: So that, in Time of *Affliction*, it is a necessary Duty to examine our Hearts and Lives, and make a severe Scrutiny what Sins have provoked *God* to scourge us; and whatsoever we find our selves guilty of, humbly to confess to him, and immediately to forsake them; Redeeming what we have lost, the Time to come.

6. **O U R** next Duty concerning *Patience*, is, That we are as much bound to comply with one sort of *Sufferings*, as another, whether they be immediately from *God*, as *Sickness*, loss of *Friends*, or the like; or whether it be from Men, who sometimes are Instruments of afflicting us; and cannot prejudice us, without *Gods* Permission: And *God* may as well create the Instruments of punishing us, as to do it directly Himself; for it is a Counterfeit *Patience*,

that pretends to submit to *God*, and yet can bear nothing from Men. We see an Instance of Holy *Job*, who is recorded in Sacred Scripture, as a Pattern of true *Patience*; he made no such Difference in his *Afflictions*; but took the loss of his Cattle, which the *Chaldeans* and *Sabeans* robb'd him of, with as much *Meekness*, as he did that which was consumed by *Fire* from *Heaven*. Therefore, whatever we suffer from Men, if it be never so unjust in respect of them, we are humbly to confess it is most just in respect of *God*; and instead of looking upon them with *Rage* and *Revenge*, as the vulgar custom of the World is, we are to look up to *God*, and acknowledge his Justice in the *Affliction*; imploring his Pardon most earnestly for those Sins, which have provoked his wrath against us, and *patiently* and *thankfully* to bear those Sufferings, till He shall in his own good time, see fit to remove them; still saying with *Job*, *Blessed be the Name of the Lord*, Job 1. 21.

7. A *Second* sort of Submission in *Humility*, is to the Wisdom of *God*; and that is, to acknowledge him Infinitely Wise: And whatsoever he doth, we must confess it the best and fittest to be done: And this Confession we are to put in practice, both in his Commands, and in his disposing and ordering of all things. *First*, Whatsoever he commands us to believe, we are to believe, how impossible soever it seems to our shallow Understandings. *Secondly*, To do whatever he commands us, how opposite soever it be to our Carnal Reason and Humour; and to conclude in both, that his *Commandments* are most reasonable, *and not grievous*, 1 Joh. 5. 3.

8. **NEXT**, we are to submit to his Wisdom, in disposing and ordering of Things; which is to acknowledge, He despoles of all things most wisely: Not only to the World in General; but in what concerns every one in particular: So that, in what
Con-

Condition soever we are in, *We are to be Content*, 1 Tim. 6. 8. and not to be impatient and disturb'd, at any Choice which *God* makes; since he chuses for us, who cannot err: But to leave all things to him, to fit us with such an Estate and Condition, as he sees best for us. Perhaps, it may not please our unreasonable Humours, because we cannot live in that Splendour equal to our Superiours: And the Reason is, we are so full of our selves, that we can see nothing beyond it. We expect *God* should place us where we please, though by it he discomposes the whole Scheme of his Providence: But he, like a wise Master-Builder, knows that every Stone is not fit for the Corner, not every little Rafter for the main Beam: And sure, there cannot be a more vile contempt of the Divine Wisdom, than to dispute his Choice, who knows what is fitter for us, than we do our selves. Therefore, when ever we are disappointed of any of our Aims or Wishes, let us not only *patiently*, but joyfully submit to it, and acknowledge, that it is certainly best for us, it being chosen by the unerring Wisdom of our Heavenly Father.

9. HAVING spoken of the *Humility* due towards *God*; I am now to speak of *Humility*, as it concerns our selves; which will be no less necessary than the former. This *Humility* is of two sorts; the first is, the having a mean and low Opinion of our selves; the second is, being content that others should have so of us. The first of these is contrary to *Pride*, and the second to *Vain-glory*. *Pride* cast the Angels out of Heaven; and it is the greatest Sin the Devil hath been guilty of: And we may frequently find in Scripture the hainousness of it, *Prov.* 16. 5. *Every one that is proud in Heart, is an abomination to the Lord*; and in *Chap.* 6. among many things which the *Lord* hates, a *Proud Look* is set as
the

the chiefest. It is indeed a most prolific Vice, and there are few Sins to which it is not either Parent or Nurse to : There are many places of Scripture, which shews the detestableness of it ; I shall only add one, *James 4. 7. That God resisteth the Proud, but giveth Grace to the Humble.*

10. AND the means of relinquishing this Sin of *Pride*, is perform'd by *Humility*, by these Directions : *First*, We are to consider the hainousness of the Sin, with that Regret as may operate in us no petty Contempt, but a deep and irreconcilable Hatred against it. *Secondly*, To be vigilant over our Hearts, that they foment not any Originals of it, never suffering them to feed on the Phantasm of our own Magnificence : But when ever such Cogitations arise, let us reverberate it immediately with the Memorial of some of our Follies and Vices ; so we may make this very Motion of our *Pride* an occasion of *Humility*. *Thirdly*, We are to make no Comparison of our selves with those we think are more foolish and vicious than we are, lest we fall into the same Snare with the *Pharisee*, *Luk. 16. 11.* Extol our selves for being better : But if we will compare, and associate our selves, let us do it with the Wise, Sober, and Religious ; and there we shall find, we come so far short of 'em, that we can have no high Esteem of our selves, but rather a more Submission to *Humility*, than we had before. *Lastly*, Let us humbly and earnestly invoke the *Almighty*, That he would eradicate all Degrees of this Sin in us, and make us of the number of those that are *Poor in Spirit*, *Mat. 5. 3.* to whom the Blessing even of Heaven it self, is pronounced and promised.

11. THE next Vice in opposition to *Humility*, is *Vain-glory* ; which is a hungering and thirsting after the Praise of Men : and first, that it is a Sin, the Words of our Saviour prove it, *John 5. 44. How can*

ye believe, that receive Honour one of another? So it is not only a Sin, but such a one as hinders the Reception of *Christ* into the Heart. Secondly, The great danger of this Sin is such, if it keep *Christ* out of our Hearts, it brings us to inevitable Destruction; for all our Hope of escaping the Wrath to come, depends in our Reception of Him: And this Sin where ever it takes Possession in the Minds of Men, it endangers the being guilty of many others; and he that seeks so much for popular Applause, may be in danger of the Mobile's Hissing, and without Repentance, in danger of *Hell Fire*, Mat. 5. 22.

12. THIRDLY, The Folly of it is, we pursue after a Blast of Wind, the Breath of Men, which affords us no real Advantage. Secondly, It is not only unprofitable, but dolorous and difficult also; for he that eagerly seeks Praise, is not Master of himself, but must suit all his Actions to that end and purpose; and contrary to what his own Reason and Conscience dictates to him, he must take care to do what will bring him in Commendations; and so captivates himself to every one that hath a Tongue, to extol him. And this Sin is further prejudicial, when it is used in Religious Duties, or any Christian Acts, it destroys all the Fruits of it: They that pray, or distribute Alms to be seen of Men, must accept of that for their Portion, Mat. 6. 2. *Verily; I say unto you, They have their Reward;* for they must expect none from God, but the reward of those Hypocrites, *that love the Praise of Men, more than the Praise of God:* And they that make such a miserable Exchange, are not only guilty of Folly, but are in danger of *losing their own Souls*, Mark 8. 36.

13. AND the Remedies against this Vice, are these: *First*, We are to keep a strict Watch over our selves, and to observe in any Christian Duty, whether we consider the Praise of Men; or in the

most indifferent Action; whether we have not an earnest Inclination to it; and if we find our selves leaning that way, we must endeavour to have a a strict Eye upon it; and whenever we find it moves, reprehend and resist it. *Secondly*, Let this be our Design, to please God; that when we intend any thing, we may make this inquiry, whether it hath his Approbation: and then we shall have no time to think what Praise it will bring us from Men; for it is a greater Benefit for us to please God, who is able to give us Eternal Rewards; than Men, whose Applauses are vain and empty; and none of us can but think it reasonable, to make the former our only Care. *Thirdly*, If at any time we receive Praise of Men, let us not be fond of it, nor think a rittle the better of our selves: If it be Virtue we are esteem'd for, we must remember it came from God, and return him the Glory; and not imagine any belongs to our selves. Indifferent Actions can deserve no Praise, and bad Ones ought to set us a trembling; else that Woe of our Saviour belongs to us, *Luke 6. 26. Woe unto you, when Men speak well of you; for so did their Fathers to the False Prophets:* and there is not a greater Appearance of an hardened Heart, than when Men make their Sins the Object of their Glory.

14. THE next Virtue is *Meekness*, which is composed of a calmness and quietness of Spirit, opposite to the Rage and Impatiences of Anger. This Virtue is a Duty to God, of which I have already spoken of under the Head of *Humility*; and may be exercised towards our Neighbor, and our selves: I shall begin with that towards our selves. *First*, The advantage we receive by it is this, We have the Blessing which Christ pronounced, *Mat. 5. 5. Blessed are the Meek;* not only in the World to come, but in this, *They shall inherit the Earth:* and indeed none hath

hath a more perfect Enjoyment, than Meek Persons: For the Impatient can never enjoy the greatest Prosperities; and the uneasiness of this Passion is such, that it raises Storms within their own Breasts, and a Perturbation upon their Spirits.

15. SECONDLY, We acquire Honour by it; for we resemble *Christ*, that blest Pattern of Meekness: *Learn of me*, saith he, *for I am meek and lowly in Heart*, Matth. 11. 28. And by it we conquer our selves, and our unruly Passions, which is the noblest Victory. *Thirdly*, It makes us deport our selves like Men, whereas Anger transforms us to the Fierceness and Wildness of Savage Beasts: The One is esteemed, and the Other abhorred; every one shunning an outrageous Man, as they would a tameless Beast. Moreover, *Meekness* inferreth a sober Mind; whereas Anger is direct Madness, and renders him incapable of being his own Master; exciting him to those things, as himself, in his serious Temper, utterly detests. Many Men have committed those things in their Rage, which they have repented all their Life after. Therefore, seeing how much Anger resembles Beastiality, a mad Man than a sober Man, let us embrace this Vertue of *Meekness*, and abandon the contrary Vice of *Anger*.

16. MEEKNESS, in the next place, makes the worst Condition tolerable and easie; and if we meekly bear any Suffering, it takes off the Edge, that it cannot wound us; whereas they that rage, whets it, and makes it sharper than it would be; as in the case of reproachful words, which in themselves do no prejudice to our Bodies nor Estates; all the mischief they can do, is to make us angry; and then the Anger will create more Strife and Debate, and animate the Espoused Party but more against us: Whereas he that *Meekly* passes them by, is never

ver the worse but the better ; for he shall be rewarded of *God* for that *Patience* : And *St. Paul* to *Titus*, gives us this Advice, *To speak Evil of no Man, to be no Brawlers, but gentle, shewing all Meekness unto all Men, Tit. 3. 2.*

16. A N D the means to obtain this Vertue, are these: *First*, To make a deep Impression in our Minds, of the Loveliness and Benefits of *Meekness*, together with the Deformity and Mischief of *Anger*. *Secondly*, To set before our selves the Example of our Blessed Lord and Saviour, who indured all Reproaches and Torments, with a perfect *Patience*, that was *Led as a Sheep to the Slaughter, Isa. 53. 7. That when he was reviled, reviled not again ; when he suffered, threatened not, 1 Pet. 2. 23.* *Thirdly*, To be very vigilant in preventing the beginnings of *Anger* ; and to that end, we must mortifie all inward Peevishness and Frowardness of Mind, which is a Sin in it self, if it proceed no further ; but if cherish'd, will break out into open Effects of Danger. Therefore, whenever thou find'st the least Motion of it within thee, make as much haste to check it, as thou would'st to quench a Fire in thy House : And be sure to keep a strick watch over thy Tongue, that it break not out into any angry Expressions ; for that Breath will fan the Fire, not only in thine Antagonist, but thy self too : Therefore, though thy Heart be ardent within, suffocate the Flame, that it break not out ; and the greater the Temptation is, the more earnestly call upon *God* to assist thee to conquer it. *Fourthly*, Often call to mind the great Punishments thy sins have deserved ; and then, whether thy Afflictions be from *God* or *Man*, thou wilt acknowledge them to be far short of what thou deservest ; and wilt be ready to blush at thy great Impatience.

A Prayer for Meekness and Humility.

○ Most Blessed Lord God, the Perfect Pattern of Humility and Meekness; infuse into me, I humbly beseech thee, those Excellent Graces, whereby I may be fully convinced of my own Wretchedness, and Evidently behold that I am sinful Dust and Ashes; Lord work in me such a lowliness of Mind, that I may in the sincerity of my Heart confess and acknowledge that I am less than the least of all thy Mercies, and justly deserve the greatest of thy Judgments: Give me, O Lord, a Contrite Spirit, a Meek and an Humble Heart, and chase from me all Pride and Vanity of Mind, whereby I may become lowly, yea base and vile in my own Eyes.

2. ROOT out, O Lord, from me all perverseness of Spirit, and wholly dispossess it of its residence; that I may be fit to entertain that good Spirit of thine, and thou mayst take delight to dwell and remain with me: Grant that I may every day be more humbled with the sight of my own Unworthiness, and Spiritual Wants, and to esteem my self as nothing without thee, but always acknowledge my own frailty and weakness: O, let me wholly depend and rely upon thee, and ascribe the Praise and Glory of whatsoever good is wrought in me, or by me, unto thee alone, who art the God of my Strength, the Author and Giver both of Grace and Glory, and the Beginner and Finisher of every Good Thing, which is wrought in any of thy Servants, to whom be all Honour and Glory, now and for ever. Amen.

S E C T. II.

In time of Sickness

1. **W**HAT should we do in this Vale of Tears, but condole each others Miseries? Every Man hath his weight, and happy is he whose Burthen is so easie, that he may assist his Neighbours. Many have waded through a Sea of Sorrows; and the Angel of the *Lord*, that hath Redeemed their Souls from Evil, and led them within few Paces of the Shore, offers to lend thee his Hand; to guide thee in this dangerous World, wherein every Error is Death: Let us follow him therefore with a humble Confidence, and be safe in the View and Pity of the woful Miscarriages of others, and take warning by their sad Misfortunes.

2. **T**HOU art on thy Bed of Sickness, and with holy *David*, *Roaring all the day long*, Psal. 32. 3. for the Extremity of thy pain, measuring the flow Hours, not by Minutes, but by Groans: *Thy Soul is weary of thy Life*, Job 10. 1. through the Intolerable *Anguish of thy Spirit*, Job 7. 11. Of all temporal Afflictions; this is the forest: And *Job* 1. 21. after the loss of his Goods and Children, could yet support himself, and *Bless the God that gives and takes*: But when his Body was tormented, and made one *Boyle*, then his *Patience* is extended so far, as to curse (not his *God*, but) his *Nativity*, *Job* 3. 3. *Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, there is a Man Child conceived.* And King *Artaxerxes* questioning with his Cup bearer *Nehemiah*, could say, *Why is thy Countenance sad, seeing thou art not Sick?* *Nehem.* 2. 2. implied that the Sick, of all others, hath just cause to
be

be dejected. Humane Crosses are at a distance, but Sickness is in our Bosoms: Those touch Externally, these Internally our Selves: Here the whole Man suffers. What could the Body feel without the Soul that animates it? How can the Soul (which makes the Body sensible) chuse but be most affected with that Pain, wherewith the Body is afflicted? Both Partners are perplex'd to encounter so fierce an Enemy, and the sharpest requires the most powerful Resistance. Therefore let us recollect our selves, and summon all the Powers of our Souls, to engage with so violent, and potent an Enemy.

3. **THY** Body is by a sore Disease confin'd to thy Bed: I should be sorry to say, thy self wert so. Thy Soul, which is thy self, I hope is at a distance from thee; but however it is content to take a share in thy Sufferings, soars above to the Heaven of Heavens; and is prostrate before the Throne of Grace, imploring for Mercy and Forgiveness; beholding the Face of thy Glorious Mediator, interceding for thee. Unhappy were we, if our Souls were lockt up in our Bosoms, that they could use no Motions, but what our lumpish Bodies could contribute: But, blessed be *God*, he hath animated us with active Spirits, that can move themselves, while our Bodies lie still; that can be so agil in their Motions, as they can pass from Earth to Heaven, ere we can turn our wearied and sick Bodies to find ease.

4. **A ND** how much shall we be wanting to our selves, if we do not make use of this Spiritual Agility; sending up these Spirits of ours, from this brittle Clay of our Bodies, to those Regions of Blessedness, that they may from thence Extract Comforts to alleviate the Sorrows of their heavy Partners. Thus if thou imployest thy better part,

no Pains of the Body can make thee miserable.

tha

that Spiritual Part of thine shall ere long be in Bliss, whilst this piece of Earth lies putrified in the Grave. Why dost thou not then, even now before thy Dissolution, improve all the Powers of it to thy present Advantage? Let thy internal Eye still behold the Face of thy God in Glory, whilst thy Corporal Eyes observe those Friends at thy Bed-side, which may pity, but cannot help thee.

5. **THOU** art pained with Sicknes: Consider seriously from whence it comes, and what makes it so bitter to thee; *Affliction cometh not out of the dust*, Job 5. 6. Couldst thou but hear the Voice of thy Disease, as thou now feelest the Stroke of it, it hath proclaim'd loud enough, *Am I come up hither without the Lord, to torment thee? The Lord hath said to me, Go up against this Man, and afflict him*, 2 Kings 18. 25. Couldst thou perceive the Hand that smites thee, thou wouldst be eager to kiss it; since it is the Father of all Mercies, Comfort and Consolation, that lays these Stripes upon thee: He that made thee and bought thee at so dear a Price as his own Blood; it is He that chastiseth thee: And canst thou think He would scourge thee, but for thine own Advantage: For what tender Father is there, but has Bowels of Compassion, and never takes the Rod in hand, out of a Pleasure to chasten that Flesh, which is derived from his own Loyns? Or is it any ease to him, to make his Child smart and bleed? But rather himself suffers more than he inflicts, and would be content to Redeem those Stripes with his own; yet he sees the Chastisement proper, not to spare him for his Frowardness, and Tears; but will plead, he had not lov'd him, if he had not been so kindly severe: And Solomon gives us this advice; *Chasten thy Son while there is Hope, and let not thy Soul spare for his Crying*, Prov. 19. 18. And if we that are evil, know how to give loving
and

and beneficial Correction to our Children, how much more shall our Father which is in Heaven, know how to Chastise us for our Advantage? So as we may sing under the Rod, with the Blessed Psalmist; *I know, O Lord, that thy Judgments are right, and that thou in Faithfulness hast afflicted me,* Psal. 119. 75. Might a Child be made Arbitrator of his Chastisement, do we think he would adjudicate himself to be Corrected? Yet the discreet Parent knows he shall wrong him, if he give not due Correction; as having learned of wise Solomon, Prov. 23. 14. *Thou shalt beat him with the Rod, and shalt deliver his Soul from Hell.* Love hath its Stroaks, saith St. Ambrose, which are the sweeter, the harder they are inflicted.

5. **DO ST** thou not remember the Message the two Sisters sent to our Saviour, John 11. 3. *Lord, behold he whom thou lovest, is Sick.* Were it so, that Pain or Sicknes, or any of the Executioners of Divine Justice, ere let loose to tyrannize over thee at Pleasure, to render thee perfectly Miserable; there were just Reason for thy utter Diffidence: But they are flinted, and march under Comission; neither can they be allowed to have any other Limits, than thy own Advantage. Hadst thou rather be Good, or be Healthful, I know thou wouldst imbrace both, and think thy self in a happy State: For who is so little in his own favour, as to imagine he can be the worse for faring well. But he that made thee, has a far greater Inspection into thee, than thine own Eyes can have; he sees thy Vigor is turning wanton, and if thy Body be not sick, thy Soul will: If he therefore think it fit to take down thy worst part a little, for the preventing of a Mortal Danger to the better, what cause hast thou to complain, yea, rather not to be thankful? When thou hast felt thy Body in a distemper

Stemper of Fulness, thou hast gone to Sea on purpose to create a Sickness; yet thou knewest that turning of thy Head and Stomach would be more painful to thee, than thy former Indisposition. Why then should not thy All-wise Creator take Liberty to Cure thee with an Afflictious Remedy.

7. THOU art now Sick: Wert thou not a long time Healthful, and canst thou not take that *patiently* which *God* hath allotted thee? If thou hast enjoy'd more dayes of health, than hours of sickness, how canst thou think thou hadst cause to repine? Had the Divine Wisdom thought fit to mitigate thy many days pain, with the Ease of one hour, it had been worthy of thy Thanks: But now that he hath required thy few painful hours, with years of perfect health, how unthankfully dost thou repine at thy Condition? It was a gross mistake, if thou didst not from all Earthly things expect a Vicissitude: They cannot have their Being without a Change; as well may Day be without a Succession of Night, and Life without Death, as a Mortal Body without Fits of Distemper: And how much better are these momentary Changes, than that last Change of a Misery unchangeable? It was a deplorable Word that Father *Abraham* said to the Rich Glutton; *Son, remember that thou in thy Life time receivest thy good things, and Lazarus evil things; but now he is Comforted and thou art Tormented,* Luke 16. 25. How happy then are we, that are here chastened of the Lord, that *We may not be Condemned of the World!* O then, welcome Feavers, and all other Diseases of the Body, that may quit my Soul from Everlasting Burnings!

8. THOU complainest of Sickness; and many have effused Tears for their superfluity of Health; condoling the fear and danger of losing God's Favour, for their not being Afflicted. *Bro-*

Bromiard tells us of a Devout Man, that complain'd at his Prosperity, as no small Affliction; whom *God* soon after accommodated with Pain enough, according to his Desires: The poor Man was joyful at this Change, and look'd upon his Sickness as a Mercy; for so it was intended by him that sent it. Why are we too much dejected with that, which others complain the want of? Why should we find that so tedious to our selves, which others have wish'd to enjoy? There have been Medicinal Agues, which the wise Physician have cast his Patient into, for the Cure of a worse Distemper. A secure and illegal Health, however Nature takes it, is the most dangerous Indisposition of the Soul: If that be healed by some few bodily Pangs, the advantage is unspeakable. Look upon some vigorous Gallant, that in the height of his Spirit, and heat of Blood, eagerly pursues his Carnal Delights, thinking of no Heaven, but the free delectation of his Sense; and compare thy present Estate with his: Here thou liest groaning and sighing, panting and shifting thy weary Sides, complaining of the slow motions of thy tedious Hours; whilst he is frolicking with his jocund Companions, Carousing his large Healths, sporting himself with his wanton *Delilah*, and bathing himself in all sensual Pleasures: And tell me whether of the two thou thinkest in the happier Condition? If thou art not shrunk into nothing but Sense, and hast not cast off all Thoughts of another World, thou wouldst pity the Misery of that Atheistical Jollity, and gratulate to thy self the advantage of thy humble and faithful suffering, that, which will at last make thee ample Satisfaction, by yielding thee *the peaceable Fruit of Righteousness*, Heb, 12. 11.

9. **THY** Pain is grievous; but dost thou not hear the great precedent of *Patience* crying out from his Dunghil, *O that my Grief were throughly weigh'd, and my Calamities laid in the Ballance together! For now it would be heavier than the Sand of the Sea: Therefore my words are swallowed up; for the Arrows of the Almighty are within me, the Poyson whereof drinketh up my Spirits: The Terrors of God do set themselves in Array against me,* Job 6. 2, 3, 4. Dost thou not hear the Man after God's own Heart speak of the *Voice of his Roaring*, Psal. 22. 1? He that shrunk not from the Bear, the Lyon, nor *Goliab of Gath*, is now *drenching his Bed with his Tears*. Psal. 6. 6. Dost thou not hear the Faithful crying out, *I am the Man that hath suffered Affliction by the Rod of his Wrath, &c. Surely against me he is turned; he turneth his hand against me all the day; my Flesh and my Skin hath he made old; he hath broken my Bones*, Lam. 3. 1, 3, 4. Consider the *Prophets, Apostles and Martyrs*, the great Favourites of Heaven; some on *Gridirons*, others in *Boyling Caldrans*; some on *Spits*, others under *Saws*; some in *Flames*, others crashed with the *Teeth of Wild Beasts*; some on *Racks*, others in *Fiery Furnaces*: Most of 'em in such Torments, as in comparison, thy Pains are but a Sport. But to leave Mortality and sinful Dust and Ashes, thou mayst behold the *Son of God*, and *Lord of Life*, the *King of Glory*, *God blessed for ever*, sweating drops of *Blood* in his dreadful *Agony*; and mayst hear him cry upon the *Tree of Curle and Shame*, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Matth. 27. 46. Alas, What are we capable to suffer, in proportion of these Tortures? What are we, that we should think much to share with the best of *God's Saints*; nay, even with the dear and eternal *Son of his Love*, our ever blessed Redeemer? Had

not

not God prescribed this their way to Heaven, they had not waded so deep in Blood.

10. WHY do we repine to wet our feet where they waded? If from these Holy Ones we turn our Eyes, we shall find Examples among meer Pagans: For instance, He who we used to account infamous for Voluptuousness, *Epicurus* the Philosopher; who, on his Dying-day, when he lay extremely tormented with the *Stone* in the *Bladder*, and a tearing *Cholick* in his *Bowels*, as it were grasping for Life; yet even then, writing to his *Idomeneus*, can out of the strength of his Resolutions, profess his Cheerfulness, and can stile even that day Blessed. It was the same Mouth that could boast, that if he were frying in the *Brazen Bull* of *Phalaris*, he could there find Contentment. What should I tell thee of a *Mutius Scaevola*, who in a Glorious Revenge, voluntarily burnt off his Right Hand, not without the Envy and Pity of his Enemies; or of a *Regulus*, that after so high a Provocation, offers himself to the worst of the merciless Fury of his Tormenters? Why shouldst thou admire, saith wise *Seneca*, that some should be well pleased to be Scorch'd, Wounded, Rack'd, or Kill'd? Frugality is a pain to the Riotous, Labour a punishment to the Lazy, Contenance a misery to the Wanton, and Study a torture to the Slothful.

11. ALL these are not in their own Nature difficult, but we are infirm and inconstant. Shall Pagans attain to this height of Magnanimity by their Fortitude! And shall we Christians droop under gentler Sufferings! We profess the advantage of Faith to uphold and cheer us: But poor *Ethnick* Souls! they never heard of a Merciful God to Comfort'em: They never knew those sweet Messages from Heaven, *Call upon me in the day of Trouble, I*

will deliver thee, and thou shalt Glorifie me, Pſal. 50. 15. Come unto me all ye that Labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you Reſt, Matth. 11. 28. Strengthen ye the weak Hands, and confirm the feeble Knees: Say to them that are of a fearful Heart, Be ſtrong, fear not, behold, your God will come with Vengeance, even God with a Recompence: He will come and ſave you, Iſa. 35. 3, 4. They had not the Heart of a Job, to ſay, I know that my Redeemer liveth, Job 19. 25. Nor the Eyes of a Stephen, to pierce the Heavens, to ſee their Saviour ſtanding at the Right hand of God: But out of their Vigour elevated with an arrogant Ambition of that Fame which they believed, would ſurvive 'em: Whereas, we Chriſtians know that we have the Father of Mercies to ſtand by us; a Redeemer to deliver us, a Comforter to ſtrengthen and reſreſh us, ſweet and infallible Promiſes to ſuſtain us: And at laſt, a Crown of Eternal Glory to reward us.

12. THOU art pained with Sickneſs: View not what thou feeleſt, but think what Punishment thou haſt deſerved: *Wherefore doth a living Man complain, a Man for the puniſhment of his Sin? Lam. 3. 39. Alas, the Wages of every Sin, is Death, a Death of Body and Soul, Temporal and Eternal: Any thing below this, is Mercy. There is not the leaſt of thy Tranſgreſſions but hath merited the infinite wrath of a juſt God, and more Torments than thou art able to undergo. What, doſt thou complain of Eaſe? Where thou oweſt a thouſand Talents, thou art bid to Take thy Bill, and write down fifty, Luke 16. 6. Wilt thou not magnifie the Clemency of ſo favourable a Creditor? Surely, were every Twig which creates a Smart, a Scorpion, and every Breath thou ſendeſt forth, a Flame: This were yet leſs than thy Deſerts. Oh, the infinite goodneſs of our Indulgent Father, that uſes*

uses so gentle a Correction to us! Tell me thou nice Patient, if thou canst not suffer these Stripes, how thou wilt endure those that are infinitely sharper? Alas! What are these Trifles to that Hell which abides for the Impatient? There are Torments without Mitigation; eternal Pains without Intermiſſion; which thou canst not suffer, nor avoid: Fear them, and murmur not at these; prostrate thy self low under the hand of *God*, and be thankful for a tolerable Misery. How graciously hath the Wisdom of *God* thought fit to temper our Afflictions, if they prove sharp, they are not long, and if long, not over sharp; that our Strength might not be depressed by those Trials we undergo. Therefore aspire a Contentment in thy self, and thy Languishment will be easie, or thy Pain soon over. Extreame and Everlasting are Terrors reserv'd for the Wicked hereafter, that are durable, painful, and not capable of any Relaxation. What a Moment is it that thou dost suffer? Yea, nothing, in respect of Eternity, which thou must either hope for, or fear. Endure a while *patiently*, that thou mayst not be infinitely Miserable.

13. THOU complainest of Pain: Of what use were thy Patience if that were mitigated? *God* never gives Vertues without an intent of their Exercise. To what end were our Christian Valour, if we had no Enemy to Encounter? Thus long thou hast supinely slept in a secure Garison, where thou hast heard no Trumpet, but thine own, and hast turned thy Drum-head into a Table for Dice, lavishing out thy days in varieties of idle Recreations: Now *God* draws thee forth to the Field, and shews thee an Enemy; where is thy Christian Fortitude if thou recoilest, and chusest rather to fly than resist? And is this a proper Character for thee,

who professeth to fight under his Banner, who is the Conqueror of Death and Hell? Is this the way to that happy Victory, and to acquire a Crown of Glory? If thou faint in the day of Adversity, thy Strength is but small: *Be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might*, Ephes. 6. 10. Encounter with that fierce Enemy, wherewith God would have thee assaulted; look up to him, who hath said, and cannot fail to perform it; *Be faithful to the Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life*, Rev. 2. 10.

14. THOU art surpriz'd with Sicknes; accuse thy self for it; Who forbid thee expecting so sure a Guest? Thy Frame of Body should have prompted thee to other Thoughts: Dost thou perceive this living Fabrick made up as a Clock, consisting of many Wheels? and imagine that some of 'em should not be ever out of order? Couldst thou think that a Cottage not strongly built, and standing so bleak in the very Mouth of the Winds, could for ever hold firm and strong? Or art thou not amazed it hath out-stood so many blust'ring Blasts, utterly unruined? It was scarce a patient Question, which Job asked; *Is my Strength the Strength of Stones? or is my Flesh as Brass?* Job 6. 12. Alas! thy best Metal is but Clay, and fading Flesh, is but Grass; the Clay mouldereth, and the Grass withereth. Why do we reckon of any thing, but Misery and Fickleness in this woful Region of Change? If we will needs over-reckon our Condition, we do but assist to aggravate our own Wretchedness.

15. THOU art retir'd to thy sick Bed, be of good Comfort, God was never so near thee, never so indulgent to thee as now. *The Whole*, saith our Saviour, *needs not a Physician, but they that are Sick*, Mat. 9. 12. The *Physician* cometh not but where there is necessity, and where that is, will not fail to come: Our Wants is motive enough to Him, who

took our Infirmities, and bare our Sicknesses, Mat. 8. 17. Our Health alienates him from us; but whilst thou art his *Patient*, he cannot be from thee. *The Lord*, saith the Psalmist, *will strengthen thee upon the Bed of Languishing, thou wilt make all his Bed in his Sickness*, Psal. 41. 3. The Comforter doth not only visit, but attend thee: If thou find thy Bed uneasy, he will soften it for thy Repose. Canst thou not read God's Indulgence in thine own Disposition? Thou art a Parent; Perhaps thou affectest one Child more than another, though all dear enough: But if any of them be cast down, thou art more careful about that than the rest: How thou pitiest and pliest it with Offers and Receipts? With what silent Anxiety dost thou watch by it, listning for every Breathing, jealous of every whispering, that might break its Slumber, responding its Groans with Sighs; and, in fine, taking such Care that thy greatest Darling seems the while neglected, in comparison of this under Affliction. How much more shall the Father of Mercies, be compassionately Intent upon the Sufferings of his dear Children, according to the Proportion of their Afflictions?

16. **THOU** art wholly entertain'd with the Extremity of thy pains: Alas, poor Soul! Thy dimness perceives nothing, but what is near thee: It is thy sense which thou followest, but where is thy Faith? Couldst thou inspect the end of thy Sufferings, thou wouldst rejoyce in Tribulation: *Let Patience have her perfect Work*; and thou shalt once say, It is good for me that I was afflicted. Thou mightest be jocund long enough, ere thy Jollity could make thee happy: *Yea, Woe to them that laugh here*, Luke 6. 25. But, on the contrary, *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. O blessed improvement of a few Groans! Oh

glorious Issue of a short Storm of Sorrow ! Why do we imitate Christians, if nothing but Flesh and Blood ? And if better, we have more cause of Joy, than Complaint ; for whilst our *Outward Man perishes*, our *Inward Man is renewed dayly*, 2 Cor. 4. 16. Our External Man is Flesh, our Internal is Spirit ; infinitely more noble, than this living Clay that we carry about us. Whilst our Spirit gains more than our Flesh is capable to lose, what reason have we not to boast of the Bargain ? Let not then these close Curtains confine thy sight, but lift up thine Eyes to Heaven, whence thy Soul came, and view there that Crown of Glory, which thy God holds forth to all that overcome : And then *Run with Patience the Race that is set before thee ; looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, who is set down at the Right Hand of the Throne of God*, Heb. 12. 1, 2. Then cheer thy self with the Expectation of that Blessedness, which if thy Torments were no less than those of Hell, would make more than ample Amends for all thy Sufferings.

17. THOU art sick to Death : And hast received the Sentence of Mortality in thy self ; thy Physician hath given the up to act the last Scene : Neither art thou like to rise till the General Resurrection : How many are lately expired, that would have thought it a great happiness to die thus quietly in their Beds ? Whom Storms of War hath hurried away furiously into another World ; not suffering them to take leave of that Life, which they were forced to abandon : Whereas thou hast leisure to prepare thy self for the Entertainment of thy last Guest ; *to set both thine House in order*, and thy Soul. It is no disadvantage to thee, thus to behold Death at a distance, and to observe every one of his Paces towards thee ; that thou mayst put thy self into a fit Posture to meet this grim Messenger who *Ushers*
thee

thee to Immortality; that dying thus by Degrees, thou hast leisure, with the Patriarch *Jacob*, to Summon thy Children, to bequeath them thy last Benediction: and being encompassed with thy sad Friends, now in thy long Journey to a far Country, thou mayst take a Solemn Farewell, as going somewhat before them to the appointed happy Meeting-place of Blessedness: And lastly, That one of thine own may close those Eyes, which shall in their opening, see the Face of thy most Glorious *Saviour*; and see this Flesh, now ready to lye down in Corruption, made like to his unspeakable Glory.

A Prayer for a Sick Person.

O Most Gracious, and Merciful Lord God, the only Author of our Health and Being; thou castest us down upon our Beds of Sicknes, and sometimes draws the Curtain between the World and us: O Lord, my time is in thy hand; and I know not how soon my change which thou hast appointed shall be; whether this Week, this Day, this Hour, yea, or this very Moment. O Lord, sanctifie unto me this thy present Visitation, which my Sins have long since deserved; heal my Soul, which in great bitterness hath sinned against thee, and then if it stand with thy good Pleasure, heal my Body, and raise it, that I may glorifie thy Holy Name in the Congregation of the Righteous.

2. BUT if in thy Omniscency thou hast otherwise determined, that this Visitation shall put a period to my frail Mortality; I humbly beseech thee, to fit and prepare me for that last and great change: Wean me from all the fading pleasures and vain allurements of this sinful World, that I may become a meet partaker of thy Heavenly Kingdom: Send down, O Lord, thy Light and
thy

thy Truth into my inward parts, that I may understand thy Wisdom secretly: Support the weakness of my Faith, that I may with a strong Assurance lay hold upon the Blood of Jesus, by whose Merits I expect Salvation, and to Reign with thee in thy Heavenly Kingdom. Amen.

S E C T. III.

Affliction of Conscience.

1. **T**H Y Sin is ponderous upon thy Soul: Bless the Omnipotence, thou art sensible of it. Many hath more weight, and boasteth of Ease. There's Musick in this Complaint; the Almighty delights to hear it, next to the Melody of Saints and Angels. Pursue and continue these sorrowful Notes, if ever thou expectest Comfort. *It is this Godly Sorrow, that worketh Repentance to Salvation, not to be repented of,* 2 Cor. 7. 10. Weep still and be not too much hasty to exhaust thy Tears; for they are precious, and rendred fit to be reserv'd in the *Bottle of the Almighty,* Psal. 56. 8. Over-speedy Remedies may prove injurious to the Patient: And as in the Body, so in the Soul; Diseases and Tumours must have their due Maturation, ere there can be a Cure. *The Inward: of the Sacrifice must be three times rinsed with Water,* Lev. 1. 9. One Ablution will not serve turn. But when thou hast Evacuated thine Eyes of Tears, and unloaded thy Breast of leisurely Sighs, I shall then, by full Commission from him that hath the Power of Remission, say to thee; *Son, be of good Comfort, thy Sins are forgiven thee,* Mat. 9. 2.

2. **T**H I N K not this Word meerly formal, and forceless: *He that hath the Keys of Hell, and of Death,* Rev. 1. 18. hath not said in vain, *Whose Sins*

ye remit, they are remitted, John 20. 23. The Words of his Vicegerents on Earth, are ratified in Heav'n; only the *Priest* under the Law, hath power to pronounce the *Leper* clean, *Lev.* 13. 3. Had any other *Israelite* done it, it had been as unprofitable, as presumptuous. It was a good Expression that fell from *Elibu*; When a Man's Soul draweth nigh unto the Grave, and his Life to the Destroyer, if there be a Messenger (of God) with him, an Interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto that Man his Uprightness; then He (i. e. God) is Gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down into the Pit; I have found a Ransom, Job 33. 22, 23, 24. Behold! this is thy State, thy Souls Life is in danger of the Destroyer, through his powerful Temptations: I am (howsoever unworthy) a Messenger sent to thee from Heaven; and in the Name of the Almighty that sent me, do here upon thy serious Repentance, before *Angels* and *Men*, proclaim thy Soul fix'd in the Court of Heaven: The Invaluable Ransom of thy dear Saviour is accepted for thee; so thou art deliver'd from descending into the Pit of Perdition.

3. O H, happy Message, thou replyest, were it receiv'd with Comfort! But, Alas! my heart is possess'd with deep Grounds of Fear and Diffidence, not easily to be remov'd: That convicts me, whilst you offer to acquit me; and positively acquaints me, I am a worse Criminal, than a Spectator can imagine: My Sins are beyond measure hainous, such as my Thoughts tremble at; and Tongue dare not express to God that knows 'em, against whom only they are committed. If there is Horror in their very Remembrance; what will their be then in their Retribution?

4. T H E Y are bitter things thou urgest against thy self; no Adversary could plead worse: But I admit thy vileness; be thou as wicked as *Satan* can make

make thee: It is not his Malice, or thy Wickedness, that can exclude thee from Mercy: Be thou as soordid as Sin can expose thee, yet *There is a Fountain opened to the House of David, Zach. 13. 1.* (a bloody Fountain in the Side of thy Saviour) *for Sin, and for Uncleanness.* Be thou as Leprous as that *Syrian* was of old, *2 King. 5. 18.* if thou canst but *Wash seven times* in the *Waters* of this *Jordan*, thou wilt be clean; *Thy Flesh shall come again to thee, like to the Flesh of a little Child:* Thou shalt be, at once sound and innocent. Be thou stung with the Fiery Serpents of this Wilderness; yet if thou cast thine Eyes to that *Brazen Serpent* erected for thy Malady, thou wilt find Cure. Wherefore came *Christ* into the World, but to save Sinners? Add, if thou wilt, *Whereof I am Chief,* *1 Tim. 1. 15.* Thou canst alledge no worse by thy self, than the best did before thee; who, in the Right of a Sinner, claimeth the Benefit of a Saviour.

5. WERE it not for Sin, what use were there of a Redeemer? Were not Sin hainous, how should it require such an Expiation, as the Blood of *Christ*? The magnitude of thy Sins, merits but to magnifie the Mercy of the Forgiver: To remit the Debt of Farthings, were insignificant; but to forgive thousands of Talents, is the height of Bounty. Thus *God* deals with thee: He permits thee to run on to so deep a Sum, that when thy Conscious heart hath proclaim'd thee a Bankrupt, he may infinitely oblige thee, and glorifie his own Mercy, in crossing the Reckoning, and acquitting thy Soul. All Sums are equally dischargable to the Munificence of our Great Creditor in Heav'n: As it is the Act of his Justice, to expect the least; so it is of his Mercy to forgive the Greatest. Had we to do with a Finite Power, we might sink under the Burthen of our Sins; But having an Infinite Power to attend us,

us, let thy Care be to lay hold on that Infinite Bounty; and as thou art an Object of Mercy, sinful, and miserable enough; so conclude thy self (as thou art) a Subject proper to receive it as a Penitent Believer. Open and enlarge thy Bosom, and assume this Free Grace, and close with thy Blessed Saviour; and in him, possess thy self of Remission, Peace and Salvation.

6. COMFORTABLE Expressions, thou confessest, to those that are capable of them: But what is this to me, that am neither Penitent nor Believer? Alas! That which is Honey to others, is Gall and Wormwood to me; who want the Grace to Repent, and Believe as I ought. Why art thou so imprudent and unjust, as to conspire with *Satan* against thy own Soul? Why wilt thou be so unthankfully injurious to the *God* of Mercies, as to deny those Graces which his good Spirit hath bestowed upon thee? If thou wert not penitent, why are these Tears? What means these Sighs and Passionate Expressions of Sorrow, which thou utterest? It is no Temporal Loss that afflicts thee; nor Corporal Distemper that thus disquiets thee: Doubtless, thou art Soul-sick, thy Spirit is wounded within thee; and what can thus affect thy Soul, but sin? Or what can this Affection of thy Soul be for Sin, but true Penitence?

7. THOU repliedst; I am indeed sorrowful for Sin, but not upon the right Grounds: I grieve for the misery that Sin hath brought upon me, not for the evil of Sin, but for the Punishment, not the Offence; for my Peril, not for the displeasure of my *God*. Beware, lest an undue Humility cause thee falsely to accuse the Graces of *God's* Spirit: Thou art no competent Judge, whilst thou art under Temptations. Had not thy Sorrow a relation to *God*, why wouldst thou Sigh

to Heaven? Why would thy Heart challenge thee for unkindness in Offending? And to cry out of the Sordidness not of the Peril of thy Sin? What renders the act of thy Sin to be sinful, but the offence against the Divine Majesty? How canst thou be sorry that thou hast Sinned, and not be sorry that thou hast Offended? Tell me, What is it thy Conscience primarily suggests to thee in this impression of thy Sorrow? Is it thou shalt be Punish'd, or that thou hast Sinned? And were it put to thy Choice, Whether thou hadst rather enjoy the Favour of God with extremity of Pain, or continue in his Displeasure with Ease? Or if Liberty were tendred to thee, that thou mightst freely sin without danger of Punishment? Whether doth not thy Heart rise at the Condition, as ready to flie in the Face of the Offerer? Besides Fear and Horror, dost thou not find an internal Indignation at thy Miscarriage, and such a detestation of thy Sin, that were it to be reiterated if it were possible to be concealed from God and Men, and if there were no Hell to avenge it, woulst thou not abhor to commit it? All these are strong Convictions of the right grounds of thy Repentance, and of the injury which thou dost thy Soul, in the unjust Scruples which thou raisest against it.

8. IF the grounds (thou say'st) of my Repentance be regular, yet the measure is Insufficient. I am sorrowful for Sin, but not enough: An effectual grief for sin, should be serious, deep, hearty, intensive; mine is slight and superficial. I Sigh, but my Sighs proceed not from an humble Heart: I can sometimes Weep, but cannot pour out my self in Tears: I mourn, but don't continue my Sorrow. To this I *Answer*, Thou hast to do with a God, which in all the dispositions of thy Soul, regards Validity, and not Quantity

tity : If he find thy Remorse, he exacts not the solid Measure : He doth not meet up our Repentance by Inches or Hours, but where he finds sincerity of Penitence, is Indulgent. Look upon *David*, and acknowledge his Sin formidably detestable, no less than *Adultery, Inebriation* and *Murder* : Yet no sooner did he in a true Compunction of Heart, cry out, *I have sinned against the Lord* ; then he hears from that Mouth which accused him ; *The Lord also hath put away thy Sin, thou shalt not die*, 2 Sam. 12, 13. Here is a penitent Confession, which was efficacious in the Expiation of those grievous Crimes. Thou art deceived if thou imaginest *God* delights in the Affliction of his Creatures : So far only is the grief of his Servants pleasing to him, that it may conduce to the health of their Souls, in the sensibleness of their Sin, and meet capacity of Mercy.

9. I do not, with some Casuists, flatter thee with an Opinion of the sufficiency of any slight Attrition and empty wishes, that thou hast not Sinned ; doubtless a true Contrition of Spirit, and Compunction of Heart, are necessarily required to a saving Repentance : And these, wert thou but an indifferent Censurer of thine own ways, thou would'st find within thy self. Why is thy Countenance so dejected, thy Cheeks pale, and watered so oft with Tears, thy want of Rest, and loss of Appetite ? Wherefore dost thou pour out those doleful Complaints and vehement Deprecations ? But after all this, art thou such as thou accusest thy self, defective in thy *Repentance* ? Dost thou rest contented in this condition, and not complain of it as the greatest Misery ? Art thou not heartily sorry that thou canst be no more grieved for thy Sin ? Comfort thy self, even this is an acceptable *Repentance*, and God accepts it. What is *Repentance*

tance but a change from Evil to Good? And how sensible is this Change, that thou who formerly delightedst in thy Sin, now detests it and thy self for it; and art yet ambitious of more Grief, for being transported into it? Let not thy Souls Enemy, who desires nothing more than to make thee perfectly Miserable, so allure thee, as to render thee unsatisfied with the Measure of that Penitency which is accepted of God: Rather turn thine Eyes from thy Sins, and look to Heaven and fix 'em upon thine All-sufficient Mediator, and behold his Face smiling upon thy humbled Soul, and perfectly reconciling thee to his Eternal Father, as being fully assured, *That being justified by Faith, we have Peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by Faith into this Grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the Glory of God, Rom. 5. 1, 2.*

10. THERE thou say'st is the very root of my Complaint: I want that *Faith* that should give me an interest in my Saviour, and afford true Comfort to my Soul, and *Boldness and Access with Confidence*, to the Throne of Grace, *Ephes. 3. 12.* I can be sorry, but cannot believe; my Grief is not so great as my Infidelity: I see others full of *Foy and Peace in believing*, *Rom. 15. 13.* But my stubborn Heart cannot soar up to a conformable apprehension of my Saviour: So as indeed I dwell in obdurate Darkness, and a sad ponderosity of Incredulity, wanting that Assurance which others profess to find in themselves. Take heed, lest whilst thou art too querulous, thou prove unthankful; and whilst thy Humbleness disparages thee, thou make God a Loser. A Man may have a rich Mine in his Ground which he knows not of, and there are Shells furnish'd with Pearls, whose Worth many are not sensible of. This is thy State: Thou
 hast

hast that Grace thou complaineſt to want; and there is no meafuring of thy ſelf by Senſe, eſpecially in the time of Temptation. Thou couldeſt not ſo ſenſibly lament the want of Faith, if thou hadſt it not. Thou canſt not deny an Aſſent to the verity of all *God's Promiſes*: Thou acknowledgeſt he could not be what he is, if he were not even Verity it ſelf. Thou canſt not doubt but he hath made thoſe promiſes of Grace and Mercy to all Penitent Sinners, which tend to their Salvation; and thou canſt not but grant, thou art ſinful enough to need Mercy, and ſorrowful enough to deſire and Embrace it.

II. CANST thou but love thy ſelf ſo well, that when thou ſeeſt a Pardon held forth to ſtretch forth thy Hand, and take it? This Hand is thy *Faith*, which takes hold of thy Redeemer. As for that Assurance thou mentions, they are happy that can feel and maintain it; and it muſt be our holy Ambition to be diligent in the Aspiration: But ſuch a height of Perfection, every Traveller in this wretched Pilgrimage, cannot whiſt he is in this perplexed and heavy Road, hope to attain to. It is an unſafe and dangerous Path, which thoſe Men have walked in, who have uſed to define all Faith by Assurance. Should I conduct thee that way, it might be prejudicial. So ſure a Certainty of our conſtant and reflected apprehenſion of Eternal Life, is both hard to acquire, and not eaſie to hold unmovably, conſidering the many ſtrong Temptations that we are ſubject to in this Vale of Miſery and Death. Should Faith be reduced to this Trial, it would be more rare than our *Saviour* hath foretold it: For as many boaſts of ſuch an Assurance, who is yet failing of a true Faith, embracing a vain Preſumption inſtead of it: So many alſo hath true Faith in the Lord *Jeſus*, who yet complains to want that Aſſu-

rance. Canst thou in a sense of thine own Misery close with thy *Saviour*? Canst thou throw thy self into the Arms of his Mercy? Canst thou trust him with thy Soul, and relie upon him for Forgiveness and Salvation? Canst thou prostrate thy self before him, as a miserable Object of his Grace and Mercy? And when it is offered thee, canst lay some (tho weak) hold upon it? Labour for further degrees of Strength daily. Set not up thy Rest in this pitch of Grace, but cheer up thy self, and thus much Faith shall save thy Soul. Thou believest, and he hath said it, that is Verity it self, *He that believeth on the Son, hath Everlasting Life*, Joh. 3. 36.

12. I know, thou averrest that *Jesus Christ* came into the World to save Sinners; and that *Whoever believeth on him, shall not Perish, but have eternal Life*, Joh. 3. 15. Neither can I deny, but in a sense of my sinful Condition, I cast my self in some measure upon my *Saviour*, and lay hold upon his All-sufficient Redemption: But, Alas! My apprehensions of him are so weak, that they can afford no Comfort to my Soul. Were it not that thou expectest to be Justified, and saved by the power and act of thy Faith, thou hast reason to be desheartened with the imbecility of it: But now, that the Vertue and Efficacy of this happy Operation is in the Object apprehended by thee, which is the infinite Merits and Mercy of thy *Saviour*, that cannot be abated by thine Infirmities, thou hast reason cheerfully to expect thy Salvation. Understand thy case aright: Here's a double Hand that helps thee towards Heaven; thy hand of Faith lays hold on thy *Saviour*: Thy *Saviour's* hand of Mercy and plentiful Redemption, lays on thee; thy hold of him is feeble and easily loosed; his hold of thee is strong and irresistible. Comfort thy self therefore with the blessed Apostle; when thou art

Weak,

Weak, then thou art *Strong*; when weak in thy self, then strong in thy Redeemer. Shouldst thou boast and say, Tush, I shall never be moved; I should suspect the Verity and Safety of thy Condition. Now thou deplorest thy Weakness, I cannot but Congratulate the happy Estate of thy Soul. If a greater Work were expedient, strength of Hand were necessary: But now only receiving of a precious Gift is required, why may not a weak Hand perform that as well as a strong, tho not so forcibly? Be not dejected with Impotency, but comfort thy self in the Mercies of thy Redeemer.

13. THOU exprestest; Sometimes, I find my heart at ease, in a comfortable Reliance on my *Saviour*; and being well resolv'd of the safety of my State, promise good days to my self; and after the banishment of my former Fears, dare bid defiance to Temptations: But, Alas! how soon is this serenity over? How suddenly is this clear Skie clouded, spread over with obscurity, and I return to my former Despondency? Didst thou conceive, that Grace would put thee into a constant and perpetual invariable Condition of Soul, whilst thou art on this side Heav'n? Didst thou ever hear or read of any of *God's* Saints upon Earth, that were unchangeable in their holy Dispositions, whilst they continued in this Region of Mutability? Behold the Man after *God's* own heart, thou shalt find him sometimes so couragious, as if the Spirits of all his *W*orthies were met in his own Bosom, how resolutely doth he blow off all dangers, trample on his Enemies, and triumph over all cross Events? Another while thou shalt find him so dejected, and transform'd from what he was: When chearful; *The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall lack nothing*, Psal, 23. 1. In Affliction; *Why art thou so sad, my Soul, and why*

why art thou so disquieted within me? Psal. 42. 14. In Fortitude; I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about, Psal. 3. 6. In Trouble; Hide me under the shadow of thy Wings, from the Wickèd that oppress me; from my deadly Enemies, who compass me about, Psal. 17. 84. In his Integrity; Thy Loving Kindness is before mine Eyes, and I have walked in thy Truth, Psal. 26. 3. In contrary Events; Lord, where are thy loving Kindnesses? Psal. 89. 49. And dost thou not hear him in one Breath professing his Confidence, and lamenting his Differtion; Lord, by thy Favour thou hast made my Mountain to stand strong: Thou didst hide thy Face and I was troubled, Psal. 30. 7. Look upon St. Paul; Sometimes thou shalt see him erecting Trophies of Victory to his God: In all these things we are more than Conquerors, through him that loved us, Rom. 8. 37. On the contrary, thou shalt find him lamenting his own sinful Condition; Oh, wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death! Rom. 7. 24. In a holy Rapture, thou shalt find him caught up into the Third Heaven, and by Permission of the Almighty, buffeted by the Messengers of Satan, and uttering Complaints to God of the Violence of that Assault. Here the Spouse of Christ bemoaning her self; I opened to my Beloved, but my Beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: My Soul failed, when he spoke. I sought him: but I could not find him; I called him but he made me no answer, Cant. 5. 6. Thus is it with thee, whilst thou art in this Carnality: The Temper of thy Soul will be, subject to Vicissitudes. Shouldst thou continue always in the same State, I should suspect thee. This difference betwixt Nature and Grace; the One is still uniform; the Other varies according to the pleasure of the Giver: The Spirit breaths when, and where it listeth, Joh. 3. 8. When therefore

therefore thou find'st the gracious Inspirations of the Holy Ghost within thee, be thankful to the Infinite Munificence of that Blessed Spirit: And still pray; *Arise, O North, and come thou South Wind, that the Spices thereof may flow out,* Cant. 4. 16. But when thou finds thy Soul becalm'd, and not a Leaf stirring in its Garden, be not too much dejected with an ungrounded Opinion of being destituted of thy God; neither repine at the Seasons, or Measures of his Bounty: That most free and beneficent Agent, will not be tyed to our Terms; but will give us what he sees necessary: Therefore humbly wait upon his Goodness; and *be confident, that he who hath begun his good Work in thee, will perform it until the Day of Jesus Christ,* Phil. 1. 6.

14. I T is true, (thou say'st) if God had began the Operation, He would at last, for his own Glory finish it: But for me, I am a Man dead in Trespases and Sins; and never had any true Contrition in me: Some shew, indeed, I have made of a Christian Profession; but I have only deceived the World with a fallacious Pretence, and have not found in my self the Verity, and Solidity of those Heavenly Vertues, whereof I have made an Ostentation. It were pity thou shouldst be so bad as thou representest thy self: I have no tender Compassion in store for Hypocrisie; nor no Disposition is more odious to the *Almighty*; insomuch, as when he expresses Vengeance against Sinners, he uses those terms of Terror, *I will appoint him his portion with the Hypocrites,* Mat. 24. 51. Were it thus with thee, it were high time to work thy Repentance in Dust and Ashes; and resign thy self into the hands of his *Almighty* Protection, to be created anew by his Powerful Spirit; and never to give thy self Peace, till thou findest thy self *Renewed in the Spirit of thy Mind,* Eph. 4. 23. But; in the mean

while, take heed of being guilty of mis-judging thine own Soul; and misprising the Operation of God's Spirit: God hath been better to thee, than thou wilt acknowledge: Thou hast a true Sense of Grace, and perceiv'st it not. There is no Cognifance to be taken of the Sentence thou passest upon thy self, in the hour of Temptation: When thy heart was free, thou wert in another Mind; and shalt, upon better advice, reasume thy former Thoughts.

15. IT is with thee, as with *Eutychus*, that fell down from the third Story, and was taken up for Dead; when his Life remained in him. We have known those in France, without any perception of Life; yea, some (as that subtil *Johannes Duns Scotus*) laid in their Graves before their Souls had taken leave of their Bodies, though unable to exert those Faculties, which might Evince her hidden Presence. Such perhaps art thou at the worst; and wert thou in Charity with thy self, thou wouldest be found in a better Condition. There is the same reason of the Natural Life and the Spiritual: Where it is discern'd by Breathings, Sense and Motions; where there is a breathing Motion, there must be a Life that sends it forth: If then the Soul breaths Holy Desires, doubtless there is a Life whence they proceed. Now deny, if thou can'st, that thou hast not these Spiritual Breathings of Holy Desires Internally? Dost thou not many times sigh for thine own Infanity? Is not thine heart perplexed with the Thoughts of thy Spiritual wants? Dost thou not truly desire, that God would *Renew a right Spirit within thee*? Be cheerful: This is the Operation of God's Spirit: As well may a Man breath without Life, as thou couldst be thus affected without Repentance. Sense is a quick Discrier of Life: Wound a dead Man, he is not sensible; but the Living perceiveth the easiest Touch. When thou
hast

hast heard the Judgments of *God*, denounced against Sinners, and laid to thy Conscience; has thy heart been pierced with them? Hast thou not secretly thought, how shall I decline this dreadful Damnation? When thou hast heard the Mercies of *God* to Penitent Sinners, hath not thy heart said, Oh that I had my share in 'em! When thou hast heard *God* blasphem'd, hast thou not felt a horror in thy Bosom? All these are Symptoms of a Spiritual Life.

16. **MOTION** is the perfectest Discoverer of Life: He that stirs his Limbs is not dead. The Feet of the Soul are the Affections: Hast thou not found an hate and detestation of that Sin, wherein thou hast been allured: And discover'd Grief of heart for thy Indisposition to all good things? Hast thou not found a Love to, and Complacency in those who are truly Religious and Conscionable? Without a Life of Repentance, Penitence had vanish. Are not thine Eyes and Hands often lift up to implore mercy? Canst thou deny, thou hast a real, though weak Appetite to the means, and degrees of it? This is that *Hunger and Thirst after Righteousness*, to which *Christ* hath pronounc'd Blessedness? *Matth. 5. 6.* Discomfort not thy self with the disappearance of *God's* Spirit: In the hour of Temptation, it is with thee, as with a Tree in Winter, whose Sap is run to the Root; where there is no Appearance of Vegetation, by any Buds or Blossoms, but appears, motionless: Yet when the Sun returns his comfortable Beams, it sprouts forth afresh, and bewrays that Vital Juice, which lay in the Earth: So thou must with *Patience* wait, till the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with Healing in his Wings, and Summon thy Humidity into thy Branches; that that Grace may spring in thee, which is able to save thy Soul: Then thou wilt say
of

of thine heart, as *Jacob* of his hard Lodging; Surely, the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not, Gen. 28. 16. Only use the means, and wait patiently God's Leisure; stay upon the Bank of this *Bethesda*, till the *Angel* descend and move the Water.

16. I could gladly, thou repliest, attend with *Patience* upon God, in this happy Work of the Excitation of Grace, were I but sure I had it; or could be perswaded of the Verity of my Conversion: But it is my unhappiness, that here I am at an uncomfortable loss; for I am inform'd, that every Convert can design the Time, Place, means and manner of his Conversion; and demonstrate how near he was to the Gates of Death, nay, to the Verge of Hell; when God, by a mighty Arm, has snatcht him away, from the Pit of *Perdition*, and rescu'd him from everlasting Damnation; placing him in a State of Eternal Salvation; Which I cannot attain to; not finding any such vehement Concussion, hearty Contrition, or such forcible and irresistible Operation of God's Spirit in me, nor can I practice the Sermon design'd for my Conversion, or those Approaches my Soul made towards an hardly-recovered Desperation.

To which I answer: It is not safe for any Man to set Limits to the Almighty; or to prescribe Rules to that Infinite Wisdom: That most free, and All-wise Agent, will not be tyed to walk always in one Path; but varies his Courses according to his Divine Will. One he calls suddenly, as *St. Paul*; another by sweet Solicitations, as *Philip*, *Nathanael*, *Andrew*, *Peter*, *Matthew*, and other Apostles. One he draws to Heaven with gracious Invitations; another with a strong hand. We have known those, who having mispent their Juvenile Years, in notorious debauch'd Courses, living as without God, and have been heart-stricken with some

some Denunciation of Judgment; which hath so wrought upon 'em, that it hath brought them with-
in sight of Hell: But after deep Humiliation, have
been raised through *God's* mercy, to a Comfortable
Sense of the Divine Favour, and have proceeded
to a high degree of Regeneration, and liv'd and
dy'd good Christians.

18. **BUT** this is not every ones Case; those who
have from their Infancy been brought up in *The*
Nurture and Fear of the Lord, Eph. 6. 4. and from
their Youth been Train'd up under a Godly and
Conscionable Ministry; where they have been
plyed with the effectual means of Grace: *Precept*
upon Precept, Line upon Line; here a little, and there
a little, Isa. 28. 10. and by an insensible Convey-
ance, received the Gracious Inoperations of the
Spirit of *God*, though not without many inward
Debates, Temptations, and deep Humiliation, for
their particular Failings; these cannot expect to
find so sensible Alterations in themselves: As well
a Child knows when he was born, as these know
the instant of their Spiritual Regeneration; and as
well may they see the Grass grow, as perceive their
insensible Increase of Grace: It is sufficient that
a Child, attaining to Reason, knows he was born;
as when we see the Grass higher than we left it,
know that it is grown. Let it then suffice thee,
that the thing is finish't, though thou canst not de-
fine the time, and manner of doing it: Be not o-
ver curious in matters of particular Preceptions,
whil'st thou art assured of what is wrought in thee.
The skilful Chyrurgion, makes a Fontinel in the
Body of his Patient, either by a sudden Incision, or
by a leisurely Corrosive; both equally tend towards
Health. Trust *God* with thy self, and with his own
Work; without making inquiry, which way he de-
signs thy Salvation?

19. ALL were safe, thou say'st, if I could be ascertain'd of my Election to Life Eternal: I could be *Patient*, so I might be sure: But, wretched that I am, here I am plung'd: I see others walk comfortably, as if in Heav'n; whereas I droop under a continual Diffidence; raising my self new Arguments of Distrust. Could my heart be settled in this Assurance, nothing could make me unhappy.

It is true, as all other mercies flow from our Election; so the securing of this one, involves all other Favours that concern the welfare of our Souls: It is no less true, our Election may be assured; else the Holy Ghost had not laid so deep a Charge upon us, to use our utmost Endeavour to ascertain it: And we are much wanting to our selves, if hearing so excellent a Blessing may be attained by diligence, if we pull not our hand out of our Bosom, to reach that Crown so offer'd to us: But withal, 'tis true, if there were not a difficulty in this work, the Apostle had not so earnestly call'd for the utmost of our Endeavour to effect it; *2 Pet. I. 10.*

20. THE Truth is, in Christianity there is no Path, wherein there is more need of treading warily, than in this: On each side is Danger and Death; Security on one hand, and Presumption on the other: And the Miscarriage either way, is deadly. Behold the miserable Examples on both kinds: Some walk carelessly, as if there were no Heav'n; or if such a Place, yet of no Concernment: Their hearts are fond of the Pleasure of this Life; and they neither care, nor wish to be happier, than this World can make 'em: *The God of this World hath blinded their Eyes, that they believe not,* *2 Cor. 4. 4.* Others walk proudly, being vainly puff'd up with their own ungrounded Imaginations, as if they were invested with Immortal Glory; fancying

cying themselves rapt up with *St. Paul* into the Third Heav'n, and have seen their Names recorded in the Book of Life: Whereas this is nothing but an Illusion of that Lying Spirit; who knows the the way to keep 'em out of Heaven, is to make 'em believe they are in a State of happiness.

21. I T must be thy main Care to walk, in a just Equidistance from both these Extreams; that thou may'st be resolute without Presumption, and careful without Diffidence. And, *First*, I advise thee to abandon those false Teachers, who improve their Wits for the Ruine of Souls, in broaching the sad Doctrines of Uncertainty and Distrust. Be sure our *Saviour* had not bid his Disciples rejoyce, that their Names are written in Heaven, Luke 10. 20. Had there not been a particular Enrollment; nor the Disciples could never have attained to the notice of such Inscription. Neither is this a Mercy peculiar to his Domestick Followers; but universal to all that believe what they testifie; and by believing we may be assur'd our Names are Registered in those Eternal Records.

22. NOT that we should take an *Acefus* his Ladder, and climb up to Heaven, and turn over the Book of God's Councils, and read our selves design'd to Glory. But as we by Experience imagine we can by Reflections read those Letters, which directly we cannot: So we may do here in spiritual Objects. The same Apostle that gives us our Charge, gives us withal our Direction, *Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give all diligence to make your Callings and Election sure; for if ye do those things, ye shall never fall; for so an Entrance shall be ministred unto you abundantly, into the Everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. 1. 10, 11.* Here is first our Calling, then our Election; Not that we should begin with Heaven, and thence

thence descend to Earth ; but that we should from Earth ascend to Heaven, from our Calling, to our Election : As knowing, that God shews what he hath done for us above, by that which he hath wrought in us here below.

23. OUR Calling not outward and formal, but inward and effectual. The Spirit of God hath a Voice, and our Soul an Ear ; that Voice of the Spirit speaks inwardly and effectually to the Ear of the Soul, calling us out of the State of Corrupt Nature, into the State of Grace ; out of Darkness, into his marvellous Light. By thy Calling, thou mayst judge of thine Election : God never works in vain, neither doth he cast away his saving Graces : But *whom he did Predestinate, them also he Called ; and whom he Called, them he Justified ; and whom he Justified, them also he Glorified*, Rom. 8. 30. This doubtless, thou sayst, is sure in it self, but how assured to me ? I answer : That which the Apostle adds, *By good Works*, if we comprehend the Acts of Believing and Repenting, is a special Evidence of our Election. But not to urge that Clause of *Good Works*, which (tho' read in the Vulgar) is found wanting in our Editions ; The clear words of the Text evince no less : *For if ye do these things, ye shall never fall* : Here is our Negative Certainty : And for our Positive ; *So an Entrance shall be Ministered unto you abundantly, into the Everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*. If we shall never fall, but shall undoubtedly enter the Kingdom of Christ ; what possible scruple can be of the accomplishment of our Election ? What then are these things that must be perform'd by us ? Fix your Eyes upon that Collection of Graces, following : *If you add to your Faith, Vertue, and to Vertue, Knowledge ; and to Knowledge, Temperance ; and to Temperance, Patience ; and to Patience, Godliness ; and*

to *Godliness, Brotherly Kindness, Charity*, 2 Pet. 1. 5, 6.

23. IF Thou wouldst be inform'd what God hath written concerning thee in Heaven, look into thy own Bosom, and see what Graces he hath wrought in thee. *Truth of Grace*, saith the Divine Apostle, *will make good the certainty of your Election.* Not to instance the rest of that Heavenly Combination; do but single the first and the last, Faith and Charity: For Faith, how clear is that of our Saviour; *He that believeth in him that sent me, hath Everlasting Life, and shall not come into Condemnation; but hath passed from Death to Life*, Joh. 5. 24. What danger can befall us in our acquiring Heaven? All the Peril is in the way. Now the Believer is already passed into Life: This is the Grace, by which *Christ dwells in our Hearts*, Ephes. 3. 17. and whereby we have Communion with him, and an assured Testimony of and from him: *For he that believeth in the Son of God, hath the Witness in himself: And what Witness is that? This is the Record, that God hath given us Eternal Life: And this Life is in his Son; he that hath the Son, hath Life*, 1 Joh. 5. 10, 11, 12. Oh happy Connexion! Eternal Life first: This Life Eternal, is in and by *Christ Jesus*; he is ours by Faith, and this Faith testifieth to our Souls assurance of Life Eternal: Charity is the last, which comprehends our love to God and Man: For, from the reflection of *God's Love to us*, ariseth a Love from us to him again. The beloved Disciple can say, *We love him, because he loved us first*, 1 Joh. 4. 19. And from these resulteth our Love to our Brethren: And such an Evidence we have, that the Apostle tells us expressly, *That we know we are passed from Death to Life, because we love the Brethren*, 1 Joh. 3. 14: For the love of the Father is inseparable from the love of the Son: *He that loveth him*

him that Begets, loves him that is Begotten of him, 1 Joh. 5. 1.

25. NOW deal impartially with thine own Heart, and enquire seriously, as in the Presence of the Searcher of all Hearts, Whether thou dost not find in thy self these Evidences of thine Election? Art thou not effectually, tho not perfectly called out of the World, and corrupt Nature? Dost thou not inwardly abhor sinful ways, and think of what thou wert with Detestation? Dost thou not endeavour to be in all things approved to God, and confirmed to thy Saviour? Dost thou not cast thy self upon the Lord *Jesus*, and depend upon his free All-sufficiency for Pardon and Salvation? Dost thou not love that infinite Goodness, who hath been so rich in Mercies to thee; and bless those Beams of Goodness which he hath cast upon his Saints on Earth? Lastly, Dost thou not love a good Man, because he is so? Comfort thy self in the Lord, and let no Fear and Distrust possess thy Soul: *Faithful is he that hath Called thee, 1 Thef. 5. 24.* who will also *Preserve thy whole Spirit, and Soul, and Body blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Thef. 5. 23.*

A Prayer for an Afflicted Conscience.

O GOD, the Father of all Mercies and Heavenly Consolation, suffer me not at any time to fall from thee, or to be swallowed up in the depth of Affliction; but when ever it shall please thee to try me in that Furnace, let my sure Hope and Confidence be fixed on thee; that when multitude of Sorrows shall encompass my Soul, my only trust may be in thy Mercies. Give me the Oil of Joy for Mourning, and the Garment of Gladness for the Spirit of Heaviness, that thy great Name

Name may be Glorified by me, in a thankful acknowledgement of thy Goodness towards me.

2. LORD, thou beholdest afar off, the manifold Perils and Dangers I am exposed to in this World, which is a sea of Miseries and numerous Calamities; The Winds blow, the deep Waters lift up their proud swelling Waves, and the stormy Tempests threaten me with Ship-wrack, to the Ruine and Destruction both of Soul and Body. But O thou, who art the God of Unity, speak Peace unto this inward Voice, and say unto it, I am thy Salvation, so shall I be refreshed with thy loving Kindness, and Praise thee ever more. Amen.

S E C T. I V.

Remedies against Temptations.

1. **T**HOU art assaulted with Temptations: And what the Enemy cannot do by Force or Fraud, he seeks by Importunity. Can this seem averse to thee, when the Son of God was in the Wilderness forty Days, and forty Nights, under the Tempter? He that durst set upon the *Captain of our Salvation*, Heb. 2. 10. How shall he spare frail Flesh and Blood? Why should Christ suffer himself to be Tempted, but to support thee in all thy Temptations? The Keys of the Bottomless Pit are at his disposal: He could have confin'd that Presumptuous Spirit to Chains of Darknes, and admitted him no nearer to him than Hell; but he would let him loose, and permit him to act his worst, purposely that we might not dislike to be Tempted, and that he might foil our greatest Enemy.

2. **CANST** thou think that he, who sits at the right Hand of Majesty, commanding the Powers of Heaven, Earth and Hell, could not keep off that malignant Spirit from assailing thee? Canst thou think him less Merciful, than mighty? Would he die to save thee? And will he turn that Miscreant of Hell loose to worry thee? Dost thou not Pray daily to thy Father in Heaven, to *Lead thee not into Temptation*? Thou hast to do with a God that heareth Prayers; Oh thou of little Faith, why fearest thou? He that was led by his Divine Spirit into the Wilderness, to be Tempted of that Evil Spirit, bids thee pray to the Father that he would not *Lead thee into Temptation*; implying, that thou couldst not go into Temptation, unless he lead thee; and whilst he that is thy Father, leads thee, how canst thou miscarry? *Let no Man when he is Tempted, say, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with Evil, neither tempteth he any Man,* Jam. 1. 13. God Tempteth thee not; yet being his, thou couldst not be Tempted without him, both permitting and ordering that Temptation to his own Glory, and thy eternal Welfare.

3. **THAT** Grace which God hath given thee, he will have thus manifested. How had we known the admirable Continency of *Joseph*, if he had not been strongly sollicitated by a Wanton Mistress? Or *David's* Valour, if the *Philistines* had not had a Giantly Challenger to encounter him? How had we known the invincible Piety of the *Three Children*, had there been no *Furnace* to try 'em? Or of *Daniel*, if no Lyons to accompany him? Be assured, thy Glory shall be Proportionable to thy Tryal: Neither couldst thou ever be so happy, hadst thou not been beholding to Temptations. How often sayst thou, have I beaten off these base Suggestions; yet still they retort upon me, as if Denials invited

invited 'em ; as tho' they meant to tire me with their Solicitations ; as if I must yield, and be overpow'rd, though not with their Force, yet with their Frequency ?

4. KNOW. thou hast to do with *Spiritual Wick- edness*, Ephes. 6. 12. whose Nature is as unweari- able, as their Malice unsatisfiable : Thou hast a Spirit of thine own ; and God hath inspir'd thee with his : So as he expects thou should'st, through the Pow'r of his Gracious Assistance, match the Importunity of that Evil Spirit, with an indefati- gable Resistance. *Be strong therefore in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might ; and put on the whole Ar- mour of God, that thou may'st be able to stand in the E- vil Day ; and having done all, to stand*, Ephes. 6. 10, 11, 13. Look upon a stronger Champion than thy self, the blessed *Apostle* ; thou shalt find him in thy own Condition ; See the *Messenger of Satan sent to buffet him*, 2 Cor. 12. 7. and he did it to purpose : With what extream Rigour was he buffeted on both sides, and how often ? *Thrice he besought the Lord, that it might depart from him*, Verse 8. but the Temp- tation holds ; only a Comfort countervails it : *My Grace is sufficient for thee, for my Grace is made perfect in Weakness*, Verse 9.

5. IT is not to be consider'd, how hard thou art aim'd at, as how strongly thou art upheld : How many with the Blessed Martyr *Theodorus*, have upon *Racks* and *Gibbets* found their Courage stronger than their Pains ? Whilst therefore the Good- ness of God supplies thee with abundance of Spirit- ual Vigour, and Refreshment answerable to the worst of Assaults, what dost thou complain of suf- fering ? The Advice is Sublime, which St. *James* gives his Compatriots ; *My Brethren, count it all Joy, when ye fall into divers Temptations*. Let Temptati- ons be rather Trials by Afflictions, than Suggestions

of Sin ; yet even those overcome, yield no small cause of Triumph : For by them is our Faith tried ; and the trying of our Faith worketh *Patience* ; and the perfect work of *Patience*, is a blessed Entireness. The number of Enemies adds to the Praise of Victory : To overcome a single Temptation, is commendable ; but to subdue Multitudes is glorious.

6. ALAS, thou repliest, I am oppress'd, not with Multiplicity, but with Pow'r : In *Duelling* respect is had to the Equality both of the Combatants and Weapons : But alas, how am I overmatch'd ! I am a weak Wretch ; and *We wrestle not against Flesh and Blood ; but against Principalities and Powers : against the Rulers of the Darkness of this World , against Spiritual Wickedness in Heavenly Places*, Ephes. 6. 12. Behold the Amorite, whose height is like the height of Cedars, and their Strength as the Strength of Oaks, Amos 2. 9. We are but poor Pismirs in the Valley, to these Men of Measures ? Who can stand before these Sons of Anak ? I did not advise thee to be strong in thy self ; we are all Compounds of weakness : One of those Pow'rs of Darkness were able to subdue all Mortality : But to be *Strong in the Lord* ; whose inferiour Angel is able to vanquish a Hell of Devils : And in the Pow'r of his Might, commandeth the most furious of those Infernal Spirits to their Chains. What a Condition should we be in, if left to our selves ; there were no way for us, but Circumvention and Death : But, *Our Help is in the Name of the Lord, who hath made Heaven and Earth*, Psal. 124. 8. *The Lord is our Strength, and our Shield*, Psal. 28. 7. *He is our Rock and our Salvation ; He is our Defence, so as we shall not be moved*, Psal. 62. 2, 6. *It is he that hath girded us with Strength unto Battle, and that subdueth those that rise up against us*, Psal. 18. 39.

7. ASSUME Courage therefore to thy self; there can't be so much difference betwixt thee, and those Hellish Pow'rs, as there is betwixt them, and the Almighty: Their Force is finite, and limited by Omnipotence. How glad do'st thou think, *Jannes* and *Jambres*, the great Magicians of *Egypt*, would have made but an Insect in affront to *Moses*? but could not. How earnest was that Legion of Devils fain to beg leave to prevail over a few *Gaderene-Swine*? How strong soever they seem to thee, yet to him they are so weak, that they cannot move without him. Who fears a *Bear*, or a *Lion*, when chain'd to a Stake? Children then can be Spectators, when they are so Restrained. Look not on thy self therefore, nor them; but look up to the Almighty, who ordines all Motions to his own holy Purposes; and even out of their Malice, raises Glory to himself, and Advantage to his Servants.

8. IT is a sad Advantage, (thou say'st) I have made of Temptations: For, Alas! I have been foil'd by 'em, what by their Subtilty and Violence, have been seduced into a grievous Sin against *God*, and lie down in a just Confusion of Face, to have been so miserably vanquished. Had'st thou wanted Tears for thine Offences, I should willingly have lent thee some. But it is indeed a deplorable Case, that thou hast given thy deadly Enemy this occasion to Triumph over thee; and hast thus provoked *God*: Nevertheless be thou thoroughly humbled under the Guilt of thy Sin, and be not too hasty in snatching a Pardon out of the hand thou hast offended: Be humbled, and after a serious Repentance, be not dis-heartned with thy Failings: Neither do I dread to tell thee of an Advantage to be made, not of thy Temptations only, but of thy Sin.

9. ART not thou a Gainer, if after this thy At-

fault, thou dost in a Holy Indignation, rise up, and fight the more valiantly? A Wound received, whets the Edge of Fortitude: Many a one had not been Victorious, if he had not bled first. Look where thou wilt, upon all the Saints of *God*; observe if thou canst see any of them without his Scars: Many fearful Gashes we have beheld of the Noblest of *God's* Champions whose Courage had not been raised to so high a Pitch, had it not been out of the sense of some former Discomfortures! As some well-spirited Wrestler, be not troubled with thy Fall, as zealous to repay it with a successful Encounter. *We know*, saith the blessed Apostle, *that all things worketh together for good to them that love God*, Rom. 8. 28. Yea, even their very Sins. The *Corinthians* offended in their silent Connivance at the Incestuous Person: The Apostles Reproof produced their Sorrow: What was the Issue? *For behold, this self-same thing that ye sorrowed after a Godly sort, what Carefulness is wrought in you? Yea, what clearing of your selves; yea, what Indignation; yea, what Fear; yea, what vehement Desire; yea, what Zeal; yea, what Revenge?* 2 Cor. 7. 11. What a marvellous Advantage is here made of one Offence? And what hath *Satan* gain'd by this Encounter? One poor *Corinthian* is misled to an incestuous Copulation: The Evil Spirit rejoiceth at such a Prey; but how long shall he enjoy it? Soon after the offending Soul, upon the *Apostles* Censure, is reclaim'd; he is deliver'd to *Satan*, that he should never possess him.

10. THE *Corinthians* are raised to a greater height of Godly Zeal, than ever. *Corinth* had never been so rich in Grace, if not defiled with so foul a Crime. Confess now, if this be not in effect thy Case? Shouldst thou ever have detested thy Sin, if thou had'st not been drawn in, to commit it? Should'st

Shouldst thou have had so fervent a Love to God, had it not been out of a sense of his great Mercy, in remitting it? Wouldst thou have been so weary in thy Stops, as thou art, if thou hadst not slip'd? Give Glory to God, but shame to thy self; and Bless him for the benefit that he hath been pleased to make of thine Offending him.

11. BUT Alas! thou sayst my Case is far worse than it is conceiv'd; I have been more than once miscarried into the same Sin: For after I have made profession of my Repentance, I have been transported into my former Wickedness: Having wash'd off my Sin, (as I thought) with many Tears, yet I have suffer'd my Soul to be defiled again. I must not flatter thee, this Condition is Dangerous: Those Diseases, which upon their first Seizure have receiv'd Cure, after a Relapse, have threatn'd Death. Look upon the Saints of God, thou shalt find they have kept a distance from that Fire wherewith they have been formerly Burn'd: Thou shalt not find *Noah* again Uncovered through Drunkenness, Nor *Judah* climbing to *Tamer's* Bed: Thou shalt not take *Peter* again in the High-Priest's Hall, denying his Master; or after *St. Paul's* Reproof, Halting in his Dissimulation, Gall. 2. 11, 12, 13.

12. BUT tell me, notwithstanding, Art thou truly serious with thy God? Hast thou doubled thy Humiliation, for the Reduplication of thine Offence, and sought God more instantly with an unfeign'd Contrition? Hast thou found thy Soul hath a greater detestation of Sin, than thine acquaintance with it hath indulg'd thee? Hast thou taken this occasion to lay hold on thy Saviour, and to reinforce the Vows of strict Obedience? If so, this unpurpos'd Reiteration of thy Sin, shall be no Prejudice to thy Salvation. It is one thing for a Man

to walk on willingly in a beaten Path of Sin, another thing for him to be led out of the way of Righteousness, by the violence of a Temptation, which he soon recovers by a sincere Repentance.

13. **THE** Best cannot but be overtaken with Sin: But, *He that is Born of God, doth not commit Sin*, 1 Joh. 3. 9. He may be transported, but makes not a Custom of doing ill: His Heart is against that, his Hand is drawn to: And if in this inward Strife he is over-power'd, he lyes not down with a willing Mind, but struggles, and with a reassumed Courage, tramples on that which formerly supplanted him. Didst thou give thy self to a resolved course of Sinning, and betwixt whiles smite thy Breast with a formal *God forgive me*, I should have no Comfort for thee, but rather send thee to an afflictious Remedy of the *Almighty*, for Correction, if possibly those Stripes may prevent thine Everlasting Torments.

14. **BUT** now, since *What thou hatest, that thou dost; and thou dost that which thou wouldst not; and it is no more thou that dost it, but Sin that dwells in thee*, Rom. 7. 19, 20. Exclaim as much as thou wilt on the sinfulness of thy Sin, bewail thy Weakness with a better Man than thy self: *O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death*, Rom. 7. 24. But know, that thou hast found Mercy with God: Thy repeated Sin may grieve, but cannot prejudice thy Soul. Had we to do with a Finite Compassion, it might be abated, by wasting it self on a frequent Remission, as a great River may be drawn dry by many small Out-lets: But now that we deal with a God, whose Mercy is Infinite; it is not the greatness, or number of our Offences, that makes a difference in his free Remission: That *God*, who hath charged our weak Charity. *Not to be overcome of Evil, but to overcome Evil with Good*, Rom.

Rom: 12. 21. justly scorneth that we should imagine his Infinite and Incomprehensible Goodness, can be check't with our Evil.

15. IT was not without a singular Providence, that St. Peter came to our Saviour with that Question in his Mouth; *Lord, How often shall my Brother sin against me, and I forgive him, till seven times?* That it might produce this Gracious Answer, for our perpetual Comfort: *I say not unto thee, until seven times, but until seventy times seven,* Matth. 18. 21, 22. Lord, if thou wilt have us sinful Creatures, indulgent to one another, in our Mutual Offences; what Limits can be set to thy Mercies in our Sins against Thee? Be we Penitent, for thou art Gracious.

A Prayer against Temptations.

O Lord, thou art the God of my Strength, and to thee alone, I fly for refuge; the Tempter is now busie, and labours to undermine me, and more especially when I least suspect him: But, O let me be always ready to meet him in the Gate, before he advances too far upon me: Let not a Supine carelessness seize upon my Spirits, but excite me to Vigilancy, that I may stand upon my Guard ever prepared to resist him, even in the beginning of his first Assaults; Lord, grant I may be fortified with Faith, Courage and Resolution, so that with the Assistance of thy Grace, I may gain the Conquest.

2. FURNISH me with thy compleat Armour, the Helmet of Salvation, the Sword of the Spirit, and the Shield of Faith whereby Satan may be vanquished; do thou Arm and so Strengthen me with thy Grace, that through the Power of thy Might, I may prevail against him, and put him to flight, when he is intending the greatest mischief, and most advantage against me; so

shall I sing Praises unto thy Name, both now and ever; and teach others to resort unto thee in their greatest dangers, and hardst Conflicts, even then when the powers of darkness shall most obstruct them. Amen.

S E C T. V.

Imbecillity of Grace:

1. **T**HOU complainest of the *Imbecillity of Grace*: Some little motions thou art sensible of God's Spirit; but so insignificant, that thou canst not find any solid Comfort. Thou seest others (thou say'st) whose *Breasts are full of Milk, and their Bones moistned with Marrow*, Job 21. 24. whil'st thou languishest under a Spiritual Leanness and Imbecillity. Thou wantest that vigorous Heat of holy Affections, and that Alacrity in the Performance of Holy Duties, which thou observest in other Christians. I like this Complaint, and tell thee, That without this, thou could'st not be in the way to happiness.

2. **T**HINK'ST thou, that those whom thou esteem'st eminent in Grace, make not the same moan that thou do'st? Certainly, they never had any, if they did not complain of too little. Every Man is sensible of his own wants, and ready to pass secret Censures upon himself for being applauded by others. Even the Man after God's own heart, can say, *But I am Poor and Sorrowful*, Psal. 69. 29. He was a great King when he said so; it was not Meanness in Estate, that troubled him; but a Spiritual Necessity: For he had before, in the same Heavenly Anthem professed; *O God, thou knowest my Foolishness, and my Guiltiness is not hid from thee,*

thee, Pſal. 69. 5. It was an old Obſervation of Wiſe Solomon ; *There is that maketh himſelf Rich, and hath nothing ; there is that maketh himſelf Poor, yet hath great Riches*, Prov. 13. 7. In this latter Rank are many Pious Souls, and thine (I hope) for one ; who certainly had never been ſo Rich in Grace, if they had been conceited of greater Store : Even in this Senſe many a Saint may ſay with St. Paul, *When I am weak, then I am ſtrong* ; ſince the Complaint of Weakneſs, argues Strength : And, on the contrary, an Opinion of ſufficient Grace, is an Evident Conviction of meer Emptineſs.

3. B U T ſuppoſe thy ſelf ſo poor as thou pretendſt ; it is not ſo much what we have, as how we improve it. How many have we known, that have grown Rich out of a little ; and others, out of a great Stock, have run to Beggary ? Had that *Servant* in the *Gospel*, with *One Talent*, employ'd it to the Gain of a *Second*, he had been proportionably as well rewarded, as he that with *Five* gain'd *Ten*. In our Temporal Eſtate, we are warned by the Wiſeſt Man, to *Take heed of making haſte to be Rich*, Prov. 28. 20. And the Apoſtle tells us, *That he that would be Rich, falls into many Temptations*, 1 Tim. 6. 9. Surely, there is no ſmall danger alſo, in affecting to be too ſuddenly Rich in the Endowments of the Soul : This cannot but be accompanied with the Temptation of an unthankful diſtruſt : For he that believes makes not haſte ; and we cannot be ſufficiently thankful for what we have, whilſt we do over eagerly reach after what we have not.

4. TELL me, thou Querulous Soul, doſt thou not acknowledge what thou receiv'ſt to be God's Gift ? And wilt thou not allow the Benefactor of Heav'n, to Diſpenſe his Favours as he pleaſeth ? If he think fit to fill thy Veſſel with drops of Grace, art thou diſcontented, becauſe he pours not out his Spirit

Spirit in full Vials? If thou enjoys any, it is his bounty, and more than thou canst repay him: Take what thou hast, as an Earnest of more; and wait thankfully upon his Bounty for the rest: Is it not convenient in a free Gift, to attend the leisure of the Donor? What sturdy Beggars are we, not to stay at the Door till we be served; and grudge at our Alms, when it comes? Look upon *Abraham*, thou shalt find him fourscore and six Years Childless; and after he had got *Ishmael*, he waited fourteen Years for the Promised Seed; and when he had enjoy'd him not longer than he expected him, he must Sacrifice him to the Giver. Thus must our Faith be exercised for Time and Measure of Mercy.

5. THY Graces are weak; yet discomfort not thy self: How many frail Bodies have we known, which with careful Tendance, have been Healthier than those of grosser Constitutions. Neither is it otherwise in the Soul: Soundness of heart, is Health; Increas'd Degrees of Grace, make up the Strength of that Spiritual Part: If thou have this Health tenderly observed, thou may'st be happy in thy Maker, although more happy in a Comfortable Sense of a stronger Fruition. We have to do with a God that minds not Quantity, as Truth of Repentance. He knows we have nothing, but what he gives us, and enables us to improve: And where he sees our Wills and Endeavours not wanting, he is ready to accept and crown his own Gifts in us. *He will not break the Bruised Reed, nor quench the Smoaking Flax*, Matth. 12. 20.

6. THOU art weak in Grace: Be not dismay'd; there are all Ages, all Statures in *Christ*. Shall the Child repine, that he is not grown a Man? Shall the Dwarf quarrel that he is not a Giant? Were there a Standard of Graces, less than is required

quired and would not be accepted, thou hadst reason to be troubled : But it is so far from that, as that our *Saviour* hath encharged ; *Suffer little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not ; for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven, Mat. 19. 14.* In some Legal Oblations, it pleased God to regard Time and Age : *The Lamb for the Passover, and for the Peace-Offering, Lev. 3. 7. The Bullock for the Sin-Offering of Israel, Lev. 4. 14.* have their Date assign'd : And in diverse Cases, he hath called for *Two Turtle Doves, or two Young Pigeons, Lev. 1. 14. Lev. 5. 7, 11. Lev. 12. 8. Lev. 15. 14.* Young *Turtles*, and *Old Doves*, (according to our *Jewish Doctors*) were unlawful to be offered : But in Spiritual Sacrifices ; he that is Eternal regards not Time, nor Statures : For the Eleventh Hour, carried the Peny as well as the First : *And let the weak say, I am strong, Joel 3. 10.*

7. IT perplexes thee, thou hast made so slow a Progress in Graces : Thy desire is Heav'n-ward, and thou checkest thy self for want of Celerity : It is an happy Ambition, that wings thee to Blessedness. Quicken thy self, with Gracious Incitations ; but observe, we must not go a full Career : For that Passage admits not of haste : How many have we known, by much forwardness, have been rejected in their Journey, whether by mistaking their Way, or misplacing their Steps ? But I am glad it is the desire of thy Soul, to *Run the way of God's Commandments, Psal. 119. 32.* and do encourage thy Zeal, in pursuing that Holy Race ; ever praying thou may'st *so run, as that thou may'st obtain, 1 Cor. 9. 24.* But withal, I tell thee, that, *Blessed is the Man, that doth but walk in the Law of the Lord, Psal. 119. 1.* Whilst thou passest on, though but a Foot-pace, thou art every step nearer to Glory : And if thou gain'st ground, thou art secure. *Blessed is the Man, whose Strength is in Thee, O God ; in whose heart are*
thy

thy Ways ; who passing through the Vale of Misery, goes on from Strength to Strength, till he appear before Thee his God in Zion, Pſal. 84. 5, 6, 7.

8. **THY** Grace is diminutive ; but thou labour'ſt for more : This is a good Beginning of Heavenly Treasure : For he is in a way to Riches, that deſires to thrive ; and never any Holy Soul loſt her Longing. If thy Wiſhes be hearty, thou haſt thy deſire, or ſhalt be aſſur'd of it. *If any Man lack Wiſdom, let him ask it of God ; who giveth to all Men liberally, and upbraideth no Man ; and it ſhall be given him, Jam. 1. 5.* Were this Condition offer'd for Temporal Riches, who would be Poor ? And if we embrace it not in Spirituals, we diſtruſt the Promiſes, or neglect Mercies. In Temporal things, how many have ſo eagerly Chafed the World, that they have over-run it ; and whil'ſt they greedily ſwallowed Gain, have been choak'd ? But in better Bleſſings, earneſtneſs of Deſire, and fervour of Proſecution, was always answered with a Gracious Impetration.

9. **THOU** art poor in Spirit ; but in an humble Dejection, long'ſt for more : Know, that an humble Poverty, is better than a proud Fulneſs : Wert thou Poor and Proud, there were no hope of thy Proficiency : Thy falſe Conception lyes in the way of thy Improvement ; and many a one had been Gracious, had they not eſteem'd themſelves : But now thou art Meaner in thine Opinion, than in thine Eſtate, who can more juſtly claim our Saviour's Bleſſing ; *Bleſſed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven ? Mat. 5. 3.*

10. **THOU** art weak in heart : It is thine own Fault, if thou acquir'ſt not more Strength. Wherefore is that Heavenly Food of the Word and Sacraments, but to nourish thy Soul to Eternal Life ? Do but Eat and Digelt, and thou wilt grow ſtronger
God

God will not be wanting to thee in an Increase of Grace, if thou art not wanting to thy self: He offers his Holy Spirit, with the Means; and it is thy neglect if thou separate 'em. Thou knowest in whose hands is the Staff of Bread, pray, That he who gives thee Food, and Mouth, would also give thee Appetite, Digestion, and Nourishment.

11. **THY Spirit is weak:** It concerns thee highly to be cautious, in avoiding occasions of Temptation. He that carries brittle Glasses, is careful lest they should break; whereas strong Metal fears no danger: So he that has a small Rush-Light, walks gently, and keeps off every Air. Thou art weak, thy God is strong. Do'st thou not see the Infant that cannot go alone, how fast he clings to the hand of his Mother; more trusting to her help, than his own Strength? Do thou so to thy God; and say with the Blessed Psalmist; *Hold up my goings in thy Paths, that my Foot-steps slip not,* Psal. 17. 5. *Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe,* Psal. 119. 117, *Uphold me according to thy Word, that I may live, and let me not be ashamed of my Hope,* Psal. 119. 116.

12. St. Peter was presumptuous, in attempting to tread on the Waters: But he that ventured to walk there, upon the Strength of his Faith, when he felt the stiff Wind, and saw the great Billow, began to sink in his Weakness: But no sooner had Jesus stretch'd forth his hand, and caught him, but he takes Courage, and goes now with the same assurance upon the Sea, as he on the Land: And with a Check, receives more Supportation from Christ than his own Limbs could afford him, Mat. 14. 29, 30, 31. Fear no Miscarriage, through thine own weakness, whilst thou art supported by that Strong Helper.

A Prayer for Grace.

O LORD, who art the Author of all Goodness, and from whom cometh every good and perfect Gift, make me to discern aright what Grace thou hast vouchsafed unto me, and learn me to be truly thankful for the same, and to Glorifie thee, the only giver of it; so likewise to use my utmost diligence in the performance of those Duties which thou requirest of me: That when thou shalt Summon me to a Reckoning for the use of that Talent committed to me, I may give in my Accounts, and be plentifully Rewarded, by entering into that Joy, which thou hast prepared for all thy Servants.

2. GRANT that I may ever use that measure of Grace thou hast allotted to me, and restrain me from turning of it into Wantonness: Let me be content with that Portion which thou in thy Wisdom and Goodness hast endowed me withal, and not plead Ignorance and condemn its Insufficiency; neither let me Envy those that have received more, lest I repine against thee; nor despise those which have attained less, lest I incur thy Displeasure, and cause thee in Justice, to withdraw that Grace from me, which in Mercy thou hast freely given me, and bestow it upon those who would make better use of it: But Lord, Sanctifie unto me all thy Gifts and Graces to my Lifes end. Amen.

S E C T. VI.

Loss of Reputation.

1. **N**EXT to our Body and Soul. is the Care of our Reputation; which lost, we are dead to the World. Thou sufferest under a Publick Infamy;

famy ; I do not ask how justly : He was wise that said, It was fit for every Good Man to fear a false Reproach: A good Name is no less wounded for the time with that, than with a just Crimination. This is a fore Evil ; against which there is no Preservative, nor hardly can be prescrib'd any Remedy : Innocence it self, is no Antidote against Malicious Tongues: Neither Grandeur nor Sanctity, can secure any from unjust Calumny.

2. MIGHT that be any Ease to thee, I could tell thee of *Kings and Saints*, that have complain'd of this Misfortune, and yet were not able to resist it. Thou hast the Company of the best, if that mitigates thy Misery. But what do I speak of Mortals, whose greatest Purity might be blurr'd with some Imperfections? Look upon the *Lord of Life, the Eternal Son of the ever living God, God cloathed in Flesh* ; and see whether any other were his Lot, in this Region of Mortality : Dost thou not hear for his Gracious Sociableness, branded as *Gluttonous, a Wine-bibber, a Friend of Publicans and Sinners* ? Mat. 11. 19. For his Powerful and Merciful Cure of Demoniacks, blazon'd for a Fellow that *Casts out Devils through Beelzebub the Prince of Devils* ? Mat. 12. 24. Was not he slandered to death for *Treason against Cæsar, and Blasphemy against God* ? John 19. 12. Mat. 26. 65. Did not the Multiude say, *He is mad and hath a Devil* ? John 10. 20. Was he not after his Death counted an *Impostor* ? Mat. 27. 63. And can there be worse Names, than *Glutton, Drunkard, Conjurer, and Traytor, Blasphemer, Madman, Demoniack, and Impostor* ? Who then can think much to be slandered with meaner Crimes, when he hears the Son of God in whom *The Prince of this World could find nothing*, laden with so hainous Calumniationes ? *John 14. 30.*

3. THOU

3. **THOU** art smitten with a fordid Tongue ; which penetrates into thy Soul. That Person gave a high praise to his Sword, that affirm'd, It was sharper than Slander : And if a Razor proves sharper, yet short of the *Edomites* Tongue, *Psal.* 52. 2. And if these Weapons reach not far enough, he found both *Spears and Arrows* in the Mouths of his Traducers, *Psal.* 57. 4. Thou art in the same Circumstance with *David* : What should'st thou do, but for his Complaint, use his Remedy ? *I will cry unto God most high, unto God that performeth all things for me : He shall send from Heav'n, and save me from the Reproach of him that would swallow me up : God shall send forth his Mercy, and his Truth,* *Psal.* 57. 2, 3. Do by thy Reproaches, as *Hexekiah* did by the Railing Lines of *Rabshakeb*, spread them before the Lord, and leave thy Cause in the just hands of the Almighty ; who will in his good time, revenge thy Wrong, and clear thine Innocency : and requite thee Good for their Malice and Envy.

4. **I N** the mean time, thou complain'st of being blemish'd with an odious Aspersion, and thy Name repeated by many censorious Mouths. Thou hearest what others say ; but do'st thou make a particular Search in thine own Bosom ? If thy Conscience acquit thee, obdure thy Face against all Spight of Malice. What is ill Fame, but an unfavory Breath ? Do but turn thine Ear from the Reception, and what art thou the worse ? It is thy Weakness to suffer thy self to be blown over by the Air of some putrified Lungs ; which if thou dost but decline, by not valuing it, will soon vanish.

5. **T H O U** art under ill Tongues : This is an Evil proper only to Man : Other Creatures are subject to Diseases, Death, or outward Violence ; but they cannot be obnoxious to Detraction, since they are not capable of Speech ; whereby a Slander can
be

be form'd: They have their several Sounds and Notes of Expression, whereby they signifie their Dislike and Anger: But only Man can cloath his angry Thoughts with Words of Offence; so that Faculty, which was given him for an Advantage, is depraved to a further Mischief. But the Liberal Hand of his Creator, hath also endued him with a Property of Reason; which as it directs his Tongue to others, so it instructs him to make use of orher Speeches to him: And where he finds it unjust, either to convince it by a just Apology, or to contemn it. If therefore thou understandest thy self to lye under an unjust Obloquy, have so much of the Man as to confute, or despise it.

6. THOU art shamefully traduced: But give me leave to enquire not what thou sufferest, but for what: If for a good Cause, I shall turn my Pity to Envy: Truth it self hath told thee, Thou art in the way to Blessedness, who can pity thee for that, wherein thou hast cause to rejoyce? *Blessed are ye when Men revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of Evil against you falsely, for my sake; rejoyce, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven,* Mat. 5. 11. Rather pluck up thy Spirits, and take up the Resolution of holy Job, that Man of Patience: *If mine Adversary had written a Book against me, surely I would take it upon my Shoulders, and bind it as a Crown to me,* Job 31. 35; 36. And say, with that gracious King of Israel; *I will be yet more vile for the Lord;* 2 Sam. 6. 22.

7. THOU art reproach'd by lewd Men: Thank thy Vertue, that thou art envyed. Wert thou so bad as thy Detractors, thou would'st sit quiet enough. *If we were of the World, (saith our Saviour) the World would love his own: But because ye are not of the World, but I have chosen you out of the World; therefore the World hateth you,* John 15. 19. Whilst

the Moon sets, no Dogs bark at her ; it is her Shining that opens their Mouths : Wert thou Obscure or Wicked, thou mightest be safe ; but if thou wilt be eminently Good, look for the Lashes of ill Tongues. *They think it strange, that you run not with them into the same Excess of Riot, speaking Evil of you,* saith the Apostle, 1 Pet. 4. 4.

8. IT was not without Reason, that a great Musician struck his Schollar, because the Multitude applauded his Skill; knowing, that had he been true to his Art, those misjudging Ears could not have approved him. What more excellent Instruments had God in his Church, than the Blessed Apostles ? And what Acceptation found they on the Earth ? *Being defamed, we intreat : We are made as the Filth of the World, and are the Off scouring of all things unto this Day : We are made a Spectacle to the World, to Angels, and to Men,* 1 Cor. 4. 9, 13. Complain, if thou canst, of a worse Condition than these Ambassadors of God ; otherwise, resolve with the Holy Apostle, to pass cheerfully through Honor and Dishonor, through evil Report, and good Report, towards the Goal of Immortality.

9. THOU art disgrac'd through scandalous Reports : It is not Air we live by. How many hast thou known ; that have blown over a just Infamy, with a careless Neglect ? Pleasing themselves to think, they are thriven under Curses : And shall their Guiltiness be entertain'd with more Courage than thine Innocence ? Let those whose heart is as foul as their Names, be troubled with deserved Censures : Do not thou give way to Malice, as to yield any Regard to her mis-raised Suggestions. Thou canst not devise more to vex a Detractor, than by Contempt. Thus thou shalt force Spight, as that wise *Heathen* truly said, to drink of the greatest Part of her own Poyson.

10. THOU art disgrac'd with an ill Fame : What a poor matter is this? How far dost thou think that Sound reacheth? Perhaps to the next Village; or Shire wherein thou dwellest; It is like, the next County never heard of thy Name: And if thou look yet further off; as soon may'st thou be discourf'd amongst the *Antipodes*, as in the Neighbouring Region. And what a small Spot of Earth is this, to which thy Shame is confin'd? Did'st thou know the vast Extent of this great World, thou would'st easily see into how narrow a Corner either our Glory, or Dishonour, can be shut up: And should'st confess how little Reason we have to affect the One, or be disheartned with the Other.

11. THOU art wronged with an unjust disgrace: Have *Patience*; Slanders are not long-liv'd: Truth is the Child of Time; ere long she'll appear and vindicate thee. Wait upon the God of Truth, who shall cause *Thy Light to break forth as the Morning; and thine Health to spring forth speedily*, Isa. 58.8. There is a Shame, worthy of thy Fear; which is both Universal, before the Face of all the World, of Angels and Men; and beyond the reach of Time, Eternal: Fear This, and contemn the Other.

12. ON the contrary; If Fame should be-friend thee so much, as to strain her Cheeks in sounding thy Praises; and should cry thee up for Vertuous, and Eminent every way: *Alas! how few shall bear her, and how soon is that Noise stilled, and forgotten?* Eccles. 9. 16. Shortly, Then let it be thy main Care, to demean thy self holily and conscionably before God and Men; leave the rest upon God, who shall be sure to make his Word good, in spite of Men and Devils: *The Memory of the Just shall be blessed, but the Name of the Wicked shall rot*, Prov. 10.7.

A Prayer upon loss of Reputation.

O Lord, withdraw my heart I beseech thee daily, more and more from the love of the World, and the things thereof, seeing they are Vain, Transitory and full of Grief and Vexation, not yielding that delight and Contentment which they promise by their fawning Allurements: But on the Contrary much anguish and uneasiness of Mind: Witness the cause of such unexpected bitterness; suffer me not to affect them as formerly, nor let them seem so sweet and pleasant to me, as they do to others, who have not tasted of better things, and therefore find such relish in these; but grant that all the affections of my heart may be fixed upon thee alone.

2. **REPROACH** and Shame, O Lord, hath now Encompassed me, and it hath been thy Justice to make others behold the Weakness of thy Servant, and to cause my wants, Imperfections, and Infirmities to be known and discerned of many; Lord, thou knowest how ready I am to fail, if thy Grace doth not continually sustain me: O let me not be overwhelm'd with grief, that others may behold that in me which creates this disrespect, but make me every day careful to walk Circumspectly, and to Redeem that Time I have so vainly lost, that at last I may by hearty Repentance, and the Merits of a blessed Jesus, be received into thy Favour. Amen.

S E C T. VII.

Of Publick Calamities.

1. **T**HOU art afflicted with the Publick Calamities; So it becomes thee as a good Man, a good Christian, and a good Patriot. We are not
entire

entire Pieces, but Limbs of a Community of Church and Kingdom : While the whole Body suffers, how can we be free? This should be no News to us : What Earthly Kingdom or State hath ever enjoy'd a constant Felicity? These Publick Bodies, like single Persons, have their Birth, Infancy, Youth, Vigour, and Declinations : Even the White Marble of that famous Emblem, and Type of *God's Church*, after not many Centuries of Years, felt the Dint of Time, and Mould'ed to nothing.

2. IT is as much as Heavenly Bodies can do, to avoid Mutation : And well might be distracted with these Troubles, if we did not know from whence they come ; even from a most Wise, Powerful, and just Providence : He that sits in Heaven, orders these Earthly Affairs according to the Counsel of his Will : It is that Almighty Hand, that holds the Stern of this Vessel, and steers it in that Course he knows best : It is not for us Passengers, to meddle with Card or Compass : Let that All-skilful Pilot alone with his Work : He knows every Rock and Shelf, that may endanger it ; and can cut the proudest Billow, that threatens it ; *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good,* 1 Sam. 3. 18.

3. WERE there no other respects than Personal, I cannot blame thee, if thy Fears strive with thy Grief for the Publick Evils : Every Man's Interest is involv'd in the Common ; and if the Ship Sink, what will become of the Passengers? But withal, there is a kind of inbred Sympathy in every good heart, which gives a Share in all Miseries, and affects us more for them, than our own. Old indulgent *Eli* lov'd his Sons well, and was no doubt, very sensible of their Death ; yet that part of the News pass'd over with some Passion : But when he heard *the Ark of God was taken,* his Neck and Heart were

broke together : And his Religious Daughter-in-Law, though she were Delivered of a Son ; yet she died in Travel of that heavy News, and could live only to say, *Ichabod ; the Glory is departed from Israel ; for the Ark of God is taken*, 1 Sam. 4. 17, 18, 21, 22. disregarding her new Son, when she heard of the Loss of her People, and her God.

4. HOW many Pagans have we read of, that have died resolutely for their Country, cheerfully sacrificing themselves to the Publick ? How many that died with their Country, hating to out-live the common Ruin ? How many have Scorn'd to be beholden for their Lives to their Peoples Murthers ? We shall as soon extinguish Grace and Nature, as quit this Compassionate Sense of the Common Calamities.

5. THOU grievest for the Publick Distempers : Mourn not as one without Faith : Be sure, *He that keepeth Israel, will neither slumber nor sleep*, Psal. 121.

4. Wherefore was *The Holy Tabernacle over spread with Skins*, but to figure to us God's Church, shelter'd under a sure Protection ? *Exod. 26. 7.* He that was so curious of the Custody of his Material Temple, by Night as well as by Day, that a sleeping Levite might not escape beating, and burning of Garments ; how careful do we think, he will be of his Spiritual, and Living House ? How unmeet Judges are we of his Holy Proceedings ? We are ready to measure his Love by an outward Prosperity, than which nothing can be more uncertain ?

6. THE Almighty goes by other Rules ; such as are most Consonant to his Infinite Justice and Mercy. I am abash'd to hear a Pagan, though no Vulgar one, say ; *Whatsoever is brought to pass, a wise Man thinks, ought to be so done ; neither goes about to rebuke Nature : But finds it best to suffer what he cannot alter :*

Senec. Epist.

107.

And

And shall we Christians repine at those seemingly harsh Events, which we see fall out in *God's Church*, whilst we are ignorant of his Designs? and be ready to bless a thriving Prophaneness? Behold the ancient Lot of *God's Inheritance*, and thou shalt see the Father of *Esau* flourishing, yielding eight *Kings* of his Line; whilst poor *Israel* was toying and sweating in the *Egyptian Furnaces*: Yet we know the World to stand inviolable; *The Elder shall serve the Younger*; and, *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.*

7. WHAT if that Wise *God*, (who brings Light out of Darkness) have purposed to dispense Honor and Happiness to his Church out of this sad Affliction? Metals are never so bright, as when polish'd: Perfumes and Spices never so Redolent, as when they have endur'd the Fire, and Pestle. Wilt thou not give the *Physician* leave to make use of *Mithridate*, because there are *Vipers* in the Composition? How unworthy art thou of Health, if thou wilt not trust the Skill of the Artist, in mixing so wholesome a Cordial?

8. THOU art troubled with the Publick Miseries: Take heed that thy Grief be clear of all Impiety. Would'st thou not have *God* to be Just; and allow it an Act of his Justice to punish Sins? Can'st thou deny, that our Sins have reacht to Heaven, and call'd for Judgment? *Wherefore doth a Living Man complain? a Man for the punishment of his Sin?* Lam. 3. 39. I read of a Devout Man, that was instant with *God* in his Prayers, for a Nation not far off: And was answer'd; *Suffer the Proud to be humbled.* Whether we suffer it or no, the just *God* will humble the Proud, and punish the Sinful. The wonderful *Patience*, and infinite Justice of the *Almighty*, hath set Limits to the Wickedness of every People. *The Iniquities of the Amorites is not yet at*

the full, saith God to Abraham, Gen. 15. 16. When the Measures is made up, it is time for God to strick: Then we complain, when perhaps 'tis too late.

9. **WOULD'ST** thou know what Remedy is to be us'd, for preventing of a Destructive Vengeance? There is no way under Heav'n, but to break off our Sins by a seasonable, serious Repentance: By the united Forces of Holy Resolutions, and Endeavours to make an Head against our Wickednesses, and not to suffer it to fill up to the Brim of that fatal *Epab*; till which time, the Long-suffering God only threatens, and corrects a People: But then he plagues them; and insists upon the necessity of his inviolable Justice. *Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? And shall not my Soul be avenged on such a Nation as this?* Jer. 5. 9.

10. **THOU** mournest for the common Sufferings: And indeed our Fears can never be better bestowed. But have not thy Sins helped to make up this irritating Heap, and thou cast in thy Symbole into the common Shot? Cannot the Times justly challenge thee as accessory to their Misery? Begin at Home, if thou wish well to the Publick, and make thine own Peace with God, for thy particular Offences: Renew the Covenant with God, of a holy and strict Obedience; and then pour out thy Prayers and Tears for an universal Mercy: Then thou wilt not only pull away one Brand from this Consuming Fire, but assist to quench the common Conflagration.

11. **THY** Heart bleeds to see the woful Vastation of Civil Discord, and the deadly fury of domestick Enemies: Certainly there is nothing under Heaven more dreadful than the Face of an Intestine War; nothing that so nearly resembles Hell: Killing, Dying, Torturing, Burning, Shrieks, Cries, and Ejaculations. fearful Sounds, and furious Violence,

lences, and whatsoever may increase Horror: The present Calamity oppresses one, another Fear: One is quivering in Death, another trembles to expect it: One begs for Life, another will sell it dearer: Here one would rescue one Life, and loseth two; another would hide himself where he finds a Merciless Death. Here lies one bleeding, groaning and grasping, parting with his Soul in extremity of Anguish; and another of a Vigorous Spirit kills and dies at once: Here one wrings her Hands, tears her Hair, and seeks for some Instrument of a self-inflicted Death, rather than yield her Chastity to a bloody Ravisher; another clings to her Husband, and takes part of the Murtherers Sword, rather than let go her Embraces: One is tortured for the Discovery of hid Treasure; another dying upon the Rack, out of Jealousie.

12. IT is pity that Christians should be so bloodily Cruel to one another! That he who bears the *Image of God*, should thus turn Fiend to his own Flesh and Blood! These are worthy of our bitterest Lamentations! I love the Speculation of *Seneca's Resolutely-Wife* *Senec. Epist. 76.* Man, that could look upon the glittering Sword of an Executioner, with undazzled Eyes, and makes it indifferent whether his Soul pass out of his Mouth or Throat: But I should more admire the Practice. Whilst we carry this Clay about us, Nature in the best of us, must shrink in at the sight of Death: Yet these are the due Revenges of the *Almighty's* Punitive Justice, so provok'd by our Sins, that we cannot claim an easier Judgment.

13. DOST thou not see *Physicians* when the Body is highly Distemper'd and the Blood Inflam'd, to order the opening of a Vein, and extracting out so many ounces as may leave the rest fit for
Cor-

Correction? Why art thou over-troubled to see the great *Physician* of the World take this Course with sinful Mankind? Certainly, had not this great Body, by wilful Disorder, contracted these Spiritual Diseases, and defiled the Blood that runs in these Vulgar Veins, with Riots and Surfeits, we had never been so Miserable, as to see these Torrents of Christian Blood running down our Channels: But could we bewail and abandon our former Wickednesses, we might live in hope, that at last this deadly Issue might stop, and dry up, and leave a Possibility of a Blessed Recovery.

14. THOU art amaz'd with Grief, to see the Pestilence, raging in our Streets, in so frequent a Mortality, as breeds a question concerning the number of the Living and the Dead: That which is wont to abate other Miseries, heightens this; the Company of Participants: It was certainly a hard and sad Option, that God gave to *David*, after his numbring the People: *Chuse thee whether Seven Years Famine shall come unto thee in thy Land, or three Months Flight before thine Enemies, or two days Pestilence,* 2 Sam. 24. 13. We may believe him when we hear him say, *I am in a great Strait*; but his wise Resolutions soon brought him out: *Let us fall now into the hands of the Lord, (for his Mercies are great) And let me not fall into the hands of Man,* 2 Sam. 24. 14. He that sent these Evils, knew their Value, and the difference of their Malignity.

15. YET he opposes three days Pestilence, to seven Years Famine, and three Months Vanquishment: He knew there was advantage betwixt the dull Activity of Man, and the quick Dispatch of an Angel! It was a favour that the Angel, who in One Night destroy'd an *Hudred fourscore and five thousand Assyrians,* 2 King. 19. 35. should in three days cut off but *Seventy thousand Israelites:*

But

But the *Almighty* in his Judgments remembers Mercy. We read of *Grand Cairo*, wherein Eighteen hundred thousand were swept away in one Years Pestilence; enough one would imagine, to have De-Populated the whole Earth: And in our Chronicles of so general a Mortality, that the Living were hardly sufficient to Bury the Dead. In the Year, 1624, died of the Plague in one Week, Four thousand four hundred sixty three; and in our last Visitation, 1665, was a larger Number: In one Week, Seven thousand one hundred sixty and five; and in the whole Year, Sixty eight thousand five hundred ninety six. It was his tender Mercy, that he spared any Alive: But he Wounds, that he may Heal; and in wounding, heals us; for his Compassions fails not to us Sinners.

16. THESE are dreadful demonstrations of *God's* Displeasure; but there is this alleviation of our Misery, that we suffer more immediately from a Holy, Just and Merciful God. The Kingly Prophet had never made that distinction in his Choice, if he had not known a difference betwixt the Sword of an Angel, and an Enemy; betwixt *God's* more direct and immediate Infliction, and the Malice of Men. It was but a poor Consolation given by a Victorious Enemy to dying *Lausus*; *Comfort thy self in thy Death with this, that thou fallest by the Hand of Aeneas.* But surely, we have just Reason to Comfort our Souls, when a Pestilential Death compasses us about, from the Thought and Intuition of that Gracious Hand, under which we suffer: So as we can say with good *Eli*, *It is the Lord.*

17. IT is not amiss to nominate those Marks of Infection, *God's Tokens*; such they are, and ought to Summon up our Eyes and Hearts to that Almighty Power that sends them, with the Resolution of Holy *Job*; *Tho thou kill me, yet will I trust*

in thee. It is none of the least Miseries of Contagious Sicknes, for it bars us from the Comfortable Society and Attendance of Friends; or else repays their Love, and kind Visitation with Death. Be not dismay'd with this Solitude; thou hast Company with thee, whom no Infection can indanger or exclude: There is an invisible Friend, that will be sure to adhere to thee, though thou art avoided by Neighbours; and *will make all thy Bed in thy Sicknes,* and supply thee with those Cordials, which thou in vain expect'st from earthly Visitants.

18. INDEED, justly do we stile this *Sicknes*; for the Mortalnes, and Generality of the Dispersi- on: Yet there is a Remedy, that can cure and confine it: Let but every one inspect the Plague of his own heart, and the Land is healed. Can we, with *David*, see the Angel that smites us, and erect an Altar; and offer *God* the Sacrifices of our Prayers, Penitence and Obedience, we shall hear him say, *It is enough,* 2 Sam. 24. 16. His Mercies are everlasting, and Remedies certain: Be we but Penitent, we cannot be Miserable.

19. WE soon forgot this Visitation; loss of Friends, and God's Judgments, (and thought, with foolish *Agag*, that *Surely the Bitterness of Death is past,* 1 Sam. 15. 32.) and provok'd him still to Wrath against us; we must have after our Contagion, a Purgation by *Fire*; which the best *Naturalists* say, is a proper Remedy against Infection; the *Almighty* seeing it necessary to use this Prescription, prepar'd it into a Medicine: That great Conflagration, which consum'd most part of our City to Ashes: It was dreadful to behold, and made most tremble; yet what signs of Remorse do we shew? What Vanity (I fear I may ask, what Vice) have we subtracted, upon the Sense of God's Anger? What
nicety

nicety in Cloaths or Diet have we cut off, in sympathy with the Nakedness and Hunger of our afflicted Brethren? Nay, do not the unreasonable Jollities among us look as if we triumpht in their Miseries, found Musick in the Discordant Sound of their Groans, and our own Laughter; and emulated that infamous Barbarity of Nero, who play'd while Rome burn'd? 'Tis mention'd by the Prophet, as a most preposs'rous thing, a kind of impious Solecism, to revel under the Menace of Judgments: *Amos 4. 11. I have over-thrown some of you, as God over-threw Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a Fire-brand pluckt out of the Burning: yet have ye not return'd to me, saith the Lord.*

20. FIRE is the *Eagle* in Nature; nothing in the Elementary World mounts so high to its Place, and stoops so low to its Prey: The two Properties God himself ascribes to that Bird, *Job 39. 27, 30.* And if we still refuse obstinately to be gather'd like Chickins under our Lord's Wings, he can again let loose this Bird of Prey, this *Eagle* of Heaven, upon us: and from the East, where it began before, flie it home like Lightning even to the utmost West, to seize and to devour where-ever there is the least Quarry remaining.

21. NEXT, *Gebal*, and *Ammon*, and *Amalek*, and the rest that *Hell*, and *Rome*, and their Partizans, our Enemies on all hands, both Foreign and Domestick, have been so long Confederate against us, saying; *Come, and let us root them out, that they be no more a People*; that the Name of that Reformed Church of *England*, may be no more in remembrance: They have often attempted to bring about their malicious Designs; and yet have not been able to seize us: To what can we justly ascribe all this, but to the gracious Protection of the Almighty, to whom we must fly for Defence and Aid.

22. AND

22. AND now, when restless and unquiet Men, (the true Spawn of him, whose Tail drew the third part of the Stars of Heaven, and cast them to the Earth) would fain by their Hellish Plots and Contrivances, bring us down again from thence, even down to the Ground, and lay our Honor in the Dust: When by their secret Machinations they are at work on all sides to hurry us back into the old Confusions; in hope, that out of that disorder'd Mass, they may at length rear up a new World of their own; but what a World? A World made up of a new Heaven of Superstitions and Idolatries: A new Earth too of Anarchy first and pretended Liberty; but of Tyranny insufferable, at the next Remove.

23. IN such a dangerous State of Affairs as this, whether should we, (nay, whether else can we) seek for Help and Deliverance, but under his Protections; the stretching out of whose Arms of Providence, fills the Breadth of thy Land, O *England!* He can make these Cockatrice Eggs; on which this Generation of Vipers (that eat out the Bowels of their Mother) have sat so long a-brood, windy and addle: So that out of the Serpents Root, shall never proceed an Adder to bite us, or a fiery flying Serpent to Devour us. He can confound these *Babel* Builders, with their City, Tower and Temple; their Foreign Policy, and strange Worship; their Novel Modes, and Models of Government in Church and State, and scatter them abroad from hence upon the Face of the Earth, like as a Dream when one awaketh: So shall he despise their *Images* and their Imaginations too, and make their whole Contrivance consume away like a Snail, and *Become like the untimely Fruit of a Woman, which shall never see the Sun.*

24. **AND** And now let us cry mightily unto God, and say, Remember not, *Lord*, our Offences, nor the Offences of our Fore Fathers, neither take thou Vengeance of our Sins: Spare us good *Lord*, spare thy People, whom thou hast Redeemed with thy most Precious Blood; and be not angry with us for ever. *And good Lord*, deliver us from Lightning and Tempest; from Plague, Pestilence, Famine and Fire; from Battle and Murder, and from sudden Death: From all Sedition and Faction, Privy Conspiracy and Rebellion; from all false Doctrin, Heresie and Schism; from hardness of Heart, and Contempt of the World and Commandment, *Libera nos Domine.*

A Prayer in time of Publick Calamity.

O THOU God of Justice, I humbly beseech thee, in this thy Wrath, to remember Mercy: We confess O *Lord*, our Guilt flasheth in our Faces, and Woe unto us, for we have Sinned: We have not kept the way of the *Lord*, but perfidiously departed from thee our God; the Wise hath trusted in his Wisdom, the Strong in his Strength, and the Rich in his Riches: Thus have we brought our selves under the Curse, by trusting in the Arm of Flesh, and the Ballances of Deceit are in our Hands, and throughout the whole course of our Lives, we have wrought a deceitful Work.

2. **BUT**, O God, bow down thy Ear unto our Prayers; attend unto the voice of our Supplications; create in us new Hearts, O God, and renew right Spirits within us: We have all been Examples of Sin; O make us all Examples of Reformation, that old things may pass away, and all things may become new. Deliver us, O *Lord*, from these Publick Calamities which we so Righteously have deserved, and let not thy Displeasure arise
any

any more against us ; and grant that we may serve thee for the future, in Holiness and Righteousness, all the days of our Lives. Amen.

S E C T. VIII.

Loss of Friends.

1. **T**HOU hast lost thy *Friend* : Thy Sorrow is just ; the Earth hath nothing more precious, than what thou hast parted with : For what is a *Friend*, but a Man's self? A Soul divided in two Bodies, and animated by the same Spirit. It is somewhat worse with thee than a *Palsied Man*, whose half is stricken with Numbness ; he hath lost but the use of one side of his Body, thou the half of thy Soul : Or may I not with assurance say, that a true *Friend* hath two Souls in one Body ; his Own and his *Friend's* ; It was so with *Jonathan* and *David* ; *The Soul of Jonathan was knit with the Soul of David ; and Jonathan lov'd him as his own Soul,* 1 Sam. 18. 1.

2. **S**TILL the more Goodness, the stronger Union ; Nature can never so fast Cement Souls as Grace : For here the Union is wrought by a better Spirit than our own ; even that blessed Spirit who stiles himself *Love*, 1 Joh. 4. 18. The greater thine Affection, the heavier thy Loss : But let me tell thee, I fear thou art accessory to thine own Affliction : Didst thou expect this Loss ? Did thy Heart say, What if we should part ? Didst thou not over-enjoy this Blessing ? If so, these are no small Disadvantages.

3. **A**S every Evil, so this especially is aggravated by our *Unexpectedation* : Neither hadst thou
been

been so oppressed with Sorrow: if thou hadst foreseen it: It is our weak inconsideration if we welcome these Earthly Comforts not as Guests, but Inmates, some are importunately Hospitable, to entertain their Friends, that they have no power to let 'em Depart: Whereas, we ought according to the Advice of *Seneca*, to possess 'em, as those that make account to fore-go 'em, and fore-go 'em as if we possess 'em. And the Apostle *St. Paul* gives us this Advice, to *Use this World as if we us'd it not; for the fashion of this world passeth away*, 1 Cor. 7. 30, 31.

4. THOU art griev'd for the loss of a Dear *Friend*: Take heed, lest thy Love had too much of Humanity, and too little of the Deity. All Blessings as they flow from the Father of Mercies, should be enjoy'd in him: But if we enjoy 'em as in themselves, our Love degenerates into Carnal. It is a sure Rule, that Love depends upon the thing affected; but when that ceaseth, Love is Extinguish'd: As he that loves a Face for Beauty, when Deformity appears, it cools his Affection: He that respects a Man for Bounty, disregards him when he is Impoverish'd.

5. DIDST thou value thy *Friend* for Wit, Complaisance and kind Offices? All these are lost, and thy Love with them: But if thou didst affect him for Eminency in Goodness, for the sake of *God* that dwelt in him, thy Love cannot be lost; because thou enjoy'st *God*, in whom thou loved'st him. Comfort thy self therefore in *God*, in whom he was thine, and yielded him cheerfully into those Hands, from whom thou receiv'st him.

6. THOU hast lost a true *Friend*: That Jewel was to be priz'd for the rarity of it. The World affords Friends enough, such as they are: Friends of the Purple, as *Tertullian* calls them; Friends of the Basket, as the Poet nominates them; such as

love thy Loaves and Fishes, and thee for them. *Wealth makes many Friends*, saith the Wise Man, *Prov. 14. 20.* and *Chap. 19. 4.* But where is the Man, that loves thee for thy self, for being Vertuous, divested of all By-respects? Whil'st there is Honey in thy Pot, the Wasps and Flies will be buzzing about it; but the Honey being gone, the Vessel remains quiet.

7. **WAS** he so much thine, as not to leave thee in Adversity? Did he honour thee, when the World despised thee? Did he follow with Applause, whil'st thou wert hooted at by the Multitude? Would he have own'd thee, if he had found thee stripped and wounded in the Wilderness? Such a *Friend* is worthy of thy Tears: But take heed, thy Love prove not envious. If God hath thought him fitter for Society of Saints and Angels, dost thou repine at his happiness? Thou hast lost his Presence; he is advanc'd to the Beatifical Presence of the *King of Glory*: Now Whether is thy Loss, or his Gain the greater.

8. **THOU** hast lost thy *Friend*: Say rather, Thou hast parted with him. That is properly lost, which is past Recovery, and past hopes to see any more: It is not so with this *Friend* thou mourn'st for: He is but gone Home before thee; and thou art following him: You will both meet in your Father's House, and enjoy each other more happily, than you could have done here below. How just is that Charge of the Blessed Apostle; *That we should not mourn as Men without Hope, for those that do but sleep in Jesus*, 1 *Theff. 4. 13, 14.* Did we think their Souls vanish into Air, (as that Heathen Poet prophanely expresth it) and their Bodies resolv'd into Dust, without all Possibility of Reparation, we might weep out our Eyes for the utter Extinction of those we lov'd: But if *They do but sleep, they shall do well*

well, John 11. 12. Why are we Impatient for their Reposal in the Bed of Earth, when assured of their waking to Glory?

9. THOU hast lost a Dear *Wife*, *the Wife of thy Youth*, *the desire of thine Eyes*, Prov. 5. 18. Isa. 54. 6. Ezek. 24. 16. Did you not take each other upon Terms of Re-delivery, when call'd for? Were you not, in Uniting, put in mind of Dissolution? *Till Death us do part*. Was she Vertuous? Knowest thou not, there was a Pre-Contract betwixt *Christ* and her Soul, ere thou could'st Claim her Body? And canst thou grudge his Challenge of his own? Wilt thou not allow him to call for a Consummation of that happy Match? Did'st thou so affect her, that thou would'st not have her Soul Glorious? If thou loved'st her not as a Man, but a Christian, envy her not that better Husband, who for her Dowry, gives Immortality.

10. THY *Son* is dead: What marvel is it, that a Mortal *Father* hath begot a Mortal *Son*? Marvel rather, that thou hast liv'd to enjoy, and lose a *Son*. We lie open to so many Casualties, that our Subsistence is almost Miraculous. Thou hast lost a piece of thy self: For what are Children, but Colonies deduced from our Flesh; yea, rather, our selves in other Models. This loss cannot but go near thee: But what was the Disposition of the *Son* thou mournest for? If graceless and debauch'd, as thy Shame, so thy sorrow should die with him. Place the hopes thou might'st have had of his Reclaiming, against the Fears of his increasing in Wickedness, and thou could'st have made no other Account, but of Dishonour and Discomfort.

11. IF it be sad, that he is taken away in his Wildness; it had been more heavy, had he added to the heap of Sin, to augment his Torments. If he were Gracious, he hath a better Father than thy

self, whose Interest was more in him, than thine: And if that Heavenly Father have thought good to prefer him to a Crown of Immortal Glory, why should'st thou be afflicted with his Advancement? Why should'st thou not rather rejoyce, that thy Loyns have assisted to furnish Heav'n with a Saint? Were it put to thy Choice, that thy Son might be call'd from his Blessed Rest, and return to his Earthly Relations; Could'st thou be so injurious, as to wish the Misery of so disadvantageous a Change to to that Soul; which, as it was never of thy Production, so it were pity it should be at thy disposing? Rather labour to have thine own Soul so disposed, that it may be ready to follow him into those Blessed Mansions, and that it may love and long for Heaven so much more to dwell among the Spirits of the Just made perfect.

A Prayer against Immoderate Grief for the Loss of Friends

O GOD, the God of the Spirits of all Flesh, thou killest and makest alive, thou bringest to the Grave, and bringest back again: And forasmuch as it hath pleased thee to take from us out of this Sinful World the Soul of this thy Servant,* grant that our grief for this affliction may not be immoderate whereby we may displease thee, or so overwhelm us, that we make our selves unfit for thy service; but sanctifie, we beseech thee, unto us this thy Fatherly Correction, that we may endeavour to live every day, as if it were to be our last, that when we are Summoned and Arrested by the hand of Death, We may not be afrighted, by that King of Terrors.

2. LORD, we are here in a state of banishment, and absent from thee, O take us where we shall for ever behold

hold thy Face, and follow the Lamb whether soever he goeth; and that at the last hour we may pronounce with a good Conscience, we have fought a good fight, we have finished our Course, we have kept the Faith, hereafter there is laid up for us a Crown of Righteousness, which God the Righteous Judge will freely give to those that Love and Fear him, and trust in his Mercy, Amen.

S E C T. IX.

Of Poverty.

1. **T**HOU art driv'n to Indigency, and which is worse, out of abundance: Those Evils we have been inur'd to from our Cradle, are grown so familiar, that we are little moved with their Presence: But those into which we fall suddenly, out of an external Felicity of Estate, overwhelm us. Let thy Care be, not to want those Riches, which shall make thy Soul happy; and thou shalt not be troubled with the loss of these mean and perishing Trifles. Had these been true Riches, they could not have been lost: For that Good that is least capable of Loss, and unsatisfying in an imperfect Fruition, so in the losing it turns Evil.

2. **D**I D'S T thou not know, *That Riches have Wings to fly away?* Prov. 23. 5. And of what use is Wings, if not to fly? If any Man's Violence shall clip those Wings, they take their flight. Set thy heart upon that Supreme Wealth, which cannot be taken from thee, which shall never leave thee, nor forsake thee; then thou mayst easily slight these poor Losses. As these were not Goods, so they were not thine: Here thou foundest them, and here

I
 eav'st them: For the Apostle *Timothy* informs us, 1 Tim. 6,7. *We brought nothing into this World; and it is certain, we can carry nothing out.* What had'st thou but their use? Neither can they be otherwise thine Heirs, whom thou leavest behind thee. I am ashamed, to hear the *Philosopher* say, All I possess I carry about me; when many Christians hug those things which are so Transitory.

3. IT was an unanswerable Question, *God* moved to the Rich Man in the Parable, upon parting with his Soul: *Then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?* Luke 12.20. Perhaps a Strangers, or (as in the Case of undisposed Lands) the Occupants, false Executors, or an Enemies. Call that thine own thou art sure to carry with thee; that may accompany thy Soul, or follow it: Such as thy Holy Graces, Charitable Works, Vertuous Actions, and Heavenly Dispositions: These are Treasures, which thou shalt *Lay up for thy self in Heaven, where neither Moth nor Rust doth Corrupt; and where Thieves do not break through, nor steal,* Mat. 6.20.

4. THOU hast lost thy Goods: May I not rather say, Thou hast restor'd 'em? He parted with more, that said; *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken,* Job 1. 21. Whether by Patrimony, or Providence, or Industry, the *Lord* gave it; and whether by the *Chaldeans* or *Sabeans*, the *Lord* hath taken it; and he did but give, and takes his own. What Reason hast thou then to complain? It was not giv'n, but lent thee for a while, till it were call'd for? And do'st thou grudge to restore what thou borrowest? Nay, (that thou may'st have less Claim to this Talent) was it not left in thy hand, by the Owner, to employ it for his Use, till he should redemand it, with the Increase? Thou wert only entrusted to improve, and account for it. If others have taken off thy Charge, by thy impoverishment, they have eated thee.

5. **THY** Wealth is gone: But if thou hast Necessaries left? Be thankful for what thou hast, and forget what thou didst possess. Hadst thou had plenty, thou couldst have used no more than Nature calls for; the rest could have but lain by thee, for readiness of Employment: Do but forbear the Thought of Superfluities, and what art thou the worse? Perhaps thy Fate is courser, Dishes fewer, Utensils meaner, Apparel homelier, and thy Train shorter; But how is thy Mind affected? Contentment consists not in Quantities, nor Qualities, but in the inward Disposition of the Heart; that multiplies Numbers, and raises Prizes; turns course Freezes into rich Velvets, Pulse into Delicates, and makes one Attendant many Officers.

6. **W I S E** *Seneca* tells thee, the true Mould of Wealth is our Body, as the Last is of the Shoe; if the Shoe be too big for the Foot, it is troublesome and useless: It is Fitness, that is regarded here, not Magnitude: And this is the Charge of the Blessed Apostle; *Having Food and Rayment, let us there with be content,* 1 Tim. 6. 8. And if we have no more, we shall be but as we were, and as we shall be: *For we brought nothing into the World, neither shall we carry any thing out,* 1 Tim. 6. 7.

7. **THOU** hast parted with thy Wealth; perhaps for thine Advantage: How many have been swell'd with Plenty, resembling the *Ostrich* or *Bustard* with the Bulk of Body, unweldly to raise their Thoughts to Spiritual Things; who when their Weight have been taken off, have mounted nimbly towards Heaven? How many had lost their Lives, if (with the Philosopher) they had not parted with their Gold? and, how many through Covetousness, may loss their Souls? The Vessel had sunk in this boist'rous Sea, if the Earthly Freight had not been cast over-board? and why art thou troubled

to lose that, which might have undone thee in keeping?

8. **THOU** had'st Wealth: Hast thou not parted with that, for which many hath been worse both in Body and Soul; and for which never any Soul was better? Have not Corn-fields been spoil'd with Rankness, and a Branch spilt with too much Fruit? Whereas had they been thinner sown, or seasonably eaten down, had yielded a fair Crop; and those Boughs moderately laden, had out-liv'd many *Autumns*. Do'st thou not hear thy *Saviour* say, *How hardly shall they that have Riches enter into the Kingdom of God?* Mat. 10. 23. Art thou troubled that a Stumbling block is remov'd out of thy way to Happiness? That the Bunch of the *Camel* is taken off, if yet thou wilt pass through the Eye of the Needle?

9. **THOU** had'st Riches? But had'st thou not Cares attended 'em? Else thou hast fared better than thy Neighbours. None but thy self could handle these Roses without pricking their Fingers. He was famous amongst the *Jewish* Doctors, whose Maxim was; *He that multiplies Riches, multiplies Cares*: And our *Saviour* hath annexed, *The Cares of the World, and the Deceitfulness of Riches*, Mark 4. 19. He was envied at *Rome*, which could experimentally say, The poor Man laughs oftner and freer than the Rich; and that external Felicity is a perplexity, never ceasing to vex it self. Thy sides are now freed from Thorns, why do'st thou repine at thine Ease?

10. **THOU** lately possess'd'st great Riches: But rather say, Thou wert possess'd by them? A wise *Roman* truly observed, That many a one hath Wealth, which clogs him, as many aptly say, Such a one has an Ague, when indeed the Ague hath him, and holds him with severity. Indeed; many a Man's Wealth is his Master, and keeps under rigid Articles, not allowing sufficient Diet, Competent Rest,

nor

nor any Recreation : If thou wert thus a Slave to thine Estate, thou art not thine own Man ; enjoy thy Liberty, and with thy *Patience*, be thankful.

THOU art very poor : Who made thee so ? If thy Negligence, Laziness, Improvidence, Prodigality and rash Engagements ; thou hast reason to bear that Burthen, which thou hast pull'd upon thy Shoulders : And if forc'd to groan under thy Load, which thy own Will hath procured in this Necessity ; let the same Necessity move thy Will to run as lightly as thou canst with that pressing Weight : If the Occasion comes by others, *God* will enable thee cheerfully to flie with this Cross, because thy Hand was not Guilty of imposing it.

12. HOW easie is it for thee to see *God's* Hand chastising thee by another Man's Sin ? And to be griev'd at the Sin of others Injuriousness, than at thine own Correction. How dismal it is for Christians to see Brethren a Prey to each other ? That Neighbours should be like the *Reed* and *Brake*, set near together, the one to Starve the other ? That we should have daily occasion to renew that woful Comparison of *Bromiard*, betwixt the Friends and Enemies of *Christ* ; That *Jews* don't suffer Beggars, but *Christians* make them ?

13. NOW, if *God* thinks fit to send Poverty to thy Door, by the Message of Men, bid it Welcom for his sake that sent it, and entertain it, not repiningly, for its own sake ; for if well us'd, 'twill repay thee with many Blessings ; as quiet Rest, safe Security, humble Patience, contented Humility, and a contemptuous Valuation of Earthly Things ! All which absented thy House in a Prosperous Condition.

14. THOU art depriv'd of thy former Conveniencies, as Diet, Lodging, and Attendance. How many have affected that which is befallen

fallen thee upon Necessity? Some out of the Grounds of *Philosophy*, others of *Religion*. *Attalus* the Philosopher, might have lain Soft; yet he Praises the Bed and Pillow that will not yield to his Body: And *Nero's* great and rich Master, brags of his usual dining without a Table. What should I tell then of the *Pharisees* uneasie Couches and penial Garments; the Mats of the Elect *Manichees*, and the austere Usages of the antient *Eremitical* Christians, their rigorous Abstinenes, affamishing Meals, nightly Watchings, cold Ground-lyings, and sharp Disciplines? Thou art in Ease and Splendor, in comparison of these, who voluntarily impos'd upon 'em these Severities, which thou wouldst be loath to undergo from others Cruelty. It was a strange word of *Epicurus*, not favouring of Contentment, but Presumption; Give me but Water with Barley-Meal, and I shall vie with Jupiter for Happiness. And if this *Ethnick*, who had an ill Name for Affectation of Pleasure, could rest so well contented with a poor Mess of this Composition, what a shame it is for Christians not to think themselves satisfied with a larger (tho homely Provision)?

A Prayer in time of Poverty.

O MOST Great and Glorious Lord God, the Earth is thine, and thy Providence divideth it among the Sons of Men; thou makest Poor, and thou makest Rich; thou bringest low, and liftest up the Needy out of the Dust, that he may Glorifie thee: Thou art the Saviour and Deliverer of the Fatherless, and him that hath no helper: Lord, behold my Necessities, who despisest not the Needy; tho thou hast Afflicted me, yet Strengthen me so, that my Wants may never cast me down to despair of thy Favour, nor endeavour their supply by any thing

thing which offendeth thee ; and whatever I want, let me never want the comfortable assurance of thy Love and Mercy, neither take thy holy Spirit from me.

2. *BE my Strength in Distress, a Refuge from the Storm, and a Shadow from the Heat. O thou who art the God of all Consolation, supply I beseech thee, my Necessities, hear me, and make speed to relieve me ; forsake me not, O my God ; open the high Places, and the Fountains in the midst of the Valleys for the Thirsty Soul : Let thy hand relieve me, until thou shalt be pleased to bring me into thy blessed Presence, where is fulness of Joy, without want, measure, or end: Lord, sanctifie those Wants unto me, make me rich in Faith, and those Spiritual Treasures, which once had, shall never be lost again. Grant me these things O merciful God, and whatever else thou knowest necessary for me, for the sake of thy dear Son, my ever Blessed Lord and Saviour. Amen.*

S E C T. X.

Of Confinement:

1. **T**HOU art restrain'd of thy Liberty : I cannot blame thee to be sensible of the Affliction. Liberty uses to hold competition with Life it self : And how many have lost their Lives to purchase Liberty ? But take care that thou art not guilty of thine own Complaint, for certainly thou canst not be depriv'd of Liberty, except thou wilt : Liberty is a priviledge of the Will : Will is a Sovereign Power, not subject to Restraint, or Constraint.

2. HAST

2. **HAST** thou freedom to thine own Thoughts? It is not the Inclosing of these external Parts that can make thee a Prisoner: Thou art not worthy the name of a Man, if thou imagin'st this Body thy self, which Human Power can reach to. Art thou a Christian? Then thou hast learn'd to submit thy Will to *God's*; and his Divine Will is declared in his Actions: And if his will be to have thee Restrain'd, why should it not be thine? And if thou desire to be Confin'd, why dost thou complain for want of Liberty?

3. **THOU** art Restrain'd: And is it such Injustice thou art depriv'd from ranging Abroad? How ill hast thou improv'd thy Time, if thou hast not laid up enough both of Employment and Contentment in thy Bosom? What pleasure can'st thou enjoy abroad to behold those Contentions and horrid Actions thine Eye shall meet withal; which thy Confinement frees thee from being a Spectator. The Thought is enough to make a Man Miserable: And instead of them, thou art presented only with the Face of thy Keeper, which Custom and Necessity hath made Familiar.

4. **THOU** art immur'd within Stone-Walls, and all Company secluded from thee; but content thy self: *God* and his Angels cannot be kept out: Thou hast better Company in Solitude, than Liberty afforded thee: The Jollity of Freedom rob'd thee of the Conversation of Spiritual Comforts, which only can render thee Happy: They which were Strangers to thee, are thy Guests and Inmates, to Sojourn with thee in this Retiredness. What if the Light be excluded from thee? It cannot hinder thee from seeing the Invisible. *The Darkness hideth not from thee* (saith the Psalmist) *but the Night shineth as the Day; the Darkness and the Light are both alike to thee*, Psal. 139. 12.

5. I may say without dubiouness, God hath never been so evidently seen, as in darkest Dungeons; for the external Light of Prosperity directs our Visive Beams, which are strongly contracted in a deep Obscurity: He must descend low and be in Darkness, that would see the glorious Lights of Heaven by day. They ever shine, but not seen except in the Night: If thine Eyes be blessed with this invisible Prospect, thou art exempt from envying those Persons, tho they could see all that the Tempter represented to the view of our Saviour upon the highest Mountain; *All the Kingdoms of the World and the Glory of them.*

6. THOU art forced to Retiredness, but with what Disposition of Mind and Body? If thou hadst a burden'd Soul, the open and free Air could not refresh thee; and if thou have a sincere Heart, a strict Closeness cannot dismay thee; thy Thoughts can keep thee Company, and cheer thy Solitari-ness. If thou hadst an unsound Body, afflicted with the Gout, Rupture, or Luxation of some Limb, thou wouldst not complain of thy Retiredness; thy Pain would make thee insensible of thy Confinement: But if God have blessed thee with Health, how easily may'st thou digest an harmless Limitation.

7. A Wise Man (as *Laurentius* observ'd) doth much in Solitude: So may'st thou employ the Hours of thy close Retiredness, and bless God for so happy an Opportunity. How memorable an Instance hath our Age afforded us, of an Eminent Person, to whose Learning we are all oblig'd for that noble *History of the* Sir *Walter*
World. The Court had his Youthful *Rawleigh.*
Years, and the Tower his latter Age:
The Tower Reform'd the Court in him, and produc'd these worthy Monuments of Art and Industry,

stry, which we should in vain expected from his Freedom and Jollitry. It is observ'd, that shining Wood, within doors loseth its Light: It is otherwise with this, and many active Wits, which had never shin'd if not for Confinement.

8. **THOU** art close shut up: *Anchorets* have sued for this as a Favour, which thou esteemest a Punishment; and having obtain'd it, have plac'd Merit in that thou apprehend'st Misery. Our *History* relates of one, who when the Church, Where his Cell was annex'd, was on Fire, would not come out, but Die, and lye Buried under the Ashes of that Roof where his Vow had fix'd him.

9. **THOU** art Imprison'd: Wise Men are apt in all Events, to enquire into the Causes: Wherefore dost thou suffer? Is it for thy Guiltiness? Make thy Goal God's Correction-House, for the reforming of thy Wickedness. Remember and imitate *Manasses*, the evil Son of a good Father; who upon Humiliation by his just Imprisonment, found an happy Expiation of his horrible Idolatries, Murders and Witchcrafts; whose Bonds brought him home to God, and himself. Is it for Debt? Think not to pay thy Creditors with a lingring Durance, if power be in thine hands for a Discharge. If there is Fraud and Injustice in this Confinement: Fear thou a worse Prison, if thou wilt wilfully live and die Indebted when thou mayst be Free and Honest.

10. **STRETCH** thine ability to the utmost, to satisfie others, thò thou art Impoverish'd: But if the hand of God have disabled thee, labour what thou canst to agree with thy Creditors: If they are Cruel, look up with *Patience* to the Almighty, who thinks fit to afflict thee with their Unreasonableness; and make the same good use of thy Sufferings, as if from the immediate Hand of thy Creator.

tor. If it be for a good Cause, rejoyce in this Tribulation, and be exhilarated with the Blessed Apostles, that thou art *Counted worthy to suffer shame and bonds for the Name of the Lord Jesus*, Acts 5. 41. For every just Cause he owns: Neither is he less a Martyr, that suffers for his Conscience in any of God's Commandments, than he who suffers for matter of Faith and Religion.

11. REMEMBER that Cordial Word of thy Saviour: *Blessed are they that are persecuted for Righteousness sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven*, Mat. 5. 10. In such a Prison thou shalt be sure to find good Company; as *Joseph, Micaiab, Jeremiab, John Baptist, Peter, Paul and Silas*; and all the Holy Martyrs and Confessors of *Christ*, from the first Plantation of the Gospel to this present. Repent, if thou canst, to be thus accompanied; and choose not rather to violate a good Conscience for freedom, than to be kept under a Momentary Restraint.

12. THOU art a Prisoner: Make the best of thy Condition: close Air is warmer than open; and how frequently do we hear *Birds* sing sweeter Notes in Cages than in Woods? It is thy defect, if thou art not amended by thy Retir'dness. Thou art a Prisoner: So is thy Soul in thy Body; there not restrain'd only, but fetter'd; yet complains not of the straitness of these Clay-Walls, or weight of these Bonds; but *patiently* waits for a happy Goal-delivery: So do thou attend with all Long-suffering the good hour of the Pleasure of God: Thy period is set, not without regard to thy Advantage: He, in whose hand are all Times, hath determined a fit time to free thy Body from these Prison-Walls, and thy Soul from this Prison of thy Body: and to restore Body and Soul *from the Bondage of Corruption, to the Glorious Liberty of the Sons of God*, Rom. 8. 21.

A Prayer in Confinement:

O Holy, Lord God, who wouldest not the death of a Sinner, but rather that he should turn from his Wickedness and live: Lord, Convert my Soul, remove my Sins, and frame my Heart, Affections and Life, according to thy blessed Will: Thou who hearest the Poor, and despisest not the Wretched Captive, visit all that are bound: Lord, hear them in an acceptable time, and help them in the day of Salvation: Preserve the Oppressed and Despised of Men: Say unto the Prisoners, go forth, and to them that are in Darkness shew your Selves: Bind up the Broken Hearted, proclaim Liberty to the Captives, and open the Prison to them that are shut up: Comfort them that Mourn, let their deep Sighing come before thee: And according to the greatness of thy Power, preserve thou them that are appointed to dye.

2. LORD, lift thou up my head, enlarge my feet, and bring me out of all bondage, that I may live to serve and praise thee, in the Assembly of thy Servants: However thou pleasest to dispose of me, Let all my Sufferings redound to thy Glory, and my own Salvation: Give me Patience to endure, and a constancy to depend on thee, a firm Faith to apprehend thy Promises, and a hope to expect thy Saving Health: Consider my Weakness, and lay no more upon me, then thou wilt Enable me to bear cheerfully: Sanctifie my Afflictions, and make them good to me in the Fruits of Righteousness, which thou hast laid up for all those who rest on thee. Hear me, O Lord, and let my Cry come unto thee, and have Mercy upon me. Amen.

S E C T. XI.

In Exile.

1. **T**HOU art banish't thy Country: Beware lest in Complaining, thou censure thy self. A wise Man's Country is every where. What relation hath the Place of thy Nativity, to thy present Station; any more than the Time of thy Residing? What Reason hast thou to be more affected to the *Region* where thou drewest thy first Breath, than to the day of Week, or the Hour of the Day in which thou salutest the Light? What are Times and Places of our Birth, but unconcerning Circumstances? Where-ever thou enjoy'st thy self, thou mayst make that thy Country.

2. **B**UT thou say'st; There is a secret Property in our Native Soyl, that attracts our Affection, and weds our Hearts to it, not without a pleasing kind of Delight; now no Reason can be granted, why we affect the Place, it is not because better than others, but being our own we esteem it: *Ulysses* doth no less value the Rocky Soyl of his barren *Ithaca*, than *Agamemnon* the noble Walls of his rich and pleasant *Mycenæ*. I grant this Relation hath so powerful an Influence upon our hearts naturally, as is pretended; yet such a one as is easily check'd with a small unkindness: How many upon an actual Affront have diverted their Respects from their Native Country, and out of a strong Alienation of Mind have turn'd their Love into Hostility.

3. **W**E shall not seek far for Histories, our Times and Memories will furnish us sufficiently: Some who have suck'd the Breasts of our common Mother, upon a little dislike, have spit in her Face? Others of our Domestick Compatriots, have upon the disgust of some displeasing Laws fled their Country, suborn'd Treasons, and incited Forreign Princes to our Invasion? That have endeavour'd to subvert

the Government, extirpate that Religion Establish't amongst us; and to set up a piece of Pageantry of their own? So this Natural Affection is not so ardent in many, but may be quench'd with a mean Discontentment. If there were no other ground of thine Affliction, thy Sorrow is not so deep-rooted; but it may easily be pluck'd up.

4. PERHAPS it is not the Air or Earth, thou insists upon; but the Company, from whom it is Death to part: Thou arguest, I shall leave all Acquaintance and Conversation; and be cast upon strange Faces, and Languages I understand not: My best Entertainment will be Solitude, and my Ordinary, Inhospitallity. What do'st thou perplex thy self with these superfluous Terrors? He is not worthy the Name of a *Philosopher*, much less of a Christian, that hath not attain'd to be absolute in himself; and which way soever he is cast, to stand upon his own Bottom; that if there were no other Men left in the World, was ignorant how to enjoy himself: It is that within us, whereby we must live and be happy: Some Additions of Complacency may come from without: Sociable Natures find Pleasure in Conversation; but if that be deny'd, Sanctify'd Spirits know how to converse comfortably with *God* and themselves.

5. HOW many holy Ones of old have purposely withdrawn themselves from Worldly Company, that they might be blessed with an invisible Society; that have exchanged Cities for Deserts, Houses for Caves, the Sight of Men for Beasts; that their Spiritual Eyes might be fixed upon those Objects, which the World held from them? And necessity puts thee into that Estate, which their Piety affected. But to be driven to forsake Parents, Kinsfolk, Friends, how sad a Case must it needs be? What is this, but a perfect Distraction? What are we,
but

but Off-springs of our Parents? What are Friends, but dear to us? And what is the World without these Comforts?

6. WHEN thou hast said all; what is befall thee more, than it pleased God to enjoyn the Father of the Faithful? *Get thee out of thy Country, and from thy Kindred, and from thy Fathers House, into a Land that I will shew thee, Gen. 12. 1.* The same God, by the Command of Authority, calls thee to this Separation: If thou wilt shew thy self worthy the Son of such a Father, do that in an humble Obedience to God, which thou art urg'd to do by Compulsion of Men.

7. BUT is this so vexatious a Case? Dost thou think to find God where thou goest? Or dost thou believe his Company will attend thee to the End of thy Journey? Hath he not said, who cannot fail; *I will not leave thee, nor forsake thee?* Certainly, he is not worthy to lay Claim to God, that cannot find Parents, Kindred and Friends in him alone: Besides, he that of *Stones could raise up Children unto Abraham*; how easily can he of Inhospitable Men, raise up Friends to the Sons of *Abraham*? Only labour to inherit that Faith wherein he walked; that alone shall free *Denizen* thee in the best of Foreign States, and shall entertain thee in the wildest Desarts.

8. THOU art cast upon a Foreign Nation: Be of good Cheer: *Flowers* remov'd grow greater; and some *Plants*, which were unthriving and unwholsom in their own Soil, have grown safe and flourishing in other Climates. Had *Joseph* been great, if not transplanted into *Egypt*? Had *Daniel*, and his three Companions of the Captivity ever attained honour in their Native Land? Many have found that health, in a Change of Air, which they could not meet at home? In *Africa*, the South-Wind clears up; and the North is Rainy. Look still to

that hand, which translated thee; wait his good Pleasure: Be thou no Stranger to *God*; it matters not who are Strangers to thee.

9. **THOU** art banish't: How canst thou be so, when upon thy Fathers Ground? *The Earth is the Lords, and the fulness thereof; the World, and they that dwell therein*, Psal. 24. 1 In his Right, where-ever thou art, thou may'st challenge a Spiritual Interest: *All things, saith the Apostle, are yours; and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's*, 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22, 23. No Man can challenge thee for a Stranger, that is not thy Father's Child.

9. **THINE** Exile separates thee from Friends: This were no small Affliction, if it might not be remedied. That was a true Word of *Laurentius*, That where Two Faithful Friends are met, *God* makes up a Third: But is it no less true, that where one Faithful Spirit is, *God* makes up a Second: One *God* can more than supply a thousand Friends.

11. **THY** Banishment deprives thee of the Comfort of thy Companions: Would not a voluntary Travel do as much? Do not thousands, willingly for many Years, change their Country for Foreign Regions; taking long Farewels of their dearest Friends and Acquaintance; some out of Curiosity, and a thirst after knowledge, and some out of a covetous desire after a Gain? What Difference is there betwixt thee and them, but that their Travel is voluntary, thy Exile constrain'd? But who are there thou art so sorry to part with? Remember what *Crates* the Philosopher said to a Young Man, that was beset with Parasitical Friends: Young Man, said he, I pity thy Solitude: Perhaps, thou may'st be more alone in such Society, than in the Wilderness: Such Conversation is better lost, than continued. If thou canst but be well acquainted with thy self, thou shalt be sorry thou wert no sooner solitary.

12. THOU art from thy Country : Who is not so? We are all *Pilgrims* together with thee, 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. *Heb.* 11. 13. *Whilst we are at home in the Body, we are absent from the Lord,* 2 *Cor.* 5. 6. Miserable are we, if our true home be not Above : That is the *Better Country* which we seek, even an *Heavenly,* *Heb.* 11. 16. And thither thou mayst equally direct thy Course in whatsoever *Region.* This Center of Earth is equidistant from the Glorious Circumference of Heaven : If we may once meet there, what need we make such Difference in the way?

A Prayer in Exile.

O LORD GOD, Lord of the Mountains and Valleys, Land and Sea, and the God of the Exiled, and Out-cast ; thou dost with much Patience behold Oppression and Wrong, until the measures of Iniquity be filled up : O Lord, behold the pressures of me thy poor, despised, and dejected Servant : Thy Mercy and Gracious Audience of the Afflicted is neither limited to Jerusalem, nor this Mountain, every place is equally near Heaven, and where ever Men lift up pure Hands and Hearts, Worshipping of thee in Spirit and Truth, thou art there present to hear, and help them : Lord, thou see'st good to permit me to the power of Men to Exercise me, yet can they not shut thy Merciful Ear against me : O let my Complaint therefore come before thee : Let thy word be as the Cloudy-Pillar to lead me in thy Way, and let thy good Spirit direct me.

2. LORD, leave me not destitute and comfortless in my Afflictions : Be my Guide and Help in this Earthly Pilgrimage, and Valley of Tears, *unto,* and in the Hour which thou hast appointed to take me hence, into the incorruptible, and undefiled Inheritance, which thou by thy Power hast reserved in Heaven for all Believers : There no hand of the Oppressor can reach, and where shall be no Curse, no Sin, nor fear of Forfeiture : Into which no

Enemy shall be admitted, and from which no Inhabitant shall ever be cast out: Lord Hear and Help me: Lord have Mercy on me, and grant me that which I ask according to thy will, and that which I should ask, which thou knowest best for me, through the Infinite Merits of of the Son of thy Love; the Author and Finisher of our Salvation, Christ the Righteous. Amen.

S E C T. XII.

Of Blindness and Deafness.

I. **T**HOU hast lost thine Eyes; a Loss which all the World is incapable to repair; and thou art condemn'd to perpetual Darknes: *For, the Light of the Body is the Eye; and if the Light that is in thee be Darknes, how great is that Darknes?* Mat. 6. 22, 23. Couldst thou have foreseen this Evil, thou hadst anticipated this Loss, by weeping out those Eyes for Grief, which now thou art destitute of, There are but two Senses, by which any external Comfort can have free access to thy Soul; *Seeing and Hearing.* One of 'em is now extinguish't for ever: Yet thou hast two internal Eyes, that can supply the want of thy external; the Eye of Reason and the Eye of Faith: The One as a Man, the Other as a Christian. Answerable to which there is a double Light apprehended by 'em; Rational and Divine.

2. SOLOMON tells thee of the one; *Prov. 20. 23. The Spirit of a Man is the Candle of the Lord, searching all the Inward Parts of the Belly.* St. John tells thee of the other; *1 John 1. 5, 7. God is Light, and in Him is no Darknes; and we walk in the Light, as he is in the Light.* Now the two Lights so far exceed that

that external and visible, of which thou art depriv'd, as Light Darknes: If then by the Eye of Reason thou attainst to intelligible Things; and by the Eye of Faith, to things Supernatural and Divine; the Improvement of these Eyes, will make amends for the want of thy Natural ones.

3. **THY** Sight is lost: Let me tell thee what *Antony the Hermite* (whom *Ruffinus* is not dubious of stilling Blessed) said to Learned *Didymus of Alexandria*, that was Blind; *Let it not trouble thee, O Didymus, that thou art bereft of thy Carnal Eyes; for thou lackest only those Eyes, which Mice and Flies, and Lizards have: But rejoice that thou hast those Eyes, which the Angels have, whereby they see God, and by which thou art enlightned with a great measure of Knowledge.* Endeavour to perfect this, and thou shalt not be much discomforted with the absence of them.

4. **THINE** Eyes are lost, and the chief Comfort of thy Life gone with them: *The Light is sweet, saith Solomon; and a pleasant thing it is for the Eyes to behold the Sun,* Eccles. 11. 7. Hath not God done this purposely, that he might take thee off from all Earthly Objects, that thou might'st fix thy self upon him, and seek those Spiritual Comforts which are to be found in a better Light? The Sun is the most glorious Planet the Eyes can possibly see; but thy Spiritual ones may behold him that Created that glorious Luminary, who is infinitely more glorious than what he Created. If thou hast now an Inspection into him more than thou hadst, that which thou countedst thy Loss, hath prov'd thy Gain.

5. **THOU** art Blind? and certainly it is a sore Affliction. The Men of *Jabesh Gilead* offered the Tyrant of the *Ammonites* to serve him, 1 Sam. 11. 1. But when he required the loss of their

Eyes, as a Condition of Peace, they will rather hazard their Lives in an unequal War ; as if Servitude and Death were a less Mischief than one Eye's loss: How much more of Both? For tho one Eye be but *Testis Singularis*, yet the evidence of that is as true as of both, and in some Causes more : For when ye take a perfect Aim, we shut one Eye, as being conducive to an accurate Perspective : Yet for ordinary use, we value equally these Lights, that there is no wise Man, but would rather lose a Limb, than one of them.

6. A Person not less Religious than Witty, when his Friends bewail'd the loss of one of his Eyes, ask'd them, whether they wept for the Eye which he had lost, or the Eye which remain'd? Weep rather said he, for the Enemy that stays behind, than for the Enemy that's gone. He look'd upon his Sight with Eyes different from others ; he look'd upon 'em as Enemies, which others beheld as Officious Servants, good Friends, and dear Favourites.

7. INDEED, they are all of these, as they are us'd : Good Servants, if they go faithfully on their Errands, and return true Intelligence : Good Friends, if they advise and invite us to Holy Thoughts : But Enemies, if they suggest Evil. If thine Eyes have been employ'd in evil Offices to thy Soul ; God hath done that for thee which he hath in a Figurative Sense, enjoyn'd thee to do thy self : *Matt. 5. 29. If thy Right Eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee : For it is better for thee that one of thy Members should Perish, and not that thy whole Body should be cast into Hell.*

8. THOU hast lost thine Eyes, and with 'em Earthly Contentment : But thou art hereby freed of many Temptations ; for those were the Inlets of Sin ; and the very Panders of Lust, for Debauching of the Soul. How many thousands on their
Death-

Death-beds, upon the sad recalling of their guilty Thoughts, have wish'd they had been Born Blind? So as thy Joy is less, thy Sin is less; neither shall any vain Objects take away thy Thoughts from the serious Meditation of Spiritual things.

9. BEFORE it was no otherwise with thee, than the Prophet *Jeremiah* reports of the *Jews*; *That Death is come up by the Windows*, Jer. 9. 21. And our great Grand-mother *Eve*; *'She saw the Tree was pleasant to the Eyes, and took of the Fruit*, Gen. 3. 6. And it hath been so ever since, with the Fruit of her Womb, both in the old and latter World: *The Sons of God saw the Daughters of Men that they were Fair, and they took them Wives of all which they chose*, Gen. 6. 2. Inſomuch as not filthy Luſts, but Adulteries take up their Lodgings: The bleſſed Apoſtle mentions it, *2 Pet. 2. 14. Having Eyes (ſaith he) full of Adultery, and cannot ceaſe from Sin. Whilſt thine Heart walked after thine Eyes, as Job ſpeaks, Job 31. 7. It could do no leſs, but Carry thee down to the Chambers of Death*, Prov. 2. 27. Thou art now deliver'd from that danger of ſo deadly a Miſguidance.

10. HATH not the loſs of thine Eyes freed thee of a World of Sorrows? Hadſt thou but ſeen what others are forc'd to behold, thoſe fearful Conflagrations, ſavage Violences, and Sacrilegious Outrages, thine Heart would bleed within thee: Now thou art affected at a diſtance, receiving 'em by the imperfect Intelligence of thine Ear from the unfeeling Relation of others.

11. THINE Eyes are loſt; What need thy Heart to go with 'em? Old *Iſaac* was Dark-ſighted when he gave the Bleſſing (contrary to his own Intentions) to his Son *Jacob*; yet he liv'd forty Years after, and could be pleas'd to have good Provision made him with *Wine and Veniſon*, Gen. 27. 25. Our Life

Life doth not lye in our Eyes: *The Spirit of a Man is that which upholds his Infirmities*, Prov. 18. 14. Labour to raise thy self to a cheerful Disposition; and in thy Bodily Darknes, *There shall be Light and Joy to thy Soul*, Est. 8. 16.

12. HATH God taken away thy Sight? But hath he not given thee a supply in other Faculties? Are not thy internal Senses more quick, thy Memory stronger, thy Fancy more active, and thy Understanding more apprehensive? The Wonders we have heard of Blind Men's Memories, were if to be credited, not obvious to conceive, that the removal of Distractions, gives them opportunity of a careful reposition of desired Objects, and a sure Fixedness of 'em where they are laid. Hence hath it come to pass, that some Blind Men have attain'd to those Perfections which their Eyes could never have endu'd 'em with.

13. OUR Ecclesiastical Story reports of *Didymus of Alexandria*, being Blind from his Infancy, through his Prayers and diligent Endeavours, reach'd unto such knowledge in *Logick*, *Arithmetick* and *Astronomy*, as was admir'd by the Leard Masters of those Arts; and for his rare insight in *Divinity*, was by *St. Athanasius* approv'd to be Doctor of the Chair in that Church. What need we doubt the Verity of it, when our late Times have so clearly seconded it? having yielded divers worthy *Divines*, which have been depriv'd of Sight.

14. THERE was one very Eminent in the University of *Cambridge*, of great skill in Tongues and Arts, and of singular acuteness of Judgment. *Suidas* reports of *Neoclides*, that being Blind, he could steal more cunningly than any that had use of Eyes: I may as boldly say of *Mr. Fisher*, That he was more dextrous in picking the Locks

of difficult Authors, and extracting their Treasures of hidden Secrets, than those that had the sharpest Eyes about 'em; insomuch as it was noted, those were singular Proficients which employ'd themselves in reading to him: If they read Books to him, he dictates Lectures the while to them, and taught 'em more than he learn'd himself.

15. AS for the other external Senses, they are vulgarly more exquisite in the Blind: We read of some who have been of so accurate a Touch, that by their feeling they could distin-

guish betwixt Black and White: *Lord Bacon's Natural History.*

And for the Ear, as our Philosophers observe, Sounds are sweeter to the Blind than to the Sighted, being more curiously judg'd by 'em: But the most perfect recompence of these Natural Eyes, is in the Exaltation of our Spiritual Ones. We are more Illuminated towards the Beautifical Vision of God, as they apprehend more Obscurity in all Terrestrial Objects: Thou wilt not miss the loss of thy Sight, if thou findest thy Soul thus happily Illuminated.

16. THINE Eyes are lost: It is a Blessing that once thou hadst 'em: Hadst thou been Born Blind, what a Stranger wouldst thou have been to God and the World? Hadst thou never seen the Face of the Elements, what Expressions could have made thee apprehensive of the wonderful Works of thy Creator? Not any Discourse could have made thee understand what Light is? The Sun, the Fountain of it, the Heavens the Glorious Region of it, and the Moon and Stars Illuminated by it? How could'st thou have had thy Thoughts raised so high, as to give Glory to that Great God, whose infinite Power hath wrought all these marvellous things.

17. NO doubt, God hath his ways of Mercy for those that are Born Blind ; not requiring what he hath not given , supplying by his Spirit in the internal Vessels, what is wanting in the External : So as even those that never see the Face of the World, shall behold the Face of God that made it : But in an ordinary Course of proceeding, those which have been Blind from their Birth, must needs want those helps of knowing and glorifying God in his mighty Works, which lye open to Sight : These once satisfied thine Eyes, and remain with thee in their absence.

18. THEREFORE walk on in the strength of those fixed thoughts; alwayes adoring the Majesty of that God whom thy Sight hath represented to thee so Glorious; and in an humble Submission to his Pleasure, strive against all the discomforts of thy Sufferings. It is reported of a valiant Soldier, *Polyzelus*, who after his Eyes were shot out in Battle, covering his Face with his Target, fought and laid about him vehemently, as if he had receiv'd no hurt. Strive to imitate this Courage, and let not the loss of thine Eyes hinder thee from a cheerful Resistance of those Spiritual Enemies, which labour to draw thee into an impatient Murmuring against God: But wait humbly upon him who hath better Eyes for thee than thou hast lost.

19. THOU hast lost thy Hearing: It is not easily determin'd which loss is greatest, the Eye, or Ear; both are afflictive. Now all the World is to thee Dumb, since thou art Deaf to it : And how small a Matter hath made thee a Cypher amongst Men ? These are the Senses of Instruction ; and there is no other way for Intelligence to be convey'd to the Soul, either in Secular or Spiritual Affairs. The Eye is the Window, the Ear is the Door, by which all Knowledge enters: In matter of Observation
by

by the Eye; and of Faith, by the Ear, *Rom. 10.17.*

20. HAD it pleas'd God to have excluded these Senses from thy Birth, thy State had been utterly Disconsolate, and there had been no possible access for Comfort to thy Soul. Had this Affliction happen'd in thy riper Age, there had been no way but to be content with thy former Store: But now he hath vouchsafed to leave thee one Passage open, it behoves thee to supply one Sense by the other, and to let in those helps by the Window, which are deny'd Entrance at the Door. But now Omnipotency hath been pleas'd to lend thee an Ear so long, till thou hast laid the sure Foundation of Faith in thy Heart, thou mayst work upon 'em in this silent Opportunity, with Celestial Meditations, and raise 'em up to no less height than thou could'st have done by thy quickest Hearing.

21. IT is a great Blessing, that in the plentitude of thy Senses, thou wert sollicitous to improve thy Bosom, as a Magazine of Heavenly Thoughts, providing with the Wise *Patriarch*, for the seven Years of Dearth: Now that the Passages are block'd up, thou mightest have been in danger of Famishing. Thou hast now leisure to recal and ruminate upon those Counsels, which thy Improvement hath laid up in thy Heart, and to thy happy Advantage, find'st the difference betwixt a wise Providence, and a careless Neglect.

22. THINE external Hearing is lost: But thou hast an internal Ear, whereby thou hear'st the secret motions of God's Spirit, which shall never be lost. How many thousands whom thou enviest, are in a worse Condition? They have an external Ear, whereby they hear the voice of Men; but they want that Spiritual Ear, which perceives the least Whisperings of the Holy Ghost: Ears they have, but not hearing ones; for Fashion more than Use.

Wise

Wise *Solomon* makes and observes the Distinction, *Prov. 20. 12. The hearing Ear, and the seeing Eye, the Lord hath made even both of them.* And a Greater than *Solomon* can say of his formal Auditors, *Hearing, they hear not, Matt. 13. 13.* If thou have an Ear for God, tho Deaf to Men, How much happier art thou than those Millions of Men, that have an Ear for Men, and are Deaf to God.

23. THOU hast lost thy Hearing; and therewith no small Sorrow: How would it grieve thy Soul to hear those woful Ejaculations, pitiful Complaints, hideous Blasphemies, atheistical Notions, mad Paradoxes, and hellish Heresies, wherewith thine Ear would have been Wounded, had it not been barr'd against their Entrance? It is thy just Grief thou missest hearing of many good Words; and it is thy happiness thou art freed from hearing of many Evil. It is an even Lay betwixt the benefit of hearing Good, and the torment of hearing Evil.

A Prayer Consolatory to the Blind and Deaf.

O MOST Powerful Lord God, who hast in thy good pleasure been pleased to deprive me of Seeing and Hearing; I know O Lord, I have deserved thy wrath in a greater measure, even Death and Hell it self; but I know thou art a God full of Compassion, Long-suffering, and abounding in Goodness and Truth, and shews Mercy unto Thousands. Lord, as thou hast inflicted this on me, even the loss of my Sight; illuminate my Understanding by thy holy Spirit: Thou hast taken away my Sight that I might not behold Vanity. O Enlighten my Mind that I may behold inwardly the wonders of thy Law: Lord, I am poor in Spirit, but let thy blessed Spirit help my Infirmities, that in thy Light I may see Light.

2. *AND, O thou bright Morning-Star, guide me in the way of thy Commandments, that at last I may safely arrive where all Tears and Obstructions of Sight shall be taken away from my Bodily Eyes: And though my outward hearing is fled away, yet let me hear the voice of the Comforter speak peace to my Soul, and quietness to my Conscience, that when ever thou shalt be pleased to call me hence, I may be ready prepared to resign my self up into thy hands, as into the hands of a Faithful Creator: In the mean time, Lord, Sanctifie these thy Fatherly Visitations to me, and ever remember, that what thou hast in thy good Pleasure inflicted on my Body, may be for the good of my Soul, in the day of the Lord Jesus. Amen.*

S E C T. XIII.

Of Sterility.

1. **T**HOU complainest of dry Loyns, and a Barren Womb; as *Abraham* did before thee: *What wilt thou give me, seeing I go Childless?* Gen. 15. 2. And the Wife of *Israel* made the same Complaints; Gen. 30. 1. *Give me Children, or else I die.* So desirous hath Nature been to propagate, and so impatient of a Denial: *Lo, Children and the Fruit of the Womb, are an Heritage, and Gift that cometh from the Lord: Happy is he that hath his Quiver full of such Shafts,* Psal. 127. 4, 6. It is a Blessing, *David* grudg'd to Wicked Ones, Psal. 17. 4. *They have Children at their Desire.*

2. **I**T was the Curse God inflicted on the Family of *Abimelech*, in closing up all the Wombs in his House, for *Sarah's* sake, Gen. 20. 17, 18. The Judgment threatned to *Ephraim*, is a miscarrying Womb, and dry

dry Breasts, Hof. 9. 14. And *Jeconiah's Doom* is, *Jer.* 22. 30. *Write this Man, Childless.* It is a special Favour of God, *That the Barren hath born seven*, 1 Sam. 2. 5. And observ'd by the *Psalmist*, as a wonder of God's Mercy, *Psal.* 113. 8. *that He makes the Barren Woman to keep House, and to be a joyful Mother of Children.*

3. IT is pity he was born, that esteems not Children a Blessing. She hath a double Favour from God, that is a Joyful Mother of Children: Many, breeds Sorrow, and Death: And there is scarce any other Blessing, season'd with so much Acrimony of Misery and Danger. Do but compare one Pain with another, and consider the Anxious Cares that attend 'em; and tell me, whether thy bemoan'd Sterility enjoys not more ease, and less sorrow?

4. IT is thy Sorrow thou art not Fruitful: Consider thou art freed from a greater affliction. *In Sorrow shalt thou bring forth Children*, Gen. 3. 16. Think on the Shrieks in the Painful Travels of thy Neighbours; wearying Days and Nights in restless Pangs, and calling for Death in despair of Delivery: And after the unprofitable Labours of the Midwives, have made use of another Sex; so have been deliver'd of Life and Birth together. All these Sorrows thou hast escap'd: And many whom thou enviest, have thought thee happier than themselves?

5. THOU art afflicted thou art not a Mother: And many a one wishes they had been Barren. If Children prove deform'd, unnatural and wicked; what a Corrosive is this to the Parents? *Rebecca* thought it long to be twenty Years Childless; her Husband at Sixty, prays for Issue, *Gen.* 25. 20, 21. his Devotion carried him to *Moriab* the place where his Life was miraculously preserved from the Knife of his Father, hoping it might, by the like Miracle, be renew'd in his Posterity.

6. GOD hears him; *Rebecca* Conceives: But when she felt that early Combat of her struggling Twins, she can say, *If it be so, why am I thus?* Gen. 25. 22. And when she saw a Child, *Red all over like a hairy Garment,* Gen. 25. 25. and saw his Conditions no less rough than his Hide, Gen. 27. 41. do we not think she wish'd that part of her Burden unborn? Certainly, Children are Blessings, or Crosses. Hast thou a Child well dispos'd, well govern'd? *A wise Son maketh a glad Father,* Prov. 10. 1. Prov. 19. 13. Hast thou a Child disorderly and debauch'd? *A foolish Son is the Heaviness of his Mother, and the Calamity of his Father,* Prov. 10. 1. Chap. 19. 13. Hast thou a Son stubborn, and unnatural? Then *Solomon* tells us; *He that wasteth his Father, and chaseth away his Mother, is a Son that causeth Shame, and bringeth Reproach,* Prov. 19. 26. And if such a Son live and die impenitent, what can answer the Discomfort of that Parent?

7. THOU hast no Children: As thou hast less Joy, thou hast less Trouble. It is a continual Care that belongs to these Possessions.

Artimedorus observes, that to dream of Children, imports Cares. As they are our greatest Cares, many lesser ensues. For thou hast many Mouths to feed, and 'tis thy Duty to provide for 'em: For, *If any provide not for his own, especially for those of his own House, he hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel,* 1 Tim. 5. 8.

Artimedor de insomniis, Lib. 1. Cap. 6.

8. DOES not many *Rivulets* from the main Channel, leave the *Stream* shallow? So is it with thee; But this Expence is not more necessary, than comfortable. A Great Man visited a Gentleman in the Country, and seeing his Children placed according to their Age and Stature, said, These make Rich Men Poor: But immediately he receiv'd

this Answer ; Nay, my *Lord*, these make a Poor Man Rich : For there is not one of these, I would part with for all your Wealth.

9. INDEED, we receive to distribute, and are but *Farmers* of those we leave behind. If we freely lay out of our Substance before-hand, so much of our Rent is happily clear'd. It is observable none are so Covetous as the Childless : For those who for maintenance of large Families, are inur'd to frequent Disbursements, find such Experience of Divine Providence in Prudent Managing of Affairs, that they lay out with more Cheerfulness, then they receive : So that their Care must be abated, when *God* takes it to himself.

10. AND if not wanting to themselves, Faith gives them Ease, in casting their Burden upon him, who hath more Power and Right to it, since Children are more his, than our own. He that feedeth the *Young Ravens*, *Psal.* 147. 9. can he fail the best of his Creatures ? A worthy Divine tells us of a Gentlewoman, coming to the Cottage of a poor Neighbour, furnished with Children, could say ; *Here are the Mouths, but where is the Meat ?* But not long after was answer'd to that Question ; for the poor Woman after the Burial of her last Child, inverted the Question upon her ; *Here is the Meat, but where is the Mouths ?*

11. SURELY, the Great Governour of the World, will never leave any of his without the Bread of Sufficiency ; and who so fit to be his Purveyors, as Parents for their Children ? Nature hath taught *Birds*, to pick out the best of Grains for their Young : Nature sends Moister out of the Root, which gives Life to Branches and Blossoms : Sometimes, indeed, it meets with a kind Retaliation ; some Stork-like Disposition repairs the loving Offices done by the Parents, in a dutiful Retribution to their Age or Necessity.

12. BUT how frequently proved often the contrary? By an insatiable Importunity of extracting from the Parents that Maintenance, which is extravagant: Sometimes an undutiful neglect, in not owning the Meanness of their Parents, or supporting their decay'd Estate by due Maintenance. Ingratitude is odious in Man; but in a Child monstrous.

13. IT is thy Grief thou never hadst a Child: There is not so much Comfort in having of Children, as Sorrow in parting with 'em; especially when their parts, and Disposition have raised our Hopes, and doubled our Affections towards 'em: And according to the *French Proverb*; *He that hath not, cannot lose*; so, on the contrary, he that hath, must lose. Our Meeting is not more certain, than our Parting: Either we must leave them, and so their Grief doubles ours; or they leave us, and so our Grief will be no less than our Love was extended.

14. IF thou wilt be truly wise, set thy heart upon that only Good, which is not capable of losing: Divided Affections abate their Force; and since no Objects of Dearness, distracts thy Love, place it wholly upon that Infinite Goodness, which entertains it with Mercy, and rewards it with Blessedness. If *Elkanah* therefore could say to his Barren Wife *Hannah*, 1 Sam. i. 8. *Why weepest thou? and why is thy Heart heavy? Am not I better to thee than ten Sons?* How much more comfortably may'st thou hear the *Father of Mercies* say to thy Soul, *Why is thy Heart heavy? Am not I better to thee than ten Thousand?*

A Prayer of Comfort in Sterility:

O GOD, the Great Creator, and Redeemer of all the World, who dost Command our first Parents to Increase and Multiply: Yet those Blessings thou thinkest not fit to dispence, where thy Wisdom and Providence knows it not requisite: O LORD, thou hast been pleased to give me dry Breasts, and shut up my Womb, and hast kept me from that great pain and peril of Child-Birth, which many have undergone, which hath put a period to their Lives: O let me Bless and Praise thy Holy Name, that I am at this day a living Monument of thy Mercy: And that thy Servant whom thou hast been pleased to ordain for my Husband, is not yet Summoned by Death from me.

2. LORD, thy Omnipotency knows what is most necessary for me, and the less Incumbrances and Cares I meet with in the World, grant that I may the more attentively serve thee; let me in every State, O Lord, submit to thy Holy Will, and not murmure and repine at what thy good pleasure has allotted me: Comfort me, O Lord, I beseech thee, and increase my Love and Affection towards my Husband, that I may say as Elkanah did to Hannah, that he is more worth to me then ten Sons: But, O Lord, grant, that when thou shalt be pleased to call me out of this dark World into thy marvellous Light, that I may be ready to leave all and follow thee, who art my God, and all things. Amen.

S E C T. XIV.

Want of Repose.

1. **T**HOU are afflicted with that which is incident to distemp'rd Bodies, and Minds: How wearisom it is to spend the long Night, tossing in

in a restless Bed, in chase of Sleep, which eagerly pursued, flies farther from us? Couldst thou forbear the Desire of it, perhaps it would come unexpected: Now thou Sollicites it, like some froward Piece, it is coy and pievish, and punishes thee for thy Eagerness after it.

2. HE that commanded an *Hundred twenty seven Provinces*, could not command Rest; *On that Night his Sleep departed from him*, Esth. 6. 1. neither could he be forc'd, or intreated to his Bed. And the Great *Babylonian Monarch*, though he possessed some Sleep, yet could not keep it; for *His Sleep brake from him*, Dan. 2. 1. And for *Solomon*, it would not appear within his view; *Neither Night nor Day seeth he Sleep with his Eyes*, Eccles. 8. 16.

3. SURELY, as there is no Earthly thing more comfortable to Nature, than Bodily rest, as *Feremiab* saith, *Jer. 31. 26. And my Sleep was sweet unto me*: So there is nothing more grievous and disheartening: If the Senses be not sometimes lock't up, they must wast, if the Body be not refreshed with a moderate Repose? And commonly the Soul follows the Temper of the Body, it cannot but find a Discomposure in her Faculties and Operations.

4. DO we not find Ravings and Frenzies the Attendants of over Watchfulness? Therefore thy Tongue hath just Cause to complain of thy Eyes. For Remedy, instead of Closing thy Lids for Sleep; lift up thy Eyes to him that *Giveth his Beloved rest*, Psal. 127. 2. For he holdeth thine *Eyes waking*, Psal. 77. 4. He keeps Sleep from thy Body, for the good of thy Soul. Let not thine Eyes wake without thy Heart. *Christ's Spouse* can say, *I sleep, but my heart waketh*, Cant. 5. 4. But how much more would she say, *Mine Eyes wake, and my Heart also?*

5. WHEN thou canst not Sleep, labour to see him that is Invisible: One Glimpse of that Sight, is worth more than all the Sleep thine Eyes is capable of. Resign thy self into his hands, to be at his Disposal. What is this sweet Acquiescence, but the Rest of the Soul? Which if thou find'st in thy self, thou shalt quietly digest the Want of Bodily Repose.

6. THOU wantest Sleep: Take heed of aggravating thine Affliction: It is only a Loss, but not of Sense; a want of what thou wishest, not a pain of what thou feelest. Alas! How many which want Rest, are tortur'd with intolerable Torments in all Parts of their Body; who would think themselves happy in thy Condition, Might they purchase Ease? how gladly would they forbear Rest? Be not therefore troubled for want of Rest; but be thankful that no worse Evil attends thee.

7. THOU lack'st Sleep; a thing we desire not so much for its own sake, as for Health. What if God be pleased to give thee Health without it? It is reported of a Woman in *Padua*, that continued fifteen Days and Nights without Sleep: And *Seneca* tells us of great *Mecenas*, that in three Years he slept not the space of an Hour: Which *Lipsius* thinks good to mitigate with a favourable Construction, conceiving an Impossibility of an absolute Vigilancy.

8. YET compared with other Instances, we have no reason to scruple that Relation; for the Learned *Heurnius* tells us, upon good Assurance, when he was Student in *Padua*; *Nizolius* the famous *Ciceronian*, liv'd ten Years without Sleep.

9. BUT that exceeds all Example, which Monsieur *Goulart* reports, of a Gentlewoman, who for Thirty five Years remain'd without Sleep, and found

Goul. *Histoires
Memorables.*

In-

Inconvenience, or Distemper, as was attested by her Husband and Servants. *The Hand of God is not shortned*: He who miraculously preserved the Maid of *Meures* so many Years without Meat; hath sustain'd the Lives of these fore-mentioned Persons thus long without Sleep; that it might appear, *Man lives not by Meat*, or Sleep only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God, Mat. 4. 4. Luk. 4. 4. Deut. 8. 3. If he pleases to bless thee with a watchful Health, the Blessing is far greater, than if he allow'd thee to sleep out thy time in a dull unprofitable Rest.

10. THOU wantest Sleep: *Behold, he that keepeth Israel, doth neither slumber nor sleep*, Psal. 121 4. Those Blessed Spirits, that continually behold the Face of God, never sleep: For Sleep is a Symptom of Mortality; and the less we partake of it, we come the nearer to those Spiritual Natures, whose Perfection requires no Rest. The retir'd Christians, in Primitive Times, affecting to come near an Angelical Life, wilfully repelled Sleep; till it necessarily forc'd it self upon them. Thou suffer'st no more out of the Distemper of Humours, or unnatural Obstructions, than better Men have willingly attract-ed out of holy Resolutions. It is but our Construction, that makes those things tedious, which have prov'd easie to others.

11. THOU wantest Sleep: Have *Patience* a while; thou art going where there shall be no need, nor use of it: And in the mean time, thy Better Part cannot rest: Though the Gates be shut, that it cannot shew it self, yet it ever will be active. As for this Lump of Earth, it shall ere long sleep its full; where no Noise can wake it, till *The Voice of the Arch-Angel, and the Trumpet of God* shall call it up in the Morning of the Resurrection, 1 *Thess.* 4. 16.

A Prayer when Repose is Obstructed.

O GOD, *the keeper of Israel, who neither slumberest nor sleepest, yet thy Omnipotency knows without it, poor Dust and Ashes cannot subsist; it was by thy Almighty Power, that King Ahasuerus one Night was deprived of his Repose in his Royal Bed, and yet through thy Gracious Providence, thy Holy Apostle St. Peter Slept quietly, though strongly Guarded by Soldiers, and Chained fast in a Dark Prison: But, O thou, that givest thy Beloved rest, Behold, I beseech thee, with thine All seeing Eye, how my Sleep is departed from me, insomuch that I am become infirm in Body, for want of that natural rest, which many through thy tender Mercy Enjoies.*

2. **L O R D,** *but of the Rich Treasure of thy Transcendent Goodness, have Compassion upon my Weak and Frail Constitution, which yet requireth further nutriment. Lord, suffer not any Cares or Fears to perplex my Thoughts any longer at this Season, but so Compose all my Senses in this Dark and Silent Night, that I may lay me down in Peace, and take my rest in Safety: O bear me, and answer me in thy own due time, that when my Body shall receive its due Refreshment, my Mind may be perpetually Vigilant to serve thee, unto my Lives end: Grant this, O Father, for thy dear Sons sake, my only Lord and Saviour. Amen,*

S E C T. XV.

Of Gray-Hairs.

1. **G**RAY-HAIRS is that we desire to aspire to; and when attain'd, are ready to complain our greatest Misery; verifying in part that old Observation, *That Wedlock and Age are things which we desire, and repent of.* Is this our Ingratitude or Inconstancy, that we are weary of what we wish'd for? Perhaps this Accusation may not be Universal: There is difference in Constitutions, and latitude in Old Age. Infancy and Youth have their limits, age admits of no certain Determination.

2. **A**T Seventy, *King David was old and stricken in Years; and they cover'd him with Cloaths, but he got no heat,* 1 King. 1. 1. Whereas *Caleb can profess, Now loe I am fourscore and five Years old, and yet I am as strong this day, as I was in the day that Moses sent me to spy out the Land: As my Strength was then, even so is my Strength now, for war, both to go out, and come in,* Josh. 14. 10, 11. And beyond him, *Moses was an hundred and twenty Years old; when he died, his Eye was not dim, nor his Natural Force abated,* Deut. 34. 7. *Methuselah was but Old, when he was Nine hundred sixty and nine,* Gen 5. 27.

3. **B**UT for the generality of Mankind, the same *Moses*, who liv'd to see an hundred and twenty, hath set Man's ordinary Period at half his own: *Psal. 90. 10. The days of our Age, are threescore Years and ten. And tho Men be so strong, that they come to fourscore Years, yet is their Strength but Labour and Sorrow: So passeth it away, and we are gone. Four-score Years, are load enough for the Strength, much more for the weakness of Age. But when*

Labour

Labour and Sorrow are added to the Weight, how can we but sink under the Burden?

4. HE was old and wise, that said by Experience; *That our last Days are the Dregs of our Life: The clearer part is gone, and all drawn out, the Lees sink down to the bottom.* Who can express the miserable Inconveniencies that attend the Aged? For Cares must needs be multiplied according to the manifold occasions of Affairs: For the World is a Net, wherein the more we stir, we are Entangled.

5. AND for Bodily Grievances, What Varieties do we meet withal? What *Aches* in the *Bones*, *Pains* in the *Joints*, *Convulsions* of *Sinews*, and *Torments* in the *Bowels*; the *Stone*, *Collick*, *Stranguary*, and *Distillation* of *Rheums*? What *Hollow Coughs*, *weaknesses* of *Retention*, *Expulsion*, *Digestion*, and *Decay* of *Senses*? So that Age is the common *Sewer*, into which all *Diseases* of our *Life* are *Evacuated*. Well therefore might *Sarah* say, *After I am waxed Old, shall I have Pleasure?* Gen. 18. 12. And good *Bazillai* justly excuses himself for not accepting the gracious Invitation of *David*, 2 Sam. 19. 35. *I am this day fourscore Years old, and can I discern between Good and Evil? Can thy Servant taste what I eat, or what I drink? Can I hear any more the voice of Singing-Men, and Singing-Women? Wherefore then should thy Servant be yet a Burden unto my Lord the King?*

6. THESE are they the Preacher calls the *Evil Days*, and the *Years*, wherein a Man shall say, *I have no Pleasure in them: Wherein the Sun, or the Light, or the Moon, or the Stars are darkned, and the Clouds return after the Rain: When the Keepers of the House shall tremble, and the Strong Men shall bow themselves, and the Grinders cease, because they are few, and those that look out of the Windows, be darkned.* Eccles. 12. 1, 2, 3. In short, what is Old-Age but the Winter

ter of Life? And how can we expect any other but *gloomy Weather, chilling Frosts, Storms, and Tempests?*

7. BUT whilst we thus querulously aggravate the incommodiousness of Age, we must beware lest we derogate from the Bounty of our Maker, and disparage those Blessings which he accounts Precious; amongst which, Old-Age is none of the meanest. Had he not put that value upon it, he would not have honour'd it with his own Stile; calling himself, *The Ancient of Days?* Dan. 7. 9. 13. 22. Or would he else have set out this Mercy, as a Reward and Obedience to himself, (*I will fulfil the number of thy days,* Exod. 23. 26.) and of Obedience to our Parents, *To live long in the Land,* Exod. 20. 12.

8. WOULD he have promised it as a marvelous Favour to restor'd *Jerusalem*, (now become a City of Truth) *That there shall yet Old Men and Old Women dwell in the Streets of Jerusalem, and every Man with his Staff in his Hand for every Age?* Zach. 8. 4. Would he else have denounc'd it as a Judgment to over-indulgent *Eli*, 1 Sam. 2. 32. *There shall not be an Old Man in thy House for ever?* Far be it from us, to despise that which God Honors, and turn his Blessings into a Curse. For the same God, who best knows the Price of his own Favours, as he makes no small estimation of Age himself, so he hath thought fit to call for a high Respect to be given it by Men, out of an Holy Awe to himself. Lev. 19. 32. *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary Head, and Honor the Face of the Old Man, and fear thy God. I am the Lord.*

9. HENCE it is, that he hath pleas'd to put together the *Ancient, and the Honourable*, Isa. 9. 15. and hath told us that an *Hoary Head is a Crown of Glory, if it be found in the way of Righteousness*, Prov. 16. 31.

Chap. 20. 29. And lastly, makes it an Argument of the deplorable State of *Jerusalem*, Lam. 4. 16. That *They favoured not the Elders*. Therefore as we too sensibly feel what to complain of, so we know what Priviledges we may challenge due to Age; even such as Nature hath taught those Heathens, which are in the next degree to Savage. If Pride and Skill have made the *Athenians* Uncivil, yet a Young *Lacedemonian* will rise, and yield his Place in the Theatre to neglected Age.

10. IT is not a little Injurious to fasten our Eyes upon the disadvantages of any Condition, as not to take in the Advantages that belong to it; which carefully laid together, may perhaps sway the Balance to an equal Poise. Suppose Old-Age is oppress'd with Bodily Grievs; yet it may yield other Immunities to keep the Scales even: And it is not the least, that it gives us firm Resolutions and bold Securities against Dangers, and Death it self: For the Old Man knows how little of his Thred. is left in the Winding; and therefore when just Occasion is offer'd, insists not much upon so inconsiderable a Remainder.

OLD-AGE and Orbity, as *Ceselinus* profess'd, were those things that emboldened him. And when *Castritius* refus'd to deliver the Hostages of *Placentia* to *Carbo* the *Consul*, and was threatned with many Swords, he answer'd those Menaces with his many Years. What young Man would have been so easily induc'd to part with his Life, and having been so ready to give entertainment to an unexpected Death? Surely the hope and love of Life, commonly softens the Spirits of vigorous Youth, and dissuades them from those Enterprizes, which are attended with manifest Perils: Whereas, extream Age teacheth us to contemn Dangers.

12. YET a greater privilege of Age, is a Freedom from those impetuous Passions wherewith Youth is commonly over-sway'd; for with our Natural Heat, the Fire of our inordinate Lusts is abated, so as our weaker Appetite may be subdu'd to Reason. The Temperate old Man in the Story, when one shew'd him a Beautiful Face, could answer; *I have long since left to be Eye-sick: And could say of Pleasure; I have gladly withdrawn my self from that Imperious Mistress.*

13. WHAT an unreasonable Vassalage our Youthful Lusts subject us to, we need no other Instance than in *Sampson*, who was effeminated by his impotent Passion, and weakned to betray his Life to a mercenary Harlot, and to endure to hear her say; *Tell me wherewith thou mayst be Bound, to do thee hurt*, Judg. 16. 6. How easily might he have answered her; *O Delilah*, even with these Cords of Brutish Sensuality. How was Solomon Besotted with his Strange Wives, and drawn away to Worship strange Gods, *1 King*, 11. 5.

14. AND how may Fir-trees howl, when Cedars fall? Who can hope to be free from being transported with irregular Affections, when we see such great precedents of Frailties? From the danger of these sad Miscarriages, our Age happily secures us; disposing us into quiet Harbour, whence we may see Youth toss'd with Tempests of unruly Passions, from which Seniority hath free'd us.

15. ANNEX Experimental Knowledge, which Age enriches us; every Dram is worth Pounds of Junior Contentments: In comparison the Speculative Knowledge is weak and imperfect. This may come at an easie rate, perhaps cost us nothing: That, commonly we pay dear for, and is esteem'd valuable. If Experience be the Mistress of Fools,
I'm

I'm sure 'tis the Mother of Wisdom: For the long Observation of variety of Actions and Events in the whole course of our Life, must needs leave such sure Rules of Judgment, as may be unfailable Directions for our selves and others.

16. IN vain shall this be expected from our Minority, which the Wise Philosopher excludes from being Judges of true Morality: And well might the Old Man say; *Ye Young Men, think us Old Men Fools; but we Old Men know you Young Men to be Fools.* And indeed what value Ignorance may put upon it, this Fruit of Age the Earth hath nothing equally so precious. It was Prophane, but fit for the Mouth of an Heathen Poet, *That Prudence is above Destiny.* But surely a Christian may justly say, That next to Providence, Humane Prudence may challenge the supream Place in Earthly Affairs, and Age claim the greatest Interest in that Vertue.

17. YOUNG *Elibu* could say, *Job 32. 7. Multitude of years should teach Wisdom.* And the Wise Man, *Ecclus. 25. 4, 5. Ob, how comely a thing is Judgment for Gray-Hairs, and for Ancient Men to know Counsel! Ob, how comely is the Wisdom of Old Men, and Understanding and Counsel to Men of Honor.* And the Grecians could say, *That young Men are for Action, and old Men for Advice:* And among the Romans, Senators take their Name from Age. That which causeth weakness of Aged Eyes, is, they better discern things further off, and by the strength of their Mental Eyes, they perceive Judgments or Advantages at a distance, and accordingly frame their Determinations.

18. IT is observ'd, that Old Lutes sound better than New. It was *Rehoboam's* Folly and Undoing, *1 King. 12. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, &c.* to follow the Advice of Green Heads, and abandon those Grave
Senators

Senators of his Fathers Counsel. Not that Age of it self is Rich in Wisdom and Knowledge : But well cultur'd, and improv'd, is valuable. There are Old Men, that live, and have a Being upon Earth; who can give no Proof of their many Years, but only Gray-Hairs and Infirmities. There are those, who, like to *Hermogenes*, are Old, whilst Young; and Children, when Old: These the Elder they grow, are more stupid.

19. TIME is an ill Measure of Age, which should rather be meted by Proficiency, Ripeness of Judgment, and Monuments of commendable and useful Labours. If we have thus imployed our selves, our *Autumn* will shew what our *Spring* was; and our Gray-Hairs will give us more Cause to fear Pride, than Dejection. We accuse Age of many Weaknesses and Indispositions: But these Imputations are not Universal: Many of these are Faults of the Person, not of the Age. All Wine doth not sour with Age, neither doth every Nature.

20. OLD Oyl is clearer, and hotter in Medicinal Uses than New. Some are pettish, and morose in Youth; and others are mild, gentle and sociable, in their decayed Years. Some are crazy in their Prime; and others in their Wain are Vigorous: And many before the fulness of their Age, have lost their Memory; as *Hermogenes*, *Corvinus*, *Antonius Carracalla*, *Georgius Trapezuntius*, and *Nizolius*.

21. SOME, whose intellectuals have so happily held out, that they have been best at the last. *Plato* at fourscore and one, died with his Pen in his hand: and *Demosthenes*, when Death Summon'd him at an 100 Years, he bemoan'd himself, that he must now die, when he began to gain knowledge. And as for Spiritual Graces and Improvements, the *Psalmist* satisfies us, *Psal.* 92. 12, 13. *Such as be plant-*

ed in the House of the Lord, shall flourish in the Courts of our God: They shall also bring forth more fruit in their Age; and shall be fat and well liking.

22. **BUT** the chief Benefit of Age is, our approach to our Journeys end: For the end of motion is rest; and once attain'd, there remains nothing but fruition: Now Age brings us after a weary Race within some breathings of our Journeys end: For if Young Men may die, Old Men must; a condition which a carnal heart bewails and abhors, complaining of nature as Niggardly in Dispensations of the shortest time to her noblest Creatures; and envying the Oaks, which many generations must leave standing and growing.

23. **NO** marvel, the Worldling thinks himself at home, and looks upon Death as a banishment: He hath placed his heav'n here below, and can see nothing in his remove, but Annihilation, or Torment: But for Christians, who know, that *whilst we are present in the body, we are absent from the Lord*, 2 Cor. 5. 6. and do justly account our selves Foreigners, our Life a Pilgrimage, Heaven our Home; how can we but rejoice, that after a tedious and painful Travel, we do now draw near the threshold of our Father's house; wherein we know there are *many Mansions*, and all Glorious, *John 14. 2.*

24. I could blush to hear a *Heathen* say, if God would offer me the choice of renewing my Age, and returning to my Childhood, I should heartily refuse it; for I should be loath, after I have passed so much of my Race to be recalled back from the Goal, to the Bars of my first setting out; and to hear a Christian sighing and sobbing at the thought of his Dissolution. Where is our Faith of a Heav'n, if after long Sea-beaten, we are loath to think of putting into the safe Harbour of Immortality?

A Prayer for the Aged.

O LORD GOD, of my Salvation, I humbly render thee all hearty thanks for thy abundant Mercies and Favours, Spiritual and Temporal, for thy Gracious Preservation of me from my Youth, untill this present Moment: That thou hast spared me in thy Fatherly Mercy, when in thy Justice thou mightest have destroyed me: Lord, as thou hast given me space for Repentance, and refer'd me to these Years, who mightest justly have cut off the days of a mispent Youth, so now accomplish thine own Work; give me an Heart faithfully to adhere unto thee, that I may constantly Endeavour to Redeem the many Errors of my life past, by becoming a Pattern of Faith, and Obedience, in all those with whom I converse with for the Future: Lord, fill me with thy Holy Spirit, that I may bear more fruit in my Age: Forsake me not now, I am Old and Gray-Headed: Neither Remember the Sins and Follies of my Youth.

2. O let thy Power appear in my Weakness, and the Operation of thy Spirit in the Decays and Ruins of this Earthly Tabernacle, by the evident repair of thine own Image in me, Mortifying the remains of Sin, and assuring me of my Election and Calling in Christ Jesus: And now, O Lord, that the time of my departure draweth nigh; give me a vigilant Spirit, that I may be ready when thou Summonest me: Lord, there are but few steps between me and this Worlds period; O strengthen me with thy Grace, give me a lively Faith, an Invincible and Constant perseverance in this Race, of the few and evil dayes of this Earthly Pilgrimage; that by thy merciful Assistance I may so run that I may obtain: That when thou pleasest to give me rest from my Labours, and gather me to my Fathers, I may against all the pains and Sorrows of Death, willingly and cheerfully, yield up my Soul, into

thy Gracious Hands, in full assurance of my Redemption and Salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

S E C T. X V I.

Of Mortality.

1. **T**HOU fearest *Death*: The Holiest, Wisest, and Strongest have done no less: He is *King of Terrors*, and must command. Thou mayst hear the Man after God's own heart say, *Psal. 116. 3. The sorrows of Death compassed me: And Psal. 88. 3, 4, 5. My Soul is full of troubles, my life draweth nigh to the Grave: I am counted with them that go down to the Pit, as a Man that hath no strength; free among the Dead. And Good Hezekiah, upon the message of Death, Chattered like a Crane or a Swallow, and went mourning as a Dove, Isa. 38. 14.*

2. **T**HOU fearest as a Man; but must strive too vercome as a Christian: which thou mayst perform, if from the terrible aspect of the Messenger, thou cast thine eyes upon the Amiable Face of God that sends him. Holy David shews the way, *Psal. 18. 5, 6. The snares of Death prevented me: In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cryed unto my God; and he heard my voice out of his Temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears: He that is our God, is the God of Salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the issnes of death, Psal. 68. 20.*

3. **M**AKE God thy Friend, and *Death* shall be an advantage, *Phil. 1. 21.* It is true what the Wise Man said, *Wisd. 1. 13. Chap. 2. 24.* that God made not death; but through envy of the Devil death came into the World: But though God made him not, he is pleas'd to employ him as his Messenger to Summon some

some to Judgment, and Invite others to Glory ; and those the *Psalmist* makes mention of, are these latter ; *Psal. 116. 15. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the Death of his Saints* : And what reason hast thou to abominate that which God accounts precious ?

4. THOU art afraid of *Death* : Acquaint thy self with him more, and thou wilt fear him less. *Bears* and *Lions*, at the first sight affright us, but upon frequent viewing lose their Terror : Inure thine eyes to the sight of *Death*, and that Face shall not displease thee. Thou must shortly dwell with him for a long time, *for the days of darkness are many, Eccl. 11. 8.* but in the mean time entertain him, as the blessed *Apostle* doth, *1 Cor. 15. 31. I protest by your rejoycing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I dye daily.*

5. INVITE him to thy Board, lodge him in thy Bed, discourse him in thy Closet, and walk with him in thy Garden, as *Joseph of Arimathea* did ; and by no means suffer him to be a stranger to thy thoughts : This familiarity shall bring thee to delight in his company whom thou didst formerly dread, then thou mayest with the blessed *Apostle* say, *Phil. 1. 23. I have a desire to be with Christ, which is far better.*

6. THOU art gievously afraid of *Death* : Fears are apt to imagin, and aggravate evils : Even *Christ* himself walking upon the *waters*, and the *Disciples* trembled, as at some dreadful Apparition ; perhaps thou lookst at *Death* as some utter abolition, or extinction of thy being ; and nature must needs shrink at the thought of not being at all : This is an ill and dangerous misprision : For it is but departing, which thou callst *Death*.

7. SEE how God stiles it to *Abraham* ; Thou shalt go to thy *Fathers* in peace, thou shalt be buried in a good

old Age, Gen. 15. 15. And *Jacob*, Gen. 49. 33. When *Jacob* had ended commanding his Sons; he gathered up *his feet into the bed, and yielded up the Ghost, and was gathered unto his People.* So that dying is going to our Fathers, and gathering to our People, with whom we shall live in a better World, and re-appear Glorious, Let but thy Faith represent Death to thee in this shape, and he will not appear terrible.

8. DO but observe in what familiar terms God Confer'd with *Moses* concerning his Death, Deut. 32. 49. *Get thee up into this Mountain Abarim unto Mount Nebo, which is in the Land of Moab, and behold the Land of Canaan, which I gave unto the Children of Israel for a Possession, and dye in the Mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered to thy People, as Aaron thy Brother died in Mount Hor, and was gathered to his People:* So it is no more, go up there and dye; should it have been go a days Journey in the Wilderness to Sacrifice, it could have been no otherwise expressed; or as if it were all one to go up to *Sinai* to meet with God, and go up to *Nebo* and dye. Neither is it otherwise with us; only the difference is, that *Moses* must first view the Land of Promise, and then dye; whereas we must first dye, and then see the Promised Land.

9. THOU art troubled with the fear of Death: What reason hast thou to be Afflicted with that which is common to Mankind? Remember the words of *Joshua*, Josh. 23. 14. *Behold this day* (saith he) *I am going the way of all the Earth.* If all the Earth go this way, couldst thou think there is a by-path left thee to tread in, were it so that *Monarchs, Princes, Patriarchs, Prophets* and *Apostles* were allow'd any easier passage out of the World, thou mightst perhaps repine at a painful dissolution, but now since all go one way, there can be no ground for a discontented murmur.

10. GRUDGE if thou wilt, that thou art a man, but grudge not that being a man thou must dye: It is true, those whom the last day shall find alive, shall not dye, *but they shall be changed*; 1 Cor. 15. 51, 52. but this change shall be an Annalogical Death a speedy Consumption of all our corrupt and drossy Parts; so as the pain must be the more intense, by its shortness, than in the ordinary course of death. Briefly, that *change is death*, and our *death is a change*, as *Job* styles it, *Job* 14. 14. The difference is not in the pain, but in the speed of the Transaction: *Fear not then the sentence of Death; remember them that have been before thee, and that come after, for this is the sentence of the Lord over all flesh*, Ecclus. 41. 3.

11 THOU fearest *Death*: So do not Infants, Children, or Distracted Persons, as the *Philosopher* observes: Why should reason render us more Cowardly, than defect of reason doth them? Thou fearest that which others wish for: O *Death*, how acceptable is thy sentence to the needy, and to him whose strength faileth, that is now in the last age, and is vexed with all things, and to him that despaireth, and hath lost patience: Ecclus. 41. 2. *Wherefore is light given* (saith *Job*) *to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in Soul? Which long for hid Treasures; which rejoice exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the grave?* *Job* 3. 20, 21, 22.

12. HOW many invite the violence of *Death*, and if refus'd, do, as *Ignatius* threatned he would do to the *Lyons*, force his Assault? *Death* is the same to all: The Difference is in the Disposition of the Entertainers; could'st thou loost upon *Death* with their eyes, he would be as welcome to thee as to them: At least, why shouldst thou not labour to have thy heart so wrought upon, that this Face of *Death* which seems lovely and desirable to some, may not appear over-terrible to thee?

13. THOU art afraid to die: Could'st thou have been capable in the Womb, of the use of reason, thou wouldst have been more afraid of coming into the World, than thou art of going out: For why should we be more afraid of the better, than of the worse? *Better is the day of death, than the day of ones birth*, saith the Preacher: *Eccles. 7. 2.* better every way; our birth begins our miseries, our death ends them: The one enters the best into a wretched World, but the other enters the good into a World of Glory: Certainly, were it not for our infidelity, as we came crying into the World, so we should go rejoicing out: And as some have solemnized their Birth-day with feasting and triumph, the Primitive Church hath enjoyed rejoicing upon the Dying day of her Martyrs and Saints.

14. THOU abhorrest *Death*, and fleest from it as from a Serpent: but dost thou know his sting is gone? what harm is there in a sting-less Snake? Hast thou not heard of some delicate Dames that have carried 'em in their Bosom for coolness, and pleasure of their smoothness? *The sting of Death is Sin*; 1 Cor. 15. 56. He may hiss and wind about us, but cannot prejudice us when that Sting is out: Look up, O thou believing Soul, to thy blessed Saviour, who hath pluckt out this sting of Death, and happily triumphs over it; O *Death where is thy sting?* O *Grave where is thy Victory?* 1 Cor. 15. 55.

15. THY Soul and Body, old Companions are loth to part: It is but forbearing their Society a while; they but take leave of other till they meet at the Resurrection in the meantime they are safe, and the better part happy: It is commendable in the *Jews* (otherwise the worst of Men) that they call their Grave *Beth Chajim*, the House of the Living; and when they return from Burial of their Neighbours, they pluck up *Grass*, and cast it into the Air, with those
words

words of the *Pfalmist*, 72. 16. *They shall flourish and put forth as Grass upon the Earth.*

16. DID we not believe a Resurrection of the one part, and a re-uniting of the other, we had reason to be daunted with thoughts of a Dissolution: But now we have no cause to be dismayed with a little Intermiſſion. It was the ſaying of a Wiſe Hea-then, That Death which we ſo fear and flee from, doth but reſpite Life for a while, not take it away: The day will come which ſhall reſtore us to Light again: Settle thy Soul in this aſſurance, and thou canſt not be diſcomfited with a neceſſary Parting.

17. THOU art afraid of Death; when thou art weary of thy days labour, art thou afraid of reſt? Hear what thy Saviour, who is the *Lord of Life*, eſteems of *Death*, Joh. 11. 11. *Our Friend Lazarus ſleepeth*; and of *Jarius* his Daughter, Matt. 9. 24. *The Maid is not Dead, but Sleepeth*: Neither uſeth the Spirit of God any other Language, concerning his Servants under the Old Teſtament: *Now ſhall I ſleep in the Duſt*, ſaith holy *Job*, Job 7. 21. and of *David*, 2. Sam. 7. 12. *When thy days be fulfilled, thou ſhalt ſleep with thy Fathers*; nor yet under the New: *For this cauſe many are weak and ſickly among you, and many ſleep*, ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 Cor. 11. 30.

18. THE *Philophers* were wont to call *Sleep* the *Brother of Death*; but God ſays, *Death* is no other than *Sleep* it ſelf; a *Sleep* ſure and ſweet: When thou lieſt down at Night to thy Reſoſe, thou canſt not be certain to awake in the Morning, as when thou layeſt thy ſelf down in *Death*, thou art ſure to wake in the Morning of the Reſurrection. Out of this Bodily *Sleep*, thou may'ſt be ſtartled with ſome noiſe of Horror, fearful Dreams, Tumults, or alarms of War; but here thou ſhalt reſt quietly in the place of Silence, free

from all internal and external Disturbances, and in the mean time thy Soul shall see none but Visions of Joy and Blessedness.

19. BUT, oh the sweet and hearty expression of our last rest, and the Issue of our happy resurrection, which our holy Apostle hath laid forth, for the consolation of his mournful *Theſſalonians*, 1 *Theſſ.* 4. 14. *For if we believe, that Jesus died and rose again; Even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.* So that our belief is Antidote enough against the worst of *Death*: And why are we troubled, when we believe *Jesus* dyed, and what a Triumph is this over *Death*, that the same *Jesus* who dyed, rose again? And what a comfort is it, that the same *Jesus* who arose, shall come again and bring all his with him in *Glory*? And lastly, what a strong Cordial is this to all good Hearts, that all which die well, sleep in *Jesus*? Thou thoughtest, perhaps, of sleeping in the Bed of the *Grave*; and there indeed is Rest: But he tells thee of sleeping in the Bosom of *Jesus*; and there is Immortality and Blessedness. O blessed *Jesus*, in thy presence is the fulness of Joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore, *Psal.* 16. 12. Who would desire to walk in the World, when he may sleep in *Christ*.

20. THOU fearest *Death*: But on what terms, doth *Death* present himself to thee: If as an Enemy, (as the *Apostle* styles him) 1 *Cor.* 15. 26. *The last Enemy that shall be destroyed is Death*, thy unpreparedness will make him dreadful; but thy readiness and fortitude takes off his terror: If as a Messenger of *God* he is sent to convey thee to happiness, what reason hast thou to be afraid of thine own bliss? It is one thing what *Death* is in himself, a privation of *Life*; such as nature cannot chuse but abhor: Another what he is by *Christ* made unto

us; and introduction to Life, and a harbinger to Glory.

21. WHY, would the Lord of Life yield unto Death, and by yielding vanquish him; but to alter and sweeten him to us; and of a fierce Tyrant, make him a Friend and Benefactor? And if we look upon him thus changed, and reconciled, how can we chuse but bid him welcome?

22. THOU art afraid of the pangs of Death: Some have dyed without any great sense of pain: Some have yielded up their Souls without a groan: And how knowest thou, what measure God hath allotted thee? Our Death is a Sea-Voyage, (The holy *Apostle*, desired to *launch forth*, Phil. 1.) wherein some find a rough and tempestuous passage; others calm and smooth: Such thine may prove; and so thy dissolution may be easier than a fit of sickness.

23. BUT if God had determined otherwise, look unto *Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith*; (Heb. 12. 2.) the Son of God, the Lord of Glory; see with what Agonies he conflicted, what torments he endured for thee: Look upon his Bloody Sweat, Bleeding Temples, Furrowed Back, Nailed Hands and Feet, Rack'd Joints, and Pierc'd Side: Hear his strong Cries, consider the Shame, Pain and Curse of the Cross which he underwent for thy sake: Say whether thy sufferings can be comparable to his. He is a Cowardly and Unworthy Soldier that follows his *General* fighting. Behold, these are the steps wherein thy God and Saviour hath trod before thee: Walk on courageously in this deep and bloody way; and after a few paces thou shalt overtake him in Glory: For if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him, 2 Tim. 2. 12.

24. THOU shrink'st at the thoughts of Death: Is it not for over-valuing Life, and making Earth thy home?

home? Rich Persons that live at ease are loth to stir abroad, especially upon hard and stormy *Voyages*: Perhaps 'tis so with thee; wherein I cannot but much pity thy weakness, in placing thy contentment, where a wiser Man could find nothing but *vanity and vexation*.

25. A L A S, what is our Exile, if this be our home? What entertainment to be enamour'd on? Distempered humours, hard usages, violent passions, and bodily sicknesses; sad complaints, disappointed hopes, and frequent miscarriages, Momentary Pleasures mixt with sorrows, and lastly, umbrages, of joy, and real miseries: Doth these so bewitch thee, that when Death calls, thou art ready to reply, as the Devil to our Saviour, Mat. 8. 29 *Art thou come to torment me before the time?*

26. ARE these such contentments, as allures thee to the World, as St. Peter was to Mount *Tabor*, Mat. 17. 4. *Master, It is good for us to be here*, if thou have any Faith in thee, look up to the other World, where thou art going and see whether that true Life, pure Joy, perfect Felicity, and Eternity, may not be worthy to draw thy heart to a longing desire of Fruition, and a Contempt of what the Earth can promise, in comparison of infinite blessedness.

27. I T was one of the defects which Sir *Francis Bacon* found in Physicians that do not study Remedies to procure the easie passage of their Patients, through the Gates of Death: Such helps I leave to the care of the skilful Sages of Nature; the use I suppose must be with caution, lest whilst they endeavour to sweeten Death, they shorten Life.

28. BUT let me prescribe this spiritual means of thine happy *Euthanasia*; which is a faithful disposition of the labouring Soul, that can truly say with *Timothy*,

Timothy, 2 Tim. 1. 12. I know whom I have believed: and Chap. 4. 7, 8. I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the Faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the Righteous Judge shall give me at that day.

29. THOU startest at the mention of Death: How canst thou but blush to read *Plato Phædon* of *Socrates*, when the Message of Death was brought him; applauded the News with much joy: Or, of a Cardinal of *Rome*, that received the Intimation of his approaching Death, Cry'd out, *the news is good and welcome!* Is not their Confidence thy Shame; who believing *that when our Earthly house of this Tabernacle shall be dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens, 2 Cor. 5. 1.* yet shrinks at the motion of taking possession of it?

30. CANST thou with dying *Mithridates* be unwilling to forsake this light! when thou art going to a light more Glorious than the Sun: It is our infidelity, that makes us unwilling to die: Did we think the Soul sleeps as well as the Body, from the moment of the dissolution, till the day of Resurrection, death might be unwelcome.

31. OR, did we think we should wander to unknown places to uncertain entertainment; or fear a scorching Tryal upon the Emigration, in flames little inferiour to those of Hell, there were some cause to tremble at the approach of Death: But we can boldly say, with the Wise Man, *Wisd. 3. 1, 2, 3. The Souls of the Righteous are in the hands of God, and there shall no torment touch them: In the sight of the unwise they seem'd to die, and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction; but they are in peace.*

32. OH thou of little Faith, why fearst thou? Chide thy self, as that dying Saint of old, and say,
my

my Soul, go boldly forth, what art thou afraid of? Lo, the Angels are ready to receive thee, and carry thee to Glory; leave there this wretched Body, and be possess'd of Heaven: After a momentary darkness upon Nature, thou shalt enjoy the Beatifical Vision of God: Be not afraid to be happy, but say in Faith what *Jonah* said in Anger; *Jonah* 4. 3. *It is better for me to dye than to live.*

33. I am afraid to dye: This is Natures voice: But wilt thou hear what Faith saith? *To me to live is Christ, and to dye is gain.* If therefore Nature reigns in thee, thou must be affrighted with Death: But if true Grace be prevalent in thy Soul, that Guest shall not be unwelcome: Was ever any Man afraid of Profit and Advantage? Such is Death to the Faithful: Whosoever finds Christ his Life, shall be sure to find Death his gain, for he is thereby brought to a near Communion with him: Whereas before he enjoyed him by the dim apprehension of Faith, now he clearly and immediately enjoys that Glorious Presence, which only makes blessedness.

34. THIS is it that causeth *Death* to change his Copy; and renders him who is formidable, pleasing, and beneficial; *I desire to depart, and to be with Christ,* saith the Man who was rapt up in the third Heaven; had it been only departing, he had not been in such an extasie, but to *depart, and to be with Christ,* is that which raiseth his Soul.

35. WHEN *Socrates* was to dye for his Religion, he comforted himself with this, that he should go to *Orpheus, Homer, Musæus,* and the other Worthies of former Ages; Poor Man! Could he have known *God manifested in the flesh, and received up into Glory,* 1 Tim. 3. 16. and in that glorified state sitting at the right hand of Majesty; could he have known the Blessed Order of the *Cberubim and Seraphim, Angels, Arch-Angels, Principalities and Powers,* and the

the rest of the most Glorious Hierarchy of Heaven; Could he have been acquainted with that Celestial Choir of the *Spirits of Just Men made Perfect*: Heb. 12. 23. Could he have known the God and Father of Spirits, the Infinite and Incomprehensible Glorious Diety, whose Presence transfuses Everlasting Blessedness into all those Citizens of Glory, And could he have known that, he should have an undoubted interest in that infinite Bliss; how gladly would he have taken of his *hemlock*, and how joyfully would he have passed to that happy World;

36. ALL this we know, and no less assured then of our present being; with what comfort should we think of changing our present Condition with a Blessed Immortality? How sweet a Song was that of old *Simeon*? Luke 2. 29. *Lord, now lettest thou thy Servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy Salvation*: That which he saw by the Eye of Sense, thou seeest by the Eye of Faith; even the *Lords Christ*; *verse 16.* he saw him in Weakness, thou seeest him in Glory; why should'st thou not depart, not in peace only, but in joy and comfort?

37. HOW did the Proto-Martyr *Stephen* triumph over the rage of his Enemies, and the fury of Death, when he had once seen the *Heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God*? Acts 7. 56. God offers the same blessed prospect to the Eye of thy Soul: Faith is the Key that open the Heav'n of Heav'ns, fix thy eyes upon that Glorious and Saving Object: Thou canst not but lay down thy Body in peace, and send thy Soul into the hands of him that bought it, with the cheerful and sweet Recommendation, of *Lord Jesus receive my Spirit*, Acts 7. 39.

A Prayer at the Hour of Death.

O LORD GOD, Almighty, I humbly acknowledge my own vileness, through the whole course of my Life: And seeing thou hast thus long spared me, now accomplish thy Mercy in me: Be thou my God forever, and my Guide unto the end; O Comfort me, now my Heart trembleth in me, and the terrors of Death are fallen upon me, give me the long expected fruits of my hopes proposed to me in thy Word: O Blessed Jesu, who art the Death of death, now shew thy self my Saviour: Take from my afflicted Soul the sting of Death, and assure me of Victory: Loose the Pains, allay the Fears and Sorrows, and Sweeten the bitterness of Death, untill in my enjoying thy Presence it be swallowed up in Victory: O Holy Saviour, who hast had Experience of all our miseries for Sin, without Sin, and hast admitted us to be Baptized into the Similitude of thy Death and Resurrection: Let me now feel in my Languishing Soul the Power and Efficacy thereof.

2. O Christ, whose Human Soul, in thy Passion for my Redemption, was heavy unto Death, now mercifully Consider my Frailty who am now at the point of Dissolution: O now give me an Invincible Faith in thee, against which the Gates of Hell shall never prevail, now speak Peace and Comfort to my poor Soul: Thou who pouredst out thy Soul to Death for me, receive my wearied Spirit to Eternal Life: Let not this fearful passage be too bitter to me, but be thou ever present with me in all my sufferings: O Holy Ghost the Comforter of all the Elect, leave me not Comfortless, let me be gathered to my Fathers in Peace: Bring me to that Life wherein thou hast promised to wipe away all Tears from our Eyes: Where shall be no more Death, Sorrow, Pain, nor any bitter Effects of Sin: LORD hear me, O thou, who despisest not a broken
and

contrite Heart, have mercy upon me : Lord receive my Petitions ; and in thy appointed hour, come Lord Jesus, my Saviour and Redeemer, deliver me from this bondage of Corruption, even so come Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen.

S E C T. XVII.

Of Judgment

1. **T**HOU apprehendest true ; *Death* is terrible, but *Judgment* more ; both succeed upon the same decree ; *It is appointed unto Men once to dye ; but after this the judgment :* Heb. 9. 27. It is not more terrible, than thought on : *Death*, because he strikes, and lays before us examples of *Mortality*, cannot but sometimes take up our hearts ; but the last *Judgment*, having no visible proofs upon our thoughts, too seldom fright us :

2. **YET** who conceives the Terror of that day ? When *the Sun shall be turn'd into darkness, and the Moon into blood*, Acts 2. 20. That day, *which shall burn as an Oven, when all the proud, and all that do wickedly shall be as the stubble ;* Mal. 4. 1. That day, *in 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 :* 2 Pet. 3. 10. That day, *wherein the Lord Jesus shall be reveal'd from Heaven with his mighty Angels ; in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,* 2 Theff. 1. 7, 8. That day, *wherein the Lord will come with fire, and with his Chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire, for by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead*
with

with all flesh, Isa. 66. 15, 16. That day, wherein the Son of Man shall come in his Glory, and all the Holy Angels with him; and shall sit upon the Throne of his Glory; and all Nations shall be gathered before him; and he shall separate them one from another, as a Shepherd divideth his Sheep from the Goats, Mat. 25. 31, 32. And that day, wherein all the kindreds of the Earth shall wail because of him, Rev. 1. 7.

3. **THAT** great and terrible day of the Lord, Joel 2. 31. wherein if the powers of Heav'n be shaken, how can the heart remain unmoved? And if the World be dissolved, who can abide it? Alas, we are ready to tremble at Thunder in a Cloud; and at Lightning that glances our Eyes; what shall we do when the Heavens shall break in pieces, and be on flame about our Ears? *Oh who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth?* Mal. 3. 2.

4. **YET** be of good cheer, amidst all this horror there is comfort; whether thou be one whom it shall please God to reserve upon the Earth to the sight of this dreadful day, he knows in whose hands our times are; but this we are sure of, that we are upon the last days: And we may spit in the Faces of St. Peters Scoffers, that say *where is the promise of his coming?* Knowing that the Lord is not slack, but he that shall come, will come, and not tarry, 2 Pet. 3. 4, 9. Heb. 10. 17. And some may live to see the Son of Man come in the Clouds of Heaven, in this last Scene of the World:

5. **I F** so, let not thy heart be dismay'd with these fearful things: Thy change shall be sudden, one Moment shall put off Mortality, and clothe thee with Incorruption, not capable of fear and pain: The Majesty of this appearance shall add to thy Joy and Glory: *Thou shalt then see the Lord himself descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Arch-*

Arch-Angel and with the trump of God: Thou shalt see thy self, and those other which are alive and remain to be caught up into the Clouds to meet the Lord in the Air; and so shalt thou be ever with the Lord. On this Assurance, the Apostle subjoyns, *Wherefore comfort one another with these words, 1 Thes. 4. 16, 17, 18.* And if ever there were comfort in words, not of Men or Angels, but of the God of Truth, these will afford it to our trembling Souls.

6. BUT if thou be one whom God hath determin'd to Summon before the great day of his appearance; here is a joy unspeakable and full of Glory: *For those that sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him; 1 Thes. 4. 15.* They shall be of that Glorious Train, which shall attend the Great Judge of the World: Yea they shall be Co-assessors to the Lord of Heaven and Earth, in this Judicature; sitting upon the Bench, when guilty Men and Angels shall be at the Bar: *To him that overcometh, saith Christ, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father upon his Throne, Rev. 3. 21.* What place is here for any terror, since such heavenly Magnificence, fulness of Joy and Eternal Glory?

7. THOU art afraid to think of Judgment; I had rather thou wert awful, than timorous, when *St. Paul, Acts 24. 25.* discoursed of the judgment to come, it is no marvel that *Felix* trembled; But the same Apostle, when he pressed to his *Corinthians*, the certainty and generality of our appearance before the Judgment-Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body whether good or evil; adding, *knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest to God, 2 Cor. 5. 10, 11.*

8. THE holiest Man is not exempted from the dread, but slavish fear of the great Judge: We know his infinite Justice; and are Conscious of our mani-

fold failings: And how can we acknowledge these, and not fear? But this fear works not in us a Malignant repining at the severe Tribunal of the Almighty, but a careful endeavour to approve our selves that we may be acquitted by him, and appear blameless in his presence. How justly may we tremble, when we look upon our Actions and Deserts? But confidently appear at the Bar, where we are assur'd of a discharge? *Being justified by Faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom. 5. 1.* When we think of a Conflagration of the World, how can we but fear? But when we think of a happy restitution of all things; how can we but rejoice in trembling? *Acts 3. 21.*

9. THOU quakest at the expectation of Judgment: Surely the Majesty of that great Assize must needs be formidable: And if the delivery of the Law on Mount Sinai, (*Exod. 19. 16, 18.*) were with so dreadful a Pomp of Thunder and Lightning, Fire, Smoak and Earthquakes, that the Israelites were half dead with fear in receiving it; with what terrible Magnificence shall God come to require an account of that Law at the hands of the whole sinful generation of Mankind?

10. REPRESENT unto thy thoughts, that which was shewed to the Prophet Daniel, *Dan. 7. 9, 10.* Imagine thou sawst, the Ancient of days sitting upon a Throne like a fiery flame; a fiery stream issuing and coming forth from before him; thousand thousands ministring unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before him; the judgment set and the Books opened: Or as John, the Daniel of the New Testament, saw *Rev. 20. 11, 12.* A great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose Face the Earth and the Heavens fled away, and the dead both small and great standing before God; and the Books opened and the Dead judged out of those things which were written in those Books, according to their works.

11. LET the eyes of thy mind foresee that which these bodily eyes shall once see; and tell me how thou feelest thy self affected with the sight of such a Judge, such an appearance, and such a process: And if thou art in a trembling Condition, cheer thy self with this, that thy Judge is thine Advocate; that upon that Throne sits not greater Majesty than Mercy: It is thy Saviour that shall sentence thee; how safe art thou then under such hands? Canst thou fear he will doom thee to death, who dyed to give thee life? Canst thou fear he will condemn thee for those sins which he hath given his blood to expiate? Canst thou fear the rigour of that Justice which he hath so fully satisfied? Or canst thou misdoubt the miscarriage of that Soul he hath so dearly bought?

12. NO, all this Divine State and Magnificence makes for thee. Let those guilty and impenitent Souls, *Rom. 2. 5.* who have heaped unto themselves *Wrath against the day of wrath*, quake at the Glorious Majesty of the Son of God; for whom nothing remains, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries, *Heb. 10. 27.* But for thee who art reconciled unto God by the Mediation of the Son of his love, and incorporated into Christ, and made a Member of his Mystical Body; thou art Commanded with all the Faithful, *to look up, and lift up thy head; for now the day of Redemption is come, Luk. 21. 28. Ephes. 4. 30.*

13. AND indeed it is thy priviledge, since by vertue of a blessed Union with thy Saviour, this Glory is thine; every Member hath an interest in the Honour of the Head. *Rejoyce therefore in the day of the Lord Jesus, Phil. 2. 16.* And when the Tribes of the Earth shall wail. *Rev. 1. 7.* Do thou Sing and call to the Heavens and Earth to bear thee Company: *Let the Heavens rejoyce, and let the Earth*

be glad : Let the Sea make a noise, and all that is therein : Let the Fields be joyful, and all that is in it. Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoyce before the Lord : for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the Earth, and with righteousness to judge the World, and the People with his Truth, Psal. 96. 11, 12, 13.

14. **THOU** art affrighted with the thought of that Great Day : Think oftner, and thou shalt less fear it ; it will come surely, and suddenly ; let thy frequent thoughts prevent it, it will come as a Thief in the Night, without warning or noise : Let thy careful vigilance expect it ; and thy Soul shall not be surprized, nor confounded. Thine Audit is sure and uncertain : Sure that it will be, but uncertain the time. If thou wilt approve thy self a good Steward, have thine Account ready ; and set thy reckoning even betwixt God and thy Soul : *Blessed is that Servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing*, Mat. 24. 46.

15. **LOOK** upon the Heavens, and Earth as Dissolving ; and think with St. *Jerome*, that thou hearest the last Trump, and voice of the Arch-angel shrilling in thine Ears, *Arise ye dead and come to judgment*. Let it be thy main care, to live Soberly, Righteously, and Godly in this present World, looking for that Blessed Hope, and the Glorious Appearing of the Great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity ; *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like to his Glorious body ; according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself*, Phil. 3. 21.

A preparatory Prayer of the Judgment to come.

O Omipotent Lord God, who hast appointed a day wherein thou wilt bring all the world to judgment, with every secret thing whether it be good, or whether it be

be evil: O make me try my Soul daily and hourly at the Bar of my own Conscience, that accusing and judging my self for my sins and transgressions, thou mayst not condemn me at thy dreadful Tribunal: Lord, let that remarkable day be often in my thoughts, that the fear of it and thee, may be ever before my eyes: And my Conscience may be kept more pure by the power of that dread and fear; give me an earnest desire and a careful endeavour to direct all my ways, and to order the whole Course of my Life, according to the Rule and Precepts of thy Holy Word; let it be my utmost care and diligence to have a good Conscience in all things, and to live so that my Life being approved of thee, my Death may be happy, and my appearance before thee in the day of thy coming surrounded with joy and comfort.

2. GRANT that the Merit of thy Death, and Vertue of thy Resurrection, may both Mortifie all my Sinful and Corrupt Affections, and raise me to the Life of Righteousness, that dying to Sin, and governed here by thy Power, and hereafter Acquitted by thy final Sentence, I may at last arrive to a perfect Union with thee, with a full view and eternal enjoyment of thee, and thy Blessed Presence: Grant this through thy Mercies, O Heavenly Father, thy Merits, O Gracious Jesu, and thy Assistance, O Holy Spirit, Three Persons, One only Wise, Omnipotent and Immortal God, to whom belongeth all Honour, Praise, Might, Majesty and Dominion, in Heaven and Earth, from this time forth and to all eternity. Amen.

S E C T. XVIII.

Spiritual Conflicts.

1. THOU art affrighted at the thought of Spiritual Enemies: Earth nor Hell hath any thing so formidable. Power, Malice and Subtilty, are met in them: Neither is it easie to say in which of these they

they are most eminent. Certainly, were we to match with him on even hands, their was just cause not of Fear, but Despair.

2. I could tremble, thou sayst, to think what Satan hath done, and what he can do: With what Contestation he enabled the *Egyptian* Sorcerers to stand with *Moses*; how they turn'd their *Rods* into *Serpents*; and seem'd to have the advantage of many *Serpents* crawling and hissing in *Pharaoh's* Pavement, *Exod.* 7. 12. How they turn'd *waters* into *blood*, *vers.* 22. and brought *Frogs* upon the Land of *Egypt*, *Exod.* 8. 7. as if thus far the power of Hell would presume to hold Competition with Heaven: What furious Tempests he raises in the Air, as that from the Wilderness beat upon the four corners of the House of *Job's* eldest Son, and overthrew it, *Job* 1. 19. Now *Job* was the greatest Man in the East, *Job* 1. 3. His Heir dwelt not in a Cottage, but a strong Fabrick, which could not stand against this Hurricane of Satan.

3. WHAT fearful Apparitions he makes in upper Regions: What great wonders, causing Fire to come down from Heaven on the Earth, in the sight of Men, *Rev.* 13. 13. Lastly, what grievous Tyranny he exerciseth upon the Children of Disobedience, *Eph.* 5. 6. Couldst thou expect any less, from those the Spirit of God himself styles *Principalities and Powers, and Rulers of the Darkness of this World, and spiritual wickednesses in high Places,* (*Eph.* 6. 12.) and the Prince of the Power of the Air, *Eph.* 2. 2.

4. SURELY it were no Victory to be a Christian, if we had not powerful Opposites; but dost thou not consider that this Power is by Concession, and the Exercise but with Permission, and Limitation? What Power is their in any Creature, which is not derived from the Almighty? This Measure the Infinite Creator was pleas'd to communicate

to them, as Angels, which they retain and Exercise as Devils; their damnation hath stript them of Glory; but we know not how much their strength is abated.

5. AND we may perceive how their Power is bounded? Those that turn'd their Rods into Serpents, could not keep 'em from being devour'd of that one *Serpent of Moses*: Those that brought *Frogs* upon *Egypt*, cannot bring *Lice*; those that were suffer'd to bring *Frogs*, lose that power to take 'em away: Restrained Powers must know their Limits, and we knowing them, must set limits to our Fears; a *Lion* chain'd can do less harm than a *Cur* loose: Why art thou concern'd at the powerfulness of Spirits, whilst they by an over-ruling Power are tied to their Stake that they cannot hurt thee?

6. THY Fears are increas'd with their number, which are as many as Powerful: one *Demoniack* was possessed with a Legion; how many Legions then tempt those Millions of Men upon the face of the Earth, whereof none is free from their Solicitations to evil? That holy Man whom our counterfeit Hermits pretend to imitate, in the Vision of his retiredness, saw the Air full of them, and their snares for Mankind; and were our Eyes as clear as His, we might perhaps meet with the same Prospect: But be not dismay'd. Couldst thou borrow the eyes of the Servant of an Holier Master, thou shouldst see, that *there are more with us, than against us*, 2 Kin. 6. 16. Thou shouldst see the blessed Angels of God, pitching their Tents about thee, as the Powerful, Vigilant and Constant Guardians of thy Soul: These are those Valiant ones about thy Bed; *They all hold Swords, being expert in VVar; every one his Sword upon his Thigh, because of fear in the night*, Cant. 3. 7, 8.

7. FEAR not therefore but make the Lord, *Even the Most High, thy Habitation; then there shall no*

evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling: For he shall give his Angels charge over thee in all thy ways, they shall bear thee up in their hands lest thou dash thy foot against a stone; and besides this indemnity Thou shalt tread upon the Lyon and Adder; the young Lyon and the Dragon shalt thou trample under thy feet, Psal. 91. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. In secular Enmity, true Valour may be oppress'd, but not easily daunted with Multitude; *I will not be afraid of ten thousand,* (saith David) Psal. 3. 6. and Psal. 118. 12. *They came about me like Bees, but in the Name of the Lord will I destroy them.*

8 IT was a brave Resolution in that General, when a Soldier told him, the Persian Arrows darkned the Sun; he of good cheer, said he, then we shall fight in the shade: Answerable to which, was that Heroical Determination of Luther, who against all Threats and Disswasions, would go into the City of Worms, though as many Devils were in it, as Tiles upon the Houses; and why should we not imitate this Confidence? What if there were as many Devils in the Air, as are Spires of Grass upon the Earth? *God is our refuge and strength, as a very present help in trouble; therefore will we not fear, though the Earth be removed; though the Mountains be carried into the midst of the Sea,* Psal. 46. 12. *Behold, God is our Salvation, we will trust, and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah, is our strength and our song, he also is become our Salvation,* Isa. 12. 2. *Let God arise, and let his Enemies be scattered; let them also that hate him flee before him; like as the smoake vanisheth, so shalt thou drive them away.* Psal. 68. 1, 2.

9. BUT oh the malice of those infernal Spirits, is implacable and deadly, whose Artifice is Temptation, and Accusation; whose delight Torment, Shrieks, Howlings, Groans and Gnashing; whose main Driit is the Eternal Damniation of miserable Mankind!

Mankind ! Why should we expect otherwise from him, who is a Manslayer from the beginning ? That carries Destruction in his Name and Nature ? That goes about like a roaring *Lyon*, seeking whom he may devour ?

10. SURELY, this Malignant is restless; on this side Hell. But comfort thy self in spite of Hells malice, thou art safe. Dost thou not know by thee stands the Victorious *Lyon* of the Tribe of *Judah*, whom that infernal Fiend dare not look in the Face ? Dost thou not remember, when sentence was pronounc'd of Eternal Enmity, between the Seed of the Woman, and the Seed of the Serpent, it was with this Doom, *It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel*, Gen. 3. 15.

11. A bruise of a Heel is far from the Heart ; but a bruise of the Serpents Head is Mortal ; where his Sting is, there his Life lies : Neither did the Seed of the Woman (Christ Jesus) this for himself (who was infinitely above all the Power and Malice of the Devil) but for us the impotent and sinful Seed of Man : *The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your Feet*, saith the blessed Apostle, *Rom. 16. 20.* not under his own only : Of whom God the Father had long before said, *Sit thou on my Right Hand, till I make thine Enemies thy Foot-stool*, *Psal. 110. 1.* But what do I speak of the Future ? Already is this great work atchieved : For *the Lord of Life, having spoiled Principalities and Powers, hath made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them on his Cross*, *Col. 2. 15.*

12. ALL the Powers of Hell were dragg'd after this Conquerour, when he advanced upon that Triumphant Chariot. Look therefore on these Hellish Forces, as vanquished ; and know that *in all things we are more than Conquerors through him that loved us*, *Rom. 8. 37.* Only do thou by the power of thy Faith, apply to thy self this great work that thy Victorious
Saviour

Saviour hath done for Salvation of all Believers.

13. P O W E R without Malice were Harmless; and Malice without Power Impotent: But when both combine together, they are Dreadful. But, Malice to execute Mischief, hath Force, or Fraud; now the Malice of Satan prevails more by the latter; and the Subtilty of these Malignant Spirits is perniciouser than their Power: In his Power, he is a *Lion*, *Psal. 7. 2.* in his *Subtilty*, he is a *Serpent*, *Gen. 3. 1.* He is that *Old Serpent*, *Rev. 20. 2.* Whose craft is marvellously increased by the Experience of so many thousand Years.

14. T H E N the more careful ought we to be, lest, as the Apostle saith, *2 Cor. 2. 11.* *Satan should get an advantage of us*: This he seeks; and if our Spiritual Wisdom and Circumspection be not vigilant, will be sure to find. It is a Word, too sublime for us, which the Apostle speaks, *2 Cor. 2. 11.* *For we are not ignorant of Satans devices.* Alas, he hath a thousand that weak Simplicity is not able to reach: The Wisest knows not the Deceitfulness of his own heart; much less can we dive into the Plots of Hell that are against us.

15. W E hear, and are forwarned of *the wiles of the Devil*, *Eph. 6. 11.* But what his Machinations are, how can we know, or prevent? *Ev'n the Children of this world*, saith our Saviour, *Luke 16. 8.* *are in their Generation wiser than the Children of Light*: How Craftier is their Father from whom their cunning is deriv'd? Be as humble then as thou wilt; and say with *Agur the Son of Jakeb*, *Prov. 30. 2, 3.* *Surely I am more brutish then any man, and have not the understanding of a man: I neither learned Wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the Holy.*

16. B U T what ever thou art in thy self, know what thou art in Gods esteem: Consider what the *Psalmist* impartially professes, *Psal. 119. 98.* *Thou*
through

through thy Commandments, hast made me wiser than mine Enemies ; for they are ever with me : The Spirit of Wisdom is ours as well as Righteousness, Deut. 34. 9. Eph. 1. 17. 1 Cor. 1. 30. And he who over-rules Hell, hath said, Mat. 16. 18. *The Gates of Hell shall not prevail against his Church :*

17. WHAT are Hell Gates, but the deep Plots of those Infernal Powers ? The *Serpent* is the *Emblem* of *Subtilty* : The *Serpents* of the *Egyptian Sorcerers*, were devoured by *Moses his Serpent*. Wherefore, but to shew that all crafty Counsels and Machinations of hellish Projectors, are easily destroyed by the Power and Wisdom of the Almighty : It was the Rod of God that swallow'd 'em all, and was still it self, when they were vanquished : And when Satan thought to have won most honor to himself, attended him shame and loss.

18. WHAT an advantage did the Powers of Darkness think to acquire, in drawing our first Parents, by their subtil Suggestions into sin, and perdition, imagining either Mankind shall not, or shall be ours ? But the Incomprehensible Wisdom, and Mercy of God disappointed their hopes ; and took occasion by Man's fall, to raise him to a greater Glory ; and so order it, that the *Serpents* nibbling at the heel, lost him the breaking of his head. What Trophies did that wicked Spirit think to erect upon the Ruines of miserable *Job*, and how was that Saint doubled in his Estate and Honour, by his conquering Patience ?

19. HOW confidently did the Subtilty of Hell say, concerning the Son of God exhibited in the flesh ; *This is the Heir, come let us kill him, and the Inheritance shall be ours ?* Mat. 21. 38. Mar. 12. 7. Luke 20. 14. How sure work did they think they had made, when they saw him, through their subtil procurement, nailed to the cross, and dying up-

on that tree of shame and curse; when they saw him laid under a Sealed and Guarded *Gravestone*? And now begins their Confusion and his Triumph; Now doth the Lord of Life trample upon *Death* and *Hell*; and to perfect his own Glory, and Man's Redemption, by his most Glorious Resurrection.

20. A ND as it was with the Head, so with the Members: When *Satan* had done his worst, they are zealoufer upon their sins, and happier upon their miscarriages; God finds out a way to improve their evils to advantage, and teaches them of *Vipers* to make Sovereign *Treacles*, and safe and powerful *Trochises*. The Temptations of *Satan*, sent from his Power, Malice, and Subtilty, are but fiery darts, for their Suddenness, Impetuosity, and Penetration: If we can hold *the Shield of Faith* before us, Eph. 6. 16. They shall not be quenched, but retorted in the Face of him that sends them; and we shall with the holy Apostle find and profess, that, *In all things we are more then Conquerors, through him that loved us*; Rom. 8. 37. And in a bold defiance of all the Powers of Darknes, say, (ver. 38, 39.) *I am perswaded, that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

A Prayer in Spiritual Conflicts,

O Blessed Jesu! the Lord of Life, Prince of Glory, and Captain of our Salvation! the perplexing trouble of my distracting thoughts, do by their sly insinuations and secret importunities disturb the quiet of my mind, and make my holy duties become a weariness to my Soul: They cool the heat, they damp the Vigor, and dead the Comfort of all my Devotions: Yea, even when I beseech
God

God to forgive my sins, I then sin whilst I am praying for forgiveness; whether it be in the Church or the Closets, so Frequently and so Violently do these vain thoughts withdraw my heart from thy service, that I cannot have confidence, thou hearest my Suit, because I know by Experience my own deafness; and therefore, sure, needs must thou, O God, be far off from my Prayers, whilst my heart is so far out of thy presence, and hurried away with a Crowd of vain Imaginations.

2. But Lord, keep my Faith fixt upon thy Mediation, let me behold thy Incense when I offer my Sacrifice, and though distractions have withdrawn me from my self, yet let not distrust drive me from my Jesus. O give me an encrease of Saving Knowledge, which will prove a sure means of Sanctifying my thoughts; Mortifie in me all vile Affections and Inordinate Passions, and suppress all evil thoughts and vain Imaginations, and by thy Special Grace, Excite and Cherish in me Holy and Spiritual Affections: Thou who hast vanquish't Satan and all the powers of Darkness; O give Victory to me, and all languishing Souls in our Spiritual Conflicts; guide us with thy Counsels, sustain us with thy Grace, refresh us with thy Comforts, preserve us in thy Love, and crown us with thy Glory. Amen. Amen. Hallelujah!

S E C T. XIX.

The Character of Patience.

1. **P**ATIENCE is a peaceable disposition of the whole Man, not troubled, nor troublesome; but abstaining from whatsoever may disturb himself or others. In its Definition, we may observe these five heads, first the nature of Patience; it is peaceable, and quiet; not subject to sudden Passion,

Passion, light Motions, or short Affections towards it; but an habitual Disposition and due Composure of a Mans self, which may bear the impression of *David's* Motto, *Psal. 120. 7. I am for Peace.*

2. **SECONDLY**, the subject of *Patience*: The whole Man, not the external, but the internal the heart and head; the mind and manners, must be dispos'd, and compos'd towards it: Principally indeed the Heart, *For out of it are the issues of Life, Prov. 4. 23.* and unless there be a *Meek and Quiet Spirit, 1 Pet. 3. 4.* It is impossible to acquire it, but withall there must be a quiet *Hand, Psal. 24. 4.* A quiet *Eye, Job 31. 1.* A quiet *Ear, Prov. 2. 2.* And a quiet *Tongue, Psal. 39. 1.* And all parts and faculties of the Soul disposed to *Patience.*

3. **THIRDLY**, the parts of *Patience*, is not in being troubled, or being troublesom, neither actively impatient in displeasing others, nor passively impatient in being disquieted by others. Fourthly, the practice of *Patience*, is an abstinence from whatsoever may disturb, for so the word *Patience* (commonly Translated) doth import: And *St. James* doth thus describe it, *Jam. 1. 21. A laying aside of all filthiness and superfluity of maliciousness.*

4. **FIFTHLY**, The Object of *Patience*, or *Impatience*, either in our selves, or others. Men disquiet themselves either by Causeless conceit of offence offered, when it is not: By being too suspicious, and *Inventers of evil things, Rom. 1. 30.* or by too much taking to heart, an offence when it is offered; by being too *Furious, 2 Tim. 3. 3.* Men disturb others, either in offering occasion of offence by being *Injurious and Disorderly, 2 Thess. 3. 11.* or by bitter seeking *Revenge, being full of Maliciousness, Rom. 1. 29.* So Man likewise disturb themselves and others; when they continue in their sins, and never think of *Repentance*: As *Elijah* told *Abab, 1 King. 18. 18. It*

is thou and thy Fathers house that trouble and disquiet Israel.

5. BY this short view we have taken of *Patience*, we may behold the true Character of a *Patient Man*: He is one of a *Mild Nature*, and true *Christian Temper*, *swift to bear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath*, 1 Pet. 3. 4. Phil. 2. 5. Jam. 1. 19. His head is not over-laden with *Cares of this Life*, nor his heart with *Fears*, his eyes are not itching after *Vanities*, nor his Ears after *Novelties*, Luk. 21. 34. Prov. 29. 25. Jer. 22. 17. A&C. 17. 21.

6. His *Hands* are not intermeddling with impertinent business, nor his *Feet* swift to run into *Evil*: His *Mouth* is far from *Cursing* and *Bitterness*, kept in as a *Bridle*, that it should not *Offend*, 1 Thes. 4. 11. Prov. 4. 26. Rom. 3. 14, Psal. 39. 1. Psal. 17. 3. His whole body is fit for a *Load of Injuries*, which he bears not out of *baseness*, and *cowardise*, because he dares not *Revenge*, but out of *Christian Fortitude*, because he will not, Rom. 12. 13.

7. HIS *Arms* are strengthened by the *Mighty God of Jacob*, *his hands are washt in Innocency*, and his breast is the *breastplate of Righteousness*, Gen. 49. 24. Psal. 26. 6. Eph. 6. 4. The hid-man of his heart, consisteth of *A meek and a quiet Spirit*, and his *Bowels* are *Bowels of Mercy, Meekness and Compassion*, 1 Pet. 3. 4. Col. 3. 12. His *Loins* are girt about with *Truth*, his *Knees* are pliable to *Bow*, his *Legs* to *bear*, and his *Foot* standeth in an *even place*, Eph. 6. 14. Psal. 26. 12.

8. HE is one can moderate himself in *Prosperity*, and content himself in *Adversity*. His hopes are so strong they can insult over the greatest discouragements; and his apprehensions so deep, that when he hath once fastned, he sooner leaveth his life then his hold. Contrariety of Events, Exercise, not dismay him; and when Crosses Afflict him, he seeth a *Divine Hand*, invisibly striking with those sensible scourges, against which he dares not *Murmur* nor *Rebel*.

9. HE troubleth not himself, with Exciting Thoughts nor others, with needles Suits: He intermeddles not in others business, nor adventures upon rash Attempts, he offends none with provoking Terms, not taketh offence at others Actions, He lendeth not his Ear to idle Tales, nor soweth discord, or seeketh Revenge: But hath a meek heart, a contented mind, and a charitable eye; his Tongue is Affable, hand Peaceable, and his gesture sociable. His Deportment is Neighbourly, his Judgment charitable, a loving Speaker, and a friendly Converter: He puts up all wrongs patiently, and wrongs none willingly. And such manner of Men ought we to be in all holy Conversation. And I shall end with the words of the holy Apostle, and desire of God, that he would *direct your hearts into his love, and into the patient waiting for him,* 2 Theſ. 3. 5.

I shall not think it improper to insert here a Relation of Sir *Thomas Moore*, that excellent Pattern of *Patience*, who wholly resigned himself to the will of the Divine Providence.

Sir *Thomas* returning from beyond Sea after his Embassy, and being remote from his House with the King, in the Month of *August*, part of his dwelling House, and all his Barns laden with Corn, were by a sudden Fire consumed, his Lady by a Letter certified him of this sad mischance, to which he return'd her this Answer,

Madam, *All Health wished to you; I do understand that all our Barns and Corn, with some of our Neighbours likewise are wasted by a fire, an heavy and lamentable loss, (but only that it was Gods will) of such abundance of Wealth; but because it so seemed good to God we must not only patiently, but also willingly, bear and submit to the hand of God so stretched out upon us. God gave whatsoever we have lost; and seeing it hath pleased him to take away what he gave, his Divine Will be done: Never let us repine at this, but let us take it in good part, we are bound to be thank-ful as well in Adversity as in Prosperity; and if we cast up our Accounts well; this which we esteem so great a loss, is rather a great gain: For what is necessary and conducing to our*
Salvation;

Salvation, is better known to God than us, I intreat you therefore to have a good heart, and to take all your Family with you to the Church, and there give thanks to God for all these things which he hath pleas'd to take away, as well as for his blessings which he hath bestow'd on us; and to praise him for that which is left; It is an easie matter with God if he please, to Augment what is yet left, but if he shall see good to take away more, even as it shall please him so let it be.

And let Enquiry be made, what my Neighbours have lost, and wish them not to be sorry: For I will not that my Neighbours shall suffer any thing by my loss, though I leave not my self any thing; and though all should be taken away, I pray thee, O Alice, be joyfull in the Lord with my Children and all our Family; all these things, and we; are in the hands of the Lord. Let us therefore wholly depend upon his good will; and so no losses shall ever hurt us: Farewel.

From the Court at Woodstock,

September 13th. 1529.

What a sincere Devotion was here to the Divine Will of God! What a Letter from a heart truly settled upon Heav'n? This Master of the Family had learn'd his Lesson well, and was grown a proficient in the *Art of Patience*. This was a Man that by supporting himself upon God's Providence, was able to bear all losses sweetly. Behold an *Ostrich*, able to digest Iron! His Barns were burnt, but his Mind was cool, *Patience* kept him in his uprightness. In a short space after, God requited his Losses; in *September* he received this heavy news: In *October* he was promoted Lord Chancellor of *England*; so that not only Honour, but his Means also were mightily enlarged, that now he needs not repair his Barns, but may build new ones.

Certainly there is not in the World such a holy sort of Artifice, so Divine a charm to unite God to us, as this of resigning our selves to him. We find the *Gibeonites* by yielding themselves *Vassals* to the *Israelites*, had their whole Army at their back to rescue them in their danger, *Jos. 10. 6.* and can we think God is less considerate of his Homagers and Dependents? No, certainly, his Honour, as well as his Compassion is concern'd in the relief of those who have Surrendred themselves to him.

A Prayer for Patience.

O Most gracious God, let not the Spirit of Impatience possess me, whereby I may in any measure incur thy displeasure, thou art my Maker, O let me strive with thee, I am the Work of thy Hands, and therefore with thee there is no contending; if I provoke thee by struggling under the Yoke of Affliction, the end thereof will be Gault to my Neck, and Bitterness to my Conscience: But, O Lord, it is not my Punishment thou pursuest after, but my Repentance and Amendment of Life; and what thou art pleased to inflict upon me is but to chase me to my Duty; which when I have perfectly learnt, I know thou wilt fully Reward and Recompence my Patience, that I may possess my own Soul in the day of the Lord Jesus.

2. O thou that art the wise disposer of all Things, both in Heaven and Earth, let me look up to thee, from whence cometh Affliction, and then inspect into my own Heart, where I shall find out the efficient Cause: O let nothing then seem to perplex me, which thou in thy good pleasure knoweth to be advantagious; but let me ever be content to drink of the bitterest Cup of Affliction, which thou hast allotted me; O let thy good Spirit still strive with me, and draw me unto thee with the Cords of thy Love; it is of thy tender Mercies that I am not consumed, but I know thy Compassion fails not towards poor and wretched Sinners: Lord give me Grace to perform this Duty, and say of my Affliction, as thou, O Jesu, didst of thy bitter Cup and Passion; Father! if it be thy will let this Cup pass from me! if not; not my Will, but thy Will be done. Amen.

The C L O S E.

Consisting of Scriptural Ejaculations, referring to the several Sections of the before-going Treatise.

1. **H**AVING gone through this short Tract of the Art of Patience, I shall now lay down these following Ejaculations, as being most necessary, and we have St. James's Testimony for it, *Is any among you afflicted, let him pray, James 5.13.* This

is the Great and Sovereign *Catholicon* of the distressed Soul, which is able to give relief to all the fore-mentioned Complaints.

2. FOR *Meekness, Humility and Patience*; hearken unto thy Saviour's Lesson, Mat. 11. 29. *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your Souls*: And St. Paul, earnestly beseeches us, Ephes. 4. 1, 2, 3. *To walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith we are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love.* And David gives us this Comfort, Psal. 25. 8. *Them that are meek shall be guide in judgment: and such as are gentle, them shall he learn his way.* And Psal. 9. 18. *For the poor shall not always be forgotten: The patient abiding of the meek shall not perish for ever.* Psal. 37. 9. *Wicked doers shall be rooted out, but they that patiently abide the Lord, those shall inherit the land.* And then lastly thou mayst say, to thy great joy and comfort, *I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my calling;* Psal. 40. 1.

3. W H E N thou art cast down on thy Bed of Sickness, Call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray, James 5. 14. This was *Hezekiah's* Recipe, when he was sick unto Death; then he turned his Face to the Wall, and prayed, 2 King. 20. 1, 2. Pray with David; Psal. 6. 2. *Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak; O Lord heal me, for my bones are vexed.* And take the Counsel of the wise Man: Eccus. 38. 9. *My Son, in thy Sickness be not negligent, but pray unto the Lord, and he will make thee whole.*

4. IF thou art afflicted in Conscience, pray with David, Psal. 18. 5, 6. *The sorrows of Hell compassed me about, and the snares of Death prevented me: In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cryed unto my God.*

5. ART thou infested with importunate Temptations, pray earnestly with St. Paul, when the Messenger of Satan was sent to buffet him: 2 Cor. 12. 8.

Thrice I besought the Lord that it might depart from me. And Holy David he complains, while I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted; thy fierce wrath goeth over me: But unto thee have I cryed, O Lord, and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee, Psal. 88. 15, 16, 17.

6. IF thou art disheartned with imbecillity of Grace, use *David's Prayer, I am feeble and sore broken, I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart: Lord, all my desire is before thee, Psal. 38. 8, 9.*

7. WHEN thou art afflicted with loss of Reputation, and Slander of Evil Tongues, say with the Psalmist, *The mouth of the wicked, and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me; they have spoken against me with a lying Tongue: Hold not thy peace, O God, of my praise, Psal. 109. 1, 2.*

8. IN time of publick Calamities, of *War, Famine, or Pestilence*, pray with good *Jehosaphat*, who importun'd God with his Gracious Promise made to *Solomon: If when evil cometh upon us, as the Sword, Judgment, or Pestilence, or Famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence, and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help: And shuts up his zealous Supplication with, neither know we what to do, but our Eyes are upon thee, 2 Chron. 9. 12.*

9. AT loss of Friends, in thy affliction, pray and have recourse to God, as *Ezekiel*, when *Peletiah*, the Son of *Benajab* died: *Ezek. 11. 13. Then fell I down upon my face, and cryed with a loud voice, and said, ah, Lord God! Wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?*

10. IN time of Poverty, pray with *David*, *Psal. 109. 24, 25, 26. I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me: I became also a reproach to them, when they that looked upon me, shaked their heads: Help me, O Lord my God; Oh save me according to thy mercy.*

11. IN Confinement, pray with *Jonah* when he was shut up within the *Living-Walls of the Whale; Jonah*

Jonah 2. 1, 2. *I cryed by reason of my affliction unto the Lord; and joyn with Asaph in prayer, Psal. 79. 11. Oh let the sorrowful sighing of the Prisoners come before thee, and according to the greatness of thy power, preserve thou those that are appointed to die.*

12. IN Exile, use Solomons Prescription; 2 Chr. 6. 36, 37, 38, 39. *If thy people be carried away into a Land far off, or near: Yet if they bethink themselves in the Land whether they are carried, and turn, and pray to thee, in the Land of their Captivity. If they return to thee with all their hearts, and pray towards the Land thou gavest to their fore-fathers, &c. then hear thou from Heaven, even thy dwelling place, their Prayer and their Supplication.*

13. HAST thou lost thy Seeing and Hearing, make thy address to him that said, *Who hath made mans mouth, or who maketh the Dumb, and the Deaf, or the Seeing, or the Blind? Have not I the Lord?* Exod. 4. 11. *Cry aloud to him with Bartimeus, Mark 10. 47, 51. Lord that I may receive my sight: And if thou be hopeless of thine outward sight, yet pray with the Psalmist, O Lord, open thou mine Eyes, that I may see the wondrous things of thy Law, Psal. 119. 18.*

14. ART thou afflicted with Sterility, pray with Isaac, *who intreated the Lord for his Wife, because she was barren: And the Lord was intreated of him, and Rebekah his Wife conceived, Gen 25. 21. And Hannab, she prayed, in bitterness of Soul unto the Lord, and wept sore, and received a Gracious Answer, 1 Sam. 1. 10.*

15. ART thou troubled and weakened for want of repose, pray with Asaph, Psal. 77. 3, 4, 1. *I complained, and my Spirit was overwhelmed, thou holdest mine eyes waking, I am sore troubled that I cannot speak; I cryed to God with my voice, even unto God with my voice, and he gave ear unto me.*

16. DOST thou droop under Old Age? Pray with David; *Oh cast me not off in the time of Old Age, for sake*

forsake me not when my strength faileth. O God thou hast taught me from my Youth: Now also when I am Old and Gray headed, O God forsake me not, Psal. 71. 9, 17, 18.

17. ART thou troubled and dismayed with fears of Death? Pray with David, Psal. 18. 3, 4, 5, 6, 13. *My Soul is full of troubles, and my Life draweth nigh unto the Grave; I am counted with them that down into the pit, I am as a man that hath no strength, free among the dead, thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deep: But unto thee have I cryed, O Lord, and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee.*

18. DOST thou tremble at the thoughts of Judgment? So did the man after Gods own heart, Psal. 119. 120. *My flesh trembled for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments; look up with Jeremiab, and say to thy Saviour, O Lord, thou hast pleaded the causes of my Soul, thou hast redeemed my Life: O Lord, judge thou my cause, Lam. 3. 58, 59.*

19. ART thou afraid of the Power, Malice and Subtily of thy Spiritual Enemies? Use Psal. 59. 1. *Deliver me from mine Enemies, O my God, defend me, from them that rise up against me, O hide me from the secret Counsel of the wicked; and Psal. 25. 19, 20. Consider mine Enemies for they are many, and they hate me with cruell hatred: O keep my Soul, and deliver me: St. Paul prayed earnestly that he might be freed from the Messenger of Satan, whose buffets he felt, and was answered with, My Grace is sufficient for thee; so he sues for all Gods Saints, May the God of peace tread down Satan under your feet shortly, 2Cor. 12. 9. Rom. 16. 19*

20. WHAT ever evil it be that presseth thy Soul, have speedy recourse to the Throne of Grace; pour out thy heart into the Ears of the Father of all Mercies, and God of all Comfort, and be sure, if not of redress, yet of ease: We have his word for it that cannot fail us, *Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorifie me, Psal. 50. 15.*

Fashionable Supplicants may talk to God; but be assur'd, he that can truly pray, can never be truly miserable: Of our selves we lie open to evils; our rescue is from above; and what intercourse have we with Heaven but by Prayer? Prayer can deliver us from Dangers, avert Judgments, prevent Mischiefs, and procure Blessings, it is an Antidote against Temptation, and a Sovereign Balsom for afflicted Consciences. It is the Instrument of fetching down all good things to us, whether Spiritual or Temporal; no Prayer that is qualified as it ought to be, but is sure to bring down a Blessing according to that of the Wise Man, Ecclus. 35. 17. *The prayer of the humble pierceth the Clouds, and will not turn away till the highest regard it:* It sanctifies all good things to us, and sweetens the bitterness of our afflictions, it opens the Windows of Heaven, shuts up the Bars of Death, and vanquishes the powers of Hell; therefore let us not cease in making our addresses to him, who is the Fountain of all Goodness; and *at whose right hand there is pleasures for evermore,* Psal. 16. 11. And let us with all lowliness as well of Body as of Mind, according to that of the Psalmist, say, *O come let us Worship, let us fall down and kneel before the Lord our Maker,* Psal. 95. 6. *For he is our hope and strength, and a very present help in trouble.* Ps. 46. 1.

A Conclusive Prayer.

BLESSED Lord, who hast caused all Holy Scripture and good Literature to be written for my Learning; grant that I may in such wise hear, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by Patience and Comfort of thy Holy Word, I may embrace, and even hold fast the blessed hope of Everlasting Life, which thou hast given me in my Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

2. Prevent me, O Lord, in all my doings, with thy most gracious favour, and further me with thy continual help, that in all my Works begun, continued and ended in thee, I may glorifie thy
holy

holy Name, and finally by thy Mercy obtain Everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

3. *Almighty God who hast promised to hear the Petitions of them that ask in thy Son's Name, I beseech thee mercifully to incline thine Ears unto me, who have now made my Prayers and Supplications unto thee: And grant that those things I have faithfully asked according to thy will may effectually be obtained, to the relief of my Necessities, and to the setting forth of thy Glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

The Blessing.

THE Peace of God which passeth all Understanding, keep my Heart and Mind in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and the Blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: The Virtue of Christ's blessed Cross and Passion, his Glorious Resurrection and Ascension, and the Coming of the Holy Ghost; be with me now, and at the Hour of Death. Amen.

FINIS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THere is lately Published, *The Government of the Thoughts, A Prefatory Discourse to the Government of the Tongue*, by the Author of the *Whole Duty of Man*. Printed for **Richard Cumberland**, at the *Angel* in *St. Pauls-Church-Yard*, 1694.







