

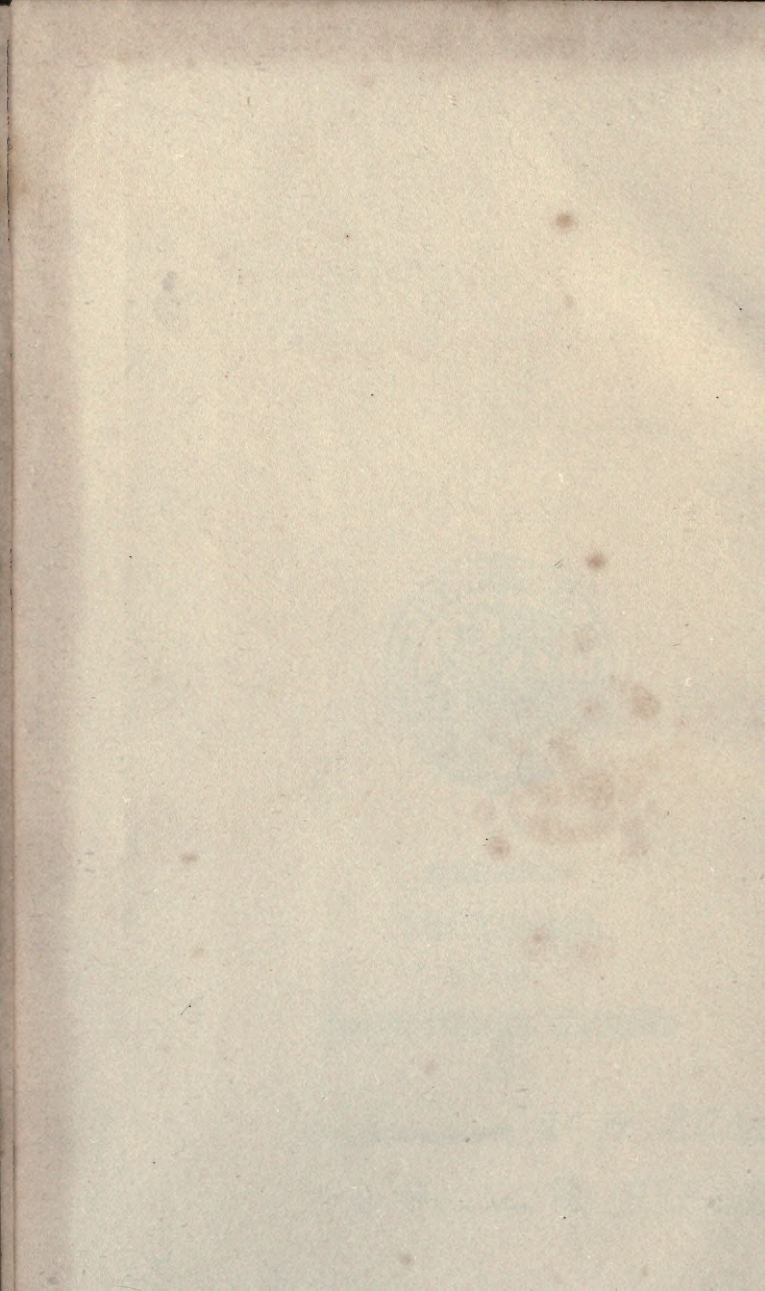


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W. O. R. K. R.

SIR JOHN TRAVEL

AN HISTORICAL TALE

W. H. H. H.

W. H. H. H.

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THE WHOLE
WORKS

OF THE

REV. MR. JOHN FLAVEL,

LATE MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL AT DARTMOUTH, DEVON.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

AN ALPHABETICAL TABLE

OF THE PRINCIPAL MATTERS CONTAINED IN THE WHOLE.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

—◆—
VOL. V.



LONDON:

145-16
51

HUSBANDRY

SPIRITUALIZED:

OR,

THE HEAVENLY USE OF EARTHLY THINGS

Consisting of many pleasant *observations*, pertinent *applications*, serious *reflections*; and each chapter concluded with a *divine* suitable *poem*. Directing *husbandmen* to the most excellent improvements of their common employments. Whereunto added, by way of *Appendix*, several choice *occasional meditations* upon *birds, beasts, trees, flowers, rivers*, and several other subjects; fitted for the help of such as desire to walk with God all their solitudes, and recesses from the world.

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

To the Worshipful ROBERT SAVERY, and WILLIAM SAVERY
Slade, Esquires;

Honoured Friends,

IT hath been long since observed, that the world below is a book to discover the world above; *Seculum est speculum*: and although I am not of their opinion, that say, the Heathens may spell out of the sun, moon, and stars; yet this I know, that the irrational and inanimate, as well as rational creatures, have a language though not by articulate speech, yet in a metaphorical sense, preach unto man the wisdom, power, and goodness of God; Rom. "There is (saith the Psalmist, Psalm xix. 3.) no speech, nor language where their voice is not heard." Or (as Junius renders it) there is no speech, nor words, yet without these, their voice is understood and their line (i. e. saith Diodate) their writing in gross and draughts, is gone out through all the earth.

As man is compounded of a fleshly and spiritual substance, so hath endowed the creatures with a spiritual, as well as fleshly usefulness, they have not only a natural use in alimental and physical

tures (saith Mr. Baxter excellently) we might have a full Christ and heaven, in every bit of bread that we eat, and draught of beer that we drink, than most men have in the sacrament.

And as the creatures teach divine and excellent things, so they teach them in a perspicuous and taking manner: *Duo idcirco movent, similitudo et exemplum*, saith the orator *. Things, similitude, and example, do especially move us. Things are more easily conveyed to the understanding, by being first clothed with some apt similitude, and so represented to the sense. As Jesus Christ the great Prophet, delighted much in teaching by parables: and the prophets were much in this way also, Hos. 12. "I have used similitudes by the ministry of the prophets." We can retain little of a sermon, yet ordinarily retain an apt

I confess it is an humbling consideration, That man, who was led by the knowledge of God to the knowledge of himself, must now by the creatures learn to know God. That though (as one saith) like Balaam's ass, should teach their master, though this be the unhappiness of poor man in his condition, yet it is now his wisdom to improve such helps: and where by the abuse of the creatures, are furthering their perdition, by the spiritual improvement of them, promoting his own

It is an excellent art to discourse with birds, beasts, and plants, about sublime and spiritual subjects, and make them answer our questions; and this may be done, Job xii. 7, 8. "And the beasts, and they shall teach thee, and the fowls of the earth, they shall tell thee; or speak to the earth, and it shall declare unto thee, and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee." This is neat and accurate † (Caryl) the creatures teach us when we ask them: "They teach us, though not formally, yet virtually; they answer and resolve the question put to them, though not to the ear, yet convincingly to the conscience. So that when we consider the creatures, when we diligently consider them, when we set out the perfections and virtues that God hath put into them, upon them. To set our mind thus upon the creature, is to converse with the creature; the questions which man asks of the creature, are only his own meditations. Again, the creatures teach us, when we in meditation make our collections and draw down our consideration of the power, wisdom, and goodness of God from the creatures, to them, or the frailty of man in needing them: such conclusions and inferences are the teachings of the creatures."

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

First, In meditation argue thus, as in the present case and s^tude of the apostle. If an husbandman upon the ordinary principle of reason can wait for the harvest, shall not I wait for the coming of the Lord, the day of refreshing? the corn is precious to him, so is the coming of Christ to me. Shall he be so patient, and endure so much for a little corn? and shall not I for the kingdom of heaven! He is willing to stay till all causes have had their courses, till he hath received the former and the latter rain; and not I, till the Divine decrees be accomplished.

Secondly, In meditation, make the resemblance, and discourse thus within yourselves: This is my seed-time, heaven is my harvest; here I must labour and toil and there rest. I see the husbandman's life is a great toil: no excellent thing can be obtained without labour and an obstinate patience. I see the seed must be hidden in the furrows, rotten and corrupted, ere it can spring forth with an increase. Our hopes are hidden, light is sown for the righteous, our comforts are buried under the clods, and after all this there will be long waiting, we cannot sow and reap in a day; effects do not follow till all necessary causes have first wrought. It is not the power of husbandmen to ripen fruits at pleasure, our times are in the hands of God, therefore it is good to wait; a long-suffering patient will reap the desired fruit. Thus you have some hints of this heavenly art of improving the creatures.

The motives inducing me to this undertaking, were the following: owning with some success, my labours of a like nature *, together with the desire and inclination (stirred up in me, I hope by the blessing of the Lord) to devote my vacant hours to his service in this work. I considered, that if the Pharisees, in a blind zeal to a faction, compass sea and land, to proselyte men to their party, though thereby they made them sevenfold more the children of the devil than before; how much more was I obliged, by true love to God, and to the everlasting happiness of souls, to use my utmost endeavours both with *seamen* and *husbandmen*, to win them to Christ, and thereby to make them more than seventy-seven fold happier than before: I need not mention other encouragements to this work, which I received from the earnest desires of some reverend and worthy brethren in the same thereunto; all which I hope the event will manifest to be a call from God to this work.

I confess I met with some discouragement in my first attempt, my unacquaintedness with rural affairs; and because I was to tread in a path (to me) untrodden; but having once engaged in it, those

book of husbandry to gentlemen of your quality. This *husbandry*, which here is taught you; and yet I tell you persons have accounted that civil employment (which is inferior to this) no disparagement to them. "The king himself by the field," Eccles. v. 9. Or, as Montanus renders the text, *Rex agro fit servus*; The king himself is a servant of the field. And of king Uzziah it is written, 2 Chron. xxvi. 10. "loved husbandry." And Amos vii. 1. we read of the *ings*. Yea, Pliny hath observed, that corn was never so plentiful at Rome, as when the same men tilled the land that ruled the empire. *Quasi gauderet terra laureato vomere, scilicet triumphali*; as though the earth itself rejoiced in the labour of the plowman, and the triumphant plowman.

What pleasure you will find in reading it I know not; but it hath been a pleasant path from first to last; who yet I know it hath cost the author far greater expence of time and pains in compiling it, than he will find in reading it. The husbandman's work, you know, is hard and tedious work, and the spiritualizing of it hath greater difficulties than the compiling of it; but yet the pleasure hath abundantly recompensed the labour. I have found Erasmus's observation experimentally true; *addicti sumas, animi lassitudinem a studiis gravioribus accipitis, sed ab iisdem studiis, sed amœnioribus recreamus*: Those that are addicted to study, (saith he) when they have wearied their minds with study, can recreate them again with study, by making a diversion from that which is severe and knotty, to some more facile and pleasant study.

But to hear that God hath used and honoured these persons, for the good of any soul, will yield me the highest content and satisfaction imaginable.

May you but learn that lesson which is the general scope and sign of this book, *viz.* How to walk with God from day to day, and make the several objects you behold, *scalæ et alæ*, wings to mount your souls nearer to him, who is the centre of all graces and spirits. How much will it comfort me, and confirm me in my faith, that it was the call of God indeed, which put me upon these labours.

O Sirs! What an excellent thing would it be for you, if you could see such holy improvements of all these earthly objects which are presented to your senses, and cause them to proclaim and preach to you of God and heavenly mysteries; whilst others make them groan to you of sin, and subjecting them to their lusts. A man may be brought into such a condition, wherein he cannot enjoy the blessing of a pious and powerful ministry; but you cannot (or at least it is very difficult) be brought into such a condition, wherein any thing (excepting a holy

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

not more, than you; but use them to those spiritual ends y
here directed, and they will yield you a sweetness far transc
that natural sweetness you ever relished in them; and indee
never use the creatures as their *Lord's*, till you come to se
Lord in and by them. I confess the discoveries of God
word are far more excellent, clear, and powerful; "He hath
"nified his word above all his name." And therein are th
searchable *riches of Christ*, or rich discoveries of that grace tha
no footsteps in nature, as the apostle's expression signifies,
iii. 8.

And if that which might be known of God by the crea
leave men without excuse, as it is manifest, Rom. i. 20. ho
excusable then will those be, who have received not only the
ings of the creature, but also the grace of the gospel in vain! "
"shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" They th
careless in the day of grace, shall be speechless in the day of
ment.

I am sensible of many defects in these papers, (as well as in m
They have doubtless, a taste of the distractions of the times w
they were written; nor was I willing to keep them so long
hand as the accurateness and exactness with which such a s
ought to have been handled, did require. Had I designed m
credit, I should have observed that counsel, *Nonumque pre*
in annum, i. e. To have kept it much longer under the file,
I had exposed it to public view; but I rather inclined to Sol
counsel, "Whatever thy hand finds out to do, do it with a
"might: for there is no wisdom, nor knowledge, nor device
"grave, whither thou art going," Eccl. ix. 10.

I apprehend a necessity of some such means to be used for t
struction and conviction of country people; who either are not
ble of understanding truth in another dialect, or at least a
affected with it. The preposition in every chapter consists
observation in husbandry; wherein, if I have failed in usin
improper expression, your candour will cover it, and impute
my unacquaintedness in rural affairs:

—————*In magnis voluisse sat est.*

The reddition or application, you will find I hope, both per
and close. The reflections serious, and such as (I hope) you
sciences will faithfully improve. I have shut up every chapter
Poem, an innocent bait to catch the reader's soul.

That of *Herbert* is experimentally true:

A verse may find him that a sermon flies

to have set my dull fancy upon the rack to extort a poem
 to entertain my reader ; for I cannot say with Ovid, *Sponte sua*
 but that I have been informed, that many seamen, induc'd
 by the pleasure of a verse, have taken much pains to learn the poem
 by heart ; and I hope both the children at home and
 servants in the fields, will learn to exercise themselves therewith.
 O, how much better will it be so to do, than so stuff the
 with obscene ballads, and filthy songs, which corrupt their
 and dispose them to much wickedness, by irritating their
 passions ! But these are purer flames, you will find nothing
 such a tendency.

'Tis guilt, not poetry, to be like those,
 Whose wit in verse is downright sin in prose.
 Whose studies are profaneness, as if then
 They only were good poets, when bad men.

D. DICKINSON

I shall add no more, but to beg that God who inspires
 the husbandman in his civil calling, to teach him wisdom
 to improve it, particularly, that you may reap a crop of much
 benefit, from that seed which is here sown by the hand of
 an unprofitable servant, and in him,

Your very affectionate

Friend and Servant

JOHN

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

THERE are three things wherein (as it hath been said
 before my day) the exercise of godliness doth chiefly consist
 temptation, meditation : Meditation is the subject of this
 manual. The object of meditation is twofold. *First*,
Secondly, The works of God. The works of God are
First, Internal. *Secondly*, External. The External works
 are twofold. *First*, Of creation, *Secondly*, Of providence.
 The works of providence are likewise twofold. *First*, In things
 natural, *Secondly*, In things moral. The Lord ordering and over-
 ruling all the affairs and motions of persons, families, and
 nations, in a subserviency to his own ends, designs, and
 purposes. *Secondly*, In things natural, instructing the
 husbandman to discretion, and teaching

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

and while we wisely consider these natural things, we may grow and more wise, in and for spirituals and eternal.

The worthy and ingenious Author of the ensuing discourse supplied us with an excellent help, for the spiritualizing of the evidential works of God in natural things, by godly meditation chiefly want the help of the Holy Spirit (without which all helps and helpers are altogether insufficient) to frame and win our hearts for this both profitable and delightful duty; yet that which the Lord is pleased to give us for our direction in it, the ministry of man, is not only not to be refused, but thankfully received and improved; and all little enough to bring our minds or keep them at this work: The best of saints, on this side heaven have, though they are not earthly-minded only, much earth in their minds; which like a heavy clog at their heels, or a weight at their hearts, presseth them down when they would make an essay to go upward in meditation. We find it no easy matter to keep off earthly thoughts, when we are most seriously engaged in heavenly things: how hard is it then to get in, and be fixed upon heavenly thoughts while we are engaged about earthly work; yea, are (for so is the husbandman) working the very earth, and raking in the bowels of it. It is a great part of our holiness to be spiritually-minded, while we are conversing with God through Jesus Christ in spiritual duties; but to be spiritually minded, and to mind spiritual things, while we are conversing with the clods of the earth, and the furrows of the field, when we have to do with corn and grass, with trees and plants, with sheep and oxen; when we behold the birds and fowls of the air, the worms, and all that creep upon the ground; then, I say, to be spiritually-minded, and thence to have our thoughts ascending, and coming up to God, in heart-affecting and quickening contemplation, witnesseth an high degree of holiness, and of gracious attainment. To make a ladder out of the earthly materials, for the raising of ourselves in spirit up to heaven, is the *art of arts*. Holy and happy indeed are they who, being taught of God, have learned this art, and live in daily practice of it. Earthly objects usually hinder us in this way, sometimes turn us quite out of our way to heaven. Many sow and sow, dig and delve the earth, till their hearts become as earth as the earth itself: Many deal about the beasts of the field till themselves become even brutish. Is it not then a blessed design which the Author aims and drives at, so to spiritualize all sorts, or the compass of earthly husbandry, that all sorts of husbandmen may become spiritual and heavenly? It seems to be a token of good favour that God hath an intendment of some special good to the souls of

way, this subject, and to publish their labours in print, that they may be of use, not only for the present age, but for posterity.

And that the husbandman may be pleased as well as improved by perusing the labours of this author; he hath, with singleness and acuteness, contrived and contracted the sum of every chapter into an elegant distich, or pair of verses, placed at the head of it, and concluded it with a choice melodious poem, to, and dilating upon the whole matter of it. These thoughts, man, who can but read, may quickly learn and sing for himself, instead of those vain ballads and corrupting rhymes, which that rank are apt to buy and solace themselves withal, without benefit, yea, much to their hurt, making their hearts more carnal, and vain thereby.

Let me add one word more to the reader. This book, Husbandry Spiritualized, is not calculated only for the country husbandman; persons of any calling, or condition, may find much to be working out such searching reflections and strong convictions in almost every part and particular of the husbandman's work. It will prove, if faithfully improved, very useful to them; to some as an awakening, to consider the state of their souls, whether they are in nature; to others for their instruction, consolation, and encouragement in the ways of grace, as also for their proficiency and improvement in those ways. That the blessing of the Lord, and the influence of his good Spirit may go out with it, for all those gracious purposes, is the heart's desire and prayer of him, who is,

CHRISTIAN REA

A sincere well-wisher to thy precious and immortal

JOSEPH C

To his Reverend and Learned Friend, Mr. JOHN FLAVEL, Author of the
Spiritual Navigation and Husbandry.

LETTERS of mark to his dear servant given,
By him that sists the ruffling winds of heaven:
To fight and take all such as would not deign
To acknowledge him the sea's great Sovereign.

And what among our riddles some might count,
 Was seen at once at Berwick, and the *Mount*.
 Yea, in more *ports* hath in one *lustre* been,
 Than Hawkins, Drake, or Cavendish have seen.
 And prizes of more worth brought home again,
 Than all the *plate-fleets* of the kings of Spain.
 But that which makes the wonder swell the more,
 Those whom he took were *beggars* all before.
 But rests he here? No, no, our friend doth know,
 'Tis good to have two strings unto his bow.
 Our rare Amphibion loves not to be pent
 Within the bounds of one poor element.
 Besides the learned author understood,
 That of an idle hand there comes no good.
 The law to him no *pulpit* doth allow,
 And now he cannot *preach*, he means to *plow*,
 Though preaching were a crime, yet he foresaw
 Against the plowman there could be no law.
 Nor stays he on resolves, but out-of-hand
 He yokes his teem, plows up the stubborn land;
 Sows it with precious seed, harrows again
 The tougher clods, takes pleasure in his pain.
 Whilst, Orpheus-like, (which doth his art advance)
 Rocks, fields, and woods, *after his pipe do dance*.

Industrious spirit, to what a rich account
 With thy blest Lord, with all these labours mount!
 That every nerve of thy best soul dost ply,
 To further heaven's *spiritual husbandry*.
 This kind of tillage which thou teachest us,
 Was never dreamt of by Triptolemus.
 Go, reader, turn the leaves; and me allow
 To pray (whilst at work) *God speed the plow*.

NICHOLAS WA



In Authoris Opera.

LET Paracelsus and Van Helmont's name,
 No more ride triumph on the wings of fame.
 Lo, here's a *chymist*, whose diviner skill

Teacheth the *plowmen*, from their work, to know
 What duties unto God and man they owe.
 Rare artist ! who, when many tongues are mute,
 Mak'st things that are inanimate confute
 The age's sins ; by preaching unto eyes,
 Truths which in other modes their ears despise.
 Prosper his pious labours, Lord ! howe'er
 Do not forget to crown the labourer,

Sic raptim canit

DAN. C

*To his Reverend and Invaluable Friend, Mr. J. F. upon
 bandry Spiritualized.*

INGENIOUS Sir, what do I see ? what now !
 Are you come from the pulpit to the plow ?
 If so, then pardon me, if I profess,
 The plow deserves to be sent to the press.
 'Tis not long since you went to sea, they say,
 Compos'd a compass which directs the way,
 And steers the course to heaven ; O blest art !
 And bravely done that you did that impart
 To us, who take it kindly at your hand,
 And bless the Lord that you are come to land,
 To be an husbandman, wherein your skill,
 With admiration doth your readers fill.
 One grain will yield increase, 'tis ten times ten,
 When the earth's manur'd by such husbandmen.
 We may expect rich harvests, and full crops,
 When heavenly dew descendeth in such drops
 Of spiritual rain, to water every field,
 That it full heaps of grace to God may yield.
 I must adore the wisdom of that God
 That makes men wise, who, even from a clod
 of earth, can raise such heavenly meditation
 Unto a pitch of highest elevation.
 Besides, I mark the goodness of the Lord,
 Performing unto us his faithful word,

THE EPISTLE.

We have some bricks, although the straw be gone,
 The church, at last, shall be of polish'd stone.
 Whatever men or devils act or say,
 Sion, at last, will have a glorious day.
 The wretched muck-worm, that from morn to night
 Labours, as if 'twere for an heav'nly weight;
 And, when he hath got all he can, the most
 Amounts to little more than a poor crust,
 To feed his tir'd carcase: If himself
 Have, by his carking, got a little pelf,
 Leave it he must, to one he knows not whom,
 And then must come to an eternal doom;
 And hear his poor neglected, wretched soul
 Tell him at last that he hath play'd the fool.
 But here he's taught, how he, before he die,
 May lay up treasure for eternity;
 Wherein he may be rich, yea, much, much more,
 Than they that do possess whole mines of ore.
 When earth's more worth than heav'n, and gold than grace,
 Then let the worldling run his brutish race;
 But not before, unless he do intend
 To meet with soul-destruction in the end.
 But I must leave him, and return again
 To gratulate the author for his pain.
 And here I can't forbear to bid my pen
 To tell the world of all the husbandmen,
 That e'er I met, he, he hath hit the vein
 To recompense the labourer's hard pain,
 And taught him how to get the greatest gain.
 Wherein he treads a path not trode before;
 By which, indeed, his skill appears the more.
 I might *encomiums* give him, great and true,
 And yet come very short of what's his due;
 But I must not walk in forbidden ways,
 For thereby I am sure, I should displease
 His pious mind, who doth, and freely can
 Give all the praise to the great husbandman;
 Who will his graces in his servants own,
 But doth expect himself to wear the crown.

Farewell, dear Sir, I take my leave, and now,
 Will say no more than this, *God speed the plow.*

from the society of many dear friends, into a solitary count. I hope none will envy me these innocent delights, which of my lonely walks, whereby the Lord sweetened my soul. It is like thou wilt find some passages here, that are harmless; yet, I assure thee, I know of none that the most Censor can censure, as sinfully light and vain. I must acknowledge the praise of God, that I have found some of those (which some of my readers will call the slightest and most trifling meditation) to be the ordinances for instruction, caution, consolation to my own soul; yea, such a degree of comfort, as to have found by these things, as hath much endeared this life to me, and made me much better to understand than Horace, than when I learned it at school,

Novistine locum potiore rure beato?

Est ubi plus tepeant hyems? Ubi gratior aura?

O rus, quando ego te adspiciam? Quandoque licebit

Nunc veterum libris, nunc somno, et inertibus hortis

Ducere sollicitæ jucunda oblivio vitæ, (i. e.)

What life can with the country life compare?

Where breathes the purest, and most healthful air.

Where, undisturb'd, my study I pursue,

And, when I sleep, bid all my cares adieu. *Hor.*

And what I have found so beneficial to myself, I cannot may be so to others. I assure thee, reader, I am not for these conceptions; and yet I think I may modestly enough the emptiest leaf of this book may serve for more, and than a mere diversion, when thou canst find leisure to. I know, your troubles and cares are many; and though condition of life hath many innocent comforts and outward sweeten it, yet I believe most of you have found that an of Anacreon experimentally true: Εχει το πικρον της γεωργίας

‘Some bitter troubles countrymen do meet,

‘Wherewith the Lord doth intermix their sweet.’

The *cares* of your *minds* are commonly no less than to your *bodies*; it concerns you, therefore, to *sweeten* what you *avoid*; and I know no better way for that, than what is intended to. O friends! what advantages have you for a spirit? Why may you not have two harvests every year? One for another for your bodies; if you could thus learn to husbandry. Methinks spiritual meditations do even put upon you. Husbandmen of old were generally presuming

THE EPISTLE, &c.

sire and design to make you so: and I could not think on a probable mean to accomplish this honest design, than what here used. Methinks it should be a pleasure to you, when you weary out of the fields from plough, or any other labour, to sit in the evening, and read that chapter which concerns that particular business, and refresh your souls, even from that which hath wearied your bodies. Were your hearts but heavenly, and more tilted for spiritual husbandry, your inward comforts would be more, and your outward gains not a jot less; for if the success of your civil labours and employments depend upon the pleasure of will of God, (as all that are not atheists do acknowledge) the more certainly, your business can succeed never the worse for your endeavour to please him, upon whose pleasure it so entirely depends. I have many times lifted up my heart to heaven, whilst these papers were under my hand, for a special blessing to accompany them, which should be in yours. If the Lord accomplish my desires by prospering upon your souls you shall enjoy two heavens, one here, and another hereafter. Would not that be sweet? The historian tells us that Altitius Serarius was sowing corn in the field, when Q. Cincinnatus came to him bare-headed with letters from the senate, signifying that he was chosen to the dictatorship. I hope the Lord will prosper you and succeed these labours, that many of you will be called to hold the *plough* on earth, to wear the *crown* of glory in heaven, which is the sincere desire of

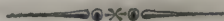
Your hearty well-wisher,

JOHN FLAVEL

The AUTHOR to the READER.

COME you, whose listening ears do even itch
To hear the way prescrib'd of growing rich;
I'll shew you how to make your tenements
Ten thousand times more worth, and yet your rents
Not rais'd a farthing; here my reader sees
A way to make his dead and barren trees
Yield precious fruit; his sheep, though ne'er so bad,
Bear golden fleeces, such ne'er Jason had:
In every thing your gain shall more than double,
And all this had with far less toil and trouble.

'Tis so indeed; thou wouldst not go thy way
 Like one that's disappointed, and so fling
 The book aside. *I thought 'twas some such thing.*
 Time was when country Christians did afford
 More hours and pains about God's holy word:
 Witness the man who did most gladly pay
 For some few leaves his whole cart-load of hay.
 And time shall be, when heavenly truth that warms
 The heart, shall be preferr'd before your farms;
 When holiness, as sacred scripture tells,
 Shall be engraven on the horses bells.
 Lord, hasten on those much desired times,
 And, to that purpose, bless those rural rhymes.



THE PROEM.

1 COR. iii. 9. *Ye are God's Husbandry.*

THE scope and design of the following chapters, being the ritual improvement of husbandry, it will be necessary, *proem*, to acquaint the reader with the foundation, and rules of this art in the scriptures, thereby to procure great benefit unto, and prevent prejudices against composures of this kind.

To this end, I shall entertain the reader a little while with this scripture affords, which will give a fair introduction to the ensuing discourse.

The apostle's scope in the context being to check and restrain vain glory and emulation of the Corinthians, who, instead of usefulness for, and an humble and diligent improvement of the plentiful blessings of the ministry, turned all into vain ostentatious emulation, one preferring Paul, and another Apollos; in time depriving themselves of the choice blessings they might have received from them both.

To cure this growing mischief in the churches, he checks the vanity, and discovers the evil of such practices by several arguments, amongst which this is one,

Ye are God's Husbandry, q. d.

What are ye, but a field or plot of ground, to be manured and cultivated for God? And what are Paul, Apollos, and C

THE PROEM.

the ministry of both, and it will be your sin if you despise either; the workmen be discouraged in their labours, it is the field that and suffers by it; so the words are a similitude, serving to illustrate the relation,

1. Which the churches have to God.

2. Which God's ministers have to the churches.

1. The relation betwixt God and them is like that of an husbandman to his ground or tillage. The Greek word signifies God's *field*, or that plot of ground which God manures by the ministry of pastors and teachers.

2. It serves to illustrate the relation that the ministers of Christ sustain to the churches, which is like that of the husbandman's labour to him and his fields; which excellent notion carries in it the perpetual necessity of a gospel ministry. (For what fruit can be expected, where there are none to till the ground?) As also the dependence, accountableness, and rewards which these labourers are subject to, and receive from God, the great Husbandman. All brought into this,

That the life and employment of an husbandman, excellently illustrates forth the relation betwixt God and his church, and the relative duties betwixt its ministers and members.

Or more briefly thus:

The church is God's husbandry, about which his ministers are employed.

I shall not here observe my usual method, (intending no more than a preface to the following discourse) but only open the particular wherein the resemblance consists; and then draw some Corollaries from the whole. The first I shall dispatch in these twenty particulars following:

1. *Prop.* The husbandman purchases his fields, and gives a valuable consideration for them, Jer. xxxii. 9, 10.

Reddit. So hath God purchased his church with a full value of price, even the precious blood of his own Son, Acts xx. 28. "the church of God which he hath purchased, or acquired with his own blood." O dear-bought inheritance! how much doth it bespeak its worth! Or rather, the high esteem God hath of it, he pay down blood, and such blood for it; never was any inheritance bought at such a rate: every particular elect person, and none but such are comprehended in this purchase; the rest still remain in the devil's right. Sin made a forfeiture of all to justice, upon which Satan entered, and took possession, and, as the strong man armed, keeps it in them. Luke xi. 21, but upon payment of this

nor their own, 1 Cor. vi. 19. but the *Lord's peculiar*, And to shew how much they are his own, you have two in one verse. Cant. viii. 12. "My vineyard, which is mine," "me, mine, which is mine."

2. *Prop.* Husbandmen divide and separate their own from other men's, they have their land-marks and boundaries; their property is preserved, Deut. xxvii. 17. Prov. xxii. 28.

Reddit. So are the people of God wonderfully separated and distinguished from all the people of the earth. Psal. iv. 3. "I have set apart him that is godly for himself. And the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself. And the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself. And the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself." "who are his," 2 Tim. ii. 19. It is a special act of grace, enclosed by God out of the waste howling wilderness of the world, Deut. xxxiii. 16. This did God *intentionally*, in the day when the world was; which decree is executed in their sanctification and adoption.

3. *Prop.* Corn-fields are carefully fenced by the husbandmen with hedges and ditches, to preserve their fruits from beasts and thieves, otherwise over-run and destroy them———*Non minus quam quærerere parta tueri.* It is as good husbandry to preserve what we have, as to acquire more than we had.

Reddit. "My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very pleasant place," "and he fenced it," Isa. v. 1, 2. No inheritance is better and more secured, than the Lord's inheritance, Psal. cxxxv. "The Lord hath chosen Jerusalem, so the Lord is in the midst of his people." So careful is he for their safety, "that he will be upon every dwelling-place of mount Sion, and upon the walls of Jerusalem, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a lamp by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence," Not a particular saint, but is hedged about and inclosed with God's power and love, Job i. 10. "Thou hast made a hedge about Job, and round about him, and thou hast been over him, and over all his ways, and over all his doings." The devil fain would, but by his own confession could not come over the hedge to touch Job, till God's permission made him: yea, he not only made an hedge, but a wall about Job, that of fire, Zech. ii. 5. Sets a guard of angels "to enclose about them that fear him," Psal. xxxiv. 7. And watches over them with a single guard of angels neither, though the Lord is great, and love to the saints as great; but watches over himself also, Isa. xxvii. 2, 3. "Sing ye unto her, a vineyard, the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment, lest it be hurt, I will keep it night and day."

4. *Prop.* Husbandmen carry out their compost, to feed

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they are costly fields indeed, dressed and fertilized, not only by precious ordinances and providences, but also by the sweat, yea, blood of the dispensers of them. "You Londoners (saith Mr. Lock) *Colos.* p. 552.) are trees watered choicely indeed; it is storied of the palm-tree, that at its first transplanting into Italy, it was watered with wine. I cannot say (saith he) that you have been watered by me, I dare not; but this I can humbly and truly say, that if our choicest strength and spirits may be named instead of water, wine; or if the blessing which hath gone along with your waters, at any time, hath turned them into wine, in vigour of your souls, then hath God by me, watered your roots with wine.

5. *Prop.* The husbandman builds his house, where he makes his purchase, dwells upon his land, and frequently visits it; he knows that such as dwell far from their *lands*, are not far from *loss*.

Reddit. So doth God; wherever he plants a church, there he fix his habitation, intending there to dwell, Psalm xlv. 5. "is in the midst of her," she shall not be moved. Thus God came to dwell upon his own fee and inheritance, in Judea, Lev. 24. 11, 12. "And I will set my tabernacle amongst you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people." Which promise is renewed to his churches of the New Testament, 2 Cor. vi. 16. when the churches shall be in their greatest flourish and purity, shall there be the fullest and most glorious manifestation of the divine presence among them, Rev. xxi. 3. "And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and be their God." Hence the assemblies are called, the places of his feet—And there they hold the beauty of the Lord," Psalm xxvii.

6. *Prop.* Husbandmen grudge not at the cost they are at for tillage; but as they lay out vast sums upon it, so they do it cheerfully.

Reddit. "And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard; what have I done unto you, that ye have despised me, say ye? have I been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done it right? And as he bestows upon his heritage the choicest mercies, so he receives it with the greatest cheerfulness; for he saith, Jer. xxxii. 41. "I will rejoice over them to do them good; and I will plant the vine in this land assuredly, with my whole heart and with my power, and my soul." It is not the giving out of mercy (saith one) that grieves God, but the recoiling of his mercy back again upon him by the creature's ingratitude.

2. This heavenly Husbandman waits for the fruits of his never did any husbandman long for the desired harvest. God doth for the fruits of holiness from his saints: God expectations of God from his people: "And when the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen that they might receive the fruits of it."

8. *Prop.* Husbandmen are much delighted, to see the fruit of their labours; it comforts them over all their hard pains and weary days to see a good increase.

Reddit. Much more is God delighted in beholding the fruit of the graces of his people; it pleases him to see his plants laden with fruit, and his valleys sing with corn, Cant. vi. 2. "My beloved is come down to the garden, into his beds of spices, to feed in the lilies, and to gather lilies." These beds of spices (say * expounding) are the particular churches, the companies of believers; he goes into these gardens, like as men go to their gardens to make them fruitful, to gather fruit, Cant. iv. 16. "He eats his pleasant fruit, the fruit of the people's holy performances, sweeter to him than any ambrosia; he feeds in the gardens, and he gathers lilies when he gathers good souls into his kingdom above; "For the Lord take vengeance on his saints, and will beautify the meek with salvation."

9. *Prop.* The husbandman is exceedingly grieved when the hopes of a good crop disappointed, and his fields prove barren or blasted.

Reddit. So the Lord expresses his grief for, and anger against his people, when they bring forth no fruits, or wild fruits, or none, Hosea ix. 16. "Ephraim is smitten, their root is dried up, because they have forsaken the Lord their God, Christ was exceedingly displeased with the fig-tree, and with its barrenness; it grieves him to the heart when his servants turn to him with such complaints as these, "We have laboured, and have not eaten, we have spent our strength for nought."

10. *Prop.* Husbandmen employ many labourers to work in their fields, there is need of many hands for such a multiplicity of business.

Reddit. God hath diversity of workmen also in the church, he sends forth to labour in his spiritual fields, Eph. iv. 12. "some apostles, some prophets, and some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry," Amos iii. 7. I have sent [my servants] prophets. It is usual with the apostles to place this title of office among their honorary titles, though a profane mouth once

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husbandman works in the field among his labourers, and the God disdaineth not to work in, and with his poor servants, work of the ministry.

11. *Prop.* The work about which husbandmen employ their servants in the field, is toilsome and spending, you see they come at night as weary as they can draw their legs after them.

Reddit. But God's workmen have a much harder task than hence are they set forth in scripture by the laborious ox, 1 Cor. Rev. iv. 7. Some derive the word *διάκονος*, *deacon*, from *νους*, signifies dust, to shew the laboriousness of their employment, being till even choaked with dust and sweat. It is said of Epaphroditus, Phil. ii. 13. "That for the work of Christ he was sick nigh unto death; not regarding his life, to supply their lack of service." The apostle's expression, Col. i. ult. is very critical, "Whereunto I also labour, striving, according to his word which worketh in me mightily." The word *ἀγωνίζομενος*, signifies such spending labour as puts a man into an agony; and he is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so.

12. *Prop.* The immediate end of the husbandman's labour, his servants labour is for the improvement of his land, to make it more flourishing and fruitful.

Reddit. The scope and end of the ministry is for the church's benefit and advantage. They must not lord it over God's heritage, if the church were for them, and not they for the church; nor be themselves of it, but be the church's servants for Jesus sake, 1 Cor. iv. 6. The power they have received being for edification, and not for destruction, 2 Cor. x. 8. Christ hath given them to the church; their gifts, their time, their strength, and all their ministerial talents, are not their own, but the church's stock and treasure.

13. *Prop.* The workmen that labour in the fields are accountable for their work to him that employed them.

Reddit. Church-officers are also accountable to God for the souls committed to them. They are stewards of the mysteries of God, 1 Cor. iv. 1. and stewards are accountable. "We watch over your souls, (saith the apostle) as they that must give an account." Heb. xiii. 7. If these servants be unfaithful in their work and the blood of souls shall be required at their hands, Ezek. iii. 17. which are *fulmina, non verba*, (saith Erasmus) thunderbolts rather than words. The guilt of blood is the greatest guilt; and the blood, the blood of souls.

14. *Prop.* Those that spend their time and strength all their

“man is worthy of his meat,” Mat. x. 10. It is a sad thing who break the bread of life to souls, should be suffered to eat themselves. God would not have the mouth of an ox tread out the corn, but have liberty to eat as well as work. Any pretended to the ministry be like the heifer, that licks out the corn, i. e. cares to do no work, but such as bring in pay; he therein sufficiently discovers his beast-like disposition. Ministers must be faithful in their Master’s work, and if God will reward them. For “he is not unrighteous to forget a work, and labour of love,” Heb. vi. 10.

15. *Prop.* It is a great trouble to husbandmen in a harvest, to be put off from their labours by stormy weather, which drives them out of the fields, and makes them let all lie, till it clears away. Yet mean while, they are not idle, but employ themselves in home-work.

Reddit. Even so in God’s husbandry, it is an unspeakable loss to God’s workmen to be rendered useless and unserviceable to the churches, by those storms of trouble, which drive them from their public ministerial work. With what a heavy heart did Paul depart from his work at Ephesus, Acts xx. It spends a minister’s strength but more to be silent. It is a loud speaking judgment. God shall say to them as to Ezekiel, “Son of man, I will silence thy tongue, and thy tongue shall cleave to the roof of thy mouth, and thou shalt not speak, till I shall open thee.” Ezek. iii. 26. Such silencing providences, speak through silence to gracious hearts; yet, even then, the keepers of the vineyard have a private vineyard of their own to look after. They do much home-work, when no out-work.

16. *Prop.* There is a vast difference betwixt those places that have been well husbanded and dressed by a skilful and diligent husbandman; and those that have been long out of husbandry. The fragrant is the one? How dry and barren the other? To pass by a field well dressed and fenced, every thing prosperous in exquisite order, you may know, without farther enquiry, that a good husbandman lives there.

Reddit. Thus stands the case betwixt those places which are blessed with a faithful, painful ministry, and such as have none, or worse than none: for as the husbandman’s cost and pains procure the verdant and fragrant hue of his fields; so a minister’s diligence and pains are ordinarily seen in the heavenly lives, and graces of the people. The churches of Corinth and Thessalonica, where Paul and other holy instruments spent much of their time, became famous and flourishing churches. 2 Cor.

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lie long under the clods; he knows it will spring up at the last to reward him, or those that come after him, for their patience in waiting for it.

Reddit. Ministers should not be presently discouraged in their work, because they see but little or no appearance of all the seed they have sown among the people. The "servant of the Lord" must be "patient towards all, waiting if at any time God will give them fruit to the increase of their righteousness," 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25. And if it never spring up in this time, it may after his death; and if so, he shall not fail of his reward, John iv. 36, 37. "And he that reapeth, receiveth also; and gathereth fruit unto life eternal, that both he that soweth and he that reapeth, may rejoice together; and herein is that which is true, one soweth, and another reapeth." Though ministers see but little fruit, yet their words live; yea, their words take hold of men who are in the dust, Zech. i. 6.

18. *Prop.* Husbandmen find low grounds and vallies, most fruitful, hills, how lofty soever they overtop the lower grounds, yet they do not the husbandman's pains as the vallies do: these are best watered and secured from the scorching heat of the sun.

Reddit. Experience shews us, that the humblest saints are the most fruitful under the gospel; "These are they that receive with a good heart the engrafted word," James i. 21. whose influences are most fruitful to them, as the rain doth in the low vallies. Happy is that minister whose lot falls in such a pleasant valley. "Blessed are they that dwell beside all such waters, that send forth thither the feet of the horse, and the ass," Isa. xxxii. 20. among these vallies run the rivers, springs and purling brooks, which fertilize the neighbouring grounds. Heavenly ordinances there, leave fruitful influences.

19. *Prop.* The first crop is usually the best, and the longer a husbandman tills his ground, the less it produces; after a few years its vigour and strength is spent.

Reddit. The first entertainment of the gospel is commonly the best; and what good is done by the ministry is often done at the first entrance. New things are pretty, and very taking. "John the Baptist was to the Jews a burning and shining light, and they were all rejoicing [for a season] to rejoice in his light," John v. 35. Paul was highly valued among the Galatians at first; such was their zeal, that they could have plucked out their eyes, and have given them to him. How quickly did this full tide ebb again? For he complains, Gal. iii. 15. "Where then is the blessedness ye spake of?"

20. *Prop.* Lastly, When fields prove barren, and will not

be over-run by their enemies. Jer. vii. 12. "Go to Sh^{em} what I did unto it." What is become of those once flourishing churches of Asia? Are they not laid waste, down by infidels? And now go to, saith the great H^{igh} "I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard; I will "hedge thereof, and it shall be laid waste," Isa. v. 5.

Thus you see the allegory opened in its particulars whole, I shall present you with these five ensuing corollaries.

The first Corollary.

*How great then are the dignities and privileges of the Jesus Christ whom he hath appropriated to himself; above the people of the earth, to be his peculiar inheritance? The rest is a waste wilderness; all other places, how pleasant soever of their natural amenity and delights, are truly enough called places of the earth; dismal, solitary cells, where Ziim and terns, Cormorants, and every doleful creature dwells. But this is the paradise of the earth, a garden inclosed, Cant. iv. hedges the gospel birds chirp and sing melodiously, Cant. ii. beds are beds of spices, Cant. vi. 2. and betwixt its pleasures a crystal river of living water runs, Rev. xxii. 1. the streams make glad the city of God, in the midst whereof the Lord delights to walk. O Zion, with what pleasures doth thou abound! If Bernard was so ravished with the delights of his monasteries of its green banks, and shady bowers, and herbs, and trees, and various objects to feed his eyes, and fragrant smells, and sweet serious tunes of birds, together with the opportunities of contemplation, that he cried out admiringly, Lord! what dost thou provide, even for the poor! How much more should we be edified with Zion's glory? For, beautiful for situation is our city, whom it may much more truly be said, what a * chronicle of praise once said of England, That it is the fortunate island, the pleasure, the garden of God, whose vallies are like Lebanon, whose hills are as Lebanon, whose springs are as Pishgah, whose Jordan, whose wall is the ocean, and whose defence is the Lord Jehovah. Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, who count the privileges wherewith Christ hath invested his church, let it never seem a light thing in our eyes, that we grow in this blessed inclosure. How sweet a promise is that, Exod. "I shall be to me a peculiar treasure, above all people of the earth is mine."*

The second Corollary.

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as the historian saith of Spain, that there is *nihil infructu*
nihil sterile ; nothing barren or unfruitful in it. God's vine
 planted in a very fruitful hill. Isa. v. 1. " And surely they
 " planted in the house of the Lord, should flourish in the co
 " our God ; they should bring forth fruit, even in old age, t
 " that God is upright," Psal. xcii. 13, 14. " They are crea
 " Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath ordaine
 " should walk in," Eph. ii. 10. " They are married unto Chris
 " they might bring forth fruit to God," Rom. vii. 4. An
 branch is a dishonour to the root that bears it, a barren field
 husbandman that owns it ; God cannot endure that in his
 which he suffers in the wilderness.

The third Corollary.

If the church be God's husbandry, then there is such a specia
 cious presence of the Lord in his churches, as is not to be fo
 all the world beside. Where may you expect to find the hu
 man but in his own fields ? There lies his business, and there
 lights to be. And where may we expect to find God but in
 assemblies of his saints ? " He walks among the golden candles
 Rev. ii. 1. I will walk among you, (saith he) and be your
 2 Cor. vi. 16. Upon this account the church is called *J*
Shammah, the Lord is there, Ezek. xlviii. ult. You may see th
 steps of God in the creatures, but the face of God is only to
 in his ordinances. Hence, Psal. xxvii. 4. " David longed
 " temple, that he might see the beauty of the Lord. Now
 beauty, but a symmetry and proportion of parts ? In the wo
 creation you see one attribute manifested in one thing, and ano
 another thing ; but in the *sanctuary* you may see beauty, eve
 the attributes of God displayed there : And, indeed, we f
 scripture such astonishing expressions about the visions of God
 church, that in reading them, a man can see little difference b
 it and heaven ; for as the church is called heaven, Mat. xxv
 its description is like that of heaven. Heb. xii. 22, 23. " Y
 " come to the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable co
 " of angels," &c. And Rev. xxii. 4. " They shall see his face,
 " name shall be written in their foreheads." And ver. 6. The
 are represented " standing nearer to the throne of God th
 " angels themselves." Hence also ordinances are called galle
 which both saints and angels walk, beholding the glory of h
 sits upon the throne. Zech. iii. 7. " If you will keep my w
 " will give you galleries to walk in among them that stand l

ry. Should husbandman employ ignorant persons, that understand the rules nor proper seasons of husbandry; how would such workmen damnify and prejudice him? He would employ such to weed his fields, as know not wheat from tares; to prune his trees, that think *midsummer* as fit for that work as winter: much less will God. He qualifies all that he sends out to work for their work. "His workmen approve themselves," indeed, such as need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of "truth," 2 Tim. ii. 15. As Bezaleel was furnished with skill before he was employed in tabernacle-work; so Christ instructs his servants with skill and insight, before they are employed in secular work. He gives them a mouth and wisdom, Luke x. 19. He endues them with power from on high; as Christ was filled abundantly with the Spirit for his work, so, according to promise, he sends out those that are sent by him. John xx. 21, 22. "As my Father has sent me, so send I you." And as for those that run blindfold, are sent, and understand not the mysteries of the gospel; he sends no more of them but this; "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

The fifth Corollary.

To conclude, If the church be God's husbandry, that husbandry have so many resemblances of God's works about it; then how inexcusable is the ignorance of husbandry things of God, who, besides the word of the gospel, have no other knowledge of the creatures; and can hardly turn their hands to their work, but the Spirit hints one spiritual use or other of all their souls? How do the scriptures abound with parables and similitudes taken from husbandry? From the field, the plow, the barn, from threshing and winnowing; similar to the planting, grafting, and pruning of *trees*; and not to the ordering of cattle. So that to what business soever you are engaged, in any part of your calling, still God meets you with one heavenly instruction or other. But alas! How few improve their civil employments to such excellent ends! They are but briefly hinted in the scriptures, and those hints scattered up and down, that they know not where to find them; they could, yet would it be difficult so to methodize them, as necessary they should be, in order to their due improvement and perfection.

And therefore I judged it necessary to collect and present them for your use: and in this manner to present them to you.

THE FIRST PART OF
HUSBANDRY SPIRITUALIZED.

CHAP. I

Upon the Industry of the Husbandman.

*In the laborious Husbandman you see,
What all true Christians are, or ought to be.*

OBSERVATION.

THE employment of the husbandman is by all acknowledged to be very laborious; there is a multiplicity of business incumbent upon him. The end of one work is but the beginning of another, every season of the year brings its proper work with it: sometimes we find him in his *fields*, dressing, plowing, sowing, harrowing, weeding, or reaping; and sometimes in his *barn*, threshing or winnowing; sometimes in his *orchard*, planting, grafting, or pruning his trees; and sometimes among his *cattle*; so that he hath no time to be idle. As he hath a multiplicity of business, so every part of it is full of toil and spending labour: he eats not the bread of idleness, but he earns it before he eats it; and, as it were, dips it in his own sweat, whereby it becomes the sweeter to him. Though sin brought forth the husbandman's sweat, Gen. iii. 19. yet now not to sweat would increase his sin, Ezek. xvi. 49.

APPLICATION.

Behold here the life of a serious Christian, shadowed forth in the life of a husbandman. As the life of a husbandman, so the life of a Christian is no idle nor easy life. They that take up religion for *ostentation*, or for an *occupation*, and those that place the business of it in rich and idle speculations, in forms, gestures, and external observances, may think and call it so: but such as devote themselves unto the study of God, make religion their business, will find it no easy work to come to themselves to godliness. Many there are that affect the reputation and *sweet* of it who cannot endure the labour and *sweat* of it. Men might be indulged to divide their heart betwixt God and

comparing the life of a Christian with the life of a husbandman, by these five particulars; wherein it will appear, that the life of a Christian is by much the harder work of the two.

1. The husbandman hath much to do, many things to do; but the Christian more: if we respect the extensiveness of his work, he hath a large field indeed to labour in, Psal. cxix. 96. "The commandment is exceeding broad," of a vast extent and latitude, comprising not only a multitude of external acts and duties, and the offices of the outward man about them, but also taking in the thought and motion of the inner man within its compass.

You find in the word, a world of work cut out for the Christian: there is hearing-work, praying-work, reading, meditating, examining-work; it puts him also upon a constant watch against the corruptions of his heart. Oh, what a world of work hath the Christian about him? For of them he may say, as the historians say of Hannibal, they are never quiet, whether conquering or conquered. How many weak, languishing graces hath he to recover, and strengthen? There is a weak faith, a languishing love, faint desires, to be quickened and invigorated. And when all is done, what a multitude of work do his several relations cut out for him? He hath a world of business incumbent on him, as a father, a child, husband, wife, master, servant, or friend, yea, not only friends, but enemies. And, besides all this, how many things are there to be borne and suffered for Christ? And he will not allow his people to neglect any one of them. How can he be a Christian that hath not respect to every commandment? He is not holy in all manner of conversation, Psal. cxix. 6. 2. He must perform every one of these duties, like the several spokes in a wheel, bearing, in the whole round of a Christian's conversation: so that he hath more work upon his hands than the husbandman.

2. The husbandman's work is confessed to be spending his strength, not like the Christian's. What Augustus said of the young men, is verified in the true Christian, *Quicquid vult, valde vult*; whatsoever he doth in religion, he doth to purpose. Under the law God rejected the *snail* and the *ass*, Lev. xi. 30. Exod. xii. 10. Under the gospel, he allows no sluggish lazy professor, 1 Thim. 3. 13. Sleepy duties are utterly unsuitable to the living God. He will have the very spirits distilled and offered up to him in every duty. John iv. 24. he bestows upon his people the very substance of his mercies, and will not accept from them the shells and the duties; not the skin, but the inwards, and the fat that

2 Pet. i. 10. In securing salvation, diligent ; or doing it thoroughly and enough.

1 Tim. iv. 7. In godliness, exercising or stripping themselves for a race.

Luke xiii. 24. In the pursuit of happiness, striving even to agony.

Acts xxvi. 7. In prayer, serving God instantly ; or in a strenuous manner ; yea, pouring out their hearts before him, Psal. 8. as if the body were left like a dead corpse upon the knees, while the spirit is departed from it, and ascended to God. This is the manner of his work : judge then how much harder this work is, to spend the sweat of the brow in manual labour.

3. The husbandman finds his work as he left it, he can begin the next day where he left the other ; but it is not so with the Christian. A bad heart and a busy devil, disorder and spoil his work every day. The Christian finds not his heart in the morning, as he left it the night ; and even when he is about his work, how many setbacks doth he meet with ? Satan stands at his right hand (the world at his left hand) to resist him, Zech. iii. 1. when he would do good, evil of his own heart and nature) is present with him.

4. The husbandman hath some resting-days, when he takes aside all his work, and takes his recreation ; but the Christian hath no resting-day, till his dying-day ; and then he shall rest from his labours. Religion allows no idle day, " but requires him to be always abounding in the work of the Lord," 1 Cor. xv. 18. When one duty is done, another calls for him ; the Lord's day is a day of rest to the husbandman, but no day in the week so laborious to the Christian. O it is a spending day to him. When he hath gathered in the crop of one duty, he is not to sit down satisfied therewith, but say as that rich worldling did, Luke xii. 19. " Soul, take thine ease ; thou hast goods laid up for many years ;" but must to plow and sow and count it well if the vintage reach to the seed-time, Lev. xxv. 3. I mean, if the strength, influence, and comfort of one duty, carry him out to another duty ; and that it may be so, and there be no time left for idleness, God hath appointed ejaculatory prayer, to fill up the intervals, betwixt stated and more solemn duties. These are to be kept in the fire, which kindled the morning sacrifice, to kindle the evening sacrifice. When can the Christian sit down and say, *Now my work is ended, I have nothing to do without doors, or within ?*

Lastly, There is a time when the labour of the husbandman is ended ; old age and weakness takes them off from all employment.

be full of fruits, Psal. xcii. 14. "They shall bring forth
"age, they shall be fat and flourishing."

REFLECTIONS.

1. How hard have I laboured for the meat that perishes

*The worldling's
reflection.*

vented the dawning of the day, and
in the very fire, and yet is the Chris
harder than mine? Surely, then, I
understood the work of Christianity. Alas, my sleepy p
formal duties, even all that ever I performed in my life,
me that pains, that one hour at plow hath done. I
wholly neglected, or at best, so lazily performed religi
that I may truly say, I offer to God what cost me nothin
me, poor Wretch! How is the judgment of Korah spi
ecuted upon me? The earth opened her mouth, and sw
his body; but it hath opened its mouth and swallowed up
my time, and all my affections. How far am I from the
God!

2. And how little better 'is my case, who have indeed

*The formalist's
reflection.*

religion, but never made it my busin
an empty (though splendid) professio
How many brave ships have perished in
notwithstanding their fine names, the *Prosperous*, the *S*
Happy Return? A fine name could not protect them from
nor will it save me from hell. I have done by religion, a
have done by the world; prayed, as if I prayed not; an
if I heard not. I have given to God but the shadow of
can never expect from him a real reward.

3. How unlike a Christian dost thou also, O my soul, go

*The reflections of a
slothful Christian.*

work; though upright in the mai
little zeal and activity dost thou ex
duties! Awake love and zeal, see
the toil and pains men take for the world? How do th
the dawning of the day; and labour as in the very fire till
all this for a trifle! Should not every drop of sweat wh
trickle from their brows fetch, as it were, a drop of bloo
heart, who am thus convinced and reproved of shameful
their indefatigable diligence? Do they pant after the c
earth? Amos ii. 7. And shall not I pant after God? P
Ah, my soul, it was not wont to be so with thee in the c
first profession. Should I have had no more communion

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now in hell, perished for want of serious diligence in religion, xiii. 34. nor doth my diligence for God, answer to that which he hath done and suffered, to purchase my happiness: or to the preparations he hath made in heaven for me? Or dost thou forget thy Master's eye is always upon thee, whilst thou art lazying loitering? Or would the damned live at this rate as I do, if their of grace might be recalled? For shame, my soul, for shame! up thyself, and fall to thy work, with a diligence answerable to the weight thereof; for it is no vain work concerning thee, it is thy life.

THE POEM.

Religion	<i>When</i> advanc'd in pow'r,
Will make you	<i>Husband</i> every hour.
'Twill make	<i>Men</i> strive with all their might,
And therein	<i>Find</i> a sweet delight.
If there were	<i>Nought</i> besides that pay
Christ gives	<i>To</i> cheer us in our way;
Should we not	<i>Do</i> the best we can?
For there's	<i>No</i> such reward from man.
Shall others	<i>Work</i> , and not regard
Their strength	<i>To</i> get a small reward?
Whilst we	<i>Turn</i> slugs, and loiter thus?
O that	<i>Their</i> zeal might quicken us!
Why are our	<i>Hands</i> , and feet so slow,
When we	<i>Unto</i> our business go?
How can we	<i>Then</i> Christ's pay expect,
And yet the	<i>Christian's</i> work reject,
If this, then	<i>Also</i> that embrace
Them both;	<i>If</i> not, we both disgrace.
Some if	<i>They</i> could these two divide,
'Twould	<i>Please</i> them well, with Christ to side!
But if they	<i>May</i> not, then it were
As good	<i>Cease</i> pleading, they'll not hear:
Rouse up	<i>From</i> sloth, my soul betake
Thee to thy	<i>Work</i> , no cavils make.
O strive,	<i>And</i> try! Saints say that even,
The pain they	<i>Take</i> , hath much of heaven.
But yet	<i>Their</i> best wine's kept till last,
Their rest, and	<i>Ease</i> comes all so fast.

CHAP. II.

Upon the Thriftiness of the Husbandman

*The hardest lab'ers are the thriving men,
If you'll have thriving souls, be active then.*

OBSERVATION.

INDUSTRY and diligence is the way to thrive and grow in the world. The earth must be manured, or its increase is not expected; *Qui fugit molam, fugit farinam*; He that runs from the mill, refuses the meal, (saith the proverb). "The diligent shall be made fat." Solomon hath two proverbs concerning industry and increase in the world. In Prov. x. 4. he saith, "The hand of the diligent maketh rich." And in ver. 22. "The blessing of the Lord maketh rich." These are not contradictory, but confirmatory each of other; one speaks of the *primary* cause, the other of the *instrumental* cause. Diligence without God's blessing will not do it; and that blessing cannot be expected without diligence; therefore husbandmen ply their business with pains, they do even lodge in the midst of their labours as our husband Boaz did, Ruth ii. 3. They are *parsimonious* of their strength, but *prodigal* of their sweet and strength, because they take the thriving way.

APPLICATION.

As nature opens her treasures to none but the diligent, so grace doth grace. He that will be a rich, must be a painful Christian; whosoever will closely ply the trade of godliness, shall certainly and quickly find, "That in keeping God's commands there is a reward," Psal. xix. 11. God is a "bountiful rewarder of them that diligently seek him," Heb. xi. 6. They must not inquire for wages, * nor yet will God suffer their work to go unrewarded; yea, it sufficiently rewards itself, 1 Tim. vi. 6. And its reward is twofold; (1.) Present and in part; (2.) Future, and in full. x. 29, 30. Now in this time an hundred-fold, even from the seed which seems the most unprofitable part of the work, and in the life to come life everlasting. If you ask what present advantages husbandmen have by their diligence? I answer, as much and more than a husbandman hath from all his toils and labours. Let us con-

THE HEAVENLY USE OF EARTHLY THINGS.

It is the highest honour of a creature to be active and useful for God. Saints are called *vessels of honour*, as they are fitted for their master's use, 2 Tim. ii. 21. Wherein consists the honour of a saint, but in this, that they are ministering spirits, serviceable creatures. And all the apostles glorified in the title of servants. The lowest office in which a man can serve God, even that of Nethinim, or door-keepers, which was the lowest order or rank of officers in the house of God, Ezek. xlv. 10, 11. is yet preferred by David before the office of the greatest prince on earth, Psalm lxxxiv. 10. It is no small honour to be active for God.

2. You have this benefit by your labour, that thereby you are freed from a loose and evil company, which would draw you into mischief. By diligence for God, the Christian also is secured from temptation. "God is with them while they are with him," 2 Chron. xv. 2. Communion with God in the way of duty is a great preservation against temptations. The *schoolmen* put the question, how the angels and glorified saints become impeccant? And resolve it thus: "They are secured from sin by the beatifical vision; and sure I am that the visions of God, not only in glory, but now also in duty, are invulnerable defences against sin; and they who are most active for God have the fullest and clearest visions of God, John xiv. 21.

3. You have this benefit by your labour, that it tends much to the health of our bodies. The Christian hath this benefit by his labour, that it tends to a healthful state of soul; "The way of the Lord is strength to the upright," Prov. x. 29. As those that follow their daily labours in the field, have much more health than citizens that live idly, or scholars that live a sedentary life: So the active Christian enjoys more spiritual health, and is troubled with fewer complaints than others.

4. By diligence in your civil employments, you preserve your estates, and are kept from running behind-hand in the world. Dissolute livers trouble not such men's doors; they usually have the foreknowledge of their neighbours. And by activity and diligence for God, souls are kept from backsliding, and running back in their graces and comforts. Remissness and intermission in our duties are the first steps and avenues by which a soul declines and wastes as to his spiritual estate.

5. Your pains and diligence in the fields, make your bed sweet to you at night, Eccles. v. 12. "Rest is sweet to a labouring man, whether he eat little or much." But the diligent life of a Christian makes the clods of the valley, his grave, sweet unto him, 2 Cor. i. 6. 2 Kings xx. 3. "Remember now, O Lord, how I have walked before thee."

Christians? They can get in an hour that which they with for all the gold and silver on earth, Prov. iii. 14.

So that compare these labourers, as to all their advantage you shall see, that there is no trade like that which Christian drives.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Blush then, O my soul, at the consideration of and sloth, which is attended with

Reflections of the slothful soul. ritual wants! And can I wonder

refuse the painful way of duty, in w
cious fruits of godliness are only to be found? If the fr
the surface of duty, or could be had with wishes, I sho
them; but to dig deep and take pains I cannot. My
those of the slothful man, kill me, because my hands refu
Prov. xxi. 25. If every duty were to be rewarded pr
gold, would I not have been more assiduous in them,
been? And yet I know that a heart full of the grace
of the Holy Ghost, is better than a house full of gold an
what a composition of stupidity and sloth am I! I hav
the short cut to comfort, when constant experience te
the further way about, by painful duty, is the nearer
What pains do husbandmen take? What peril do sear
a little gain; O sluggish heart! wilt thou do nothing
treasures?

Secondly, If there be such great reward attending
duty, then why art thou so apt, O my soul, to cast off d
thou findest not present comfort in it? How quickly a
raged, if I presently find not what I expect in duty?
well is deep, and much pains must be taken to draw up
of joy, Isa. xii. 3. There is a golden vein in the mount
it lies deep; and because I meet not with it as soon as
lazy heart throws by the shovel, and cries, Dig I canno

Thirdly, If this be indeed the rich and thriving trad
puddle about the poor, low things
The worldling's reflections. so much, neglecting the rich trade
for it? O how much of my time a

have these things devoured? Had I employed that tim
nion with God, would it not have turned to a bett
Thinkest thou in earnest, O my soul, that God hath en
with such excellent faculties, capable of the most Divine
ly employments, or that Jesus Christ hath shed his inv

THE HEAVENLY USE OF EARTHLY THINGS.

greatest strength, and choicest hours? O that I could once sider, what a good Master Christians serve, who will not abundantly reward them at night, but brings them their food to the fields to encourage them in their labour! What pity is it, so good a Master should be so badly served as he hath been by Hark how he pleads to gain my heart:

THE POEM,

By way of Dialogue betwixt Christ and the World.

CHRIST.

O Why so free of sweat and time,
For what ere long will not be thine?
Or if it might, thou sell'st to loss,
A precious soul for lasting dross.
Those weary hands, and toiling brains,
Might be employ'd for better gains.
Wouldst thou but work as hard for me,
As for the world which *cozens* thee;
Thy gains should be a thousand fold:
For my revenue's more than gold.

WORLD.

Soul, I have always found thee willing,
Rather by me to earn a shilling,
Than trust uncertain things which lie
Beyond thee in eternity.
Shall things unseen now tempt thee? Tush,
A bird in hand's worth two i' th' bush.
I pay thee wages down in hand,
This thou canst feel, taste, understand,
O let not such a vain pretence
Prevail against thy very sense.

CHRIST.

Thus beasts are led, thus birds are snar'd,
Thus souls for ruin are prepar'd.
What! trust no farther than you see,
You'll trust a thief as far as me.
Deluded wretch! Will nought but sight
And sense convince thee? O how right,
How just is God? whose direful scourge
Such arguments in hell shall urge.

Come see, the saints, for all their brags,
How well they thrive, they're cloth'd in rags.

CHRIST.

If my dear saints in rags do go,
'Tis not religion clothes them so ;
But by such wants the Lord secures
Their souls against the killing snares :
They all are heirs, tho' under age,
Expectants of their heritage :
Kept short for present, yet condemn
A change with those that scoff at them.

WORLD.

It is vain to plead, for I
With present things charm pow'rfully :
Whate'er thou offer'st, they'll despise,
I hold them pris'ners by their eyes.

CHRIST.

If they will serve no other Lord,
Then let it stand upon record,
Against their souls, that they refus'd
My wages, and my grace abus'd.
Remember this when they shall see
All turn'd to ashes that's in thee.

ANOTHER.

NONE will deny but those are blessed pains
Which are attended with the richest gains.
Grant this, and then most clearly 'tis inferr'd,
Soul-work to all deserves to be preferr'd.
This is an unknown trade : O who can count
To what the gains of godliness amount ?
For one poor shilling, O what risks some run ?
Some toiling as i' th' fire, from sun to sun.
Whereas one hour spent with God brings in
Such heavenly treasures, that poor souls have been
Enrich'd for ever. Even as you see
A prince's favourite, upon the knee,
Can in an hour's time more wealth obtain,
Than all your lives by labour you can gain.

THE HEAVENLY USE OF EARTHLY THINGS.

The difference 'twixt the one, and th' other's best
By such a simile as this, exprest :
As in a summer's day you often see
The wanton butterfly, and painful bee ;
On fragrant flowers fix, whence one doth strive
To bear his precious burden to the hive ;
The other's pains no profit with it brings,
His time is spent in painting of his wings.
When winter comes, the bee hath full supplies,
The other creeps into an hole, and dies.
Like different events shall be betwixt
The painful saint, and lazy notionist.

CHAP. III.

Upon the cheerfulness of the Husbandman.

*The plowman sings, and whistles, though he sweat,
Shall Christians droop, because their work is great ;*

OBSERVATION.

THOUGH the labours of the husbandman are very great toilsome, yet with what cheerfulness do they go through them. It is very delightful to hear the melody they make, by whistling they follow the plow ; yea, the very horses have their bells, which make a pleasant noise. *Horses* (saith Mr. Fuller) *will do more for a whistle than a whip ;* and their bells do, as it were, gingle at their weariness. I have been often delighted with this country music, whereby they sweeten their hard labours with an innocent pleasure, and verify the saying of the poet :

Tempus in agrorum cultu consumere dulce est. Ovid.
Altho' they plow from morning until night,
Time steals away with pleasure and delight.

APPLICATION.

BUT how much greater cause have the people of God to add themselves unto his work with all cheerfulness of spirit ? And indeed, so far as the heart is spiritual, it delights in its duties. true, the work of a Christian is painful, and much more spent

them, Psal. cxix. 14. "I have rejoiced in the way of thy
 "as much as in all riches." And by the promises that
 such, Psal. cxxxviii. 5. "Yea, they sing in the ways
 "for great is the glory of the Lord." And again, "Yea,
 "a song as in the night, when an holy solemnity is kept
 "ness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe, to
 "mountain of the Lord, to the Mighty One of Israel
 29.

And, lastly, by the many commands, whereby joy in
 the Lord is made the duty of the saints. "Rejoice in
 "righteous, for praise is comely for the upright," Ps.
 "Rejoice, and again I say, rejoice," Phil. iv. 4. where
 the command is doubled, yea, not only simple rejoicing, but the
 degree of that duty comes within the command. Psal. c.
 "Shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart." And
 23. they are bid *to leap for joy*, when about the difficulty of
 their work. And that you may see there is a sufficient
 reason for it, and that it is not like the mad mirth of sinners,
 consider,

1st, The nature of the work about which they are employed
 is the most excellent and heavenly employment that ever
 man was acquainted with. O what a ravishing and delightful
 it is to walk with God! And yet by this, the whole work of a
 Christian is expressed, Gen. xvii. 1. Can any life compare with this?
 Can they be chill that walk in the sun-shine? Can they
 abide in the fountain of all delights; and walk with him
 who is the God of all comfort, 2 Cor. i. 3. "In whose presence
 is the fulness of joy," Psal. xvi. 11. O what an angelical
 life is this! Can a Christian then live?

Or, 2dly, If we consider the variety of spiritual employment,
Varietas delectat. Change of employment takes off the
 tedium of labour. Variety of voices pleases the ear, variety of
 lights the eye, the same meat prepared several ways, pleases
 the palate more, and clogs it less. But oh the variety of choice
 employment with God entertains his people in a Sabbath! as the
 sacraments, &c. Isa. lviii. 13. If thou call the Sabbath
 precious, or, as Tremellius renders it, thy delicate things. "My
 (David) shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness,"

3dly, or lastly, If we consider the suitableness of this
 employment to a regenerate soul. Is it any pain for a bird to fly? Or a fish
 to swim? Is the eye tired with beautiful objects? Or the ear with
 sweet sounds? As little can a spiritual soul be wearied with

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loveliness of Jesus Christ. The sight of your thriving flocks flourishing fields, cannot yield you that pleasure which an un-
soul can find in one quarter of an hour's communion with
"They that are after the flesh, (saith the apostle, Rom. viii.)
"mind the things of the flesh, and they that are after the Spirit
"things of the Spirit." But then look how much heavenly ob-
transcend earthly ones, and how much the soul is more capable
light in those objects, than the gross and duller senses are in the
so much doth the pleasure arising from duty excel all sensitive
lights on earth.

REFLECTIONS.

How am I cast and condemned by this, may I say, who never
soured this spiritual delight in holy duties! *The carnal heart*
When I am about my earthly employments, I *reflection.*
can go on unweariedly from day to day; all the
way is down-hill to my nature, and the wheels of my affections
oiled with carnal delight, run so fast, that they have need most
of triggling. Here I rather need the curb than the spur. O
fleet and nimble are my spirits in these their pursuits! but O
slug am I in religious duties! sure if my heart were renewed
grace, I should delight in the law of God, Rom. vii. 22. A
world is alive in their ways, every creature enjoys his proper plea-
and is there no delight to be found in the paths of holiness? Is
ness only a dry root that bears no pleasant fruits? No, there
doubtless incomparable pleasures to be found therein; but such
carnal heart as mine savours them not.

I cannot say but I have found delight in religious duties, but
have been only such as rather sprang from the ost- *The hypocrite*
tentation of gifts and applauses of men than any *reflection.*
sweet and real communion I have had with God
through them; they have rather proved food and fuel to my
than food to my soul. Like the nightingale, I can sing sweetly
when I observe others to listen to me, and be affected with my note.
O false, deceitful heart, such delight as this will end in howling!
my spirit right, it would as much delight in retirements for the
joyment of God, as it doth in those duties that are most exposed
the observation of man. Will such a spring as this maintain
stream of affections when carnal motives fail? What wilt thou
answer, O my soul! to that question? Job xxvii. 9, 10. "Will
"hear his cry when trouble comes upon him? Will he delight

*The upright heart's
reflection.*

From all this the upright heart
tage to rouse up its delight in God
it expostulateth with itself: Doth
sing amidst his drudging labours, and whistle away his
the fields; and shall I droop amidst such heavenly employ-
my soul, what wantest thou here, to provoke thy delight
be such an affection as delight in thee, methinks such
the blessed face of God in ordinances should excite it.
would this ennoble all my services, and make them angelic
glad are those blessed creatures to be employed for God
were they created, but they sang together, and shouted
xxxviii. 7. How did they fill the air with heavenly melody
sent to bring the joyful tidings of a Saviour to the world
glory to God in the highest, even to the highest of the
Yea, this delight would make all my duties Christ-like; and
that pattern, the more excellent: he delighted to do his
will, it was to him meat and drink, Psalm xl. 7. John i.

Yea, it would not only ennoble, but facilitate all my
be to me as wings to a bird in flying, or sails to a ship in motion
tardat uncta rota; oiled wheels run freely: "Or ever
"my soul made me like the chariots of Amminadib." Can
reason (my God) my delight in thee should be so little?
cause my unbelief is so great? Rouse up my delights, O
tain of pleasure! and let me swim down the stream of
duty, into the boundless ocean of those immense delights
thy presence, and at thy right hand for evermore.

THE POEM.

O What a dull, desponding heart is mine!
That takes no more delight in things divine.
When all the creatures, both in heav'n and earth,
Enjoy their pleasures, and are big with mirth.
Angels and saints that are before the throne,
In ecstasies and raptures every one
Perpetually is held; each blessed spirit
The purest, highest joys doth there inherit:
The saints on earth, in their imperfect state,
Those peerless joys, by faith do antedate.
To nat'ral men, who savour not this pleasure,
Yet bounteous nature doth unlock her treasure

THE HEAVENLY USE OF EARTHLY THINGS.

Yea, birds and beasts, as well as men, enjoy
Their innocent delights : these chirp and play ;
The cheerful birds among the branches sing,
And make the neighb'ring groves with music ring :
With various warbling notes they all invite
Our ravish'd ears with pleasure and delight.
The new-fall'n lambs, will in a sun-shine day,
About their feeding dams jump up and play.
Are cisterns sweet ? and is the fountain bitter ?
Or can the sun be dark when glow-worms glitter ?
Have instruments their sweet, melodious airs ?
All creatures their delights ; and saints not theirs ?
Yea, theirs transcend these sensual ones as far
As noon-day Phœbus doth a twinkling star.
Why droop I then, may any creature have
A life like mine for pleasure ? Who'e'er gave
The like encouragement that Christ hath given,
To do his will on earth, as 'tis in heaven ?



CHAP. IV.

Upon the due Quality of Arable Land.

*Corn land must neither be too fat, nor poor ;
The middle state suits best with Christians, sure.*

OBSERVATION.

HUSBANDMEN find, by experience, that their arable land may be dressed too much, as well as too little ; if the soil be too rank, the seed shoots up so much into the stalk, that it seldom comes well ; and if too thin and poor, it wants its due nutriment, and comes not to perfection. Therefore their care is, to keep it in heart, not to over-dress, or under-dress it. The end of all their costly pains about it is fruit ; and therefore reason tells them, that such a soil and temperament of it, as best fits it for fruit, is best both for it and them.

APPLICATION.

AND doth not spiritual experience, teach Christians that a man

dition, as a suit is to the body that sits close and neat, short, nor too long; we cannot desire a better condition. This was it that wise Agur requested of God, Prov. "Give me neither poverty nor riches, but feed me with nient for me, lest I be full and deny thee, and say, "Lord? Or lest I be poor and steal, and take the name "in vain." Against both he prays *equally*, not *absolute* been his sin; but, comparatively, and submissively to the. He had rather, if God see it fit to avoid both of these, but what would he have then? Why, food convenient. ing to the Hebrew, give me my prey or statute-bread, metaphor from birds which fly up and down to prey for and what they get they distribute among them; they enough to preserve their lives, but not more than enough dering in the nest. Such a proportion Agur desired, and why he desired it is drawn from the danger of both extremes. measured like a wise Christian, the convenience or increase of his estate in the world, by its suitableness or unsuitableness of his being, which is the service of his God. He desires the true excellence of his life to consist in its reference and to the glory of his God; and he could not see how a *redundance* great a *penury* of earthly comforts could fit him for that middle estate, equally removed from both extremes, best fit. And this was all that good Jacob, who was led by the Lord, looked at, Gen. xxviii. 20. "And Jacob vowed a vow, "if God will be with me, and keep me in the way that thou shalt give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I may come "to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be with me." Poor Jacob, he desires no great matters in the world, but that God's providence will satisfy him; in spiritual matters his desires are great, he is the most greedy and unsatisfied man in the world, but in the matters of this life, if he can get from God *āquam*, a morsel of meat and a mouthful of water, he is the richest Croesus, or Crassus upon earth. *Cibus divitiæ Christianorum*; meat and drink are the riches of Christians. *Divitiæ sunt ad legem naturæ composita paupertas*, said Atticus; riches are such a poverty, or mediocrity, as is best for nature's uses; and such a state is best accommodated to the condition, and to the desires of a saint.

1. To his condition, for what is a saint but a stranger upon earth, a man in a strange country travelling here and there. David professed himself Psalm cxix. 12. "I am a stranger upon earth, a sojourner, as all the days of my life shall be."

THE HEAVENLY USE OF EARTHLY THINGS.

2. It suits best with his desires, I mean his regular and advantageous desires. For.

1. A gracious soul earnestly desires a free condition in the world, if he is sensible he hath much work to do, a race to run, and is not to be clogged, or have his foot in the snare of the cares or pleasures of this life. He knows that fulness exposes to wantonness and irregularity, Deut. vi. 12. Hos. xiii. 6. It is hard, in the midst of so many tempting objects, to keep the golden bridle of moderation upon our affections. The heart of a Christian, like the moon, commences an eclipse when it is at the full, and that by the interposition of the earth.

It was Solomon's fulness that drew out and dissolved his spirit, and brought him to such a low ebb in spirituals, that it remains a question with some, Whether he ever recovered it to his dying. As it is the misery of the poor to be neglected of men, so it is the misery of the rich to neglect God. Who can be poorer than to neglect the world and love it? Or richer, than to enjoy but little of it, and live above it?

And on the other side, extreme poverty is no less exposed to want and danger, Lev. vi. 2, 3, 4. As high and lofty trees are subject to storms and tempests, so the lower shrubs to be browsed on by every beast; and therefore a saint desires a just competency as the *freest* state.

2. A gracious person desires no more but a competency, because there is most of God's love and care discovered in giving in our necessities bread, by a daily providence. It is betwixt such a condition, and fulness of creature-provisions in our land, as it was betwixt Egypt and Canaan; Egypt was watered with the flood from the river Nile, and little of God was seen in that mercy; but Canaan depended on the dews and showers of heaven? and so every shower of rain was a refreshing shower to their souls, as well as bodies. Most men have a stock of creature-comforts in their hands, look upon them as coming in an ordinary, natural course, and see very little of God in their mercies. Pope Adrian built a college at Louvain, and caused this inscription to be written in letters of gold on the gates thereof, *Trajectum plantavit, Louvanium rigavit, Cæsar dedit incrementum* (i. e.) Utrecht planted me, Louvain watered me, and Cæsar gave me the increase. One to reprove his folly wrote underneath, *Hic nihil fecit*; here God did nothing. Carnal men sow, and reap, and eat, and look no further.

But now, when a man sees his mercies come in by the special

in which he receives it, because it comes (be it never so little) as a covenant mercy to him. "He hath given bread that fear him, he is ever mindful of his covenant," Luther, who made many a meal upon a broiled herring, say, *Mendicato pane hic vivamus, annon hoc pulchre sat quod pascimur pane cum angelis et vita æterna, Christo et pietate*: Let us be content with coarse fare here, have we not that came down from heaven? Do we not feed with angelic instance of the sweetness of such mercies is given us of the divine of our own, Mr. Isaac Ambrose, "For my own sake (he) however the Lord hath seen cause to give me but a taste of outward things, for which I bless his name, and the income thereof, I have many times observed so much of his providence, that thereby they have been very much sweetened to my heart hath been raised to admire his grace. When I was under an hard dispensation (which I judge not meet to mention) I suffered with inward peace conscientiously) all streams of supplies being stopt, the waters of relief for myself and my family run low. I went to bed with some staggerings and doubts, the fountain's letting out itself for our refreshing; but when I was awake in the morning, a letter was brought to my bed-chamber, which was signed by a choice friend, Mr. Anthony Ash, which contained some unexpected breakings out of God's goodness for me. These are some of his lines,—Your God, who hath given me an heart thankfully to record your experiences of his goodness, may renew experiences for your encouragement. Now I have one which will raise your spirit towards the God of your mercies. Whereupon he sweetly concludes, 'One morsel of God's goodness' (especially if it come unexpected, and upon prayer, which is the most) will be more sweet to a spiritual relish, than all the enjoyments were.

Many mercies come unasked for, and they require thanksgiving; but when mercies come in upon prayer, and as a return for prayer, their sweetness more than doubles; for now it is both a seal set upon his own institution, and a seal set to his promise. Psal. lxi. 16, 17. Doubtless Hannah found more comfort in her Samuel, and Leah in her Naphtali, the one being asked for, and the other wrestled for with God, (as their names in themselves) mothers ordinarily do in their children.

THE HEAVENLY USE OF EARTHLY THINGS.

God's people have subjected all their creature-enjoyments to religion so appositely, O my soul, thou hast subjected religion to thy worldly interest and designs. Instead of eating and drinking to serve God, I have served God that I might eat and drink; yea, I have not acted below religion, but below reason also; for reason dictates plainly, that the means must never be more excellent than the end. Wretch that I am, to make religion a slave to my lust, a stirrer to advancement, an artifice to carry on my carnal designs; verily I have my reward; and this is all the good I am ever like to get by it.

And no less should the worldling tremble, to consider how he has cast off the duties of religion, made them stand aside, and give place to the world. Instead of desiring so much only as might make him serviceable to God, he thrusts aside the service of God to get as much of the world as he can, who is so far from making godliness the end of creature-comforts, that he rather looks upon it as an obstacle and hindrance to them. May not the very heathens make me blush? Could Aristotle deliver this as a true rule to posterity, to make religion our first, and chief care? Could Aristippus say, He would rather neglect his means than his mind! his farm than his soul? Or the very Mahometans, how urgent soever their business be, lay aside five times in the day to pray? Yea, it is common to a prodigal among the very Papists, that mass and meat hinder no man; yet I, that profess myself a Christian, thrust out duty for every trifle. O wretched soul! how hath the god of this world blinded mine eyes? Can the world indeed do that for me that Christ can? Hath it ever proved true to them that trusted it, and doated on it? Hath it not at last turned them off, as men turn off a sumpter-horse at night, that hath been a drudge to carry their gold and silver all day, and at last is turned out with an empty belly, and galled back? O how righteous will that sentence of God be! Go to the gods whom thou hast served.

And may not many gracious hearts turn in upon themselves with shame and sorrow, to consider how unsatisfied they have been in that condition, that others have preferred and esteemed as the greatest of all outward mercies? I have indeed been fed with food convenient, but not contented? how hath mine heart been tortured from day to day with anxious thoughts, what I shall eat and drink, and wherewith I shall be clothed? I pretend indeed that I care but for a competency of the world, but sure I am, my cares about it have been

The worldling's reflection.

The gracious soul's reflection.

sation a home-dweller. Erasmus said he desired home no more than a weary horse doth a heavy cloak-back. He would not account him a fool that would victual his ship as she enters the channel to France, as if she were bound for the Indies. Alas! it will be but a little while, and then there will be no need of any of these things. It is sad, that a soul which is the door of eternity, should be perplexing itself about foolish things.

Quest. 2. Which of all the saints hast thou known that hath been for much of the world? It hath been some men's utter folly to let God suffer men to be their own carvers, but they will not let their fingers. 'To give riches and pleasure to an evil man (said the Lord) is but to give wine to one that hath a fever.' What a sad *want*, there is usually much *wantonness*. What a sad example, Pius Quintus. When I was in a low condition, said he, I had comfortable hopes of my salvation; but when I came to the world, I greatly doubted of it: But Since I came to the world, I have no hope at all. Though this poor, undone world is all out, and others keep it in; yet, doubtless, he hath many such fellows in the world that might say as much, would they but tell the truth.

And even God's own people, though the world hath not driven them out of heaven, yet it hath sorely clogged them in their way thither. Many that have been very humble, holy, and in a low condition, have suffered a sad ebb in a full condition. A cold blast have they felt coming from the cares and cold of this life, to chill both their graces, and comforts! It hath happened to some of God's people, if they had never known what the world meant.

Quest. 3. Is not this a sad symptom of a declining state? He that is so hot, eager, and anxious about the superfluous trifles of the world. Thinkest thou, O my soul? that one who walks in the glory above, and maintains a conversation in heaven, is taken with these vanities? Do not the visions of God veil the splendour of the creature! It was the opinion of some of the Fathers, that the reason why Adam in paradise was not ashamed of his nakedness, was because he was wholly taken up in communion with God. But this is certain, lively and sweet communion with God blunts and dulls the edge of the affections to earthly things. Canst thou be satisfied, my soul, with such gains as these, when thou art with such spiritual losses?

Quest. 4. To conclude, is it not dishonourable to

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unbecoming a thing is it in me to live and act as I have done
me henceforth learn to measure and estimate my condition, rather
its usefulness to God, than its content and ease to my flesh.

THE POEM.

IF fruit and service be indeed the end
To which my being and redemption tend,
Reason concludes that state of all the rest,
Which is most serviceable, to be best.
And such a state experience shews to lie
'Twixt fulness and a pinching poverty.
This golden *mean* is worth a golden *mine* ;
He that hath this should be ashamed to whine.
The full-fed Christian, like the ox in the stall,
Is no way fit to work, or plow withal.
And penury, like Pharaoh's leaner kine,
Devours the fattest portions of our time.
That man with whom this earthly pleasure's found,
Or in whose heart those anxious cares abound ;
And yet can walk by scripture-rule, and line,
Will need a better head and heart than mine ;
A single staff the traveller may find,
Of use and service ; but if you should bind
A bundle of them to his back, they'll make
Him slack his pace and cry, my shoulders ache.
I am a traveller, this world's my way,
A single staff may be of use to stay
My feeble body, if it do not crack
By too hard leaning on it ; but my back
Will bear no more : Alas ! I soon shall tire,
And more than one I cannot well desire.
Lord, to prescribe to thee becomes me not,
I rather do submit unto my lot.
But yet let condescending grace admit
Thy servant's suit this once, and this is it :
The staff of bread convenient let me have,
And manage it discreetly ; so, 'twill save
Thy feeble servant from the mire and dirt.
But more or less than this may do me hurt.
Or if thou say, thy servant shall have none,

CHAP. V.

Upon the Improvement of bad Ground

*Spent barren land you can restore, and nourish;
Decayed Christians God can cause to flourish.*

OBSERVATION.

WHERE land is spent out by tillage for want of a careful husbandman hath many ways to recover and heart again. He lets it lie fallow, to give it rest, and till itself: carries out to his sand, lime, and compost, to quicken it again; and in pasture and meadow ground it, (if possible) with a current of water, or the float of the sea, or a fall of rain, which is to the earth as a spring of new blood to a sumptive body. He cuts down and kills the weeds that choke it, and causes them to make restitution of what they have taken from it, by rotting upon the place where they grew. He lets it be as they to recover it, when it is spent, as an honest physician lets his patient in a languishing condition; for he knows he shall be as grateful to him, and fully requite his care and cost.

APPLICATION.

AS man's, so God's husbandry is sometimes out of order, yielding too many crops, but too few. The mystical husbandman hath some fields, (I mean particular societies and persons) once fragrant and fruitful like a field) which God had blessed, but are now decayed and grown barren; whose gleanings were more than their vintage now; the things that are ready to die, Rev. iii. 3. It is possible, yea, too common, for good souls to be reduced to a very low ebb, both of graces and comforts; how low I will not say. Our British divines say, grace indeed cannot be totally intermitted, nor finally lost; but it may be an omission of the act, though not an omission of the gift. The act may be perverted, though the faith cannot be so; the gift may be shaken in, though not shaken out: Its fruits may be hid, but its sap lies hid in the root. They demerit the loss of it, but lose it not effectively; the effect of justification may be lost, but the state of the justified cannot be dissolved*.

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“who shall separate me from the love of Christ?” may, at any time lie mourning, as at the gates of death, crying, “O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of death?” One that hath walked in sweet communion with Christ, sunning himself in the light of his countenance, may afterwards “walk in darkness, and see no light,” Isa. l. 10. He that hath an anchor within the veil, and rode securely in the peaceful harbor of assurance, may seem to feel his anchor of hope come home to him, and go a-drift into the stormy ocean again, crying with the church, Lam. iii. 18. “My hope is perished from the Lord.” His calm and clear air may be overcast and clouded, yea, filled with storms and tempests, lightnings and thunders; his graces, like underground flowers in the winter, may all disappear, and hide their beautiful heads.

To God he may say, I am cast out of thy sight. I know thou canst do much, but wilt thou shew wonders to the dead?

To the promises he may say, you are sweet things indeed, but what have I to do with you? I could once, indeed, rejoice in you as my portion; but now I doubt I grasped a shadow, a fancy instead of you.

To saints he may say, turn away from me, labour not to comfort me, O do not spill your precious ointment of consolation upon my head; for what have I to do with comfort? To former experiences he may say in his haste, you are all liars. To the *light of God's countenance* he may say, farewell sweet light, I shall behold thee no more. To Satan he may say, O mine enemy, thou hast at last prevailed against me, thou art stronger than I, and hast overcome. To duties and ordinances, he may say, Where is the sweetness I once found in you? You were once sweeter to me than the honey-comb; but now as tasteless as the white of an egg. O sad relapse! deplorable change! *quantum mutatus ab illo?*

But will God leave his poor creatures helpless, in such a case as this? Shall their leaf fall, their branches wither, their joy, their life, their hearts depart? Will he see their graces fainting, their hopes grasping, the new creature panting, the things that are in them ready to die, and will he not regard it? Yes; “there is hope for a tree if it be cut down, and the root thereof wax old in the earth, yet by the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant,” Job xiv. 8, 9. This poor declined soul, as sad as it sits at the gates of hell, may rouse up itself at last, and say to Satan, I stand triumphing over him, “Rejoice not over me, O mine enemy.”

"not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord say to the *promises*, You are the true and faithful saviour. My unbelief did bely you; I said in my haste you were dead, but eat my words, I am ashamed of my folly. Surely, O Lord, yet hope in thine end, thou mayest be restored, Psal. x. yet mayest yet recover thy verdure, and thy dew be as the dew of the morning. For,

1. Is he not thy father, and a father full of compassion and bowels? And can a father stand by his dying-child, see him melt, fits, hear his melting groans, and pity-begging looks, and not comfort him, especially having restoratives by him, that can do good? "As a father pities his own children, so will thy God." "Psal. ciii. 12, 13. "He will spare thee as a father spareth his own son that serves him," Mal. iii. 17. Hark, how he doth yearn! "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself, saying, 'Ephraim my dear son? Is he not a pleasant child?' I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still, I will have mercy on him," Jer. xxxi. 20.

2. Doth he not know thy life would be altogether useless if he should not restore thee? What service art thou to him, in such a condition? "Thy days will consume themselves, whilst thy heart is smitten and withered like grass," Isa. lvi. Thy months will be months of vanity, they will fly away and do no good, Job vii. 3. If he will but quicken thee again, thou mayest call upon his name, Psal. lxxx. 18. but in a languishing condition thou art no more fit for any work, as a sick man is for manual labours; and surely he hath bestowed precious and excellent graces of the Spirit within thee, which they were planted there for fruit and service, and therefore, if he will, he will revive thee again.

3. Yea, doth thou not think he sees thine inability to be in that condition long? He knows "thy spirit would fail before the soul which he hath made;" Isa. lvii. 16. David was much in the like condition, Psal. cxliii. 7, 8. "Hear, O Lord, for my spirit faileth; hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto those that go down into the pit:" q. d. In my haste, and recover my languishing soul; otherwise, I shall be like now a *sick child*, thou wilt shortly have a *dead child*.

And in like manner Job expostulated with him, Job xxi. 11, 12. "My grief is heavier than the sand of the sea, now I am swallowed up, for the arrows of the Almighty are within me."

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“ He will not stir up all his wrath, for he remembers thou art
 “ flesh, a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again,”
 lxxvii. 38, 39. He hath ways enough to do it ; if he do but u
 his blessed face, and make it shine again upon thee, thou art sa
 Psal. lxxx. 3. The manifestations of his love, will be to thy sou
 showers to the parched grass ; thy soul, that now droops, and h
 the wing, shall then revive and leap for joy, Isa. lxi. 1. a new
 shall come upon thy graces, they shall bud again, and bloss
 rose. If he do but send a spring of * auxiliary grace into thy
 to actuate the dull habits of inherent grace, the work is done ;
 shalt thou return to thy first works, Rev. ii. 4, 5. and sing, as in
 days of thy youth.

REFLECTIONS.

O this is my very case, saith many a poor Christian ; thus my
 languishes and droops from day to day. It is good news indeed,
 God both can and will restore my soul ; but sad that I should
 into such a state ; how unlike am I to what I once was ! Surely
 the old men wept when they saw how short the second *temple* o
 of the glory of the first ; so may I sit down and weep bitterl
 consider how much my first love and first duties excelled the
 sent. For,

1. Is my heart so much in heaven now, as it was wont to
 Say, O my soul ! Dost thou not remember, when, *A contri*
 like the beloved disciple, thou laidst in Jesus’s bo- *reflection.*
 som, how didst thou sweeten communion with him ?
 How restless and impatient wast thou in his absense ! divine v
 drawments were to thee as the hell of hell ; what a burden wa
 world to me in those days ! Had it not been for conscience o
 duty, I could have been willing to let all lie, that communion
 Christ might suffer no interruption. When I awaked in the n
 how was the darkness enlightened by the heavenly glimpses o
 countenance of my God upon me ? How did his company sho
 those hours, and beguile the tediousness of the night ? O my
 speak thy experience ; Is it now as it was then ? No, those day
 past and gone, and thou art become much a stranger to that heav
 life. Art thou able with truth to deny this charge ? When occasio
 I pass by those places, which were once to me as Jacob’s Beth
 him ; I sigh at the remembrance of former passages betwixt me
 heaven there, and say with Job, chap. xxix. “ O that it were with
 “ as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me, when

“ When I remember these things my soul is poured out.”

2. Is thy obedience to the commands of Christ thy duty, as free and cheerful as they were wont to be? my soul, the times when thou wast borne down the stony every duty. If the Spirit did but whisper to thee, saying, *face*, how did my spirit echo to his calls? saying, “ *Thy will I seek,*” Psal. xxvii. 8. If God had any work how readily did I offer my service? Here am I, Lord, my soul made me like the chariots of Amminadib; love of my affections, and “ his commandments were not John v. 3. *Non tardat uncta rota.* There were no struggles with the command, no such excuses and delays as No, such was my love to Christ, and delight to do his will, could no more keep back myself from duty, than a soldier carried away in a crowd.

Or, lastly, tell me, O my soul, dost thou bemoan thyself so tenderly for sin, and for grieving the Holy Spirit who wast wont to do? When formerly I had fallen by temptation, how was I wont to lie in tears at the foot of the cross, moaning myself? How did I hasten to my closet, like Ezra, chap. ix. 6. “ O my God, I am ashamed, and I will not lift up my face.” How did I sigh and weep before Ephraim, smite upon my thigh, saying, “ What have I done to my soul! how didst thou work, strive, and cast about thyself again? Hast thou forgotten how thou wouldst look up and sigh bitterly? Ah! what a God have I professed to love and goodness have I abused? Sometimes look upon me, Ah! what motions did I withstand? what a good Spirit did I despise? Ah! my soul, thou wouldest have abhorred thyself, thou wouldest never have borne it, had thine heart been as stupid as I am now; if ever a poor soul had reason to desire tears for its sad relapses, I have.

2. But yet mourn not, O my soul, as one without a member, “ There is hope in Israel of thy redemption.”

A supporting reflection. “ *thing,*” As low as thy condition is desperate, it is not a disease that seizes many a man that hath been stretched out for dead, and lived many a comfortable day in the world, that hath cast both leaf and fruit, by the skill of a prudent man, hath recovered again, and been made both flourishing. Is it not easier, thinkest thou, to recover a languishing

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"turn to the days of my youth," Job xxxiii. 22. Though flourish, and much of my fruit too be gone, and I am a withered tree; yet as long as the root of the matter is in me, there is hope of such a poor, decayed, withered tree, than of the hypocrite that wants such a root in all his glory and bravery. His sun set, and never rise again; but I live in expectation of a sweet morning after this dark night.

Rouse up, therefore, O my soul, set thy soul a work on Christ quickening grace, for he hath life in himself, and quickens whom ever he will, John vii. 38. Stir up that little which remains. Rev. iii. 2. hast thou not seen lively flames proceed from glimmering and dying sparks, when carefully collected and blown up? amongst the most lively and quickening Christians; "as iron sharpens iron, so will these set an edge upon thy dull affections," Prov. xxvii. 17. Acts xviii. 15. But, above all, cry mightily to the Lord for quickening; he will not despise thy cry. The moans of a distressed child work upon the bowels of a tender father. And be content to keep within thy view the great things of eternity, which are reserved to be revealed; live in the believing and serious contemplation of them, and be dead if thou canst. It is true, thou hast reason enough from thy condition, to be for ever humbled, but no reason enough from thy God to be in the least discouraged.

THE POEM.

THOU art the Husbandman, and I
A worthless plot of husbandry,
Whom special love did, ne'ertheless,
Divide from nature's wilderness.
Then did the sun-shine of thy face,
And sweet illapses of thy grace,
Like April show'rs, and warming gleams,
Distil its dews, reflect its beams.
My dead affections then were green,
And hopeful buds on them were seen;
These into duties soon were turn'd,
In which my heart within me burn'd.
O halcyon days! thrice happy state!
Each place was Bethel, heaven's gate.
What sweet discourse, what heav'nly talk,
Whilst with thee I did daily walk!

My fragrant branches blasted be,
 No fruits like those that I can see.
 Some canker-worm lies at my root,
 Which fades my leaves, destroys my fruit.
 My soul is banish'd from thy sight,
 For this it mourneth day and night.
 Yet why dost thou desponding lie?
 With Jonah cast a backward eye.
 Sure in thy God help may be had,
 There's precious balm in Gilead.
 That God that made me spring at first,
 When I was barren and accurst,
 Can much more easily restore
 My soul to what it was before;
 'Twas Heman's, Job's, and David's case,
 Yet all recovered were by grace.
 A word, a smile on my poor soul,
 Will make it perfect, sound, and whole.
 A glance of thine hath soon dissolv'd
 A soul in sin and grief involv'd.
 Lord, if thou canst not work the cure,
 I am contented to endure.

CHAP. VI.

Upon the incurableness of some bad Ground.

*No skill can mend the miry ground; and so
 Some souls the gospel leaves as past a cure.*

OBSERVATION.

ALTHOUGH the industry and skill of the husbandman may make some ground that was useless and bad, good for pasture, and improve that which was barren; and by his pains make one acre worth ten: yet such is the nature of the miry ground, where the water stands, and there it cannot cleanse it, that it can never be made fruitful. The husbandman

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APPLICATION.

MANY also, there are, under the gospel, who are given by God to judicial blindness, hardness of heart, a reprobate sense, and perpetual barrenness; so that how excellent soever the means are which they enjoy, and how efficacious soever to the conversion, edification, and salvation of others; yet they shall never do to their souls good. Ezek. xlvii. 9, 11. "Every thing wheresoever the river comes shall live, but the miry places thereof, and the marshes thereof shall never be healed, but be given to salt;" i. e. given to an obstinate and everlasting barrenness. Compare Deut. ix. 17. By these waters, saith the judicious Mr. Strong *, understand the doctrine of the gospel; as Rev. xxi. 2. a river of water of life, clear as crystal: *Hic fluvius est uberrima doctrina Christi*, saith Brightman. This river is the most fruitful doctrine of Christ: these waters do not heal the miry, marshy places; i. e. men that are unfruitfully under ordinances, who are compared to miry, marshy places, in three respects:

(1.) In miry places the water hath not free passage, but stagnates and settles there. So it is with these barren souls; therefore the apostle prays, that the gospel may run, and be glorified, 2 Thes. i. 1. The word is said to run, when it meets with no stop, *Cum libere propagatur*, when it is freely propagated, and runs through the world; when it meets with no stop, either in the mouth of the speaker, or hearts of the hearers, as it doth in these.

(2.) In a miry place the earth and water are mixed together; the mixture makes mire. So when the truths of God do mix with the corruptions of men, that they either hold some truths, and yet live in their lusts; or else when men do make use of the truths of God to justify and plead for their sins. Or,

(3.) When, as in a miry place, the longer the water stands in it, the worse it grows; so the longer men abide under ordinances, the more filthy and polluted they grow. These are the miry places that cannot be healed, their disease is incurable, desperate.

O this is a sad case! and yet very common; many persons are given over as incorrigible, and hopeless; Rev. xxii. 11. "Let the filthy be filthy still." Jer. vi. 29. "Reprobate silver shall men call them, for the Lord hath rejected them." Isa. vi. 10, "Go make the heart of this people fat, their ears dull," &c.

Christ executes, by the gospel, that curse upon many souls, which he denounced against the fig-tree, Mat. xxi. 19. "Let no fruit grow on thee henceforth for ever, and immediately the fig-tree withered."

a bad heart, (saith one) but it is the depth of woe to that never shall be made better. To be barren under a sore judgment, but to have that *pertinax sterilitas*, barrenness ; this is to be twice dead, and plucked up by the roots. Jude speaks.

And to shew you the woful and miserable state and men, let the following particulars be weighed.

(1.) It is a stroke at the soul itself, an inward spiritual stroke, and by how much the more inward and spiritual any judgment is, so much the more dreadful and lamentable. As so the best mercies, so soul-judgments are the saddest of all. If it were but a temporal stroke upon the body, the loss of an eye, an ear, a hand, a foot, though in itself it would be a con- siderable loss, yet it were nothing to this. *Omnia Deus dedit dupliciter* sustom, speaking of bodily members ; God hath given us two hands, two eyes, if one be lost, the other supplies the place of the other ; two ears, two feet, that the failing of one may be the help of the other : *animam vero unam*, but one soul ; if it perish, there is no other to supply its loss. “ The heathen *, is the man ; that which is seen, is not the man ; the apostle calls the body a vile body, Phil. iii. 21. and so is the soul ; and Daniel calls it the sheath, which is a temptible thing to the sword which is in it. Oh ! it is more precious than many bodies perish, than one soul ; that every body made the seat and subject of the most exquisite torture and judgment should fall upon the soul.

(2.) It is the severest stroke God can inflict upon the soul, to give it up to barrenness ; because it cuts off all means of grace, it frustrates all means, nothing can be a blessing to him. If God shut him from the dead, if angels should descend from heaven to help him, there is no hope of him. If God shut up a man, as Job xii. 14. As there was none found in heaven or earth to open the seals of that book, Rev. v. 5. so is there no other hand of the most able and skilful ministry, those seals of blindness, and unbelief, thus impressed upon the spirit. If God so locks up, mercy will never let out. This is that which is called the *Anathema Maranatha*, 1 Cor. xvi. 22. which is the curse in all the book of God, accursed till the Lord come.

(3.) It is the most indiscernable stroke to themselves, and by that so much the more desperate. Hence there is poured out upon them the spirit of slumber. Isa. xi.

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stupefactive ingredients, which casts a man into such a deep slumber that do what you will to him, he feels, he knows it not. "Make their eyes heavy, and their ears dull; lest they should see, hear, and be converted," Isa. vi. 9, 10. This is the heart that cannot repent which is spoken of, Rom. ii. 5. For men are not sensible of all of this judgment, they do not in the least suspect it, and thank themselves for their misery. Though they be cursed trees, which shall never bear any fruit to life, yet many times they bear abundance of other fruits, and pleasant fruits to the eye, excellent gifts, and rare endowments, and these deceive and undo them. Mat. vii. 22. "We have prophesied in thy name;" this makes the wound desperate, that there is no finding of it, no probe to search it.

(4.) It is a stroke that cuts off from the soul all the comforts and sweetness of religion. A man may pray, hear, and confer, but those duties are dry stalks to him, which yield no meat, no solid and substantial nutriment; some common touches upon the affections may sometimes find in duty, the melting voice or rhetoric of a preacher may perhaps strike his natural affections, as another tragedy pathetically delivered may do; but to have any real communion with God in ordinances, any discoveries or views of the beauty of the Lord in them, that he cannot have; for these are the special effects and operations of the Spirit, which are always restrained.

God hath said to such, as he did to them, Gen. vi. 3. "My Spirit shall no longer strive with them;" and then what sweetness is there in ordinances? What is the word, separated from the Spirit, but a dead letter? It is the Spirit that quickens, 2 Cor. ii. 13. Friend, thou must know that the gospel works not like a *natural cause* upon those that hear it; if so, the effect would always follow, unless miraculously stopt and hindered; but it works like a *ministered cause*, whose efficacy and success depend upon the arbitrary concurrence of the Spirit with it. "The wind blows where it lists, and thou canst not hear the sound of it, so is very one that is born of the Spirit," John iii. 8. "Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth." Ordinances are like the pool of Bethesda, which had his healing virtue only when the *angel* moved the waters; but the Spirit never moves savingly upon the waters of ordinances, for its healing of their souls, how many years soever they lie by them; though others feel a divine power upon them, yet they shall not. As the men that travelled with Paul, when Christ appeared to him from heaven, they saw the light, but heard not the voice which he heard to salvation: So it was with these; they see the ministers, hear the words, which are words of salvation to others, but not to them.

(5.) It is such a stroke upon the spirit of man, as is of his eternal reprobation. It is true, we cannot positively say of any man in this life, he is a reprobate, one that God will never give mercy to; but yet there are some probable marks of it upon him in this world, and they are of a trembling consideration when they appear; of which this is one of the saddest, 2 Cor. 4. 12. "our gospel be hid, it is hid to those that are lost, in whom the light of this world hath blinded the minds of them that do not see, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." So Acts xiii. 48. "they that were ordained unto eternal life believed. Ye believe, because ye are not of my sheep," John x. 26. And again, Matt. 13. 35. "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." There cannot be a more dreadful sign of a person marked out for wrath, than to continue in sin and iniquities, as the rocks and miry places do under the influences of heaven. What blessed opportunities had Judas under Christ's own ministry, he often heard the gracious words proceeded out of his mouth; he was day and night in the temple, yet never the better; and why? Because he was the son of perdition, that is, a man appointed to destruction and wrath.

(6.) And lastly, To add no more. It is such a stroke upon the souls of men, as immediately fore-runs hell and damnation, Matt. vi. 8. "But which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burnt." So many of the saints in this world have had a prelibation or foretaste of hell, which the scripture calls *the earnest of the Spirit*, a precursor of hell, a sign of wrath at the door. We may see it is said of the pale horse in the Revelation, that hell fire was in him; "a man abide not in me, (saith Christ, John xv. 6.) he is cut off as a branch, and withered;" which is the very state of cursed souls. And what follows? Why, saith he, men and women, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. Let us see the vengeance which the gospel executes upon this barren

REFLECTIONS.

1. Well then, blessed be God that made me feel the want of the gospel. O, let God be exalted for this mercy!

The sincere soul's reflection.

that how defective I am in common gifts, though I have

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but according to the riches of thy mercy. Some little fruit I bring forth, and what it is, is by virtue of my union with Jesus Christ. Rom. vii. 4. And this hath more in it as to my comfort, than all the glittering gifts and splendid performances of the most glorious hierarchy can yield to him: if I might have my choice (saith one) I would chuse and prefer the most despicable and sordid work of a reprobate Christian before all the victories of Alexander, and triumphs of Cæsar. *Blessed therefore be the Lord, who hath abounded unto me in spiritual blessings, in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*

I cannot remember a sermon as another can, but blessed be that I am able to favour it, and feel it? that I have an heart to hear, and a will to obey all that God discovers to be my duty.

2. O, then how little cause have I to make my boast of ordinary and glory in my external privileges, who never bear spiritual fruit under them? If I well consider my condition, there is matter of trembling, and not of glorying in these things. *The formal professor's reflection.* It may be while I have been glorying in them, and lifting up my secure heart upon them, the Lord has been secretly blasting my soul under them, and insensibly executing this horrible curse by them. Shall I boast with Capernaum that I am lifted up to heaven, since I may with her, at last be cast down to hell? And if so, Lord, what a hell will my hell be? It will be more terrible for Sodom and Gomorrah than for me. It drew tears from the eyes of Christ, when he was looking upon Jerusalem, under the same consideration that I doubt I have cause to look upon my soul, Luke xix. 41. "He wept over it, saying, if thou hadst known even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thee, peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes." So long have I been a hearer, a professor of the gospel, so many years have I enjoyed its distinguishing ordinances, but have they not been all dry and empty things to me; hath not the spirit of formality acted in them? Have not self-ends and worldly respects lain at the bottom of my best duties? Have not my discourses, in communion with saints, been trade words, speaking what I have learnt, but not felt? See my condition now, but it would be desperate and irrecoverable shouldst thou execute this curse upon me.

3. And what may I think of my condition; Lord, I acknowledge my unprofitableness under the means hath been shameful; and this hath made my condition doubtful. *The less formal Christian's reflection.* I have often trembled for fear, lest my root had been blasted by such a curse? but if so, whence is this trembling? Will not the Lord say to me, as he said to the fig-tree, "Why dost thou say, I am poor and afflicted, when thou art full of figs?"

* The laws of men spare for the fruit's sake, and wilt thou me also, my God, if there be found in me a blessing in law. lxxv. 8.

4. To conclude, what a serious reflection should this every dispenser of the gospel? How should he say when he goes to preach the gospel, I am *The gospel reflection* going to preach that word which is to be a *savour of life or death unto these souls*; upon how many hearers may the curse of perpetual barrenness be executed. O how should such a thought melt his heart into compassion for them, and make him beg hard, and plead earnestly with them for a better issue of the gospel than this upon them.

THE POEM.

YOU that besides your pleasant fruitful fields,
Have useless bogs, and rocky ground that yields
You no advantage, nor doth quit your cost,
But all your pains and charges on them's lost:
Hearken to me, I'll teach you how to get
More profit by them than if they were set
At higher rents than what your tenants pay
For your most fertile lands; and here's the way.

Think when you view them, why the Lord hath chosen
These, as the emblem to decipher those

That under gospel-grace grow worse and worse;
For means are fruitless when the Lord doth curse.

Sweet showers descend, the sun his beams reflects
On both alike, but not with like effects.

Observe and see how after the sweet showers
The grass and corn revive: the fragrant flowers
Shoot forth their beauteous heads, the vallies sing,
All fresh and green as in the verdant spring.

But rocks are barren still, and bogs are so;
Where nought but flags, and worthless rushes grow.
Upon these marshy grounds there lies this curse,
The more rain falls, by so much more the worse.

Even so the dews of grace that sweetly fall,
From gospel-clouds, are not alike to all.

The gracious soul doth germinate and bud,
But to the reprobate it doth no good.

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Shall be to him but as the sun and rain
Are to obdurate rocks, fruitless and vain.
Be this your meditation when you walk
By rocks and fenny-grounds thus learn to talk
With your own souls; and let it make you fear
Lest that's your case that is described here.
This is the best improvement you can make
Of such bad ground; good soul I pray thee take
Some pains about them; though they barren be,
Thou seest how they may yield sweet fruits to thee.



CHAP. VII.

Upon the plowing of Corn-land.

*The plowman guides his plow with care and skill;
So doth the Spirit in sound conviction still.*

OBSERVATION.

IT requires not only strength, but much skill and judgment to manage and guide the plow. The Hebrew word *ברש* which translates to plow, signifies to be intent, as an artificer is about a curious piece of work. The plow must neither go too shallow nor too deep in the earth; it must not indent the ground, by making crooked furrows, nor leap and make baulks in the good ground; be guided as to a just depth of earth, so to cast the furrow in a straight line, that the floor or surface of the field may be made plain, as Isa. xxxviii. 25. And hence that expression, Luke ix. 62. "that puts his hand to the plow, and looks back, is not fit for the kingdom of heaven." The meaning is, that as he that plows must have his eyes always forward, to guide and direct his hand in casting the furrows straight and even; (for his hand will be quivering out when his eye is off;) so he that heartily resolves for heaven must addict himself wholly and intently to the business of religion, and not have his mind entangled with the things of this world, which he hath left behind him; whereby it appears, that the right management of the plow requires as much skill as strength.

much of the wisdom, as well as power of God, is discovered in the work of repentance, and saving contrition is set forth in this metaphor of plowing*, Jer. iv. 3. Hos. x. 12. "Plow the fallow ground;" that is, be convinced, humbled, and contrite-hearted for sin. And the resemblance betwixt both the things appears in the following particulars.

(1.) It is a hard and difficult work to plow, it is reckoned the painfullest manual labours; it is also a very hard labour to convince and humble the heart of a secure, stout, and proud, and indurate in wickedness. What Luther saith of a dejected sinner, "it is as easy to raise the dead, as to comfort such a one." I may say of the secure, confident sinner; it is as easy to turn the rocks, as to work saving contrition upon such a heart. *pumice aquam*; all the melting language, and earnest preaching of the gospel, cannot urge such a heart to shed a tear: They are called a heart of stone, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. a firm rock, Acts ii. 14. "Shall horses run upon the rock? Will one plow there with oxen? Yet when the Lord comes in the power of his Spirit, they shall rend, and yield to the power of the word."

(2.) The plow pierces deep into the bosom of the earth, if it were, a deep gash or wound in the heart of it. So doth the Spirit of God upon the hearts of sinners, he pierces their very souls. Acts ii. 37. "When they heard this they were pierced (point blank) to the heart." "Then the word pierced them to the soul and spirit," Heb. iv. 12. It comes upon the consciences of such piercing dilemmas, and tilts the sword of conviction upon their souls, that there is no stanching the blood, no stopping the wound, till Christ himself come, and undertake the cure. *terri lethalis arundo*; this barbed arrow cannot be pulled out of their hearts by any, but the hand that shot it in. Discourse with the soul about his troubles, and he will tell you, that all the pleasures he ever had in this world, loss of estate, health, children, &c. ever else, are but flea-bitings to this; this swallows up all the pleasures. See how that Christian Niobe, Luke vii. 38. is distressed with tears; "Now deep calleth unto deep at the noise of his waves;" "when the waves and billows of God go over the soul." His sorrows are deep waters, in which the stoutest and most courageous soul would sink and drown, did not Jesus Christ, by his supporting hand, hold it up, and preserve it.

(3.) The plow rends the earth in parts and pieces, and makes those parts hang loose, which were united, and makes those parts hang loose, which were united.

comparative, though the expression be negative. And this re-
implies not only acute pain, flesh cannot be rent asunder without
guish, nor yet only force and violence; the heart is a stubborn
knotty piece, and will not easily yield; but it also implies a dis-
of parts united. As when a garment, or the earth, or any contiguous
body is rent, those parts are separated which formerly cleaved
ther. Sin and the soul were glued fast together before, there
no parting of them, they would as soon part with their lives, as
their lusts; but now when the heart is rent from them truly,
also rent from them everlastingly, Ezek. vii. 15, to 19.

(4.) The plow turns up and discovers such things as lay hid
bosom of the earth before, and were covered under a fair green
face, from the eyes of men. Thus when the Lord plows up the
of a sinner by conviction, then the secrets of his heart are made
nifest, 2 Cor. xiv. 24, 25. the most secret and shameful sins will
out; for "the word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than
"two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of the soul
"spirit, the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts
"and secret intents of the heart," Heb. iv. 12. It makes them
burn inwardly, so that the soul hath no rest till confession be
vent to trouble. Fain would the shuffling sinner conceal and
his shame, but the word follows him through all his sinful steps
and brings him at last to be his own, both accuser, witness, and judge.

(5.) The work of the plow is but *opus ordinabile*, a preparatory
work in order to fruit. Should the husbandman plow his ground
ever so often, yet if the seed be not cast in, and quickened, in
is the harvest expected. Thus conviction also is but a preparatory
to a farther work upon the soul of a sinner; if it stick there
goes no farther, it proves but an abortive, or untimely birth. I
have gone thus far, and there they have stuck; they have been
a field plowed, but not sowed, which is a matter of trembling con-
sideration; for hereby their sin is greatly aggravated, and their
nal misery so much the more increased. O when a poor dan-
creature shall with horror reflect upon himself in hell, How
was I once, under such a sermon, to conversion! my sins were
in order before me, my conscience awakened, and terrified me
the guilt of them: many purposes and resolves I had then to turn
God, which had they been perfected by answerable execution,
never come to this place of torment; but there I stuck, and that
my eternal undoing. Many souls have I known so terrified
the guilt of sin, that they have come roaring under horrors of

the showers of rain; then the work goes on sweetly and never doth the heart so kindly melt, as when the gospel solve, and the free grace and love of Jesus Christ comes showering down upon it; then it relents and mourns in Ezek. xvi. 63. "That thou mayest remember, and be converted," and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy sin. "I am pacified towards thee for all that thou hast done," was with that poor penitent, Luke vii. 38. when the Lord discovered to her the superabounding riches of his grace in pardon of her manifold abominations, her heart melted with love, and she washed the feet of Christ with tears. And indeed, there is a difference betwixt the tears which are forced by the terror of the law, and those which are extracted by the grace of the gospel; there is betwixt those of a condemned malefactor, who considers the misery he is under, and those of a pardoned sinner, that receives his pardon at the foot of the ladder, and in the mercy and clemency of his gracious prince towards him.

(7.) The plow kills those rank weeds which grow in the field, and turns them up by the roots, buries and rots them. So saving conviction kill sin at the root, makes the soul sick of it, and indignation in the heart against it, 2 Cor. vii. 11. *Ἀγανακτήσιν*, there signifies the rising of the stomach against sin, angry even unto sickness; religious wrath is the fiercest remedy, the soul cannot endure sin, it trembles at it. "I find a yoke bitter than death," (saith penitent Solomon) Eccl. vii. 26. Conviction, like a surfeit, makes the soul to lothe what it formerly loved and delighted in.

(8.) That field is not well plowed, where the plow skips over good ground and makes baulks, it must run over the field alike; and that heart is not savingly convicted, where sin is spared, and left untouched. Saving conviction extends to all sins, not only to sin in general, with this cold confession, "I am a sinner"; but to the particulars of sin, yea, to the particular circumstances and aggravations of time, place, manner, occasions, that I have done; to the sin of nature, as well as practice. "I was shapen in iniquity," Psal. li. 5. There must be no sparing of any sin; the sparing of one sin, is a sure argument that the heart is not truly humbled for any sin. So far is the convinced sinner from studious concealment of a beloved sin, that it weeps over it more than over any other actual sin.

(9.) New ground is much more easily plowed, than

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are wrought upon. How many young persons are called to endure, inveterate sinner? I do not say but God may call home a soul at the eleventh hour, but I may say of these, compared with others, as Solomon speaks, Eccl. vii. 28. "One man among a thousand have I found," &c. Few that have long resisted the good that come afterwards to feel the saving efficacy thereof.

REFLECTIONS.

1. O grace, for ever to be admired! that God should send forth his word and Spirit to plow up my hard and stony heart, yea, mine, when he hath left so many of more tender, ingenious, sweet, and meek tempers without any culture or means of grace. O blessed good heart-dissolving voice! I have felt thine efficacy, I have experienced thy divine and irresistible power; thou art indeed sharper than a two-edged sword, and woundest to the heart; but thy wounds are the wounds of a friend: All the wounds thou hast made in my heart were so many doors opened to let in Christ; all the blows thou gavest my conscience, were but to beat off my soul from sin, which I embraced, and had retained to my everlasting ruin, hadst thou not cut them and me. O wise and merciful Physician! thou didst indeed bind me with cords of conviction and sorrow, but it was to cut out that stone in my heart, which had killed me if it had continued there. O how did I struggle and oppose thee, as if thou hadst come with the sword of an enemy, rather than the lance and prodigality of a skilful and tender-hearted physician? Blessed be the day when my sin was discovered and embittered! O happy sorrows, which were prepared for such matchless joys! O blessed hand, which turned my bitter waters into pleasant wine! and after many pangs and sorrows my soul, didst, at length, bring forth deliverance and peace.

2. But O what a rock of adamant is this heart of mine! that never yet was wounded, and savingly pierced for sin by the terrors of the law, or melting voice of the gospel! long have I sat under the word, but when did I feel a relenting pang? O my soul? my unpurged soul! thou hast got an antidote against repentance, but thou art any against hell? Thou canst keep out the sense of sin now, art thou able to keep out the terrors of the Lord hereafter? If thou couldst turn a deaf ear to the sentence of Christ in the day of judgment, as easily as thou dost to the entreaties of Christ in the day of grace, it were somewhat; but surely there is no defence against

kened by it, and filled with terrors and tremblings under those troubles have soon worn off again, and my heart (I moved from the fire) returned to its native coldness. In what dismal case am I in? many convictions have I choaked and which, it may be, shall never more be revived, until thou against me in judgment. I have been in pangs, and but nothing but wind; my troubles have wrought no deliverance have my lusts fallen before them? My conscience, been sometimes sick with sin, yea, so sick as to vomit an external, partial reformation? but then, with the turned again to my vomit, and now I doubt I am given a heart that cannot repent. O that these travelling pains quickened again! but alas! they are ceased, I am like escaped, and again recovered, whom the goaler loads with irons. Surely, O my soul! if thy spiritual troubles return they are but gone back to bring eternal troubles. It is my soul! as with a man whose bones have been broken, set; who must, (how terrible soever it appear to him) the pain of breaking and setting them again, if ever he be a man. O that I might rather chuse to be the object of thy mercy, than of thy sparing cruelty! if thou plow not up again by compunction, I know it must be rent in pieces in desperation.

THE POEM.

THERE's skill in plowing, that the plowman knows
 For if too shallow, or too deep he goes,
 The seed is either bury'd, or else may
 To rooks and daws become an easy prey.
 This, as a lively emblem, fitly may
 Describe the blessed Spirit's work and way:
 Whose work on souls, with this doth symbolize;
 Betwixt them both, thus the resemblance lies.
 Souls are the soil, conviction is the plow,
 God's workmen draw, the Spirit shews them how.
 He guides the work, and in good ground doth bless
 His workmen's pains, with sweet and fair success.
 The heart prepar'd, he scatters in the seed,
 Which in its season springs, no fowl nor weed
 Shall pick it up, or choak this springing corn,
 'Till it be housed in the heavenly barn.

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The rest uncover'd lies, which fowls devour.
Alas! their heart was touch'd, but not with pow'r.
The cares and pleasures of this world have drown'd
The seed before it peep'd above the ground.
Some springs indeed, the Scripture saith that some
Do taste the powers of the world to come.
These embryos never come to timely birth,
Because the seed that's sown wants depth of earth.
Turn up, O God, the bottom of my heart;
And to the seed that's sown, do thou impart
Thy choicest blessing. Though I weep and mourn
In this wet seed-time, if I may return
With sheaves of joy; these fully will reward
My pains and sorrows, be they ne'er so hard.



CHAP. VIII.

Upon the Seed-Corn.

*The choicest wheat is still reserv'd for seed,
But gracious principles are choice indeed.*

OBSERVATION.

HUSBANDMEN are very careful and curious about their seed corn, that it may not only be clean and pure, but the best and most excellent of its kind. Isa. xxviii. 25. "He casteth in the principal wheat." If any be more full and weighty than other, it is reserved for seed. It is usual with husbandmen to pick and leave their seed-corn by hand, that they may separate the cockel and darnel, and all the lighter and hollow grains from it, wherein they manifest their discretion; for, according to the vigour and goodness of the seed, the fruit and production are like to be.

APPLICATION.

THE choice and principal seed corn, with which the fields are sowed, after they are prepared for it, doth admirably shadow forth those excellent principles of grace infused into the regenerate soul.

upon it, it must be plowed and sowed, or no fruit can be. So man, at first, had all the principles of holiness in him; now they must be infused by regeneration, or else he is void of holiness as the barren and untilled desert is of fruit.

2. The earlier the seed is sown, the better it is rooted to endure the asperities of the winter; so when infused, when nature is sanctified in the bud, grace is triumphantly advantaged. It was Timothy's singular advantage that he knew the Scriptures from a child.

3. Frosts and snows conduce very much to the well-ripening of the seed, and make it spread and take root much the better by sanctified afflictions, which usually the people of God meet in their calling, and often in their very seed time. 1 The apostle says, "you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction." But if they have fair weather, be sure they shall meet with weather hard enough after. x. 32. "But call to remembrance the former days, in which, when ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of affliction."

4. When the seed is cast into the earth, it must be covered up by the harrow, the use whereof in husbandry, is not to make a plain floor (as they speak) but to open and let in the seed into the bosom of the earth, and there cover it up for its security, that would devour it. Thus doth the most wise God secure the security of that grace which he at first disseminated among his people. He is as well the finisher as the author of the work. Heb. xii. 2. and of this they may be confident, that which he has begun a good work in them will perform it unto the end. The care of God over the graces of his people, is like the care of the husbandman over the seed for security.

5. Seed-corn is in its own nature of much more value than other corn; the husbandman casts in the principle of the harvest. These are the seeds of grace sown in the renewed soul, for it is the seed of God, 1 John iii. 9. *The divine nature*, 2 Pet. i. 4. A dram of grace is far beyond all the glory of this world, more precious than gold which perishes. 1 Pet. i. 7. "Though fire should consume you, yet you shall be as gold tried by fire." "Above rubies, and all that thou canst desire is not to be separated from me." "With it," Prov. iii. 15.

6. There is a great deal of spirit and vigour in a little seed. It may be small in bulk, yet it is great in virtue and efficacy. Good habits are also vigorous and efficacious things. Such are the graces that they overcome the world, 1 John v. 4. "Whatsoever the world bringeth forth, it cannot overcome them."

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bring forth to God, virtually contained in those habits or seeds of grace. It is strange to consider, that from a *mustard-seed*, (which Christ saith, is the least of all seeds) should grow such great branches, that the birds of the air may build their nests in them. Surely, heroical and famous acts and achievements of the most renowned believers sprang from small beginnings at first, to that eminent and glory.

8. The fruitfulness of the seed depends upon the sun and rain, which they are quickened, as opened largely in the next chapter. And the principles of grace in us have as necessary a dependence upon the assisting and exciting grace without us. For though it be true, they are immortal seed; yet that is not so much from their own strength as from the promises made to them, and that constant influx from above, by which they are revived and preserved from time to time.

9. The seed is fruitful in some soils more than in others, produces much better, and comes sooner to maturity. So do graces take better and grow faster in some persons than in others. "Your faith groweth exceedingly," 2 Thes. i. 3. "Whilst the things that are sown in others are ready to die," Rev. iii. 2. Though no man's heart be naturally a kind soil to grace, yet doubtless grace is more advantaged in some dispositions than in others.

10. And lastly, their agreement, as seed, appears in this, the seed of corn is scattered into all parts of the field, as proportionally and equally as may be. So is grace diffused into all the faculties: judgment, will, and all the affections are sowed with these new principles. "The God of peace sanctify you wholly," 1 Thes. v. 9.

And thus you see why principles of grace are called seed. Now in the next place, (which is the second thing promised, and made designed in this chapter) to shew you the choiceness and excellency of these holy principles with which sanctified souls are embellished and adorned; and to convince you that true grace excels all other principles by which other persons are acted, even as the principal wheat doth the chaff, and refuse stuff, I shall here institute a comparison betwixt grace and the most splendid, common gifts in the world, and its transcendent excellency above them all, will evidently appear in the seven following particulars.

1. The most excellent common gifts come out of the common treasury of God's bounty, and that in a natural way. They are but improvement of a man's natural abilities, (or as one calls them) sparks of nature blown up by the wind of a more benign and lib-

“nor of the will of man, but of God,” John i. 13. In they differ from gifts, as the heavenly *manna* which was from heaven differs from common bread, which, by pain and try, the earth produces in a natural way.

2. The best natural gifts afford not that sweetness and comfort to the soul that grace doth; they are but a dry stalk and no meat for a soul to feed on. A man may have an understanding full of light, and an heart void of comfort at the same time. 8. “Believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.” 11. They are sown for them in these divine and heavenly gifts which are glory in the bud.

3. Gifts adorn the person, but do not secure the soul.

Like a precious stone in a toad's head.

A man may be admired for them and yet rejected eternally by God. Who can read that sixth chapter of the Hebrews and tremble to think in what a forlorn case he is, though set off and accomplished with the rarest endowments of this kind! Mat. vii. 22. We read, that many shall say, “that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils,” &c. and yet themselves at last shall be as a prey to devils. How divinely and rhetorically did Isaiah prophesy, Numb. xxiii. What rare and excellent parts had the Scribes and Pharisees? who upon that account, were styled *princes of the world*. Cor. ii. 8. What rare and excellent parts had the heathen *sages* and *philosophers*? but these things are so far from securing the soul from the wrath of God, that they often expose it unto wrath, and are as oil to increase the burnings; but now gracious principles are the *παρακαταστάσεις* which the apostle calls them, Heb. vi. things that accompany a man in his salvation. These are the things on which the promises of God run; and these treasures are never found but in the heart. Glory is by promise assured and made over to him that loves God. There is but a little point of time betwixt him and the glorified spirits above. And how inconsiderable a matter is it, which contracts and winds up apace? For now is our salvation more certain than when we believed. And hence the scripture speaks of us as already saved, Rom. viii. 24: “We are saved by hope,” as sure as if we were in heaven. We are made to sit in hea-

him. Aristotle said, a little knowledge about heavenly things, though conjectural, is better than much of earthly things, though certain. "The world by wisdom knew not God," (saith the apostle, 1 Cor. i. 21.) i. e. Their learning hanged in their light, they were too proud to submit to the simplicity of the gospel. The excellent parts of old heretics did but serve to midwife into the world the monstrous birth of soul-damning heresies. *Cupit abs te ornari diabolus* Austin said to that ingenious young scholar; the devil desires to be adorned by thee. But now grace itself is not subject to such abuse; it cannot be the proper *univocal cause* of any evil effect; it cannot puff up the heart, but always humbles it, nor serves the devil's desire, but ever opposes them.

5. Gifts may be given a man for the sake of others, and not out of any love to himself; they are but as an excellent dish of meat which a man sends to a nurse, not for her sake so much as for his child that sucks her. God, indeed, makes use of them to do his children good, the church is benefited by them, though themselves are but cooks; they prepare excellent dishes, on which the saints feed, they are nourished, though themselves taste them not. They are *ministrantia, non sanctificantia*, ministering, but not sanctifying, proceeding not from the good-will of God to him that hath them, but to those he benefits by them. And O what a sad consideration is this be one day to such a person, to think I helped such a soul to heaven, while I myself must lodge in hell?

6. Sin in the reign and power of it, may cohabit with the most excellent natural gifts under the same roof, I mean in the same heart. A man may have the tongue of an angel, and the heart of a devil. The wisdom of the philosophers (saith Lanctantius) *non excindit sed abscondit*, doth not root out, but hide their vices. The learned Pharisees were but painted sepulchres. Gifts are but as a fair garment drawn over a foul hand: But now grace is incompatible with sin's dominion, it purifies the heart, Acts xv. 6. cleanses the conscience, Heb. ix. 14. crucifies the affections and lusts of the flesh, Gal. v. 24. is not content with the concealment, but ruin of corruptions.

7. And lastly, Gifts must leave us at last. "Whether their knowledge shall cease. All flesh is grass, and the goodliness of it as the flower of the grass; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of the Lord abideth for ever," Isa. xl. 8. Many times they leave a man before death. One knock, if it be right, (as one saith) may make a wise man a fool: but, to be sure, they all leave us at death. "Doth not his excellency which is in him," "amen?" Job ix. 21. "more than all natural excellencies depart."

soul into eternity, and there receives its perfection, and ment. Gifts take their leave of the soul as Orpah did but grace saith then, as Ruth, Where thou goest I will where thou lodgest I will lodge, and nothing shall separate me. Now put all this together, and then judge whether spoke hyperboles, when he said, "Covet earnestly the" "and yet I shew unto you a more excellent way," 1 Cor. 12:31. And thus you have the choiceness of these principles and

REFLECTIONS.

The gracious soul's reflection. The lines are fallen to me in my place, may the gracious soul say, I am not perfective soever I am in gifts, yet the Lord who hath sown the true seeds of grace in my heart, though I am not famed and honoured among men, let me know that I am precious in the eyes of the Lord. Though I have abounded to me in gifts of nature, "Yet blessed be the Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, who hath abounded to me with spiritual blessings, in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Is not a true jewel, though spurned in the dirt, more precious than a false one, though set in gold? Why art thou troubled for the want of these things which reprobates may have but not rather admiring and blessing God for those things which the darlings and favourites of heaven can have? Is not a pound of pure gold more valuable than many pounds of gilt? What though the dews of Helicon descend not upon me, yet in the mean time the sweet influences of Sion fall upon me by my God! how much soever others are elated by the light of knowledge, I have cause, with humility to adore thee and to be fervently heat with which thou hast warmed my affections.

Pause a while, my soul, upon this

The deceived soul's reflection. what seed is my heart sown, and what are those things wherein I excel?

Are they indeed special seeds of grace, or are they gifts and natural excellencies? If the latter, little cause have I to glory in myself in them, were they ten thousand times more than these things be indeed the things that accompany salvation of God, the true and real work of grace, then, (1.) How can I pass that I never found my throes, or travailing pang of production of them? It is affirmed and generally acknowledged that a new creature is never brought forth without such pain and

THE HEAVENLY USE OF EARTHLY THINGS.

how have I delighted in the noise of the Pharisee's trumpet ! Ma
2. No music so sweet as that. Say, O my conscience, have I
delighted more in the theatre than the closet ? In the praise of
than the approbation of God ? O how many evidences dost thou
duce against me ! Indeed these are sad symptoms that I have sh
thee, but there is yet another, which renders thy case more suspi
yet, yea, that which thou canst make no rational defence against,
the ineffectualness of all thy gifts and knowledge to mortify any
of all thy lusts. It is beyond all dispute, that gifts may, but grace
not consist without mortification of sin, Gal. v. 24. Now what
hath fallen before these excellent parts of mine ? Doth not pride,
sion, covetousness, and indeed the whole body of sin, live and th
in me as much as ever ? Lord, I yield the cause, I can defend
longer against my conscience, which casts and condemns me, by
proof, to be but in a wretched, cursed, lamentable state, not
standing all my knowledge and flourishing gifts. O shew me a
excellent way. Lord ! that I had the sincerity of the poorest s
though I should lose the applause of all my parts ; with these
I may go to hell, but without some better thing no hope of hea

THE POEM.

GREAT difference betwixt that seed is found,
With which you sow your sev'ral plots of ground.
Seed-wheat doth far excel in dignity
The cheaper barley, and the coarser rye :
Tho' in themselves they good and wholesome are,
Yet these with choicest wheat may not compare.
Men's hearts, like fields, are sow'd with different grain,
Some baser, some more noble, some again
Excelling both the former, more than wheat
Excels that grain your swine and horses eat.
For principles of mere morality,
Like cummin, barley, fitches, pease, or rye,
In those men's hearts are often to be found,
Whom yet the scriptures called cursed ground ;
And nobler principles than these, sometime
Call'd common grace, and spiritual gifts, which shine
In some men's heads, where is their habitation ;
Yet they are no companions of salvation.
These purchase honour both from great and small :
But I must tell thee, that if this be all,
Tho' like an angel in these gifts you shine

Whose seat is in the heart, not head, or face;
 Like solid wheat sown in a fruitful field,
 Shall spring, and flourish, and at last will yield
 A glorious harvest of eternal rest,
 To him that nourish'd them within his breast.
 O grace ! how orient art thou ! how divine !
 What is the glory of all gifts to thine !
 Disseminate this seed within my heart,
 My God, I pray thee, tho' thou should'st impart
 The less of gifts ; then I may truly say,
 That thou hast shew'd me the more excellent way.

CHAP. IX.

Upon springing-weather after seed-time

*By heaven's influence corn and plants do spring,
 God's show'rs of grace do make his valleys sing.*

OBSERVATION.

THE earth, after that it is plowed and sowed, must and warmed with the dews and influences of heaven, can be expected. If God do not open to you his go the heavens to give rain unto the land in its season, and work of your hands, as it is Deut. xxviii. 12. the earth her increase. The order and independence of natural c production of fruit, is excellently described, Hos. i. 21, "hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; and "shall hear the corn, and wine, and oil, and they sha "reel." Jezreel must have corn, and wine, and oil, c not live; they cannot have it unless the earth bring i earth cannot bring it forth without the heavens; the he yield a drop unless God hear them, that is, unlock and * 'Nature, and natural causes, are nothing else but 'which God works.' This some heathens, by the ligh acknowledged, and therefore when they went to plow ing, they did lay one hand upon the plow (to speak their be painfulness) and held up the other hand to Ceres, th

THE HEAVENLY USE OF EARTHLY THINGS.

There was an husbandman (saith * Mr. Smith) that always sowed good seed, but never had good corn; at last a neighbour came to him and said, I will tell you what probably may be the cause of it. He may be (said he) you do not steep your seed: No, truly said the other, nor did I ever hear that seed must be steeped. Yes, said his neighbour, and I will tell you how; it must be steeped in prayer. When the party heard this, he thanked him for his counsel, reformed his fault, and had as good corn as any man whatsoever. Surely it is not the husbandman's, but God's steeps, that drop the seed. *Alma mater terra*, the earth indeed is a fruitful mother, the rain which fecundates, and fertilizes it, hath no other Father but God, Job xxxviii. 28.

APPLICATION.

AS impossible it is (in an ordinary way) for souls to be made fruitful in grace and holiness, without the dews and influence of the ordinances, and the blessing of God upon them, as for the earth to yield her fruit without the natural influences of heaven: for as much as what dews, showers, and clear shinings after rain are to the fruit of the earth, that the word and ordinances of God are to the souls of men. "As the doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew," "as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass," Deut. xxxii. 2. "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud; so shall my word be that goeth forth of my mouth," Isa. lv. 10, 11. And as the doctrine of the gospel is like rain, so gospel-ministers are the clouds in which those heavenly truths are bound up: the resemblance lies in the following particulars.

1. The rain comes from heaven, Acts xiv. 17. "He gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons," &c. The doctrines of the gospel are also of an heavenly extraction and descent; they are heavenly truths which are brought to you in earthen vessels; things which were hid in God, and come from his bosom, Eph. iii. 8, 9. When Nicodemus said of Christ is, in a proportion, true of every faithful dispenser of the gospel, "Thou art a teacher come from God," John iii. 2. You are not to look upon the truths which ministers deliver as the mere effects and fruits of their inventions and parts; they are but the conduits through which these celestial waters are conveyed to you. It is all heavenly, the officers are from heaven, Eph. iv. 10. their doctrine from heaven, Eph. iii. 8, 9. the efficacy and success of it from heaven, 1 Cor. iii. 2. "What I received of the Father"

And then, (*2dly*,) The rains falls by divine direction and appointment: "He causes it to rain upon one city, and not upon another," Amos iv. 7. You shall often see a cloud dissolve and fall upon one place, when there is not a drop within a few miles. Thus is the gospel sent to shed its rich influences upon one city, and not upon another; it pours down showers of blessings upon one or parish, whilst others are dry like the ground which Gideon's wet fleece. "To you is the word of this salvation," Acts xiii. 26. *Sent*; it comes not by *chance*, but by *commandment* and appointment, and it is sent to you by special direction, that it can no more go whither they please, than the failing cloud goes against the wind. Paul and Timothy, were two fruits of that sent down many sweet refreshing showers upon the earth, whither they came. The Lord sent them through Phrygia and Galatia, but forbad them to preach the word in Asia, Acts xiii. 46. "when they essayed to go into Bithynia, the Spirit suffered them not," v. 7. But a man of Macedonia appears to Paul and prayed him, saying, "Come over to Macedonia and preach," ver. 9. Thus you see how the *mystical*, as well as the *literal*, clouds are moved according to divine counsel; and though they are not now disposed to their respective places, in such a regular way, yet there is still a special hand of the Spirit governing their motions, which is seen partly in qualifying them for service, and partly in drawing out their hearts to elect and calling them, inclining their hearts to accept the call.

3. There is a great deal of difference in the showers that fall upon the earth. Sometimes you have an hasty shower, that makes the ways float, and the streets run, but it is gone in a moment, the earth hath but little benefit by it; and sometimes you have a sweet, gentle soaking rain, that moderately soaks to the root, and refreshes the earth abundantly. This is called the *small rain*, the former, the *great rain of his strength*, Job xxxvii. 6. These spiritual showers; the effects of some sermons (like a shower of rain) are very transient, that touch the heart a little for a moment, by way of conviction or comfort, but it fleets away immediately. i. 23. At other times the gospel, like a settled, moderate rain, goes to the root, to the very heart. So did that sweet shower, Acts ii. 37. It searched the root, it went to the heart; the fruits of it are sometimes abiding, and do much longer remain in the heart, than the rain doth the earth. There be effects of some hearts, by some sermons and duties, that will never

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virtue of the earth is drawn forth, and then the herbs, flowers, and corn sprout abundantly. So it is with gospel-showers, when the Spirit of righteousness opens upon poor souls under the word, darting down the beams of grace and love upon them, whilst they are attending to it, (just as you sometimes see a sweet shower fall while the sun shines out). O how comfortable is this! and effectual to melt the heart. And as the warm rain is most refreshing, so when the word comes warmly, from the melting affections of the preacher, who imparts not only the gospel, but his own soul with it, 1 Thess ii. 8. this doctrine is abundantly more good than that which drops coldly from the lips of the unaffected speaker.

5. Showers of rain do exceedingly refresh the earth, as a man refreshed by a draught of water, when his spirits are even spent. how welcome is a shower to the thirsty ground! Hence the little children are said to rejoice on every side, yea, to shout for joy and sing when a shower comes, Psal. lxxv. 12, 13. But never were showers of rain so sweetly refreshing to the thirsty earth, as gospel-showers are to gracious souls, Col. iv. 8. they comfort their very hearts. What was there in Samaria, when the gospel came to that place? Acts xvi. 8. It revives the soul, it is *mel in ore, melos in aure, jubilum in corde*, honey in the mouth, melody in the ear, and a very jubilee to the heart.

6. Rain is necessary at seed-time, to make ready the earth to receive the seed, Psal. lxxv. 9, 10. "Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it; thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water; thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for them; thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly, thou settlest the fountains thereof, thou makest it soft with showers, thou blessest the rows thereof, thou makest it soft with showers, thou blessest it with springing thereof." And this the scripture calls the former rain. And as this is necessary about seed-time, so the latter rain is as necessary about earing-time, to disclose the ear and to bring it to perfection. both these are great blessings to the earth, and conduce to a plentiful harvest, Joel ii. 23, 24. "Be glad then ye children of Sion, and rejoice in the Lord your God, for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the latter rain in the first month, and the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil." Thus the gospel hath a double use and benefit also. It is as necessary as the former rain at seed-time, it causes the first spring of grace in the heart, Psal. xix. 7. And there could be (in an ordinary way) no spring of grace without it, Prov. xxix. 18. And as this former rain is necessary to cause the first spring of grace in the heart,

“ unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God
 “fect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness
 Were all the elect converted unto God, yet still there
 necessity of a gospel-ministry.

7. After a great glut of rain, usually there comes a
 is a common country proverb, *Wet and dry pay one another*
 truly when a people are glutted with a fulness of gospel
 usual with God to shut up and restrain the gospel-cloud
 time at least, there be no dews upon them, and thereby
 to prize their despised (because common) mercies at an
 For as a good man once said, mercies are best known by
 and most prized when most wanted. “ In those days
 “ the Lord was precious, there was no open vision,” 1
 It is with spiritual as with temporal food, slighted when
 but if a famine once come, then every bit of bread is pre-
 rusalem remembered in the days of her affliction, and of
 all her pleasant things, that she had in the days of old.
 It is both a sinful and dangerous thing to wantonize with
 cies, and despise the plainest (if faithful) ministers of
 The time may come when you may be glad of the plainest
 from the mouth of the meanest ambassador of Christ.

8. To conclude, The prayers of saints are the keys that
 shut the natural clouds, and cause them either to give
 hold their influences, Jam. v. 17, 18. “ Elias was a man
 “ like passions, as we are, and he prayed earnestly that
 “ rain, and it rained not on the earth by the space of three
 “ six months; and he prayed again, and the heavens gave
 “ the earth brought forth her fruit.” God hath subjected
 of his hands to the prayers of his saints, Isa. xlv. 11.

Prayer is also the golden key which opens these mys-
 tery-clouds, and dissolves them into sweet, gracious showers
 have the whole work of the ministry carried on by the people;
 people; they first obtain their ministers by prayer, Luke
 “ ye the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into
 “ the field.” It is by the help of prayer that they are enabled
 enabled to exercise their ministry: They may tell their
 great general once told his soldiers, ‘ That he flew upon
 “ Pray for me, (saith the great apostle) that utterance
 “ me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known
 “ the series of the gospel,” Eph. vi. 19. Yea, by the saints
 that ministers obtain the success and fruits of their labour.

THE HEAVENLY USE OF EARTHLY THINGS.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Am I then a cloud? And is my doctrine as rain to water the Lord's inheritance? And yet do I think it much to be tossed up and down by the furious winds and storms of persecution? Do not I see the clouds above me in continual motions and agitations? And shall I dream of a fixed, settled state? No; false teachers, who are clouds without rain, are more likely to enervate than I. Which of all the prophets have not been tossed and hurried worse than I? Acts vii. 52. He that will not let men alone to be quiet in their lusts, must expect but little quiet from men in this life. But it is enough, Lord, that a rest remaineth for thy servants. Let me be so wise to secure a rest to come, and not so vain to expect it on earth.

Three reflections for private ministers

2. And, O that I might study those instruction clouds, from which, as from the bottles of heaven, God pours down refreshing showers to quench and satisfy the thirsty earth! In this may I resemble them, and come amongst the people of the Lord, "in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ," Rom. xv. 29. O let not the thirsty souls that wait for me as for the rain, Job xxix. 23. "rejoice like the troops of Tema, ashamed, with their heads covered," Job vi. 19. O that my lips might refresh many! Let me never be like those empty clouds, which deceive the hopes of thirsty souls; let my doctrine descend as the rain, and distil as the dew, and that plot of thine inheritance which thou hast assigned to me, be a field which the Lord hath blessed.

3. Once more, lift up thine eyes to the clouds, and behold how great an height the sun hath mounted them, for by reason of their sublimity it is that they are called the clouds of heaven, Mal. xxiv. 30. Lord, let me be a cloud of heaven too: Let my habitation and conversation be both there! Who is more advantaged for heavenly life than I? heavenly truths are the subjects of my daily study, and shall earthly things be the objects of my daily delights and loves? God forbid that ever my earthly conversation should contradict and shame my heavenly calling and profession. Shine forth thou glorious sun of righteousness, and my heart shall quickly be attracted and mounted above these visible clouds, yea, and above the aspectable heavens.

1. Is the gospel rain, and are its ministers clouds? *Three reflections*
Woe is me then, that my habitation is upon the mountains of Gilead, *for private*

wherein I live with showers of grace, that we may not be in the desert, which seeth not when good cometh, nor parched places of the wilderness.

For those that enjoy a gospel-ministry.

2. O Lord, thou hast caused the heavens to be black with clouds, thou openest thine eternal casements from above, and daily sendest down showers of gospel-blessings: O that I might be like the parched earth under them! Not for barrenness, but for fruitfulness. Let me say, "My soul longeth, yea, even faints for the courts of the Lord:" that I might there see the face of the Lord. Doth the spongy earth so greedily suck up the dew as many mouths as there are clefts in it, to receive the clouds dispense? And shall those precious soul-enriching dews fleet away unprofitably from me? If so, then,

For unprofitable hearers.

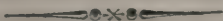
5. What an account have I to render to thee, O Lord, for those gospel-blessings that I have received, and all those gospel-dews and showers that have been watered! Should I be found fruitless at last, as the barren and uncultivated wilderness is, though more tolerable for Indians and Barbarians that never heard of the gospel, than for me that have been so assiduously and plentifully watered by it. Lord! what a difference wilt thou put in the difference betwixt simple and pertinacious barrenness? Surely, if men were more rottenness, such heavenly waterings and influences as thou sendest down, it sprout forth into fruits of obedience.

THE POEM.

THE vegetables here below depend
Upon those treasures which the heavens do spend
Most bounteously upon them, to preserve
Their being and their beauty. This may serve
To shadow forth a heavenly mystery,
Which thus presents itself before your eye.
As when the sun draws near us in the spring,
All creatures do rejoice, birds chirp and sing.
The face of nature smiles; the fields adorn
Themselves with rich embroideries: The corn
Revives, and shooteth up; the warm sweet rain
Makes trees and herbs sprout forth, and spring again.
Walk but the fields in such a fragrant morn,
Hear ye the birds pour forth their music charm!

THE HEAVENLY USE OF EARTHLY THINGS.

Which God ordains in nature, to draw forth
The virtue seminal that's in the earth ;
It warms their hearts, their languid graces cheers,
And on such souls a spring-like face appears.
The gracious showers these spiritual clouds do yield,
Enriches them with sweetness, like a field
Which God hath bless'd. Oh ! 'tis exceeding sweet,
When gracious hearts and heavenly truths do meet !
How should the hearts of saints within them spring,
When they behold the messengers that bring
These gladsome tidings ? Yea, their very feet
Are beautiful, because their message's sweet.
Oh what a mercy does those souls enjoy,
On whom such gospel-dews fall day by day !
Thrice happy land ! which in this pleasant spring,
Can hear these turtles in her hedges sing ?
O prize such mercies ! If you ask me, why ?
Read on, you'll see there's reason by and by.



CHAP. X.

Upon a Dearth through want of Rain.

*If God restrains the show'rs, you howl and cry :
Shall saints not mourn when spiritual clouds are dry ?*

OBSERVATION.

IT is deservedly accounted a sad judgment, when God shut the heavens over our heads, and makes the earth as brass under feet, Deut. xxviii. 23. Then the husbandmen are called to mourning, Joel i. 11. All the fields do languish, and the bellowing oxen are pined with thirst. Such a sad state the prophet rhetorically describes, Jer. xiv. 3, 4, 5, 6. " The nobles have sent their little
" to the waters ; they came to the pits and found no water ;
" returned with their vessels empty ; they were ashamed and
" founded, and covered their heads, because the ground is chafed
" for there was no rain in the earth ; the plowmen were ashamed
" they covered their heads ; yea, the hind also calved in the field
" and forsook it, because there was no grass ; and the wild asses
" stand in the high places : They snuffed up the wind like dragons

APPLICATION.

AND, truly as much cause have they to weep and whose souls God shuts up the spiritual clouds of the thereby sends a spiritual famine upon their souls. So ment the Lord threatens in Amos viii. 11. "Behold the," saith the Lord, that I will send a famine in the land, "of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the," "Lord." The meaning is, I will send a more fearful judgment than that of the famine of bread; for this particle [not] is not *excessive*; implying, that a famine of bread is nothing, compared with the famine of the word. Parallel is that text, Isa. v. 6. "I will lay it waste (saith God of the church;) it shall not be pruned nor digged; but there shall be up briers and thorns; I will also command the clouds that they rain not upon it." And we find both in human and ecclesiastical histories, that when God hath shut up the spiritual clouds, or silencing his minister, sensible Christians have ever been affected with it, and reckoned it a most tremendous judgment. Thus the Christians of Antioch, when Chrysostom their minister was banished, * they judged it better to lose the sun out of the sky, than lose that, their minister. And when Nazianzen was to take his leave of Constantinople, as he was preaching his farewell sermon, the people were exceedingly affected with his loss; and one of the rest, an old man in the congregation fell into a bitter lament, and cried out, *Aude pater, et tecum trinitatem ipsam ejice*; I dare, if you dare, and take away the whole trinity with him. He said, that God would not stay when he was gone. How do the Christians of Antioch also weep and lament, when Paul was taken away from the well of them? Acts xx. 37, 38. He had been a cloud of blessing to that place; but now they must expect no more showings of him. Oh! they knew not how to give up such a minister! when the cloud was taken, God (which was the symbol of the Divine presence among them) was taken, "All the city cried out," 1 Sam. iv. 13. Crying out, that a gospel-ministry is an inestimable loss, not to be repaired by man's own return, or by heaven! Mr. Greenham tells us, that in times of popish persecution, when godly ministers were hale and hearty, and their flocks to *martyrdom*, the poor Christians would run the way to the prison, or stake, with their little ones in their arms, and throwing themselves at their feet, would thus beseech them, "What shall be our estate, now you are gone to martyrdom?"

THE HEAVENLY USE OF EARTHLY THINGS.

And to let you see there is sufficient ground for this sorrow, w
God restrains the influences of the gospel, solemnly consider
following particulars.

1. That it is a dreadful token of God's great anger against
people from whom he removes the gospel. The anger of God
fearfully incensed against the church of Ephesus, when he did
threaten to come against her, and remove the candlestick out o
place, Rev. ii. 5. It is a stroke at the soul, a blow at the r
usually the last, and therefore the worst of judgments. There
pedigree of judgments; first Gomer bears Jezreel; next Lo-ruha
and at last brings forth Lo-ammi, Hosea i. 4, 6, 8, 9.

2. There is cause of mourning, if you consider the deplor
estate in which all the unregenerate souls are left, after the gosp
removed from them. What will become of these? Or by wh
shall they be gathered? It made the bowels of Christ yern wi
him, when he lookod upon the scattered multitude that had
shepherd, Matth. ix. 36. What an easy conquest doth the d
now make of them! How fast doth hell fill in such times! E
souls being driven thither in droves, and none to rescue the
Matthew Paris tells us, that in the year 1073, when preaching
suppressed at Rome, letters were then framed as coming from h
wherein the devil gave them thanks for the multitude of souls they
sent to him that year. But truly we need not talk of letters fr
hell, we are told from heaven, how deplorable the condition of s
poor souls is; See Prov. xxviii. 19. Hos. iv. 6. Or,

3. The judgment will yet appear very heavy, if you consider
loss which God's own people sustain by the removal of the gosp
for therein they lose, (1.) Their chief glory, Rom. iii. 2. T
principal thing in which the peculiar glory of Israel consisted
this, "That unto them were committed the oracles of God."
that account it was called the glorious land, Dan. xi. 16. This m
them greater than all the nations round about them, Deut. iv. 7
(2.) By losing the ordinances they lose their quickenings, comfo
and soul-refreshments: for all these are sweet streams from
gospel-fountain, Psalm cxix. 50. Col. iv. 8. No wonder then
hear the people of God complain of dead hearts when the gosp
removed. (3.) In the loss of the gospel they lose their defence
safety. This is their hedge, their wall of protection, Isa. v. 5. W
and hedges (saith *Musculus in loc.*) are the ordinances of God, wh
served both *ad separationem et munitionem*, to distinguish and
defend them. When God plucks up this hedge and breaks down t

“ that came in, but great vexations were upon all the
 “ the countries, and nation was destroyed of nation
 “ city ; for God did vex them with all adversity.” I
 Jerusalem remain after that voice was heard in the temple
mus hinc? Let us be gone. (4.) With the gospel, we lose
 enjoyments and creature-comforts. These usually come
 the gospel. When God had once written *Lo-ammi* upon
 next news was this, “ I will recover my wool and my
 ii. 9. (5.) And, lastly, to come up to the very case
 lose with it their spiritual food and soul-subsistence, for
 their *feast of fat things*, Isa. xxv. 6. their spiritual well-
 a dole distributed among the Lord’s poor, Rom. i. 11.
 it is as the rain and dews of heaven, as hath been shew-
 ing restrained, a spiritual famine necessarily follows, and
 the most terrible. Now to shew you the analogy betwixt
 a temporal famine, that therein you may see what cause
 be deeply affected with it, take it in these six following.

1. A famine caused by the failing of bread, or that want
 instead, and hath the use of bread. Dainties and superfluities
 may fail, and yet men may subsist comfortably. As long as
 have bread and water, they will not famish ; but take away
 once, and the spirit of man faileth. Upon this account
 ed a staff, Psal. cv. 16. because what a staff is to an aged
 man, that bread is to the faint and feeble spirits, which lean
 upon it. And look what bread is to the natural spirit, is
 more than that, the word is to gracious spirits, Job xxii.
 “ esteemed the words of thy mouth more than my need.”
 If once God break this staff, the inner-man, that hidden
 heart, will quickly begin to fail and faulter.

2. It is not every degree or scarcity of bread that produces
 a famine, but a general failing of it ; when no bread is left
 that which is, yields no nutriment. (For a famine may be
 occasioned by God’s taking away *panis nutrimentum*, the
 virtue of bread, that it shall signify no more, as to the use
 than a chip, Hag. i. 6. as by taking away *panem nutrimentum*
 itself, Isa. iii. 1.) And so it is in a spiritual famine, occasioned,
 sioned, either by God’s removing all the ordinances, or
 sion utterly to fail ; or else, though there be preaching and
 other ordinances left, (at least the names and shadow of them)
 the presence of God is not with them. There is no oil in the
 bone, no milk in the breast ; and so, as to soul-subsistence

THE HEAVENLY USE OF EARTHLY THINGS.

sweet, Prov. xxvii. 7. It is the Dutch proverb, and a very true *Hunger is the best cook* *.

- ‘ In time of famine coarsest fare contents,
- ‘ The barking stomach strains complements.’

It is storied of Artaxerxes Memnon, that when he was flying fore his enemies, he fed hungrily upon barley-bread, and said, *jusmodi voluptatis hactenus inexpertus fui!* O what pleasure have I hitherto been ignorant of! When great Darius drank the puddle water, that had been defiled with dead carcasses, which had been slain in that famous battle, he professed he never drank more pleasant drink. And famous Hunniades said, he never fared more daintily, than when (in a like exigence,) he supped upon bread and onions, and water, with a poor shepherd in his cottage.

Just so doth the famine of the word raise the price and esteem of vulgar and despised truths. Oh! what would you give for one of those sermons, one of those sabbaths we formerly enjoyed! *In those days the word of the Lord was precious.* When God calls to his enemy to take away and remove his contempt, but precious duties, from his wanton children, and a spiritual famine hath afflicted them, they will then learn to prize their spiritual food at a higher rate.

4. In time of famine some persons suffer more than others: it is heaviest, and pincheth hardest upon the poorer sort; as long as a thing is to be had for money, the rich will have it. So it falls in a spiritual famine; although the most experienced and best furnished Christians will have enough to do to live in the absence of ordinances, yet they are like to subsist much better than weak, ignorant and unexperienced ones. Some Christians have husbanded their treasure well, and, like Joseph in the seven years *plenty, laid up for a scarcity.* The word of God dwells richly in them. Some such there are, John calls young men, who are strong, and the word of God remaineth in them; of whom it may be said, as Jerom spake of Nestorianus, that by long and assiduous meditation of the scriptures, he had made his breast the very library of Christ. But others are barren in Christ; and though God will preserve that good work which hath begun in them, yet these poor babes will soonest find, and are most concerned in the loss of their spiritual fathers and nurses.

5. In time of famine there are pitiful cries, and heart-breaking complaints wherever you go. Oh the many pale faces you shall see, and the sad language that rings in your ears in every place! Cries, Bread, bread, for Christ's sake! one bit of bread! and

souls into their mother's bosom. Just so it is in a family; poor Christians every where sighing and crying, are our godly ministers? our sweet sabbaths, sermons, My fathers! my fathers! the chariots of Israel, and the thereof! How beautiful were your feet upon the mountain then, weeping, like the people at Paul's *departure*, to see their faces no more.

6. Lastly, In time of famine there is nothing so costly but the people will part with it to purchase bread.

"given their pleasant things for meat to relieve their souls."

11. And, doubtless, when a spiritual famine shall pinch those that have been close-handed to maintain a gospel-ministry, they will count it a choice mercy to enjoy them again at any rate.

"the Lord feed you with the bread of affliction, and give you"

"waters of adversity; yet it will sweeten that bread as the honey."

"you, if your teachers be no more removed into corners,"

REFLECTIONS.

The ungrateful 2. Is the famine of the word such a *soul's reflection*. ment? Then Lord pardon my unthankfulness.

the plentiful and long-continued enjoyment of a precious and invaluable mercy.

How long lightly have I enjoyed

the great things of the gospel! O that with eyes and heart

to heaven, I might bless the Lord that ever I was brought

into the age of so much light, in a valley of visions, in a land flowing

with gospel-mercies! "Hath not God made of one blood all the

"men to dwell on the face of the earth? And determined

"before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation?"

26. Many of these great and populous nations are involved

in darkness. Now that of all the several ages of the world

there is in it, God should espie the best place for me, and bring me

into it, in such a happy nick of time, as can hardly be paralleled

any where for the plenty of gospel-mercies that this age and nation

enjoyed; that my mother did not bring me forth in the desert

of Arabia, or wastes of America, but in England, where God

has set the sun of the gospel to stand still, as the natural sun

stood at Gibeon; and that such a mercy should no more affect me

with shame cover my face for this, and trembling seize my heart.

2. Is the gospel indeed departed

The deprived Christian influences restrained? and a famine

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this severe dispensation ; the provocation of thy sons and of daughters have been very great, and amongst them none greater mine. May we not this day read our sin in our punishment : what nice and wanton appetites, what curious and itching ears thy people in the days of plenty ! Methods, tones, and gestures more regarded than the excellent treasures of divine truths. my soul ! I remember my fault this day ; little did I then consider that sermons work not upon hearts, as they are thus elegant, admirable, but as they are instruments in the hand of God appointed to such an end. Even as Austin said of the conduits of water, though one be in the shape of an angel, another of a beast, yet water refreshes as it is water, and not as it comes from such a conduit : by this also O Lord, thou rebukest the supineness and folly of thy people. How drowsy, dull, and careless have they been under the most excellent and quickening means ? Few more than I. Alas ! I have often presented my body before the Lord in ordinary prayer, $\eta \xi \epsilon \psi \chi \eta \epsilon \xi \omega$, but my soul hath been wandering abroad, as Chrysostom speaks. I should have come from under every sermon, as a stamp comes from the press, with all the stamps and lively impressions of the truths I have heard upon my heart. But alas ! if it had been commanded of me, as once it was of Aristotle, after a long and curious oration, how he liked it ? I might have answered, as he did, truth did not hear it, for I was all the while minding another matter. Righteous art thou, O Lord, in all that is come upon us !

3. I am now as a spring shut up, that can yield no refreshment to thirsty souls, ready to perish. Thou hast said to me as once to Ezekiel, "Son of man, behold, I will *The silent* make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, *ister's reflection* and thou shalt be dumb." This is a very heavy judgment ; but thou must be justified and cleared in it. Although men may not, yet God, if he please, may put a lighted candle under a bushel. And herein I must acknowledge thy righteousness. Many times have I been sinfully silent, when both thy glory and the interest of souls engaged me to speak. Most justly therefore hast thou rendered my tongue to cleave to its roof. Little did I consider the preciousness of souls, or the tremendous account to be given for them, at the appearing of the great Shepherd. I have now time enough to sit down and mourn over former miscarriages and lost opportunities. I desire to restore me once again to a serviceable capacity, to a larger sphere of activity for thee, for I am now become as a broken vessel. It grieves me to the heart to see thy flock scattered ; to hear the people c

THE POEM.

WHEN God doth make the heavens above as h
 The earth's like iron; flowers, herbs and grass
 Have lost their fragrant green, are turned yellow;
 The brooks are dry, the pining cattle bellow;
 The fat and flow'ry meadows scorch'd and burn'd;
 The country's mirth is into mourning turn'd;
 The clefted earth her thirsty mouth sets ope
 Unto the empty clouds, as 'twere in hope
 Of some refreshing drops, that might allay
 Her fiery thirst: but they soon pass away;
 The pensive husbandman with his own eyes
 Bedews his land, because he sees the skies
 Refuse to do it. Just so stands the case,
 When God from souls removes the means of grace.
 God's ministers are clouds, their doctrine rain,
 Which when the Lord in judgment shall restrain,
 The people's souls in short time will be found
 In such a case as this dry parched ground.
 When this sad judgment falls on any nation,
 Let saints therein take up this lamentation.

O dreadful, dark, and dismal day!

How is our glory fled away?

Our sun gone down, our stars o'ercast?

God's heritage is now laid waste.

Our pining souls no bread can get;
 With wantons God has justly met.
 When we were fed unto the full,
 This man was tedious, that was dull:
 But they are gone, and there remain
 No such occasions to complain.
 Stars are not now for lights, but signs,
 God knows of what heart-breaking times.
 Sure heaven intends not peace, but wars,
 In calling home ambassadors.
 How long did Sodom's judgment stay,
 When righteous Lot was snatch'd away?
 How long remain'd that stately hall,
 When Samson made the pillars fall?
 When horsemen and commanders fly.

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God hath remov'd them out o' th' way.
Now sleep in sin, and take your ease ;
Their doctrine shall no more displease.
But, Lord ! what shall become of us ?
Our teacher's gone, and left us thus :
To whom shall we ourselves address,
When conscience labours in distress ?
Oh ! who shall help us out at need ?
Or pour in balm when wounds do bleed ?
Help, Lord ! for unto thee our eyes
Do pour our tears ; our groans, our cries
Shall never cease, 'till thou restore
The mercies which we had before ;
'Till Sion's paths, where grass now grows,
Be trodden by the feet of those
That love thy name, and long t' enjoy
The mercies they have sinn'd away.



CHAP. XI.

Upon the Corruption of the Seed before it springs.

*Seeds die and rot, and then must fresh appear ;
Saints' bodies rise more orient than they were.*

OBSERVATION.

AFTER the seed is committed to the earth, it seems to perish and die, as our Saviour speaks, John xii. 24. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone ; but if it die, it brings forth much fruit." The death of the corn in the earth is not a total death, but only the corruption or alteration of it : if once the seminal life and virtue of it were quite extinguished, it could neither put forth blade or ear without a miracle. Yet because that alteration is a kind of death, therefore Christ here uses it as an illustration of the resurrection. And indeed there is nothing in nature more apt to illustrate that great mystery. What a fragrant green and beautiful blade do we see spring up from a corrupted seed ! How black and mouldy is that ! How beautiful and verdant is the

that though the seed rot in the earth, yet it will rise as the believer knows, "that though after his skin worms his body, yet in his flesh he shall see God," Job xix. 23. the resemblance betwixt the seed sown, and springing up, the bodies of the saints dying and rising again, lies in these particulars.

1. The seed is committed to the earth from whence it is the body of a saint ; earth it was, and to earth it is again. Grace exempts not the body of the best man from seeing death. Rom. viii. 10. Though Christ be in him, yet the body that is, sentenced to death because of sin, Heb. ix. 27. "appointed for all men once to die."

2. The seed is cast into the earth in hope, 1 Cor. ix. 10. there not a resurrection of it expected, the husbandman will not be willing to cast away his corn. The bodies of saints are committed to the grave in hope, 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14. "But we would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those which are asleep, as they which have no hope ; for if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, so even also them which sleep in Jesus shall the Lord bring with him." This blessed hope of resurrection sweetens not only the troubles of life, but the pains of death.

3. The seed is cast into the earth seasonably, in its proper time, so are the bodies of the saints, Job v. 26. "Thou shalt not be cast into a grave in a full age, as a shock of corn cometh in, when it is ripe." They always die in the fittest time, though sometimes they die immaturely : the time of their death was from all eternity fixed by God, beyond which they cannot go, and short of which cannot come.

4. The seed lies many days and nights under the clod, before it rises and appears again : "even so man lieth down, and shall not rise again until the heavens be no more," Job xiv. 12. The darkness in the grave are many.

5. When the time is come for its shooting up, the clod covered it can hide it no longer ; it cannot keep it down, it will find or make way through the clods. So in the resurrection the great trump shall sound, hell shall come to its end, the grave shall not be able to hold them a minute longer. The earth must render the dead that are in them, Rev. xx. 13.

6. When the seed appears above-ground, it appears fresh and orient, than when it was cast into the earth.

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out food, raiment, sleep, know no lassitude, weariness or pain. Our bodies, after the resurrection, shall be above these necessities and distempers; for we shall be as the angels of God, Matth. xx. Yea, our vile bodies shall be changed, and made like unto Christ's glorious body; which is the highest pitch and ascent of glory and honour that an human body is capable of, Phil. iii. 21. Indeed the glory of the soul shall be the greatest glory; that is the orient precious gem: But God will bestow a distinct glory upon the body, and richly enamel the very case in which that precious jewel shall be kept. In that glorious morning of the resurrection, the saints shall be put on their new fresh suits of flesh, richly laid and trimmed with glory. Those bodies, which in the grave were but dust and rottenness, when it delivers them back again, shall be shining and excellent pieces, absolutely and everlastingly freed. (1.) From all natural infirmities and distempers: Death is their good physician, which has once freed them of all diseases. It is a great affliction now to many of the Lord's people, to be clogged with so many bodily infirmities which render them very unserviceable to God. *The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.* A crazy body retorts and shoots its distempers upon the soul, with which it is so closely conjoined. But though now the soul (as Theophrastus speaks) pays a dear price for the tabernacle in which it dwells; yet, when death dissolves the tabernacle, all the diseases and pains, under which it groaned, shall be buried in the rubbish of its mortality; and when they come to be re-united again, God will bestow rich gifts and dowries, even upon the body, in the day of its re-espousals to the soul. (2.) It shall be freed from all deformities; there are no breaches, flaws, monstrosities in glorified bodies; but of them it may much rather be said what was once said of Absalom, 2 Sam. xiv. 25. "That from the crown of the head to the sole of his foot, there was no blemish in him." (3.) It shall be freed from all natural necessities, to which it is now subjected in this its animal state. How is the soul now disquieted and tortured with cares and troubles to provide for a perishing body! Many unbelieving and unbecoming fears it is now vexed with: "What shall it eat? And what shall it drink? And wherewithal shall it be clothed?" But meats for the belly, and the belly for meats; "shall destroy both it and them," 1 Cor. vi. 13. i. e. as to their present use and office; for as to its existence, so the belly shall not be destroyed. But even as the masts, poop and stern of a ship are cast away in the harbour after the voyage is ended, so shall these bodily members be cast away as Tertullian excellently illustrates it. (4.) They shall be freed from death, to which they are now subjected, and shall live in glory.

“ gels, and are the children of God, being the children
 “ rection,” Luke xx. 35, 36. Mark it (equal to the an
 they shall be separate and single spirits, without bodies a
 are: but equal to them in the way and manner of their
 acting.* We shall then live upon God, and act freely,
 delightfully for God; for all kind of living upon, and c
 creatures, seems in that text (by a synecdoche of the p
 ordinarily in scripture put for all creature-delights, depen
 necessities) to be excluded. Nothing but God shall ex
 fill the soul; and the body shall be perfectly subdued t
 Lord, what hast thou prepared for them that love thee

REFLECTIONS.

The healthful saint's reflection. 1. If I shall receive my body aga
 fied and improved in the world to
 Lord let me never be unwilling to
 now for the interest of thy glory, or my own salvation !
 God, it grieves me to think how many precious opportun
 ing and honouring thee I have lost, under pretence of
 my health !

I have been more solicitous to live long and healthfu
 live usefully and fruitfully; and, like enough, my life ha
 serviceable to thee, if it had not been so fondly overval

Foolish soul ! hath God given thee a body for a living
 strument ? And art thou afraid to use it ? Wherein is t
 having a body, if not in spending and wearing it out in t
 God ? To have an active vigorous body, and not to emp
 ercise it for God, for fear of endangering its health, i
 should give thee a handsome and sprightly horse, upon co
 shouldst not ride or work him. O ! if some of the saint
 ed the blessings of such an healthy active body as mine,
 lent services would they have performed to God in it ?

The sickly saint's reflection. 2. If my body shall as surely ri
 glory, vigour, and excellent endowm
 seed which I sow doth ; why should r

fort me over all the pains, weaknesses,
 with which my soul is now clogged ? Thou knowest, my
 a grief it hath been to my soul, to be fettered and entang
 distempers and manifold indispositions of this vile body : I
 me sigh and say with holy Anselme, when he saw th

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worm, in the discharge of my duties, I shall shortly fly, like a seraphim in the execution of thy will. Cheer up, drooping soul ; time is at hand when thou shalt be made more willing than thou art, and thy flesh not so weak as now it is.

3. And is it so indeed ? Then let the dying saint, *The dying saint's reflection.*
like Jacob, rouse up himself upon his bed, and encourage himself against the fears of death by this refreshing consideration. Let him say with holy dying Musculus, why tremblest thou, O my soul, to go forth of this tabernacle to the land of rest ? Hath thy body been such a pleasant habitation to thee, that thou shouldest be so loth to part with it, though but for a time, and with assurance of receiving it again with such a glorious improvement ? I know, O my soul, that thou hast a natural inclination to this body, resulting from the dear and strict union which God himself hath made betwixt thee and it ; yea, even the holiest of men sometimes sensibly feel the like in themselves ; but beware thou lovest it not immoderately or inordinately ; it is but a creature, how dear ever it be to thee ; yea, a fading creature, and that which now stands in thy way to the full enjoyment of God. But say, my soul, why are the thoughts of parting with it so burdensome to thee ? Why art thou loth to take death by its cold hand ? Is this body thy old and dear friend ? True, but yet thou partest not with it upon such sad terms as should deserve a tear at parting. For mayest thou not say of thy departure, as Paul at the departure of Onesimus ? Philem. ver. 16. " It therefore departeth for a season, that thou mayest receive it again for ever." The day of re-espousals will quickly come ; and in the mean time, as thy body shall not be sensible of the tedious length of the interposing time, so neither shalt thou be solicitous about thine absent friend ; for the fruition of God in thine unbodied state, shall amply recompense thee with infinite satisfaction and rest.

Or is it not so much simply for parting with it, as for the manner of thy parting, either by the slow and lingering approaches of a natural, or the quick and terrible approaches of a violent death : Worry not thyself about that ; for if God lead thee through the dark lane of a tedious sickness, yet at the end of it is thy Father's house. And for a violent death, it is not so material whether friends or enemies stand weeping or triumphing over thy dead body. *Nunc corpus sensit in nervo cum anima sit in celo.* When thy soul shall be in heaven, it will not be sensible how the body is used on earth.

4. But oh ! what an uncomfortable parting will it be to mine be ! and how much more sad our meeting *The ungodly*

ded for them both ; but I began at the wrong end, and ed both eternally.

THE POEM.

BARE seeds have no great beauty, but, inhum
That which they had is lost, and quite consum'd :
They soon corrupt and grow more base, by odds,
When dead and bury'd underneath the clods :
It falls in baseness, but at length doth rise
In glory which delights beholders' eyes.
How great a difference have a few days made,
Betwixt it in the bushel and the blade !
This lovely, lively emblem aptly may
Type out the glorious resurrection-day ;
Wherein the saints that in the dust do lie,
Shall rise in glory, vigour, dignity ;
With singing, in that morning they arise,
And dazzle glory, such as mortal eyes
Ne'er view'd on earth. The sparkling beauties h
No more can equalize their splendor there,
Than glimmering glow-worms do the fairest star
That shines in heaven, or the stones that are
In ev'ry street, may competition hold
With glittering diamonds in rings of gold.
For unto Christ's most glorious body they
Shall be conform'd in glory at that day ;
Whose lustre would, should it on mortals fall,
Transport a Stephen, and confound a Paul.
'Tis now a coarse and crazy house of clay ;
But, oh ! how dear do souls for lodgings pay !
Few more than I : For thou, my soul, hast been
Within these tents of Kedar coop'd in ;
Where, with distempers clogg'd, thou mak'st thy
And, for deliverance, with tears and groans
Hast often su'd : Cheer up, the time will be
When thou from all these troubles shall be free :
No jarring humours, cloudy vapours, rheums,
Pains, aches, or whatever else consumes
My day in grief ; whilst in the Christian race,
Flesh lags behind, and can't keep equal pace

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CHAP. XII.

Upon the Resemblance of Wheat and Tares.

*As wheat resembled is by viler tares ;
So vile hypocrisy like grace appears.*

OBSERVATION.

IT is Jerom's observation, that wheat and tares are so much alike in their first springing up, that it is exceedingly difficult to distinguish the one from the other : These are his words, *Inter triticum et lolium quandiu herba est, et nondum culmus venit ad spicam ; graminis similitudo est ; et indiscernendo aut nulla, aut per difficultis tantia.* The difference (saith he) between them, is either none at all, or wonderfully difficult to discern, which those words of Christ, Matt. xiii. 30. plainly confirm. Let them both alone till the harvest ; thereby intimating both the difficulty of distinguishing the tares and wheat, as also the unwarrantable rashness of bold and hasty censures of men's sincerity or hypocrisy, which is there shadowed by them.

APPLICATION.

HOW difficult soever it be to discern the difference betwixt wheat and tares, yet, doubtless, the eye of sense can much easier distinguish them, than the most quick and piercing eye of man can discern the difference betwixt special and common grace ; for all special graces in the saints have their counterfeits in hypocrites. There are *similar works* in these, which a spiritual and very judicious eye can easily mistake for the *saving and genuine effects* of the sanctifying Spirit.

Doth the Spirit of God convince the consciences of his people of the evil of sin ? Rom. vii. 9. Hypocrites have their convictions. Exod. x. 16. " Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in his chariot, and he said, I have sinned against the Lord your God, and against you." Thus was Saul also convicted, 1 Sam. xv. 24.

Doth true conviction and compunction work reformation of life in the people of God ? Even hypocrites also have been famous for their reformations. The unclean spirit often goes out of the false hypocrite, by an external reformation ; and yet still retains his dominion in them, Matth. xii. 43, 44. For that departure is indeed

“himself believed also.” Luke viii. 13. “These are for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.”

Doth the precious eye of faith, discovering the transcendencies that are in Christ, enflame the affections of the heart with vehement desires and longings after him? Strange hearts have also been found in hypocrites towards Christ and holy things. John vi. 34. “Lord, evermore give us this bread.” xxv. 8. “Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out.” what a rapture was Balaam transported, when he said, “I desire the death of the righteous, and my last end be like him.” xxiii. 10.

Doth the work of faith, in some believers, bear upon its fruits the full ripe fruit of a blessed assurance? Lo ! what subtleties and high-built persuasions of an interest in God, have sometimes been found even in unsanctified ones? John viii. 12. “whom you say, that he is your God ; and yet ye have not known him.” To the same height of confidence arrived those mentioned in Rom. ii. 19. Yea, so strong may this false confidence be, that they dare boldly venture to go to the judgment-seat, and there defend it, Mat. vii. 22. “Lord, Lord, have we prophesied in thy name?”

Doth the Spirit of God fill the heart of the assured believer with joy unspeakable and full of glory, giving them, *through* the Holy Spirit, a foretaste of heaven itself, in those first fruits of the Spirit? near to this comes that which the apostle supposes may be found in *apostates*, Heb. vi. 8, 9. who are there said “to taste the powers of God, and the powers of the world to come.” What if real Christians delight in ordinances, those that are not? They delight in approaching to God, Ezek. xxxiii. 32. It may be said, though the difference be not easily discernible in outward obedience, yet, when it shall come to suffering, there they may discern it ; the false heart will then flinch, and cannot persevere in work. And yet even this is no infallible rule neither ; for the apostle supposes, that the *salamander* of hypocrisy may live in the flames of martyrdom, 1 Cor. xiii. 3. “If I give my body to be burned, and have not charity.” And it was long since determined, *Non pœna, sed causa facit martyrem* ; so, that in controversy, the difficulty of distinguishing them is very great.

And this difference will yet be more subtle and undiscernible. I should tell you, that as in so many things the hypocrite is like the saint ; so there are other things in which a real Christian

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then ! how hard is it for the eye of man to discern betwixt chaff and wheat ? How many upright hearts are now censured, whom God will clear ? How many false hearts are now approved, whom God will condemn ? Men ordinarily have no clear convictive proofs, only probable symptoms ; which, at most, can beget but a conjectural knowledge of another's state. And they that shall peremptorily judge either way, may possibly wrong the generation of the upright, or, on the other side, absolve and justify the wicked. And truly, considering what hath been said, it is no great wonder that dangerous mistakes are so frequently made in this matter. But though man cannot, the Lord both can and will, perfectly discriminate them. " The Lord knoweth who are his," 2 Tim. ii. 19. He will have a day perfectly to sever the tares from the wheat, to melt off the varnish of the most resplendent and refined hypocrite, and to blow off the ashes of infirmities, which have covered and obscured the very spark of sincerity in his people : he will make such a division as was never yet made in the world, how many divisions soever there have been in it. " And then shall men indeed return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked ; betwixt him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not." Meanwhile, my soul, thou canst not better employ thyself, whether thou be sound or unsound, than in making those reflections upon thyself.

REFLECTIONS.

And is this so ? Then, Lord, pardon the rashness and precipitancy of my censorious spirit ; for I have often boldly anticipated thy judgment, and assumed thy prerogative, although thou hast said, " Why dost thou judge thy brother ? And why dost thou set nought thy brother ? We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live (saith the Lord) every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more," Rom. xiv. 10, 11, 13. And again ; " He that judgeth me is the Lord. Let us therefore judge nothing before the time until the Lord come, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart ; and then shall every man be praised of God," 1 Cor. iv. 4, 5.

What if God will own some of them for his sons, to whom I refuse to give the respect of brethren ? I may pass hasty and headlong censures upon others ; but where is my commission for so doing ? I have not only a commission, but fit qualifications for such a work.

table and hasty censures. If others knew but what I know of myself, would they not judge as severely of me as I do of

2. Though I may not judge the presumptuous of another, yet I may, and ought to judge of my own state of my own soul; which is, *soul's reflection.* more necessary and concerning w

For since every saving grace in a Christian hath its counterfeit in the hypocrite, how needful is it for thee, O my soul, to meditate here, and solemnly to ponder this question, Whether the works whereon I depend, as my best evidences for the life to come, be real, or only the common works of the Spirit? Whether they will abide the test of the word, and abide at the bar of my own conscience?

Come then, my soul, set the Lord before thee, to whom the secrets of all hearts are manifest: and in the awful sense of that presence make true answer to these heart-discovering queries: Canst thou canst not discern the difference betwixt these things? yet thou mayest and oughtest to discern it in thyself: For God knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man that is hid within him.

1. Is my obedience uniform? am I the same man in all places and companies? Or, rather, am I not exact and diligent in public, open and public, remiss and careless in private and secret? Sincere souls are uniform souls, Psal. cxix. 6. the hypocrite is a closet-man, Matth. vi. 5.

2. Doth that which I call grace in me oppose and mortify the flesh? or doth it not rather quietly consist with, and protect my lusts and passions? True grace tolerates no lust, Gal. v. 17. No, not the darling corruptions, Psal. xviii. 23.

3. Doth that which I call my grace, humble, empty, and lowly in my soul? Or rather, doth it not puff it up with self-conceit? saving grace is humbling grace, 1 Cor. xv. 10. "But the proud is lifted up, is not upright," Hab. ii. 4.

Lastly, Canst thou, my soul, rejoice and bless God for the grace imparted to others? And rejoice if any design for Christ be in the world by other hands? Or, rather, dost thou not care that excel thee, and carest for no work in which thou art engaged?

But stay, my soul, it is enough: If these be the substantial evidences betwixt special and common grace, I more than do need to not endure the day of his coming, *Whose fan is in his hand* to winnow those spots appear upon me, which are not the spots of his grace. Woe is me, poor wretch! the characters of death are upon me.

THE POEM.

IN eastern countries, as good authors write,
 Tares, in their springing up, appear to sight,
 Not like itself, a weed, but real wheat ;
 Whose shape and form it counterfeits so neat,
 That 'twould require a most judicious eye,
 The one from t'other to diversify.
 'Till both to some maturity be grown,
 And then the difference is eas'ly known.
 Even thus hypocrisy, that cursed weed,
 Springs up so like true grace, that he will need
 More than a common insight in this case,
 That saith, this is not, that is real grace.
 Ne'er did the cunning actor, tho' a slave
 Array'd in princely robes, himself behave
 So like a king, as this doth act the part
 Of saving grace, by its deep hellish art.
 Do gracious souls melt, mourn, and weep for sin ?
 The like in hypocrites observ'd hath been.
 Have they their comforts, joys, and raptures sweet ?
 With them in comforts hypocrites do meet.
 In all religious duties they can go
 As far as saints, in some things farther too ;
 They speak like angels, and you'll think within,
 The very spirit of Christ and grace hath been.
 They come so near, that some, like Isaac, take
 Jacob for Esau, this for that mistake :
 And boldly call (their eyes, with his, being dim)
 True grace, hypocrisy ; and duty, sin :
 Yea, many also, Jacob-like, embrace
 Leah for Rachel, common gifts for grace :
 And in their bosom hug it, 'till the light
 Discover their mistake, and clear their sight :
 And then, like him, confounded they will cry,
 Alas ! 'tis Leah, curs'd hypocrisy !
 Guide me, my God, that I may not, instead
 Of saving grace, nurse up this cursed weed.
 O let my heart, at last, by thee be found
 Sincere, and all thy workings on it sound !

CHAP. XIII.

Upon the Dangers incident to corn from Seed-time to

*Fowls, weeds, and blastings do your corn annoy;
Even so corruptions would your grace destroy.*

OBSERVATION.

THERE are, amongst many others, three critical and dangerous periods between the seed-time and harvest. The first, when the seed is newly committed to the earth, all that lies uncovered is picked up by the birds; and much of that which is buried, is plucked up, as soon as it begins to sprout, by root-devouring fowls, Matth. xiii. 4. But if it escape the fowls, it gets root in the earth, yet then it is hazarded by noxious insects which purloin and suck away its nourishment, whilst the tender blade. If by the care of the vigilant husbandman it be freed from choaking weeds; yet, lastly, as great a danger as any of the former still attends it; for oftentimes, whilst it is growing in the ear, blastings and mildews smite it in the stalk, and cut off the juice and sap that should ascend to nourish the grain; the grain shrivels and dries up the grain whilst it is yet immature; and when it becomes like those ears of corn in Pharaoh's vision, thin and blasted with the east-wind; or like the ears of wheat which the prophet speaks of upon the house top, wherewith the reaper smites his arms.

APPLICATION.

TRUE grace, from the infancy to the perfection thereof, is attended with far greater dangers, amongst which it answerably resembles the three dangerous periods which marvellously hazard it: it is a much greater wonder that it ever arrives at its journey's end. For, (1.) No sooner hath the great Husbandman disseminated his holy seeds in the regenerate heart, but multitudes of impetuous temptations immediately assault, and would certainly devour them as the fowls of the air, did not the same arm that sowed them also preserve them. It fares with grace, as with Christ its Author, whom the devil sought to destroy, in his very infancy. The new creature is scarcely seated, before it must fight to defend itself. This conflict is set forth in that famous text, Gal. v. 17. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are

desiring the mutual ruin and destruction of each other; for even when they are not acting, yet then they are lusting; there is an opposite disposition against each other; which opposition is both a *moral* and an *effective* opposition. There are two contrary forms; there is in every saint, Col. iii. 9, 10. From hence an effective opposition must needs follow; for as things are in their natures and principles, so they are in their operations and effects; workings always follow beings; fire and water are of contrary qualities, and when they meet, they effectually oppose each other. Sin and grace are opposite, that if sin should cease to oppose grace, it would cease to be sin; and if grace should cease to oppose sin, it would cease to be grace. And this doth much more endanger the work of grace than any other enemy it hath; because it works against it more *inwardly, constantly, and advantageously*, than any thing else can do. (1.) More inwardly, for it hath its being and working in the same soul where grace dwelleth yea, in the self-same faculties; so that it not only sets one faculty against another, but the same faculty against itself; the understanding against the understanding, and the will against the will; so that it cannot do the good, nor yet the evil that ye would; not the good that ye would, because when the spirit moveth to good, and becometh upon the heart by Divine pulsations, exciting it to duty, the flesh crosses and opposes it there; and if it cannot totally hinder the performance of a duty, yet it lames the soul upon the working-harbour, whereby the performance is not so spiritual, free and composed, as it desires; nor yet the evil that ye would commit, if grace were not there; because when lust stirs, in its first motions, grace puts a restraint in its way. "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" Gen. xxxix. 9. And if it cannot (which for the most part it doth) hinder the acting of sin, yet it so engages the will against it, that it is not committed with complacency and full consent, Rom. vii. 15. "What I do, I allow not." (2.) It opposes it more constantly, it is like a continual dropping; a man can no more fly from this enemy, than from himself. There is a time when the devil leaveth tempting, Mat. iv. 11. but no time when corruption ceases from working. And, lastly, It opposes grace more *advantageously* than any other enemy can do, for it is not only always in the same soul with it, but it is there naturally; it hath the advantage of the soil which suits with it. And yet, oh the wonder of free grace! it is not swallowed up in victory, but it escapes this hazard.

But (2.) It soon meets with another, though it escapes this, even by temptations, which strike desperately at the very life of it; these, like the weeds, with animals being swallowed up, are not

greatly endanger it, when it is even ready for the harvest. It fell out with David, whose last ways were not like his first; by this these holy fruits were not utterly destroyed, because the seed of God, and so is immortal, 1 John v. 4, 5. And the promises of perseverance and victory made to it, cannot be frustrated; amongst which these are excellent, Isa. liv. 10. 40. 1 Cor. i. 8. Psal. i. 3. cxxv. 1. John iv. 15. So a great matter of unspeakable comfort; though the flesh say, *Ego decipiam*, I will fail thee; though the world say, *Ego decipiam*, I will deceive thee; though the devil say, *Ego eripiam*, I will snatch thee; yet as long as Christ saith, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, thy graces are secure in the midst of all these enemies.

REFLECTIONS.

1. This soul of mine was once plowed and sown (as I thought) with the seed of God. In those days many purposes and resolutions began to chink and bud forth, but no blessed harvest: but oh! (with what consternation and horror I speak it) the cares and pleasures of this life, the lusts and passions of my base heart springing up, have quite destroyed it; by which it appears it was not the seed of God, as I imagined it to be; and now my expected harvest shall be a day of grief and desperate sorrow, Isa. xvii. 11. I had counted on them, but they are gone; troubles for sin, conscience of duties, buried, and my soul is now as a barren field, which God has not blessed.

Woe is me! I have revolted from God, and now the word, Jer. xvii. 5, 6. is evidently fulfilled upon me; “the heath in the desert, that seeth not when good cometh, because his soul inhabits the parched places of the wilderness.” My former formal and heartless duties were but as so many seeds sown in the field, which could not defend these slight workings from being devoured by the infernal fowls. Had these principles been of God, no doubt they would have continued and increased in this world, 1 John ii. 19. Wretched soul! thy case is sad, but better with the uncultivated wilderness, than with such a corrupting soul, unless the great Husbandman plow thee up again, and sow thy heart with better seed.

2. And are the corruptions of my heart not as many fowls, weeds, and mildews are? O what need have I then to watch and keep it with all diligence; for in the

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carelessness, but provoke the soul to an industrious use of means to preserve it; so it is in itself an irrational and senseless conclusion which will never follow from any scripture-promise; for although it is readily granted, that God hath made many comfortable and sweet promises to the grace of his people, yet we must expect to enjoy the benefits and blessings of all those promises, in that way and order which God hath promised them; and that is in the careful and diligent use of those means which he hath prescribed, Ezek. xxxvi. 37. For promises do not exclude, but imply the use of means, Acts xxvii. 31. I know my life is determined to a day, to an hour, and shall live out every minute God hath appointed; but yet, I am bound to provide food, raiment, and physic to preserve it.

To conclude, let all doubting Christians reflect seriously upon this truth, and suck marrow and fatness out of it to strengthen and establish them against all their fears: your life, your spiritual life hath for many years hung in suspense before you; and you have often said with David, I shall one day fall by the hand of Saul. Desponding, trembling soul! lift up thine eyes, and look upon the fields; the corn lives still, and grows up, though birds have watched to devour it, the snows have covered it, beasts have cropped it, weeds have almost choked it, yet it is preserved. And hath not God more care for that precious seed of his own Spirit in thee, than any husbandman hath of his corn? Hath he not said, "That having begun the good work in thee, he will perfect it to the day of Christ?" Phil. i. 6. Hath he not said, I give unto them eternal life, and they shall not perish, John x. 28. Hast thou not many times said, and thought, it, as thou dost now, and yet it lives? O what matter of unspeakable joy and comfort is this to upright souls! Well then, be not discouraged, for thou dost not run as one uncertain, nor fight as one that beats the air, 1 Cor. ix. 26. But the foundation of God stands sure, having this seal, the Lord knows who are his, 2 Tim. ii. 19. Though thy grace be weak, thy God is strong: though the strength seem sometimes to fail, yet it is fed by an ever-flowing fountain.

*The doubting
soul's reflection*

THE POEM.

TIS justly wondered that an ear of corn
Should come at last in safety to the barn:
It runs through many hazards, threat'ning harms,
Betwixt the sower's hands and reaper's arms.

It shooteth forth the tender blade, and then
 The noxious weeds endanger it again.
 These clasp about it till they kindly choak
 The corn, as flattering ivy doth the oak.
 Are weeds destroy'd and all that danger past?
 Lo, now another comes, the worst at last:
 For when i' th' ear it blows, begins to kern,
 A mildew smites it, which you can't discern,
 Nor any way prevent till all be lost,
 The corn destroy'd with all your hopes and cost.
 Thus saving grace, that precious seed of joy,
 Which hell and nature plot how to destroy,
 Escapes ten thousand dangers, first and last,
 O who can say, now all the danger's past?
 'Tis like a crazy bark toss'd in a storm,
 Or like a taper which is strangely born
 Without a lanthorn in a blust'ring night,
 Or like to glimmering sparks, whose dying light
 Is still preserv'd: the roaring waves swell high,
 Like moving mountains in the dark'ned sky:
 On their proud backs the little bark is even
 Mounted unto the battlements of heaven;
 From thence dismounted, to the deeps doth slide
 Receiving water upon every side;
 Yet he whose voice the proudest waves obey,
 Brings it at last unto the quiet quay;
 The blust'ring winds strive with a fatal puff,
 To bring the taper to a stinking snuff:
 Their churlish blasts extinguish it, and then
 Our gentle breath recovers it again:
 The fainting sparks beneath the ashes lie,
 Where, choak'd and smother'd, they begin to die.
 But these collected, we do gently blow,
 'Till from faint sparks to lively flames they grow.
 Ev'n thus is grace preserv'd, thus kept alive;
 By constant wonders grace doth live and thrive.

 CHAP. XIV.

Upon the Patience of the Husbandman for the

Our husbandmen for longest wait and stre

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plows, plows in hope, 1 Cor. vi. 19. And they are not so irritable to think they shall presently be partakers of their hope ; nor so rash to anticipate the harvest, by cutting down their corn before it is fully ripened : but are content to plow, sow, and weed it ; and when it is fully ripe, then they go forth into their fields, and reap it down with joy.

APPLICATION.

CAN a little corn cause men to digest so many difficult labours and make them wait with invincible patience till the reaping come ? Much more should the expectation of eternal glory comfort and fortify my spirit against all intercurrent hardships and difficulties. It least of all becomes a Christian to be of an hasty and impatient spirit. " Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart," Psal. xcii. 11. " Behold the husbandman waits for the harvest," &c. Jam. v. 7. " Be patient, therefore, my brethren, for the coming of the Lord draws near." There are three great arguments to persuade Christians to a long-suffering and patient frame under sufferings. (1.) The example of Christ, Isa. liii. 7. To think quietly he suffered all injuries and difficulties with invincible patience is sufficient to shame the best of Christians, who are of such short tempers. I have read of one Elezarius, a nobleman, that when his wife wondered at his exceeding great patience in bearing injuries, he answered her : You know sometimes my heart is ready to rise in indignation against such as wrong me ; but I presently begin to think of the wrongs that Christ suffered ; and say thus to myself ; though thy servant should pluck thy beard, and smite thee on the face, this were nothing to what the Lord suffered : he suffered more and greater things ; and assure yourself, wife, I never leave off thinking on the injuries done to my Saviour, till such time as my mind is still and quiet. To this purpose it was well noted by Bernard, speaking of Christ's humiliation, Was Christ the Lord of glory thus humbled and emptied of his fulness of glory ? And shall such a worm as I swell ? (2.) The desert of sin, Lam. iii. 39. " Why doth the living man complain ?" It was a good saying of the blessed Greenham when sin lies heavy, affliction lies light. * And it is a famous instance which Dr. Taylor gives us of the duke of Conde. I have read (says he) when the duke of Conde had voluntarily entered into the incommodities of a religious poverty and retirement, he was one day surprised and pitied by a lord of Italy, who, out of tenderness wished him to be more careful and nutritive of his person. The good duke answered, Sir, be not troubled, and think not that I am ill provided of

myself, and the consideration of what I deserve for my eternal torments; and when with this knowledge I arrivings, how unprovided soever I find it, methinks it is even I deserve. (3.) And as the sense of sin, which merits present difficulties, so (to come home to the present situation) the expectations and hopes of a blessed harvest and reward. This made Abraham willing to wander up and down many a stranger in the world; for he looked for a city that hath whose builder and maker is God. The hopes of such a encouragement enough to work hard, and wait long: Yet tians are so impatient of it, that they would fain be reaping time: but as God hath, by an unalterable law of nature, both the seasons of seed-time and harvest (which are the the appointed weeks of the harvest) Jer. v. 24. and the hastened; but when we have done all that we can on our wait till God send the former and the latter rain, and give al cause its effect; so is it in reference to our spiritual are appointed to sweat in the use of all God's appointments when we have done all, must patiently wait till the divine accomplished, and the time of the promise be fully come "time we shall reap, if we faint not." To which patient and quiet waiting for the glory to come, these following are of excellent use.

1. As the husbandman knows when the seed-time is not be long to the harvest; and the longer he waits, the it is: so the Christian knows, "It is but yet a little that shall come will come, and will not tarry," Heb. x. "that now his salvation is nearer than when he first believed xiii. 11. What a small point of time is our waiting-time with eternity? Yet a few days more, and then comes expected and welcome harvest.

2. The husbandman can find other work to do before ing time come; he need not stand idle, though he can. And cannot a Christian find any work to do for God to heaven? O there is much work to do, and such work is to this season! You may now reprove sin, exhort to the distressed; this is good work, and this is your only work; the whole of eternity will be taken up in other "I think it meet (saith Peter) as long as I am in this "stir up your minds, knowing shortly that I must put "nacle," 2 Pet. i. 13, 14. q. d. I know I have but a

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you here for their sakes, up and be doing : if you had done all were to do for yourselves and them, he would have you to heaven immediately ; you should not wait a moment longer for your glory.

3. Husbandmen know, though they cannot yet gather in precious fruits of the earth, yet all this while they are ripening preparing for the harvest ! they would not house it green, or take it before its time. And is not this also my preparation-time for glory ? As God prepared heaven for his people by an eternal decree ; Num. xxv. 34. by an act of *creation*, Heb. xi. 10. by the death of Christ which made a purchase of it, Heb. x. 19, 20. and by his ascension into it, John xiv. 2, 3. So the reason why we are kept here, is in order to our fitting for it. Heaven is ready, but we are not fit ; the barn is fit to receive the corn, but the corn is not fit to be gathered into it. “ But for this self-same thing God is now working in us,” 2 Cor. v. 5. he is every day at work by ordinances, and providences, to perfect his work in us ; and as soon as that is finished, we shall hear a voice like that, Rev. xi. 12. “ Come up hither,” and immediately we shall be in the spirit ;” for how ardently ever we long for that desirable day, Christ longs for it more than we can do.

4. The husbandman is glad of the first-fruits, that encourages him to wait though the greatest part be yet out : and have not you received the first fruits of that glory ? Have you not earnest, pledges, and first fruits of it ? 'Tis your own fault, if every day you feed not upon such blessed comforts of the Spirit, Rom. viii. 23. Rom. v. 2. 1 Cor. viii. 9. O how might the interposing time, even all the days of your patience here be sweetened with such prelibations of the glory that is to come !

5. Husbandmen know it is best to reap when it is fit to reap ; a handful fully ripe is worth many sheaves of green corn. And we know, heaven will be sweetest to you when you are fittest for it. The child would pluck the apple whilst it is green, but he might find it rather easier, and taste it sweeter, by tarrying longer for it. We would fain be glorified *per saltum*. When we have got a taste of heaven, we are all in haste to be gone. Then, O that I had wings as a dove ! I would fly away and be at rest. Then we cry to God for ourselves, as Moses for his sister Miriam, “ Heal her [now], O God, I beseech thee !” Numb. xii. 13. Glorify me now, O Lord, I pray thee ! But, surely, as God hath contrived thy glory in the best of ways ; so he hath appointed for thee the fittest of seasons, and whenever thou art gathered into glory, thou shalt come

“ the hart panteth for the water brooks, so panteth my
 “ O God ! O when shall I come and appear before
 sire to be dissolved and to be with Christ ! When shall
 most lovely face ? When shall I hear his soul-transp
 Some need patience to die : I need it as much to live.
 O God, by faith, have made this world a burden, this
 den, and this soul to cry, like thirsty David, “ O th
 “ give me of the waters of Bethlehem to drink ! ” T
 man longs for his harvest, because it is the reward of a
 labour. But what is his harvest to mine ? What is a
 the enjoyment of God ? What is the joy of harvest t
 heaven ? What are the shoutings of men in the fields
 mations of glorified spirits in the kingdom of God ?
 gone forth, bearing more precious seed than they ; wh
 turn rejoicing, bringing my sheaves with me ? Their h
 when they receive their corn ; mine comes when I leav
 desired ! O day of gladness of my heart ! How long
 long ! Here I wait as the poor man at Bethesda’s pool,
 my turn will come, but every one steps into heaven be
 Lord, I am content to wait till my time is fully come :
 content to stay for my *glorification* till I have finishe
 my *generation* ; and when I have done the will of O
 receive the promise. If thou have any work on earth
 I am content to abide : behold, the husbandman waitet
 I ; for thou art a God of judgment ; and blessed are
 wait for thee.

But how doth my slothful soul sink down into the fle
 itself in the love of this animal life ?

The lingering hug and wrap up itself in the gar
soul’s reflection. mortality, not desiring to be remo
 the more perfect and blessed state

bandman is indeed content to stay till the appointed w
 harvest ; but would he be content to wait always ? O
 heart ! is this life of hope as contentful to thee as the l
 will be ? Why dost thou not groan within thyself, that t
 might be swallowed up of life ? Doth not the scriptures
 saints by their earnest looking for the mercy of our
 Christ unto eternal life ? Jude 21. “ By their hasten
 “ coming of the day of God,” 2 Pet. iii. 12. What is
 that my heart hangs back ? Doth guilt lie upon my cons
 have I gotten into a pleasant condition in the world, y

THE POEM.

NO prudent husbandman expects
 The fruit of what he sows,
 'Till every cause have its effects,
 And then he reaps and mows:
 He works in hope the year throughout,
 And counts no labour lost,
 If, when the season comes about,
 His harvest quits his cost.
 His rare example justly may
 Rebuke and put to shame
 My soul; which sows its seed and ease
 And looks to reap the same.
 Is cursed nature now become
 So kind a soil to *grace*,
 That to perfection it should come
 Within so short a space?
 Grace springs not up with seed and ease,
 Like mushrooms in a night;
 But rather by degrees increase,
 As doth the morning light.
 Is corn so dear to husbandmen?
 Much more is heav'n to me;
 Why should not I have patience then
 To wait as well as he?
 To promises, appointed years,
 By God's decrees, are set;
 These once expir'd, beyond its fears
 My soul shall quickly get.
 How small a part of hasty time,
 Which quickly will expire,
 Doth me within this world confine,
 And then comes my desire.
 Come, Lord, how long my soul hath gasp'd!
 Faith my affections warms;
 O when shall my poor soul be clasp'd
 In its Redeemer's arms!
 The time seems long, yet here I'll lie,
 'Till thou, my God, do call:
 It is enough, eternity
 Will make amends for all

CHAP. XV.

Upon the Harvest-Season.

*Corn, fully ripe, is reap'd, and gather'd in
So must yourselves, when ripe in grace, or*

OBSERVATION.

WHEN the fields are white to harvest, then husbandmen go through them, rub the ears; and finding the grain full, they presently prepare their scythes and sickles; send forth their harvest-men, who quickly reap and mow them down; and then follow the binders, who tie it up; from the field where it is reaped, it is carried to the barn, where it is threshed out; the good grain is gathered into an heap, the chaff separated and burnt, or thrown away on a hill. How bare and naked do the fields look after harvest, which before were pleasant to behold? When the harvest-men have reaped the field, it is (to allude to that, Joel ii. 3.) before them as the garden of Eden, and behind them a desolate wilderness. In some places, it is usual to set fire to the dry stubble which is left in the field; which rages furiously, and covers it all with smoke.

APPLICATION.

THE application of this, I find made to my hands by the apostle himself, in Mat. xiii. 38, 39. "The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; the reapers are the angels."

The field is the world; there both the godly and the wicked grow together, until they be both ripe; and then both be reaped down by death: death is the sickle that reaps both. I will open this allegory in the following particulars.

1. In a catching harvest, when the husbandman sees the corn begin to grow black, he hurries in his corn with all possible haste, and houses it day and night.

So doth God, the great Husbandman; he hurries to gather up their graves when judgments are coming upon the world. "The righteous perish, and no man layeth it to heart; neither do the righteous men are taken away, none considering that they shall be taken away from the evil to come." Methuselah

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ment of many wise and tender hearts in England? I find some of them thus ranked in a funeral elegy :

The learned Twisse went first, (it was his right)
Then holy Palmer, Burroughs, Love, Gouge, White,
Hill, Whitaker, grave Gataker and Strong,
Perne, Marshal, Robinson, all gone along.
I have not nam'd them half; their only strife
Hath been (of late) who should first part with life.
These few who yet survive, sick of this age,
Long to have done their parts, and leave the stage.

The Lord sees it better for them to be under-ground, than above ground; and therefore, by a merciful providence, sets them out of harm's way.

2. Neither the corn nor tares can possibly resist the sharp and keen sickle, when it is applied to them by the reaper's hand; neither can the godly or ungodly resist the stroke of death when God inflict it; Eccl. viii. 8. "No man can keep alive his own soul in the land of death; and there is no discharge in that war." The frail body of man is as unable to withstand that stroke, as the weak reeds or feeble stalks of the corn are to resist the keen scythe and sharp sickle.

3. The reapers receive the wheat which they cut down into their arms and bosom. Hence that expression by way of imprecation upon the wicked, Psal. cxxix. 6, 7. "Let them be as the grass upon the house top, which withers before it grows up; wherewith the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth sheaves, his bosom." Such withered grass are the wicked, who are never taken into the reaper's bosom; but as soon as saints are cut down by death, they fall into the hands and bosoms of the angels of God, who bear them in their arms and bosoms to God their father, Luke xvi. 22. For look as these blessed spirits did exceedingly rejoice at their conversion, Luke xv. 10. and thought it no dishonour to minister to them, when they stood in the field, Heb. i. 14. So when they are cut down by death, they will rejoice to be their convoy to heaven.

4. When the corn and weeds are reaped and mowed down, they shall never grow any more in that field; neither shall we ever return to live an animal life any more after death, Job vii. 9, 10. "As the cloud is consumed, and vanisheth away; so he that goeth down into the grave, shall come up no more; he shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more."

Lastly, (to come home to the particular subject of this chapter)

‘place) but yet, in one sense, it is an universal truth, a
 ‘filled; for whensoever they die, they die in a good
 ‘though they die in the spring and flower of their youth
 ‘in a good old age; i. e. they are ripe for death whenever
 ‘Whenever a godly man dies, it is harvest-time with
 ‘in a natural capacity he be cut down while he is green
 ‘ped in the bud or blossom; yet in his spiritual capacity
 ‘dies before he be ripe. God ripens him speedily, when
 ‘to take him out of the world speedily; he can let out
 ‘rays and beams of his Spirit upon him, as shall soon
 ‘seeds of grace into a preparedness for glory.’

The wicked also have their ripening-time for hell and
 God doth with much long-suffering endure the vessel
 prepared for destruction. Of their ripeness for judgment
 often speaks, Gen. xv. 16. “The sin of the Amorites
 “yet full.” And of Babylon it is said, Jer. li. 13. “
 “dwellest upon many waters! thine end is come, and
 “of thy covetousness.”

It is worth remarking, that the measure of the sin,
 of the sinner, come together. So Joel iii. 13. “Put ye
 “for the harvest of the earth is ripe; for the press is
 “overflow: for their wickedness is great.” Where, men
 are not cut down till they be ripe and ready. Indeed, they
 ripe for death, nor ready for the grave; that is, fit to die
 are always ripe for wrath, and ready for hell before they
 as husbandmen judge of the ripeness of their harvest, by
 and hardness of the grain; so may we judge of the ripeness
 saints and sinners, for heaven or hell, by these following

Three signs of the maturity of grace.

1. **W**HEN the corn is near ripe, it bows the head
 lower than when it was green. When the people of God
 ripe for heaven, they grow more humble and self-denying
 the days of their first profession. The longer a saint
 world, the better he is still acquainted with his own hea-
 obligations to God; both which are very humbling things
 had one foot in heaven, when he called himself the chiefest
 and least of saints, 1 Tim. i. 15. Eph. iii. 8. A Christian
 progress of his knowledge and grace, is like a vessel cast
 the more it fills, the deeper it sinks. Those that went
 Athens (saith Plutarch) at first coming seemed to them

substantial and weighty : So it is with Christians ; the affections of young Christian, perhaps are more feverous and sprightly ; but those of a grown Christian are more judicious and solid ; their love of Christ abounds more and more in all judgments, Phil. i. 9. The limbs of a child are more active and pliable : but as he grows up to perfect state, the parts are more consolidated and firmly knit. The fingers of an old musician are not so nimble ; but he hath a more judicious ear in music than in his youth.

3. When corn is dead ripe, it is apt to fall of its own accord to the ground, and there shed ; whereby it doth, as it were, anticipate the harvest-man, and calls upon him to put in the sickle. Not unlike these are the lookings and longings, the groanings and hastenings of ready Christians to their expected glory ; they hasten to the coming of the Lord, or, as Montanus more fitly renders it, they hasten to the coming of the Lord ; (i. e.) they are urgent and instant in their desires and cries to hasten his coming ; their desires sally forth to meet the Lord ; they willingly take death by the hand ; as the corn bears to the earth, so doth these souls to heaven : This shows their harvest to be near.

Six signs of the maturity of sin.

WHEN sinners are even dead-ripe for hell, the signs appear upon them ; or by these, at least, you may conclude those souls to be far from wrath, upon whom they appear.

1. When conscience is wasted, and grown past feeling, having no remorse for sin ; when it ceases to check, reprove, and smite, for any more, the day of that sinner is at hand, his harvest is even come. The greatest violation of conscience is the greatest of sins ; this was the case of the forlorn Gentiles, among whom Satan had such a plentiful harvest ; the patience of God suffered them to grow till their consciences were grown seared, and past feelings, Eph. iv. 19. When a member is so mortified, that if you lance and cut it never so much, no fresh blood, or quick flesh appears, nor doth the man feel any pain in all this, then it is time to cut it off.

2. When men give themselves over to the satisfaction of their lusts, to commit sin with greediness, then are they grown to a maturity of sin ; when men have slipped the reins of conscience, and rush headlong into all impiety, then the last sands of God's patience are running down. Thus Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, in like manner gave themselves over to wickedness and strange sins ; and then justice quickly gave them up for an exam-

“pare deceit,” Job xv. 35. “who travail in pain to this deformed birth, ver. 20. “who wink with their plodding wickedness, as men used to do when they are upon the study of any knotty problem, Prov. vi. 13. so much of hell already in them, that they are more hell already.

4. He that of a forward professor is turned a bitter p also within a few rounds of the top of the ladder; the their light the Lord hath already punished upon the obduracy and madness against the light. Reader, if t thus far, thou art almost gone beyond all hope of recover other sinners God usually exercises more patience, but makes short work. When Judas turns traitor to his quickly sent to his own place. Such as are again in overcome of those lusts they once seemed to have clo these bring upon themselves swift damnation, and the lingers not, 2 Pet. ii. 3, 20.

5. He that can endure no reproof or controul in the w but derides all counsel, and like a strong current, ra sweeps away all obstacles in his way, will quickly fall i lake, Prov. xxix. 1. “He that being often reproved, h “neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that witho This is a death-spot, a hell-spot, wherever it appears. very symptom the prophet plainly predicted the appro of Amaziah, 2 Chron. xxv. 16. “I know that God ha “ed to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, a “hearkened to my voice.” He that will not be timely shall be quickly destroyed.

Lastly, When a man comes to glory in his sin, and wickedness, then it is time to cut him down, “whos “struction, whose glory is in their shame;” Phil. iii. 1 braving, a daring of God to his face; and with wh bears long, to be sure these are none of them.

You see now what are the signs of a full ripe sinner; comes to this, either with a nation, or with a single p ruin is near, Joel iii. 13. Gen. xv. 16. It is in the filli measure of sin, as in the filling up of a vessel cast into t rolls from side to side, taking in the water by little and be full, and then down it sinks to the bottom. Mean v able is Divine patience, which bears with these vesse whilst fitting for destruction!

upon my soul; and though my heart hath been an unkindly soil which hath kept it back, and much hindered its growth, yet, blessed be the Lord, it still grows on, though by slow degrees; and from the springing of the seed, and shooting forth of those gracious habits I may conclude an approaching harvest: Now is my salvation nearer than when I believed; every day I come nearer to my salvation. Rom. xiii. 11. O that every day I were more active for the God of my salvation! Grow on, my soul, and add to thy faith virtue, thy virtue knowledge, &c. Grow on from faith to faith; keep thyself under the ripening influences of heavenly ordinances: The faster thou growest in grace, the sooner thou shalt be reaped down in mercy, and bound up in the bundle of life, 1 Sam. xv. 29. I have not yet attained the measure and proportion of grace assigned to me; neither am I already perfect, but am reaching forth to the thing before me, and pressing towards the mark for the prize of my heavenly calling, Phil. iii. 12, 13. O mercy to be admired! that who lately had one foot in hell, stand now with one foot in heaven!

2. But the case is far different with me; whilst others are ripening apace for heaven, *The reflection of a decaying Christian* I am withering: many a soul plowed up by conviction, and sown by sanctification long after me, hath quite overtopped and outgrown me; my sweet and early blossoms are nipped and blown off, my bright morning overcast and clouded: had I kept on, according to the rate of my first growth, I had either now been in heaven, or at least in the suburbs of it on earth; but my graces wither and languish, my heart contracts and cools to heavenly things; the sun and rain of ordinances and providences improve not my graces: how sad therefore is the state of my soul!

3. Thy case, O declining saint, is sad, but *The reflection of a hardening sinner* not like mine: thine is but a temporary remission of the acts of grace, which is recoverable; but I am judicially hardening, and "treasuring up to myself wrath against the day of wrath," Rom. ii. 5. Time was when I had some tender sense of sin, when I could mourn and grieve for it; now I have none at all: my heart is grown stupid and sottish. Time was when I had some conscientious care of duty, when my heart would smite me for the neglect of it; but now none at all. Wretched soul! what wilt thou do? Thou art gone far indeed, a few steps further will put thee beyond hope: hitherto I stand in the field; the long-suffering God doth yet spare me; yea, spare me while he hath cut down many of my companions in sin round about me. What doth this admirable patience, this long-suffering, draw

at last the end of a long-suffering God, lest he proportion of his wrath, according to the length of his patience!

THE POEM.

WHEN fields are white, to harvest forth you
 With scythes and sickles to reap down and mow.
 Down go the laden ears flat to the ground,
 Which those that follow having stitch'd and bound
 'Tis carried home unto the barn, and so
 The fields are red where lately corn did grow.
 This world's the field, and they that dwell therein
 The corn and tares, which long have ripen'd been
 Angels the reapers, and the judgment-day
 The time of harvest, when, like corn and hay,
 The fading flow'rs of earthly glory must
 Be mowed down, and level'd with the dust:
 The barns are heav'n and hell, the time draws nigh
 When through the darken'd clouds and troubl'd
 The Lord shall break; a dreadful trumpet shall
 Sound to the dead; the stars from heaven fall;
 The rolling spheres with horrid flames shall burn
 And then the tribes on earth shall wail and mourn
 The judgment set, before Christ's awful throne
 All flesh shall be conven'd, and ev'ry one
 Receive his doom; which done, the just shall be
 Bound in life's bundle, even as you see
 The full ripe ears of wheat bound up and borne
 In sheaves with joy into the owner's barn.
 This done, the angels next in bundles bind
 The tares together; as they had combin'd
 In acting sin, so now their lot must be
 To burn together in one misery.
 Drunkards with drunkards pinion'd, shall be sent
 To hell together in one regiment.
 Adulterers and swearers there shall lie
 In flames among their old society.
 O dreadful howlings! O the hideous moans
 Of fetter'd sinners! O the tears! the groans!
 The doleful lamentations as they go
 Chain'd fast together to their place of woe!
 The world thus clear'd, as fields when harvest's

THE HEAVENLY USE OF EARTHLY THINGS.

CHAP. XVII.

Upon the Care of Husbandmen to provide for Winter

*Your winter store in summer you provide :
To Christian prudence this must be applied.*

OBSERVATION.

GOOD husbands are careful in summer to provide for winter. Then they gather in their winter store; food and fuel for themselves and fodder for their cattle. "He that gathers in summer, is a wise son: but he that sleeps in harvest is a son that causeth shame," Prov. x. 5. A well chosen season is the greatest advantage to any action, which, as it is seldom found in haste, so it is often lost by delay. This is a good proverb which the frugal Dutch have among them:—*Bona servatus faciet bonum bonifacium*:—A good saver will make a good benefactor. And it is a good proverb of our own, He that neglects the occasion, the occasion will neglect him. Husbandmen know that summer will not hold all the year; neither will they trust to the hope of a mild and favourable winter, but in season provide for the winter.

APPLICATION.

WHAT excellent Christians should we be, were we but as provident and thoughtful for our souls? It is doubtless a singular piece of Christian wisdom to foresee a day of spiritual straits and necessities; and, during the day of grace, to make provision for it. The great gospel-truth is excellently shadowed forth in this natural observation, which I shall branch out into these seven particulars.

1. Husbandmen know there is a change and vicissitude of seasons and weather ; though it be pleasant summer weather now, yet winter will tread upon the heel of summer : frosts, snows, and great rains of rain must be expected. This alternate course of seasons, in nature, is settled by a firm law of the God of nature to the end of the world. Gen. viii. 22. " Whilst the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, day and night, shall not cease."

And Christians know, that there are changes in the right-hand of the Most High, in reference to their spiritual seasons. If there be a *spring-time* of the gospel, there will be also an *autumn*; if a day of *prosperity*, it will set in a night of *adversity*: "for God hath appointed us to various seasons."

2. Common prudence and experience enable the husbandman in the midst of summer, to foresee a winter, and provide for it; he feels it; yea, natural instinct teaches this to the very birds of the air, and beasts of the field.

And spiritual wisdom should teach Christians to foreseeing faculties, and not suffer them to feel evil before it. But, oh! the stupifying nature of sin! Though the heavens know her appointed time, and the turtle, crane, and other birds know the time of their coming, yet man, whom God hath made wiser than the fowls of the air, in this acts quite below them, Jerusalem.

3. The end of God's ordaining a summer season, and a pleasant weather is to ripen the fruits of the earth, and give the husbandman fit opportunity to gather them in.

And God's design of giving men a day of grace, is to give them with an opportunity for the everlasting happiness and salvation of their souls; Rev. ii. 21. "I gave her space to repent." It is not a reprimand of the soul, or only a delay of the execution of God's wrath, though there be much mercy in that; but the purpose of this patience and bounty of God is to open for them a door to escape the wrath to come, by leading them to repentance," Rev. iii. 22.

4. The husbandman doth not find all harvest-seasons alike: sometimes they have much fair weather, and meet with success and advantage in their business; other times it is a catching time, now and then a fair day, and then they must be nimble, or they will be lost.

There is also a great difference in soul-seasons; sometimes a long and fair season of grace; a hundred and twenty years of grace wait upon the old world, in the ministry of Noah. I will wait on the gainsaying Israelites, Isa. xlii. 14. "I have waited, but ye have said, 'He held my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself, because I have a short and catching season, all lies upon a day, and will be gone in a time,' Acts xvii. 30.

5. A proper season neglected and lost is irrecoverable. Things in husbandry, must be done in their season, or cannot be done at all for that year: if he plow not, and sow not in the proper time, he loses the harvest of that year.

It is even so as to spiritual seasons: Christ neglected and despised, in the season when God offers them, are irrecoverably lost. Prov. i. 28. "Then (that is when the season is over) shall they call upon me, but I will not hear." Oh! there is a time, in a short opportunity; that may be done, or pre-

Whence it became a proverb in Greece, *To-morrow is a new day*. Our glass runs in heaven, and we cannot see how much or little the sand of God's patience is yet to run down; but this is certain when that glass is run, there is nothing to be done for our souls. Luke xix. 42. "O that thou hadst known, at least, in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes."

6. Those husbandmen that are careful and laborious in the summer have the comfort and benefit of it in winter: he that then provides fuel, shall sit warm in his habitation, when others blow their fingers. He that provides food for his family, and fodder for his cattle, in the harvest, shall eat the fruit of it, and enjoy the comfort of his labour when others shall be exposed to shifts and straits. And he that provides for eternity, and lays up for his soul a good foundation against the time to come, shall eat when others are hungry, and sing when others howl, Isa. lxv. 13. A day of death will come, and that will be a day of straits to all negligent souls; but then the diligent Christian shall enjoy the peace and comfort that shall flow in upon his heart, from his holy care and sincere diligence in duties; as 2 Cor. i. 12. "This is our rejoicing, the testimony of our conscience, that in sincerity and godly simplicity, we have had our conversation in the world." So Hezekiah, 2 Kings xx. 3. "Remember now, O Lord, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart." A day of judgment will come, and then foolish virgins who neglected the season of getting oil in their lamps, will be put to their shifts; then they come to the wise, and say, Give us of thy oil, Matth. xxv. 8, 9. but they have none to spare, and the season of buying is then over.

7. No wise husbandman will neglect a fit opportunity of gathering in his hay and corn, upon a presumption of much fair weather to come; he will not say, The weather is settled, and I need not trouble myself; though my corn and hay be fit for the house, yet I may gather it in another time as well as now.

And no wise Christian will lose a present season for his soul, upon the hopes of much more time, yet to come; but will rather say, Now is my time, and I know not what will be hereafter: hereafter I may wish to see one of the days of the Son of man, and not see it. Luke xvii. 22. It is sad to hear how cunning some men are to compute themselves out of heaven, as if the devil had hired them to plead against their own souls; sometimes urging the example of those that were called at the eleventh hour, Mat. xx. 6. and sometimes that

when Christ hanged on the cross, and was to be inaugurated kings manifest such bounty, and pardon such crimes pardoned afterwards. Besides, God was then in a way of miracles ; then he rent the rocks, opened the graves, raised the dead, and converted this thief ; but God is now out of that way.

REFLECTIONS.

The careless soul's reflection.

1. I have indeed been a good husband to the world : with what care and diligence have I looked out for myself and family, to provide food to nourish them, and clothes to defend them against the rigour of winter ? mean while, neglecting to make provision for myself, or take care for my soul. O my destitute soul ! how much have I slighted and undervalued thee ? I have taken more care to feed an ox, than for thee : a well-stored barn, but an empty soul. Will it not shortly be with me, as with that careless man, when her house was on fire, busily bestirred herself to save her goods, but forgot the child (though it were saved by another man) then minding her child, ran up and down like one distracted, saving her hands, and crying, O my child ! my child ! I have saved my goods, and lost my child ! Such will be the case of the careless soul. Matth. xvi. 26. Besides, how easy will my conviction be, if I see the love of Christ ? Will not my providence and care for the temporal life, leave me speechless and self-condemned in that day ? Shall I answer, when the Lord shall say, Thou couldst have provided for winter, and seasonably provide for it ; yea, thou hadst saved thy very beasts, to provide for their necessities : and thou no care for thy soul ? Was that only not worth the labour ?

The presumptuous soul's reflection.

2. Is it so dangerous to neglect a season of grace ? What then have I done, who have suffered many such seasons of grace to pass in my hand, upon a groundless hope of future opportunity ? I am a wretched wretch ! what if that supposition fail ? Where am I ? I am not the lord of time, neither am I sure, that he who vouchsafes an hour of grace in old age, to him that hath neglected many such hours in youth ; neither indeed is it ordinary to do. It is storied of Caius Marius Victorius, who lived three hundred years after Christ, and to his old age continued in sin ; but at last being convinced of the Christian verity by a friend, Simplicianus, and told him he would be a Christian ; but he nor the church could believe it, it being so rare an example.

THE HEAVENLY USE OF EARTHLY THINGS.

3. Bless the Lord, O my soul ! who gave thee a season, a day for eternal life, which is more than he hath afforded for thousands ; yea, bless the Lord for giving thee an heart to understand and improve that season. *The industrious soul's reflection*
 I confess I have not improved it as I ought ; yet this I can (through mercy) say, that however it fare in future times with my outward man, though I have no treasures or stores laid up on earth, or have, they are but corruptible, yet I have a blessed hope laid up in heaven, Col. i. 5. I have bags that wax not old. Whilst worldly men rejoice in their stores and heaps, I rejoice in these eternal treasures.

THE POEM.

OBERVE in summer's sultry heat,
 How in the hottest day
 The husbandman doth toil and sweat
 About his corn and hay :
 If then he should not reap and mow,
 And gather in his stores,
 How should he live, when, for the snow,
 He can't move out of doors ?
 The little ants, and painful bees,
 By nature's instinct led,
 These have their summer granaries
 For winter furnished.
 But thou, my soul, whose summer's day
 Is almost past and gone ;
 What soul-provision dost thou lay
 In stock to spend upon ?
 If nature teaches to prepare
 For temporal life, much rather
 Grace should provoke to greater care,
 Soul-food in time to gather.
 Days of affliction and distress
 Are hasting on apace ;
 If now I live in carelessness,
 How sad will be my case !
 Unworthy of the name of man,
 Who for that soul of thine,
 Wilt not do that which others can
 Do for their very kine.
 Think, frugal farmers, when you see

For your poor souls, as you have done
 So often for a beast.
 Learn once to see the difference
 Betwixt eternal things,
 And those poor transient things of sense,
 That fly with eagle's wings.

CHAP. XVII.

Upon reaping the same we sow.

*When from tare-seeds you see choice wheat to grow,
 Then from your lusts may joy and comfort flow.*

OBSERVATION.

GOD gives to every seed its own body, 1 Cor. xv. 42. He created every tree and herb of the field having its own seed for the conservation of their *species*, and they all inviolable to the law of their creation. All fruits naturally rise out of their stems and roots proper to them. "Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles;" such productions would be contrary to nature; and although the juice or sap of the earth be the common matter of all kind of fruits, yet it is specificated according to the different sorts of plants and seeds it nourishes. Where the seed of wheat is turned into wheat; in an apple-tree, it becomes an apple; so in every sort of plants or seeds, it is concocted into fruit of the kind.

APPLICATION.

TRANSLATE this into spirituals, and the proposition is set forth by it, is fully expressed by the apostle, Gal. vi. 7. "Who sows, shall also reap: They that sow to the flesh shall reap corruption; and they that sow to the Spirit shall reap life everlasting." And as sure as the seed follows the seed-time, so sure shall such fruits and effects follow the seeds of such actions. "He that soweth iniquity shall reap sorrow," Prov. xxii. 8. "And they that now go forth weeping, and bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, and bringing sheaves with them," Psal. cxxvi. 6. The sum of all

the clods, and for some time after we see no more of it, and yet last it appears again; by which it is evident to us that it is not finally lost: So our present actions, though physically transient and perhaps forgotten, yet are not lost, but after a time shall appear again, in order to a retribution.

If this were not so, all good and holy actions would be to the loss of him that performed them. All the self-denial, spending duties and sharp sufferings of the people of God, would turn to their damage, though not in point of honesty, yet in point of personal utility; and then also, what difference would there be betwixt the actions of a man and a beast, with respect to future good or evil? Yet man would then be more feared and obeyed than God, and all souls be swayed in their motions, only by the influence of present things. And where then would religion be found in the world? It is an excellent note of Drexellius; 'Our works (saith he) do not pass away as soon as they are done, but as seed sown, shall, after a time, rise up to all eternity: Whatever we think, speak, or do, once spoken, thought, or done, is eternal, and abides for ever.'

What Zeuxus, the famous limner, said of his work, may be truly said of all our works; *Æternitati pingo*,—I paint for eternity. How careful should men be of what they speak and do whilst they are commanded so to speak and so to do, as those that shall be judged by the perfect law of liberty! James ii. 12. What more transient than a vain word? And yet for such words men shall give an account in the day of judgment, Matth. xii. 36. That is the first thing: Actions, like seed, shall rise and appear again in order to a retribution.

2. The other thing held forth in this similitude is, that according to the nature of our actions now, will be the fruit and reward of them then. Though the fruit or consequence of holy actions, for the present may seem bitter, and the fruit of sinful actions, sweet and pleasant; yet there is nothing more certain than that their future fruits shall be according to their present nature and quality, 2 Cor. v. 10. Then Dionysius shall retract that saying, *Ecce quam prospera navigatio a Deo datur sacrilegis*, Behold how God favours our sacrileges! Sometimes indeed (though but rarely) God causes sinners to reap in this world the same that they have sown; as hath been their sin, such hath been their punishment. It was openly confessed by Adonibezek, Judg. i. 7. "As I have done, so hath God requited me."

Socrates, in his church history, furnishes us with a pertinent passage to this purpose, concerning Valens the Emperor, who was

the matter by way of dispute; the emperor hearing of while they were yet in the harbour, and not a man left the ships to be fired wherein they were, and so consumed. Not long after, in his wars against the Goths, he was and hiding himself in a little cottage, the enemy coming and him together. Thus this wretch reaped what he sowing for burning, the very same in kind paid him again. ways so in this world; but so it shall be in that to come shall then be turned, and the *scene* altered; for shall not all the world do righteously? * Diogenes was tempted. God had cast off the government of the world when he sinned and prosper in their wickedness. On the same ground had been tempted to Atheism; but then the world shall see justice shining out in its glory, "Tribulation, anguish, to every soul of man that doth evil; but glory, honour, to every man that worketh good," Rom. ii. 9, 10. To appear what seed we sowed, what lives we lived; "For he shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil," Eccles. xii. 14.

REFLECTIONS.

The profane person's reflection.

1. This meditation may be to hand-writing upon the wall was to prince, Dan. v. 5, 6. and a like effect have upon me; for if all the actions of this life be seed next, Lord, what a crop, what a dreadful harvest am I! How many oaths and curses, lies and vain words have I sown on my tongue! How have I wronged, oppressed, and over-reached in my dealings! Rushed into all profaneness, drunkenness, sabbath-breaking, &c. "as the horse rusheth into the bridle, what shall I reap from such seed as this but vengeance?" These sins seemed pleasant in the commission, but, oh! how bitter will it be on their account? "What shall I do when God shall visit me, and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?" Job. Is it not reasonable and just, O my soul! that thou shouldst reap the fruit of thine own planting, and reap what thou hast sown? If nothing but profit and pleasure would spring from my labours, I see it is a root bearing gall and wormwood, Deut. xxix. 17. Wretched soul; what shall I do? By these actions I have been the author of mine own ruin, twisted and

2. How have I also been deceived in this matter? I verily thought that glory and immortality would have been the fruit and product of my moral honesty and righteousness; that joy and peace had been seminally contained in those actions but now I see such fruit can spring from no other root but special grace. Glory is disclosed from no other bud but holiness. Alas! as my planting and sowing was to little purpose, because I sowed not the right kind of seed; the best fruit I can expect from this is but a lesser degree of damnation.

The moral man's reflection.

Deluded soul! thy seed is no better than what the moral heathens sowed: And do I expect better fruit than what they reaped? Civility without Christ, is but a free slavery; and Satan holds men as fast in captivity by this, as he doth the profane by the pleasure of their lusts: Either I must sow better seed, or look to reap bitter fruit.

3. Mean while, bless the Lord, O my soul! who enabled thee to sow better seed; who kept thee watching, humbling thyself, and praying, whilst others have been swearing, drinking and blaspheming. This will yield thee fruit of joy in the world to come; yea, it yields present peace to thy conscience. These revenues are better than gold, sweeter than the honey, and the honeycomb; not that such fruits are meritoriously contained in these actions; I sow to myself in righteousness, but I reap in mercy, *Heb. x. 12.* This is the way in which God will save and glorify me. Then, let me be ever abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that my labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

The holy soul's reflection.

THE POEM.

'T WOULD be a strange and monstrous thing to see
 Cherries or plumbs grow on an apple-tree.
 Whoever gather'd from the thistle figs?
 Or fruitless grapes from off the worthless twigs
 Of pricking thorns? In nature still we find
 All its productions answering to their kind.
 As are the plants we set, or seeds we sow,
 Such is the fruit we shake, and corn we mow:
 And canst thou think, that from corruption's root
 Thy soul shall pluck the sweet and pleasant fruit
 Of spiritual peace! Whoever that was wise,
 Abus'd himself with such absurdities?

Our present acts, though slightly passed by,
 Are so much seed sown for eternity.
 The seeds of prayers, secret groans and tears,
 Will shoot at last into the full-blown ears
 Of peace and joy. Blessed are they that sow
 Beside these *waters*, yea, thrice bless'd, that go
 Bearing such precious seed : Though now they
 With joyful sheaves they shortly shall return.
 Needs must the full-ripe fruits in heaven be go
 When as the seed was glory in the bud.
 But oh ! the bitter, baneful fruits of sin,
 When all the pleasures sinners have therein,
 Like faded blossoms to the ground shall fall,
 Then they will taste the wormwood and the gall
 What God and conscience now of sin report,
 You slight, and with their dreadful threat'ning
 But he'll convince you then your ways are naught
 As Gideon the men of Succoth taught.
 If sermons cannot, fire and brimstone must
 Teach men how good it is to pamper lust.
 When conscience takes thee by the throat, and
 Now wretch ! now sinner ! thou that didst despise
 My warnings ; learn, and ever learning be
 That lesson which thou ne'er wouldst learn of
 The stoutest sinner then would howl and roar,
 O sin I never saw thy face before.
 Is this the fruit of sin ? Is this the place
 Where I must lie ? Is this indeed the case
 Of my poor soul ! must I be bound in chains
 With these companions ? Oh ! are these the ga
 I get by sin ? Poor wretch ! I that would never
 See this before, am now undone for ever !

CHAP. XVIII.

Upon the Joy of Harvest-men.

*Great is the joy of harvest-men : yet less
 Than theirs whom God doth with his favours*

OBSERVATION.

AMONG all antiquaries, these four sorts are noted

(3.) *The joy of conquests and victories*, when men divide the spoils. And, lastly, *The joy of harvest*. These two we find put together in the principal matters of joy, Isa. ix. 3. "They joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoils." The joy of harvest is no small joy; *Gaudium messis est messis gaudium*. The joy of harvest, is the harvest of their joy. It is usual with men, when they have reaped down their harvest (or cut the new corn as they call it) to demonstrate their joy by shouting, and loud acclamations.

APPLICATION.

THUS, and unspeakably more than thus, do saints rejoice and shout for joy, when they reap the favour and love of God, which they laboured in many a weary duty. This joy of harvest, as great as it is, and as much as carnal hearts are lifted up with it, is but a trifle, a thing of nought, compared with yours; after they have sown to themselves in righteousness, and waited for the effects and returns of their duties with patience, and at last come to reap in mercy, either the full harvest in heaven, or but the first-fruits of it on earth, yet rejoice, "with joy unspeakable and full of glory," 1 Pet. i. 8. "This puts more gladness into their hearts, than when corn and wine increase," Psal. iv. Carnal joys are but as soul-fevers, the agues of the inward man; there is a great difference betwixt the unnatural inflammations of a feverish body, which waste the spirits, and drink up the radiance of moisture, and the kindly well-tempered heat of an healthy body, and as much between the sweet, serene, and heavenly joy, which flows from the bosom of Christ in the hearts of believers, and the earthly delights which carnal hearts, in a sensual way, suck out of creature enjoyments. I will shew you the transcendency of spiritual joys, above the joy of harvest, in these eight particulars following.

1. You that joy with the joy of the harvest, are glad, because now you have food for yourselves and families to live upon all the year: but the Christian rejoiceth because he hath bread to eat that the world knows not of, Rev. ii. 17. Christ is the food of his soul, and his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed, John v. 55. i. e. the most real and excellent food. You read Psal. lxxxviii. 25. that men did eat angels food, i. e. Manna; which was such excellent bread, that if angels did live upon material food, they would be chosen for them; and yet this is but a type and shadow of Jesus Christ, the food of believers.

but Jesus Christ is all in all to believers, and out of him can fetch all supplies; he is their health in sickness, strength in weakness, their ease in pain, their honour in reproach, their friend in poverty, their friend in friendlessness, their habitation in want, their enlargement in bonds, the strength of their life and life of their life; O! he is a full Christ! and what mercies and blessings are scattered among all the creatures, do meet at much more.

3. You rejoice, when you have gotten in your harvest, you can free those engagements, and pay those debts well contracted. 'Tis a comfort to be out of debt; and you rejoice that God gives you wherewith to quit your engagements; you may owe no man any thing but love; but still the joy falls short of the joy of the saints; for you rejoice that you have wherewith to help yourselves out of men's debt: but they rejoice that they are out of God's debt; that his book is cancelled, their sins pardoned: that by reason of the imputed righteousness the law can demand nothing from them, Rom. viii. the matter of joy is this!

4. You rejoice, because now your corn is out of danger while it was abroad, it was in hazard, but now it is housed, not the rain: but Christians rejoice, not because their corn is safe, but because their souls are so. All the while they abode in a perilous state, they were every moment in danger of wrath: but now being in Christ, that danger is over; and what is there betwixt the safety of a little corn, and the security of a mortal soul?

5. Your joy is but a gift of common providence. The Turks can rejoice with your joy; but the joy of a Christian is a peculiar favour and gift of God. Corn is given to all nations, the most barbarous and wicked have store of it; but Christ is only given to a few, and those the dearly beloved of God. Look at the whole Turkish empire, (where is the best and greatest store of corn) that it is but a crumb which the master of the fowls casteth to the dogs. He that had more corn than his barns could hold, would want a drop of water to cool his tongue. Christ is a gift only upon God's elect.

Your joy will have an end; the time is coming, then you shall have reaped down your harvests, yourselves must be cut off by death, and then you shall rejoice in these things no more; when your joy is ended, then is the joy of saints perfected.

inseparable from their enjoyment of Christ : indeed the sense of the interest may be lost, and so the acts of their joy intermitted ; but they always have it in the seed, if not in the fruit, Psal. xcvi. " Joy is sown for the upright ;" he hath it still in the principle, and in the promise.

8. The joy of harvest-men, for the most part, is only in the harvest, and in such earthly things ; take that away, and their joy ceases. Earthly hearts are acquainted with no higher comfort but the people of God can joy in him, and take comfort in the earthly enjoyments too. And what comfort they take in these things is much more refined and sweet than yours ; for they enjoy all the things in God, and his love in giving them, puts a sweetness in them, that you are unacquainted with. Thus you see, how far your joys fall short of theirs.

REFLECTIONS.

1. How have I rejoiced in a thing of nought, and pleased myself with a vanity ? God hath blessed me in my fields, and in my stores ; but not with spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. My barns are full of corn, but my soul is empty of grace. Common bounty hath given me a fulness of the things of this life, but what if the meaning of it should be to fat me for the day of slaughter ? What if this be the whole of my portion from the Lord ? What if the language of his providences to my soul should be this ? Lo ! here I have given thee (with Ishmael) the fatness of the earth. Thou shalt not say but thou hast tasted of thy Creator's bounty ; but make the most of it, for this is all that ever thou shalt have from him. There be others in the world, to whom I have denied these things, but for them I have reserved better ; for the most part they are poor in this world, but rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom. Is not this enough to damp all my carnal mirth ? Should my conscience give me such a memento as Abraham, in the parable, gave to Dives ? " Remember that thou in thy life-time receivest thy good things." Ah ! what a cut would that be to all my comforts ? A man in fever hath a lively colour, but a dying heart. I have an appearance of a shadow of comfort, but a sad state of soul.

A reflection, of one that hath a full barn, but no Christ.

2. " Blessed be the God and Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed me with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ," Ephes. i. 3. Though he hath not seen fit to give me much of this world in hand, yet it hath pleased him to

A reflection, of one that hath no Christ, but a full barn.

Lord Jesus, I have no bags, I have no barns; but to me instead of all those things. When others rejoice of their earthly comforts, I will rejoice in the fulness of they have that which (though I have not) I shall not have that which all their riches cannot purchase. Bless O my soul!

A reflection for one that hath a full barn and Christ too.

3. But, Lord, how am I obliged to love and praise thee? I admire thee, who hast not only provided for my soul, but for my body; thou hast given me both the upper and the nether springs, earth; things present, and things to come? Thou hast with all; no, not with all of thy own people: many of them strangers to the mercies which I enjoy. God hath done great things for me, O my soul! what wilt thou do for God? The freer is he hath placed me in, the more am I both obliged and ready for his service; and yet I doubt, it will be found, that I am a Christian that labours with his hands to get his bread, more hours for God than I do. Lord, make me wise to use and answer the double end of this gracious dispensation! let me spend the more of my time upon God, and stand ready to minister to the necessities of his people.

A reflection for one that hath neither a full barn nor a Christ.

4. Oh! what an unhappy wretch have nothing either in hand, or in heart! I am miserable here, and like to be so for ever. I have but an interest in Christ, as the good seed that would sweeten all present troubles, and bring me the end of them. But, alas! I am poor and wicked in the eyes of men, and abhorred of God; an object of contempt both to heaven and earth. Lord, look upon such a truly miserable object with compassion, give me a portion with thy people in the world; let thou never better my outward condition here! O sanctify my heart; bless these straits and wants, that they may necessarily lead me to go to Christ: make this poverty the way to glory, and bless thee to eternity that I was poor in this world.

THE POEM.

OFT have I seen, when harvest's almost in,
The last load coming, how some men have been
Wrapt up with joy, as if that welcome cart
Drew home the very treasure of their heart;

But they despise your sparks as much as you
Contemn their sun. Some that could never shew
A full stuff'd barn, on which you set your heart,
But glean, perhaps, the ears behind your cart;
Yet are the gleanings of their comfort more
Than all your harvest and admired store.
Your mirth is mix'd with sorrow, theirs is pure;
Yours like a shadow fleets, their joys endure.
God gives to you the husk, to them the pith,
And no heart-stinging sorrows adds therewith.
Though at the gates of death they sometimes mourn,
No sooner doth the Lord to them return,
But sorrow's banish'd from their pensive breast;
Joy triumphs there, and smiles their cheeks invest.
Have you beheld, when, with perfumed wings,
Out of the balmy east, bright Phœbus springs,
Mounting th' Olympic hill, with what a grace
He views the throne of darkness, and doth chase
The shades of night before him? having hurl'd
His golden beams about this lower world,
How from sad groves, and solitary cells,
Where horrid darkness and confusion dwells,
Batts, owls, and doleful creatures, fly away,
Resigning to the cheerful birds of day:
Who in those places now do sit and chant,
Where lately such dire creatures kept their haunt?
Thus grief resigns to joy; sighs, groans, and tears
To songs triumphant, when the Lord appears.
O matchless joy! O countenance divine!
What are those trifles to these smiles of thine?
May, I, with poor Mephibosheth, be blest
With these sweet smiles; let Ziba take the rest.
My life! my treasure! thou shalt ne'er be sold
For silver-hills, or rivers pav'd with gold.
Wert thou but known to worldlings, they would scorn
To stoop their hearts to such poor things as corn:
For so they do, because thou art above
That sphere wherein their low conceptions move.

CHAP. XIX.

Upon the threshing out of Corn.

*More solid grain with greater strength you thresh
The ablest Christians have the hardest lash.*

OBSERVATION.

HUSBANDMEN having to do with divers sorts of grain, some more tough and stubborn, others more free and tender, all alike on the threshing-floor; but as they have threshing instruments of different sizes, so they bestow on some grain more, on others less, according to the different qualities of the grain to be threshed. In this observation the prophet Isaiah hath, chap. xxviii. ver. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

APPLICATION.

GOD having to do, in a way of correction, with offenders, doth not use the like severity with them all, but adapts his corrections to their abilities and strength, *"I will not make a full end of thee, [but will correct thee] and will not leave thee altogether unpunished."* Afflicted thou must be; my respect to my own glory, puts a necessity upon that; but yet I will do it moderately, not lay on without measure or mercy, as I intend to do with the enemies; but will mete out your sufferings in a due proportion. As a careful physician, in prescribing pills or potions to his patient, regards as well to the ability of the patient, as to the nature of the disease; even so thy God, O Israel, will correct thee according to the greatness of his power, and his wrath against thee, *Psalm xc. 11. That would break thee to pieces.*

towards thee. And the similitude betwixt the husbandman's threshing his corn, and the Lord's afflicting his people, stands in the particulars.

1. The husbandman's end in threshing the corn is, to separate from the husks and chaff; and God's end in afflicting his people is to separate them from their sins, Isa. xxvii. 9. "In measure which it shooteth forth, he will debate with it," (i. e.) he will moderate and correct them; and what the ends of those corrections are, the new words inform us, "By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sin." God uses afflictions as we use soap, to cleanse away filthiness, and fetch out spots, Dan. xi. 35. He aims not at the destruction of their persons, but of their lusts.

2. If the husbandman have cockle, darnel, or pernicious tares before him on the floor among his corn, he little regards whether it be bruised or battered to pieces by the thresher or not; it is a worthless thing, and he spares it not. Such cockle and tares are the enemies of God; and when these come under his flail, he strikes them without mercy; for these the Lord prepares a new sharp threshing instrument, having teeth, which shall beat them to dust, Isa. xli. 1. "The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing-floor; it is time to thresh her," Jer. li. 33. And when that time is come, then (in allusion to the beast that was to tread out the corn) "Zion's hoofs shall be of iron, and her hoofs brass," Mic. iv. 13. He smites not his people according to the stroke of them that smote them; the meaning is, his strokes on them shall be deadly strokes: they shewed no mercy to Zion; and God will shew no mercy to them.

3. When the husks and chaff are perfectly separated from the grain, then the husbandman beats it no more. When God hath perfectly purged and separated the sins of his people, then affliction shall come to a perpetual end; he will never smite them again: there is no noise of the threshing instrument in heaven; he that beats them with his flail on earth, will put them into his bosom in heaven.

4. Though the husbandman lays on, and beats his corn as if he was angry with it, yet he loves and highly prizes it; and though God strike and afflict his people, yet he sets a great value upon them, and it is equally absurd to infer God's hatred to his people from his afflicting of them, as the husbandman's hatred of his corn, because he threshes and beats it; Heb. xii. 6. "Whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, and chasteneth every son whom he receiveth."

5. Though the husbandman thresh and beat the corn, yet he will not bruise or hurt it, if he can help it; though some require more

asures and degrees of his servants faith and patience, and shall their trials be, Psal. ciii. 13, 14. "Like as a father his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him; for their frame, he remembers they are but dust;" "a way to escape, that they may be able to bear it," This care and tenderness over his afflicted, is eminent in three particulars.

(1.) In not exposing them to, until he hath prepared their trials, Luke xxiv. 49. "Tarry ye at Jerusalem, and be endued with power from on high." He gives the eminent discoveries of his love immediately before, and relative to their sufferings, in the strength whereof they go through all.

(2.) Or if not so, then he intermixeth supporting their troubles; as you sometimes see the sun shine on rain falls. It was so with Paul, Acts xxvii. 23. "This it was a sad night indeed) there stood by me the angels, whose I am."

(3.) In taking off the affliction when they can bear it, 1 Cor. x. 13. "He makes a way to escape, that they may be able to bear it;" Psal. cxxv. 3. The rod is taken off, "where the spirit of the Lord is even ready to put forth his hand to iniquity." Jewish proverb, When the bricks are doubled, then comes the mortar. And it is a Christian's experience, When the spirit is poured out, then comes Jesus, according to that promise, Isa. lvii.

REFLECTIONS.

A reflection 1. How unlike am I to God, in the manner of my treatment of his people? The Lord is pitiful when he smites, but I have been cruel: he is kind to the most severe; but the best of my kindness to them, may be called severity: God smites them in love; I have smitten them in hatred. Ah! what have I done? God hath used me as his rod, Psal. xvii. 14. or as his rod to afflict them, Jer. x. 24. and mine have widely differed in that action, Isa. x. 24. the scullion, or rather the whisp to scour and cleanse the glory; and when I have done that dirty work, those whom I have smitten shall be set up in heaven, and I cast into the fire. If I have judgment without mercy, that shewed no mercy, how shall I have mercy from the Lord, whose people I have persecuted in his sake?

THE HEAVENLY USE OF EARTHLY THINGS.

Some there are whom God loves not so well as to spend a rod upon them, but saith, "Let them alone," Hos. iv. 17. but miserable their condition, notwithstanding their impunity! For what is the interpretation but this? I will come to a reckoning with them altogether in hell. Lord, how much better is thy afflicting mercy, than thy sparing severity! Better is the condition of an afflicted child than of a rejected bastard, Heb. xii. 7. Oh, let me rather feel thy rod now, as the rod of a loving Father, than feel thy wrath hereafter, the wrath of an omnipotent avenger!

3. Well then, despond not, O my soul! *A reflection for an afflicted saint.*
Thou hearest the husbandman loves his corn, though he thresheth it; and surely, the Lord loves thee not the less, because he afflicts thee so much. If affliction then be the way to heaven, blessed be God for affliction! The threeing-strokes of God have come thick upon me; by which I may see what a tough and stubborn heart I have: if one stroke would have done the work, he would not have lifted up his hand the second time. I have not had a stroke more than I had need of, 1 Pet. i. 6. and by this means he will purge my sins: blessed be God for that the damned have infinitely more and harder strokes than I, and their sin shall never be separated by their sufferings. Ah sin! cursed sin! I am so much out of love with thee, that I am willing to endure more than all this to be well rid of thee: all this I suffer for thy sake; but the time is coming when I shall be rid of sin and suffering together: meanwhile I am under my own father's hand, he smite me he may, but hate me he cannot.

THE POEM.

THE sacred records tell us, heretofore
God had an altar on a threshing-floor,
Where threshing instruments devoted were
To sacred service; so you find them here.
I now would teach the thresher to beat forth
A notion from his threshold much more worth
Than all his corn; and make him understand
That soul-instructing engine in his hand.
With fewer strokes, and lighter will you beat
The oats and barley than the stubborn wheat,
Which will require and endure more blows
Than freer grain. Thus deals the Lord by those
Whom he afflicts: he doth not use to strike
Offending children with his rod like

God hath a rate-book by him wherein he
 Keeps just accounts how rich his people be ;
 What faith, experience, patience, more or less
 Each one possesseth, and doth them assess
 According to their stock. Such as have not
 A martyr's faith, shall have no martyr's lot.
 The kinds, degrees, and the continuance
 Of all their sufferings to a circumstance
 Prescribed are by him who wisely sways
 The world, and more than's right on no man lays
 Be man or devil the apothecary,
 God's the Physician : who can then miscarry
 In such a hand ? He never did or will
 Suffer the least addition to his bill.
 Nor measure, nor yet mercy he observes
 In threshing Babylon ; for she deserves
 His heaviest strokes ; and in his floor she must
 Be beaten shortly with his flail to dust.
 But Zion's God, in measure, will debate ;
 His children he may smite, but cannot hate ;
 He beats them, true, to make their chaff to fly,
 That they, like purged golden grains, may lie
 In one fair heap, with those bless'd souls that here
 Once in like manner thresh'd and winnow'd were.

CHAP. XX.

Upon the winnowing of Corn.

*The fan doth cause light chaff to fly away
 So shall th' ungodly in God's winnowing-c-*

OBSERVATION.

WHEN the corn is threshed out in the floor wher-
 gled with empty ears, and worthless chaff, the husban-
 it out altogether into some open place ; where, havin-
 sheet for the preservation of the grain, he exposes it al-
 the good, by reason of its solidity, remains upon the s-
 chaff, being light and empty, is partly carried quite
 mind, and all the rest, and for some time, and win-

godly who shall be held up to the wind; but only the wicked shall be driven away by it. Such a day God hath in this world, where he winnows his wheat, and separates the chaff. There is a double fanning or winnowing of men here in this world; one is *doctrinally* in which sense I understand that scripture, Matth. iii. 12. spoken of Christ, when he was entering upon his ministerial work: "His fan is in his hand; and he shall thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." The preaching of the gospel is as a fan in Christ's hand: and it is as much as if John had thus told the Jews that though there were many hypocritical ones among them, they had now a name and place among the people of God, and gloried in their church-privileges; yet there is a purging blast of truth coming which shall make them fly out of the church, as chaff out of the floor. Thus Christ winnows or fans the world *doctrinally*: the other is *judiciously*, by bringing sore and grievous trials and sufferings upon the churches for this very end, that those which are but chaff, i. e. empty and vain professors, may by such winds as these be separated from his people.

The church increases two ways, and by two diverse means; *extensively*, in breadth and numbers; and *intensively*, in vigour and power; peace and prosperity cause the first, sufferings and adversities the last: And well may a day of persecution be called a winnowing-day, for then are the people of God tossed to purpose, as corn to the sieve, though nothing but chaff be lost thereby. Of such a winnowing-day the prophet speaks, Amos ix. 9, 10. "I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve; yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth; all the sinners of my people shall die." q. d. I will cause great agitations and tossings among you by the hands of the Assyrians and Babylonians into whose countries you shall be dispersed and scattered; yet I will so govern those your dispersions by my *providence*, that not one good grain, one upright soul, shall eternally perish, but the sinners of my people, the refuse stuff, that shall perish.

To the same purpose speaks another prophet, Zeph. ii. 1, 2. "Gather yourselves together, (or as some read) fan yourselves, yea, fan yourselves, before the decree bring forth, and the day pass as the chaff." He doth not mean that the time shall pass as the chaff, but there is the day of affliction and distress coming, in which the wicked shall pass as the chaff before the wind; and yet, notwithstanding all these winnowings upon earth, much chaff will still abide among the corn: therefore God hath appointed another day for the

world like corn in a sieve, and then the wicked shall be but chaff, which God will eternally separate from his wheat. We do not strain the similitude, but fairly display it in these particulars.

1. The chaff and wheat grow together in the same field, from the same root and stalk. In this wicked men are like chaff, they only associate with the people of God, but oftentimes spend their time with them in the same family, and from the same root and stock. Parents, Mal. i. 2. "Was not Esau Jacob's brother?" One was wheat, the other chaff. Instances of this are many.

2. The husbandman would never endure the husks, or chaff, or stalks to remain in the field; if it were not for the good of the wheat, he would quickly set fire to it, but that the corn is among them, he highly prizeth: And be assured, God would never suffer the wicked to abide long in this world, were it not for his goodness to the church, who are dispersed among them: Except the Lord had suffered the wicked to be dispersed in the world, he would quickly set fire to the world, and make it like Sodom, Isa. i. 9.

3. The chaff is a very worthless thing, the husbandman cares not what become of it; and of as little worth are wicked men. 20. "The heart of the wicked is little worth." The heart is the principal part of the man, and yet that is but chaff, notwithstanding his hands, his clothes, &c. are worth somewhat, but his heart is worth nothing.

4. Though chaff in itself be nothing worth, yet it is of use to the corn while it is standing in the field; the stalks support the ear, and the chaff covers the grain, and defends it from the weather. Thus God makes wicked men of use to the church in outward society; they help to support and protect the church in the world, Rev. xii. 16. "The earth helped the woman," the wicked men for carnal ends helped the church, when a flood of tribulation was poured out. The church often helps the world, it is of use to the world, and benefits from the people of God; and sometimes God uses the world to help his church.

5. When the chaff and wheat are both brought forth, and then to the wind in one sieve, they fall two ways; the wheat falls upon the floor or sheet, the chaff is carried quite away. Though for a time godly and ungodly abide together, when winnowing-time comes, God's wheat shall be gathered in, and shall abide in heaven, the chaff shall go the other way, Mat. iii. 12.

6. If there be any chaff among the corn, it will appear in the

7. *Lastly*, After corn and chaff are separated by the winnowing wind, they shall never lie together in one heap any more: The wicked shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but themselves thrust out: There is no chaff in heaven.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Am I an empty vain professor, that wants the pith and substance of real godliness? Then *A reflection for*
am I but chaff in God's account, though I grow *close hypocrite.*
among his corn; the eye of man cannot discern my hypocrisy; but when he comes, whose fan is in his hand, then how plainly will it be detected? Angels and men shall discern it, and say, "Lo, this is the man that made not God his hope;" How shall I abide the day of his coming? Christ is the great heart-anatomist. Things shall not be carried then by names and parties, as they are now; every one shall be weighed in a just balance, and a *Mene Tekel* written upon every false heart: Great will be the perspicuity of the trial: My own conscience shall join with my judge, and shall then acknowledge, that there is not one drop of injustice in all that sea of wrath; and though I am damned, yet I am not wronged. The chaff cannot stand before the wind, nor I before the judgment of Christ.

2. Is there such a fanning-time coming? Why do not I then search my heart every day by serious self-examination?
No work more important to me, and yet how *A reflection for*
much have I neglected it? O my soul! thou *that neglects*
hadst been better employed in searching thine *examination.*
own estate in reference to that day, than in prying sinfully into the hearts, and censuring the conditions of other men. Judge thyself, and thou shalt not be condemned with the world; that work indeed is difficult, but the neglect dangerous: Were I within a few days to stand at man's bar, there to be tried for my life, how busy should I be every hour of the day in writing to any that I thought could befriend me, and studying every advantage to myself? And what a vast difference is there betwixt man's bar and God's? Is it not twixt a trial for my life, and for my soul? Lord, rouse up my slothful heart by awful and solicitous thoughts of that day, lest I be found amongst that chaff which shall be burnt up with unquenchable fire.

5. Fear not, O my soul! though there be a blast coming which shall drive all the chaff into hell, yet it shall blow thee no harm. "I know
A reflection for
sincere soul.
"that when he hath tried me, I shall come forth

cannot be lost in it: for "God will not cast away a perfect (or upright-hearted) man," Job viii. 20. He that is appointed to the world is mine! and his imputed righteousness will be the weight in the balance. Bless the Lord, O my soul, for this will abide, when common gifts and empty names will be as chaff before the wind.

THE POEM.

THE winnowing wind first drives the chaff away,
 Next light and hollow grains; those only stay
 Whose weight and solid substance can endure
 This trial, and such grains are counted pure.
 The corn for use is carefully preserv'd;
 The useless chaff for burning flames reserv'd.
No wind but blows some good, a proverb is;
 Glad shall I be if it hold true in this.
 O that the wind, when you to winnowing go,
 This spiritual good unto your souls might blow!
 To make you pause, and sadly ruminate,
 In what a doleful plight and wretched state
 Their poor souls are who cannot hope to stand
 When he shall come, whose fan is in his hand;
 His piercing eyes infallibly disclose
 The very reins, and inward part of those
 Whose out-side seeming grace so neatly paints,
 That, with the best, they pass for real saints.
 No hypocrite with God acceptance finds,
 But, like the chaff, dispers'd by furious winds.
 Their guilt shall not that searching day endure,
 Nor they approach the assemblies of the pure.
 Have you observ'd in autumn, thistle-down,
 By howling Æolus scatter'd up and down
 About the fields? Ev'n so God's ireful storm
 Shall chase the hypocrite, who now can scorn
 The breath of close reproofs; and like a rock,
 Repel reproofs, and just reprovers mock.
 How many that in splendid garments walk,
 Of high professions, and like angels talk,
 Shall God divest, and openly proclaim
 Their secret guilt to their eternal shame?

O make my heart sincere, that I may never
 Prove such light chaff as then thy wind shall sever
 From solid grain ! O let my soul detest
 Unsoundness, and abide thy strictest test !

AN

INTRODUCTION

To the Second Part of

HUSBANDRY.

HOW is it, reader, have I tired thee,
 Whilst through these pleasant fields thou walk'st with me ?
 Our path was pleasant ; but if length of way
 Do weary thee, we'll slack our pace and stay :
 Let's sit a while, under the cooling shade
 Of fragrant trees ; trees were for shadow made.
 Lo here a pleasant grove, whose shade is good ;
 But more than so, 'twill yield us fruit for food :
 No dangerous fruits do on these branches grow,
 No snakes among the verdant grass' below ;
 Here we'll repose a while, and then go view
 The pleasant herds and flocks ; and so adieu.

CHAP. I.

Upon the Ingrafting of Fruit-trees.

*Ungrafted trees can never bear good fruit ;
 Nor we, till grafted on a better root.*

OBSERVATION.

A WILD tree naturally springing up in the wood or hedge, and never grafted or removed from its native soil, may bear some fruit, and that fair and beautiful to the eye ; but it will give you no content at all in eating, being always harsh, sour, and unpleasant to the taste ; but if such a stock be removed into a good soil, and grafted with

on their natural root, old Adam, may, by the force and natural principles, bring forth some fruit, which, like the fruit we speak of, may, indeed, be fair and pleasant to men, but God takes no pleasure at all in it; it is sour and distasteful to him, because it springs not from the Spirit. Isa. i. 13. "I cannot away with it, it is iniquity," &c. may not entangle the thread of my discourse, I shall (as chapters) set before you a parallel betwixt the best fruit of men, and those of a wild ungrafted tree.

1. The root that bears this wild fruit is a degenerate root; it is the cause of all this sourness and harshness in the fruit. It is the seed of some better tree accidentally blown, or cast into bad and bad soil, where not being manured and ordered aright, it grows wild: So all the fruits of unregenerate men flow from Adam, a corrupt and degenerate root; he was indeed pure seed, but soon turned a wild and degenerate plant; he is the root from which every man naturally springs, corrupted by him, that any man bears from him. It is observed by Grotius, not only to my present purpose, *Genus humanum in parente in radice putruit*: Mankind was putrified in the root of it. Matth. vii. 18. "A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit."

2. This corrupt root spoils the fruit, by the transmission of a sour and naughty sap into all the branches and fruits that spring from it; they suck no other nourishment, but what the root sends them, and that being bad, spoils all; for the same cause, no mere natural or unregenerate man can ever do one acceptable action, because the corruption of the root is infectious. The necessity of our drawing corruption into a clean vessel from this cursed root Adam, is expressed by a quick interrogation, Job xiv. 4. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." The sense of it is well delivered by Caryl, *in loc.*) This question (saith he) may undergo a twofold construction. First, thus, Who can bring a morally clean thing out of a person originally unclean? and so he lays his hand upon his own sin. Or, Secondly, which speaks to my purpose, it may signify the action of the same man; man being unclean, cannot bring forth a clean thing; i. e. a clean or holy action; that which is like its original. And that this sour sap of the first sin (Adam's sin) is transmitted into all mankind, not only into their fruit, but ruining and withering all the branches that spring from it, shews us in that excellent parallel betwixt the two A

that looks upon them, and doth not know what fruit it is, would judge it by its shew and colour, to be excellent fruit; for it may have a fairer shew oftentimes than the best and most wholesome fruit. It doth: even so, these natural gifts and endowments which some regenerate persons have, seem exceeding fair to the eye, and a fruit to be desired. What excellent qualities have some mere natural men and women! what a winning affability, humble condescension, meekness, righteousness, ingenuous tenderness and sweetness of nature. As it was (hyperbolically enough) said of one, *In hoc homine, non peccavit Adam*: Adam never sinned in this man; meaning that he excelled the generality of Adam's children in sweetness of temper and natural endowments. What curious phantasies, nimble wits, sound judgments, tenacious memories, rare elocution, &c. are to be found among mere natural men! by which they are assisted in discoursing, praying, preaching and writing to the admiration of such as know them. But that which is highly esteemed of men, is abomination to God, Luke xvi. 15. It finds no acceptance with him, because it springs from that cursed root of nature, and is not the production of his own Spirit.

4. If such a stock were removed into a better soil, and grafted with a better kind, it might bring forth fruit pleasant and grateful to the husbandman; and if such persons (before described) were but regenerated and changed in their spirits and principles, what excellent and useful persons would they be in the church of God? And their fruits would be sweet and acceptable to him. One observes Tertullian, Origen, and Jerom, that they came into Canaan laden with Egyptian gold, i. e. they came into the church full of excellent human learning, which did Christ much service.

5. When the husbandman cuts down his woods or hedges, he cuts down these crab stocks with the rest, because he values them no more than the thorns and brambles among which they grow, and as little will God regard or spare these natural branches, however much soever they are laden with such fruit. The threatening is universal, John iii. 3. "Except you be regenerate, and born again, you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." And again, Hebrews xii. 14. "Without holiness no man (be his natural gifts never so excellent) shall see God." Embellished nature, is nature still nature. "That which is born of the flesh, is *but* flesh," however it be set off with advantage to the eye of man.

REFLECTIONS.

1. To what purpose then do I labour in vain?

4. "I will

God makes no account of. O cunning thought ! that thou shalt rise and take heaven, when I with all my excellencies descend into hell. Heaven was not made for scholars, but for believers ; as one said, when they comforted him upon his bed, that he was a knowing man, *a doctor of divinity* ; but thou shalt not appear before God as a *doctor*, but as a man ; thou shalt be upon a level with the most illiterate in the day of judgment. What doth it avail me that I have a nimble wit, whilst I have a weak heart? Am I myself good? Will my judge be charmed with a rhetorical flourish? Things will not be carried in that world, as they are in this. I could, with Berengarius, discourse *de omni scibili*, of every thing that is knowable ; or with Solomon, unravel nature from the root of *hyssop*, what would this advantage me, as long as I am ignorant of Christ, and the mystery of regeneration? My head hath been filled with study, but when did my heart ach for sin? Methinks I am a soul ! thou trimmest up thyself in these natural ornaments, but before God, as much as that delicate Agag did, when he stood before Samuel, and fondly conceited that these things would procure him favour, or, at least, pity from him ; but yet think not, that *the bitterness of death is past* : Say not within thyself, Shall I be cast such a one as I into hell? Shall a man of such parts be cast into hell? Alas? Justice will hew thee to pieces, as Samuel did that Agag, and not abate thee the least for these things ; many thousands of nature, as fair and fruitful as thyself, are now blazing in the same cause not transplanted by regeneration into Christ : and thou art not them, neither will he spare thee.

2. I am a poor despised shrub without beauty at all in me, and yet such a one as the Lord chosen to transplant into Christ. I have left many fragrant branches standing of my native stock, to be fuel of his wrath.

A reflection for a true, but weak believer. O grace ! for ever to be admired ! Ah ! what cause have I to be thankful to free grace, and for ever to walk humbly before God ! the Lord hath therefore chosen an unlikely, rough and unpolished creature as I am, that pride may for ever be broken down in my eyes, and that I may ever glory in his presence, 1 Cor. i. 27. I shall have the advantage of a better root and soil than any other tree hath ; it will therefore be a greater shame to me, and a greater dishonour to the root that bears me, if I should be outstripped and left behind them ; yet, Lord, how often do I find it so? I see some trees so meek and patient, whilst I am rough and surly ; generous

The common stock : his situation good,
 His branches many, of himself a wood ;
 And like a cedar by the river fed,
 Unto the clouds his ample branches spread :
 Sin smote his root, then justice cut him down,
 And levell'd with the earth his lofty crown.
 What hope of branches when the tree's o'erturn'd,
 But like dry faggots to be bound and burn'd?
 It had been so, had not transcendent love,
 Which in a sphere above our thoughts doth move,
 Prepar'd a better stock to save and nourish
 Transplanted twigs, which in him thrive and flourish.
 In Adam all are curs'd ; no saving fruit
 Shall ever spring from that sin-blasted root ;
 Yea, all the branches that in him are found,
 How flourishing soever, must be bound
 And pil'd together (horrid news to tell !)
 To make an everlasting blaze in hell.
 God takes no pleasure in the sweetest bud
 Disclos'd by nature ; for the root's not good,
 Some boughs, indeed, richly adorned are
 With natural fruits, which to the eye are fair ;
 Rare gifts, sweet dispositions which attract
 The love of thousands, and from most exact
 Honour and admiration. You'll admire
 That such as these are fuel for the fire.
 Indeed, ten thousand pities 'tis to see
 Such lovely creatures in this case to be.
 Did they by true regeneration draw
 The sap of life from Jesse's root, the law,
 By which they now to wrath condemned are,
 Would cease to curse, and God such buds would spare :
 But out of him there's none of these can move
 His unrelenting heart, or draw his love.
 Then cut me off from this accursed tree,
 Lest I for ever be cut off from thee.

CHAP. II.

Upon the union of the Graff with the Stock,

Whene'er you bud and graff, therein you see,

having cut off the top of the limb in some smooth part, he takes it with his knife or chisel a little beside the pith, knocks it out, and keeps it open, then (having prepared the graff) he cuts it into the cleft, joining the inner side of the barks of graft together (there being the main current of the sap) then he drives his wedge, binds both together (as in barking) and closes the wound, defend the tender graff and wounded stock from the sun and rain.

These tender cyons quickly take hold of the stock, and in immediate coalition with it, drink in its sap, concoct it into nourishment, thrive better, and bear more and better fruit than ever they would have done upon their natural root; yea, the new bud, being carefully inoculated and bound close to the stock, in a short time, become a flourishing and fruitful limb.

APPLICATION.

THIS carries a most sweet and lively resemblance to the union with Christ by faith; and indeed there is nothing that shadows forth this great gospel-mystery like it: It is a pity that any who are employed about, or are but spectators of such an action, should terminate their thoughts (as they do in that natural object, and not raise up their hearts to heavenly meditations, which it so fairly offers them.

1. When a twig is to be ingrafted, or a bud inoculated, it is cut off by a keen knife from the tree on which it naturally grows.

And when the Lord intends to graff a soul into Christ, he first does work about it, is cutting work, Acts ii. 37. their hearts were cut by conviction, and deep compunction; no cyon is ingrafted without cutting, no soul united with Christ, without a cutting and misery, John xvi. 8, 9.

2. When the tender shoot is cut off from the tree, many more ordinarily, many more left behind upon the same tree, are as vigorous as that which is taken; but it pleaseth the Lord to chuse this, and leave them.

Even so it is in the removing or transplanting of a sinner; it leaves many behind it in the state of nature, and promising as itself; but so it pleaseth God to take one, and leave many others; yea, often such as grew upon the same stock. I mean, the immediate parent, Mal. i. 2. "Was not Esau my brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau."

3. When the grafts are cut off, in order to this work, it is

in the stock, by an external dead-hearted profession, but never can to any thing; and as such dead graffs, either fall off from the stock or moulder away upon it; so do these, 1 John ii. 19.

4. The husbandman, when he hath cut off graffs, or tender buds, makes all the convenient speed he can to close them with the stock, the sooner that is done, the better; they get no good by remaining they are. And truly it concerns the servants of the Lord, who are employed in this work of ingrafting souls into Christ, to make all the haste they can to bring the convicted sinner to a closure with Christ. As soon as ever the trembling jailor cried, "What shall I do to be saved?" Paul and Silas immediately direct him to Christ, Acts xv. 30, 31. They do not say, it is too soon for thee to act faith on Christ, thou art not yet humbled enough, but "believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

5. There must be an incision made in the stock before any bud can be inoculated; or the stock must be cut and cleaved, before the eye can be ingrafted; according to that in the poet,

Venerit insitio, fac ramum ramus adoptet; i. e.

To graffs no living sap the stocks impart,

Unless you wound and cut them near the heart.

Such an incision, or wound, was made upon Christ, in order to our ingrafting into him, John xix. 34. the opening of that deadly wound gives life to the souls of believers.

6. The graff is intimately united, and closely conjoined with the stock; the conjunction is so close, that they become one tree.

There is also a most close and intimate union betwixt Christ and the soul that believeth in him. It is emphatically expressed by the apostle, 1 Cor. vi. 17. "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." The word imports the nearest, closest, and strictest union. Christ and the soul cleave together in a blessed oneness, as those things do that are glued one to another; so that look as the graff is really in the stock, and the spirit or sap of the stock is really in the graff, so a believer is really (though mystically) in Christ, and the Spirit of Christ is really communicated to a believer. "I live, (saith Paul) yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," Gal. ii. 20. "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him," 1 John iv. 16.

7. Graffs are bound to the stock by bands made of hay or flax; these keep it steady, else the wind would loose it out of the stock.

The believing soul is also fastened to Christ by bands, which will secure it from all danger of being loosed off from him any more. There are two bands of this union; the Spirit on God's part, this is the firm bond of union, without which we could never be made one

thrive and flourish alike in it ; some outgrow the rest, and grow not so well as the others do, the fault is in them and the stock : so it is with souls really united to Christ ; all are alike in him, the faith of some grows exceedingly, 2 Tim. i. 13. things that be in others are ready to die, Rev. iii. 2. and we must charge the fault upon themselves. Christ sends enough, not only to make all that are in him living branches.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Is it so indeed betwixt Christ and my soul, as it is ingrafted cyon and the stock ? What glory then hath Christ conferred upon *Four comfortable reflections for a poor unworthy creature ! What ! to regenerate soul.* with him, to be a living branch of the tree, joined thus to the Lord ! Oh ! what comfortment is this ! It is but a little while since I was a wild plant, growing in the wilderness amongst them that shall be cut down and faggotted up for hell ; for me to be taken up from them, and planted into Christ. O my soul ! fall down before the feet of free grace, that moved so freely towards so vile a creature ! The dignities and honours of the kings and nobles of the world are nothing to mine. It was truly confessed by one of the saints, that it is a greater honour to be a member of Christ, than the head of the church. Do I say, a greater honour than is put upon the kings of the world ? I might have said, it is a greater honour than is put upon the angels of heaven : For “ to whom of them said Christ, at any time, ‘ art thou bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh ? Behold I have loved thee, and thou shalt love me, as I have loved the world, that I may bring thee to me, that thou mayest abide with me, that my love may be in thee, that thou mayest bring forth much fruit to the glory of the Father.’ ” “ of love is this ! ” 1 John iii. 1.

2. Look again upon the ingrafted cyons, O my soul, and thou shalt find, that when once they have taken hold of the stock, they shall live as long as there is any sap in the root ; and because I shall live also, for my life is hid with Christ in God. The graft is preserved in the stock, and my soul is ever in Christ Jesus ! ” Jude, ver. 1.

3. Am I joined to the Lord as a mystical part or branch ? How dear art thou then, O my soul, to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ! What ! a branch of his dear Son, who God with-hold from one so ingrafted ? Eph. i. 6. “ (saith my God) for ye are Christ’s, and Christ is in you.” iii. 23.

at the very glory of Christ, tenderly touch and affect thee? Yea, thou tenderly affected with all the reproaches that fall upon him from abroad, but especially with those that redound to him from thine own unfruitfulness. Oh! disgrace not the root that bears thee! let never be said, that any evil fruit is found upon a branch that lives and is fed by such a root.

THE POEM.

OH! what considering serious man can see
 The close conjunction of the graff and tree;
 And whilst he contemplates, he doth not find
 This meditation grafted on his mind?
 I am the branch, and Christ the vine;
 Thy gracious hand did pluck
 Me from that native stock of mine,
 That I his sap might suck.
 The bloody spear did in his heart
 A deep incision make,
 That grace to me he might impart,
 And I therefore partake.
 The Spirit and faith are that firm band
 Which binds us fast together;
 Thus we are clasped hand in hand,
 And nothing can us sever.
 Bless'd be that hand which did remove
 Me from my native place!
 This was the wonder of thy love,
 The triumph of thy grace!
 That I, a wild and cursed plant
 Should thus preferred be,
 Who all those ornaments do want,
 Thou may'st in others see.
 As long as e'er the root doth live,
 The branches are not dry;
 Whilst Christ hath grace and life to give,
 My soul can never die.
 O blessed Saviour! never could
 A graff cleave to the tree
 More close than thy poor creature would
 United be with thee.
 My soul, dishonour not the root,
 'Twill be a shame for thee

CHAP. III.

Upon the Gathering in of Fruits in Autumn.

*When trees are shak'd, but little fruit remain
Just such a remnant to the Lord pertains.*

OBSERVATION.

IT is a pleasant sight in autumn to see the fruit hanging full of clusters, which weigh the boughs to the ground.

Aspice curvatos pomorum pondere ramos.

Ut sua quod peperit vix ferat arbor onus.

Which I may thus English.

O what a pleasant sight it is to see,

The fruitful clusters bowing down the boughs.

But these laden branches are soon eased of their burden soon as they are ripe, the husbandman ascends the tree, and with the limbs with all his might, causes a fruitful shower to fall of stones upon the ground below; which being gathered together and carried to the pound, broken all to pieces in a trough, and then put to a dry lump in the press, whence all their juice and marrow run into the fat. How few escape this fat of all those many fruits that grow in the orchard? If you look upon the trees, you will see here one, and there another, two or three upon the boughs, but nothing in comparison to the vast number that are laden.

APPLICATION.

THESE small remains of fruit, which are either left upon the tree, or gathered in for an hoard, do well resemble the number of God's elect in the world, which free-grace hath preserved from the general ruin of mankind. Four things are exemplified forth to us by this similitude.

1. You see in a fruitful autumn, the trees even oppressed and laden with the weight of their own fruits, before the harvest comes, and then they are eased of their burden. Thus the creation groans under the weight of their sins, who inhabit the earth. *Gen. viii. 22.* the creatures are in bondage, and by an elegant metaphor are said, both to groan and wait for deliverance. The devil brought an original curse, which burdens the creature. *Gen. iii. 17.* "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; and the act of the ground shall bring forth thorns and thistles."

with fruit. Thus it is with the world, that mystical tree, with respect to men that inhabit it; there is not a year, a day, or hour, which some drop not, as it were, of their own accord, by a natural death; and sometimes wars and epidemical plagues blow down the sands together into their graves; these are as high winds in a fruitful orchard; but when the shaking time, the autumn of the world comes, then all its inhabitants shall be shaken down together, either by death, or a translation equivalent thereunto.

3. When fruits are shaken down from their trees, then the husbandman separates them; the far greater part for the pound, and some few reserved for an hoard, which are brought to his table, and eaten with pleasure. This excellently shadows forth that great separation, which Christ will make in the end of the world, when some shall be cast into the wine-press of the Almighty's wrath, and others preserved for glory.

4. Those fruits which are preserved on the tree, or in the hoard, are comparatively, but an handful to those that are broken in the pound; alas! it is scarce one of a thousand, and such a small remnant of elected souls hath God reserved for glory.

I look upon the world as a great tree, consisting of four large limbs or branches; this branch or division of it on which we grow, hath doubtless, a greater number of God's elect upon it than the other three; and yet, when I look with a serious and considering eye upon this fruitful European branch, and see how much rotten and withered fruit there grows upon it, it makes me say, as Chrysostom did of his populous Antioch; Ah, how small a remnant hath *Jesus Christ* among these vast numbers! "Many indeed are called, but ah! how few are chosen?" Mat. xx. 16. Alas! they are but as the gleanings when the vintage is done; here and there one upon its utmost branches: to allude to that, Isa. xvii. 6. It was a sad observation which that searching scholar, Mr. Brerewood, long since made upon the world; that, dividing it into thirty equal parts, he found no less than nineteen of them wholly overspread with idolatry and heathen darkness; and of the eleven remaining parts, no less than six are Mahometans; so that there remains but five of thirty which profess the Christian religion at large; and the far greater part of these remaining five are enveloped and drowned in popish darkness! so that you see the reformed Protestant religion is confined to a small spot of ground indeed. Now, if from these we subtract all the grossly ignorant, openly profane, merely civil, and secretly hypocritical, judge them in yourselves, how small a scantling of the world falls to Christ's share.

Well might Christ say, Mat. vii. 14. "Narrow is the way."

and diamonds, which the Latins call *Uniones*. *Quia nunquam reperiuntur*, (saith Pliny) because nature gives them not one by one: how many pebbles to one pearl! Suitable to this is that complaint of the prophet, Mic. vii. 1, 2. "Wo is that man as when they have gathered the summer-fruits, and the gleanings of the vintage; there is no cluster to eat; they have sired the first ripe fruits; the good man is perished out of the land, and there is none, (i. e. none comparatively) upright left." The prophet alludes to a poor hungry man, that, after time is past, comes into an orchard desiring some choice fruit, but, alas; he finds none; there is no cluster; possibly he comes one after the shaking time. True saints are the world's

REFLECTIONS.

A reflection for one that follows the example of the multitude.

1. What then will be my lot, when the shaking time shall come, who have been in the multitude, and gone with the tide of it? How, even when I have been pressing forward with singular diligence in the matters of religion,

and told what a narrow way the way of life is, have I perished in this? If it be so, then wo to thousands! Ah, for thousands, and ten thousands shall be woful and miserable to all eternity! Will it be any mitigation of my misery, to have thousands of miserable companions with me in hell? Will the generality of my neighbours in the world did; except I have been as good as they, and there a more precise person, I saw none but lived as I did, foolish sinner! is it not better to go to heaven alone, than to go to hell in company? The worst courses have always the most in the road to destruction is thronged with passengers.

2. And how little better is my condition, who have been in the wickedness of my own heart, and have not the encouragement of mercy? Thus have I pleaded against strictness and duty, and have said, O merciful God, and will not be so severe to me.

A reflection for an abuser of mercy.

world, to damn so many thousands as are in my condition, my soul! if God had damned the whole race of Adam, he had done no more wrong: yea, there is more mercy in saving but one, than there is of severity and rigour in damning all. How many adulterers and adulterers have lived and died with thy plea in

THE HEAVENLY USE OF EARTHLY THINGS.

cy should cast forth a line or plank to save me !
 That when millions perish, I, with a few more *A reflection for*
 should escape that perdition ! Was it the Father's *elect soul.*
 good pleasure to bestow the kingdom upon a lit-
 tle flock, and to make me one of that number ? What singular ob-
 gations hath *mercy* put upon my soul ! The fewer are saved, the more
 cause have they that are to admire their salvation. If but one of
 thousand had been damned, yet my salvation would have been an
 of infinite grace ; but when scarce one of a thousand are saved, what
 shall I call that grace that cast my lot among them !

THE POEM.

HE that with spir'tual eyes in autumn sees
 The heaps of fruit which fall from shaken trees,
 Like storms of hail-stones, and can hardly find
 One of a thousand that remains behind ;
 Methinks this meditation should awake
 His soul, and make it like those trees to shake.
 Of all the clusters, which so lately grew
 Upon those trees, how few can they now shew ?
 Here one, and there another ; two or three
 Upon the utmost branches of the tree.
 The greatest numbers to the pound are borne.
 Squeez'd in the trough, and all to pieces torn.
 This little handful's left, to shadow forth
 To me God's remnant in this peopl'd earth.
 If o'er the whole terrestrial globe I look,
 The gospel visits but a little nook.
 The rest with horrid darkness overspread,
 Are fast asleep, yea, in transgression dead.
 Whole droves to hell the devil daily drives ;
 Not one amongst them once resists or strives.
 And in this little heaven-enlight'ned spot
 How fast an interest hath Satan got ?
 But few of holiness profession make ;
 And if from those that do profess, I take
 The self-deluding hypocrites, I fear
 To think how few'll remain that are sincere.
 O tax not mercy that it saves so few ;
 But rather wonder that the Lord should shew
 Mercy to any. Quarrel not with grace ;
 But for thyself God's gracious terms embrace

Had the whole species perish'd in their sin,
 And not one individual sav'd been,
 Yet every tongue before him must be mute
 Confess his righteousness, but not dispute.
 Or had the hand of mercy which is free,
 Taken another, and pass'd over me ;
 I still must justify him, and my tongue
 Confess my Maker had done me no wrong,
 But if my name he please to let me see
 Enroll'd among those few that saved be,
 What admiration should such mercy move !
 What thanks, and praise, and everlasting love !

CHAP. IV.

Upon the Cutting down of dead Trees

*Dead barren trees you for the fire prepare
 In such a case all fruitless persons are.*

OBSERVATION.

AFTER many years patience, in the use of all means, fruit-tree, if the husbandman see it be quite dead, and there be no more expectation of any fruit from it, he brings it down by the root ; and from the orchard it is taken to the fire, it being then fit for nothing else ; he reckons it better to let such a useless tree abide in good ground, where another may be planted in its room, that will better pay for the ground. I myself once saw a large orchard of fair but fruitless trees cut up, rived broad, and ricked up for the fire.

APPLICATION.

THUS deals the Lord by useless and barren people, who but cumber his ground, Matth. iii. 10. “ And now also I will begin to cut down the tree that beareth not good fruit, and will cast it into the fire.” And the dresser of the vineyard, Behold, these three years I have been seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none ; why cumbereth it the ground ?” These three years was the time of his ministry, he being at that time entering

and empty professors under the gospel : and the resemblance cleaveth holds in these following particulars :

1. The tree that is to be hewn down for the fire, stands in the orchard among other flourishing trees, where it hath enjoyed the benefit of a good soil, a strong fence, and much culture ; but being barren, these privileges secure it not from the fire. It is not our standing in the visible church by a powerless profession among real saints with whom we have been associated, and enjoyed the rich and excellent waterings of ordinances, that can secure us from the wrath of God, Matth. iii. 8, 9. " Bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father." Neither Abraham, nor Abraham's God, will acknowledge such degenerate children ; if Abraham's faith be not in your hearts, it will be no advantage that Abraham's blood runs in your veins. It will be a poor plea for Judas, when he shall stand before Christ at judgment, to say, Lord, I was one of thy family, I preached to thee ; I did eat and drink in thy presence. Let these scriptures be consulted, Matth. vii. 22. Matth. xxv. 11, 12. Rom. ii. 17, and 29.

2. The husbandman doth not presently cut down the tree because it puts not forth as soon as other trees do ; but waits as long as there is any hope, and then cuts it down. Thus doth God wait upon barren dead-hearted persons, from sabbath to sabbath, and from year to year ; for the Lord is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, 2 Pet. iii. 9. Thus the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah upon those dry trees, who are now smoking and flaming in hell, 1 Pet. iii. 20. He waits long on sinners, but keeps exact accounts of every year and day of his patience, Luke xiii. 7. " These three years." Acts xxi. 3. these twenty-three years.

3. When the time is come to cut it down, the dead tree cannot possibly resist the stroke of the ax ; but receives the blow, and falls before it. No more can the stoutest sinner resist the fatal stroke of death, by which the Lord hews him down ; Eccl. viii. 8. " There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit ; neither hath he power in the day of death, and there is no discharge in that war." When the pale horse comes, away you must into the land of darkness. Though thou cry with Adrian, O my poor soul, whither art thou going ? Die thou must, thou barren professor, though it were better for thee to do any thing else than to die. When a dreadful shriek will thy conscience give when it sees the ax at the root, and say to thee, as it is Ezek. vii. 6. " An end is come, and an end is come : it watcheth for thee, behold it is come."

my life, I am able either by policy to get it, or by riches. Fie (quoth he) will not death be hired? Will riches? No, neither riches nor policy can then avail.

4. The side to which the tree leaned most while it stood, it will fall when it is cut down: and as it falls, so it lies, to the south or north, Eccl. xi. 3. So it fares with these rotten professors: Had their hearts and affections been bended heaven-ward whilst they lived, that way, now they had fallen at their death; but as their hearts inclined to the world, even bended to the world, so when God gives the fatal stroke, they must fall hell-ward and wrath-ward: And, how dreadful will their fall be!

5. When the dead tree is carried out of the orchard, it will not be among the living trees of the orchard any more; nor will it grow among them, but now it shall never have a place there. And when the barren professor is carried out of the world, he shall never be associated with the saints any more: I shall say, farewell all ye saints, among whom I lived, and with whom I often heard, fasted, and prayed: I shall never see you any more. Matth. viii. 11, 12. "I say unto you, that many shall come from the east, and west, and north, and south, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven: but the children of the kingdom shall be cast forth into outer darkness: there shall be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth."

6. When the dead tree is carried out of the orchard, and a man cuts off its branches, and rives it asunder with his vine-saw, also is the lot of barren professors: "The Lord of the vineyard shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and shall cut him asunder;" he shall be dissected, or cut abroad, Luke xiii. 31.

Now therefore "consider this, ye that forget God, lest I rend you in pieces," Psalm l. 22. O direful day! when the hand that planted, pruned, and watered thee so long, and which has hitherto been thy support, shall now strike mortal strokes at thee, and that will be thy ruin. "For, he that made them, will not have mercy on them, neither will he that formed them, will shew them no favour," Isa. xli. 11. the day of mercy is over; and the day of his wrath is at hand.

7. When this tree is cleaved abroad, then its rottenness appears, which was the cause of its barrenness; it looks like a green and sound-bodied tree, but now all may see how rotten its heart is; so will God in that day, when he shall dissect the barren professor, discover the rottenness of his heart, and un-

there is no plant in God's vineyard, but he will have glory from it, by bearing fruit; or glory on it, by burning in the fire. In this fire shall they lie "gnashing their teeth," Luke xiii. 38. and that both against their saints, whom they shall see in glory; and against Jesus Christ, who would not save them; and against themselves, for losing so foolishly the opportunities of salvation. Do you behold, when you sit by the fire, the froth that boils out of the flaming logs? O think of that foam and rage of those undone creatures, foaming, and gnashing their teeth in that fire which is not quenched! Mark ix. 14.

REFLECTIONS.

A reflection for a formal hypocrite.

How often have I passed by such barren trees with a more barren heart, as little thinking such a tree to be the emblem of myself, as Nebuchadnezzar did, when he saw that tree in a dream, which represented himself, and shadowed forth to him his ensuing misery, Dan. iv. 1. But, O my conscience! my drowsy, sleepy conscience! wert thou but tender, and faithful to me, thou wouldst make as round and terrible an application of such a spectacle to me as the faithful prophet did to him, ver. 22. And thus wouldst thou, O my soul, bemoan thy condition.

Poor wretch! here I grow, for a little time, among the trees of righteousness, the plants of renown, but I am none of them; I was never planted a right seed; some green and flourishing leaves of profession, indeed, I have, which deceive others, but God cannot be deceived; he sees I am fruitless and rotten at the heart. Poor soul, what will thine end be but burning? Behold, the ax lieth by the root; and wonder it is, that there it should lie so long, and I yet standing! Still mercy pleads for a fruitless creature: Lord, spare me one year longer. Alas! he need strike no great blow to ruin me, his very breath blows to destruction, Job iv. 9. A frown of his face can blast and ruin me, Psalm lxxx. 6. He is daily solicited by his justice to hew me down, and yet I stand. Lord, cure my barrenness! I know thou hadst rather see fruit than fire upon me.

THE POEM.

IF, after pains and patience, you can see
No hopes of fruit, down goes the barren tree.
You will not suffer trees that are unsound,
And barren too, to cumber useful ground.
The fatal ax is laid unto the root:

Think on it sadly, lay it close to heart,
 This is the case in which thou wast, or art.
 If so thou wast, but now dost live and grow,
 And bring forth fruit, what praise and thanks do
 To that wise husbandman that made thee so?
 O think, when justice lifted up its hand,
 How mercy did then interceding stand!
 How pity did on thy behalf appear,
 To beg reprieval for another year.
 Stop, Lord! forbear him: all hope is not past;
 He can but be for fire at the last.
 Though many sermons, many a gracious call
 He hath resisted like a brazen wall,
 The next may win him; when thy grace shall raise
 Unto itself a monument of praise.
 How should this mediation thaw and melt
 The heart of him that hath such mercy felt?
 But, if thou still remain a barren tree,
 Then here, as in a mirror, thou may'st see
 Thy wretched state, when justice, at a blow,
 Requites God's patience in thine overthrow.
 And canst thou bear it? Can thy heart endure
 To think of everlasting burnings? Sure,
 This must thy lot, thy fearful portion be,
 If thou continue still a barren tree.

 AN

INTRODUCTION

To the Third Part of

HUSBANDRY.


 NOW, from the pleasant orchard let us walk
 A turn i' th' fields, and there converse and talk
 With cows and horses; they can teach us some
 Choice lessons, though irrational and dumb.

CHAP. I.

Upon the Husbandman's Care for his Cattle.

*More care for horse and oxen many take
Than for their souls, or dearest children's sake.*

OBSERVATION.

MANY husbandmen are excessively careful about their cattle, rising themselves early, or causing their servants to rise betimes, to provender and dress them. Much time is spent in some countries in trimming and adorning their horses with curious trappings and plumes of feathers; and if at any time their beasts be sick, what care is taken to recover and heal them: you will be sure they shall want nothing that is necessary for them; yea, many will chuse rather to want themselves, than suffer their horses so to do, and take a great deal of comfort to see them thrive and prosper under their hands.

APPLICATION.

WHAT one said of bloody Herod, who slew so many children at Bethlehem, That it were better to be his swine than his son, may truly enough be applied to some parents and masters, who take less care for the saving the souls of their children and servants, than they do for the bodies of those beasts which daily feed at their stalls and cribs. Many there be who do in reference to their souls, as Jacob did with respect to the preservation of their bodies, when he put all the herds of cattle before, and his wives and little ones behind, as he went to meet his brother Esau. It is a weighty saying of a grave * author; 'It is vile ingratitude to rejoice when cattle multiply, and repine when children increase; it is heathenish distrustfulness to fear that he who provides for your beasts, will not provide for your children; and it is no less than unnatural cruelty, to be careful of the bodies of beasts, and careless of the souls of children.' Let us but a little compare your care and diligence in both respects, and see, in a few particulars, whether you do indeed value your own, your children and servants' souls, as you do the life and health of your beast.

1. Your care for your very horses is expressed early, whilst they are but colts, and not come to do you any service; you are willing to be at pains and cost to have them brought up, and then to sell them.

ruption and wickedness, and not a rod of reproof to them off it.

It is observed of the Persians,* that they put out their school, as soon as they can speak, and will not see them after, lest their indulgence should do them hurt.

2. You keep your constant set times, *morning* and *evening*, water, and dress your cattle, and will by no means neglect but how many times have you neglected *morning* and *evening* in your families? Yea, how many be there, whose very prospect of any worship God hath there, do very little direct to very cribs and mangers at which their horses feed? Are you up in a morning, you are with your beasts before you have been with your God. How little do such differ from the happy were it, if they were no more accountable to God than beasts are.

The end of your care, cost, and pains about your children, they may be strong for labour, and the more serviceable to you comply with the end of their beings. But how rare to find these men as careful to fit their posterity to be useful and serviceable to God in their generations, which is the end of all. If you can make them rich, and provide good matches, you reckon that you have fully discharged the duty of parents. They will learn to hold the plow, that you are willing to teach them. When did you spend an hour to teach them the way of God?

Now to convince such careless parents of the heinousness of their sin, let these queries be solemnly considered.

Qu. 1. Whether this be a sufficient discharge of the duty which God hath laid upon Christian parents, in reference to their families? That God hath charged them with the souls of their children, is undeniable, Deut. vi. 6, 7. Eph. vi. 4. If God hath charged you with his authority, to command them in the way of the Lord, he would never have charged them so strictly to yield up to him as he hath done, Eph. vi. 1. Col. iii. 20. Well, a great deal is proposed in you, look to your duty; for, without dispute, you must answer for it.

Quest. 2. Whether it be likely, if the time of youth (the moulding age) be neglected, they will be wrought upon afterwards? Husbandmen, let me put a sensible case to you. Do you not see in your very horses, that whilst they are young, you do not bring them to any way; but if once they have got a false straight long custom it be grown natural to them, then there is

“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.”

Qu. 3. Whether if you neglect to instruct them in the way of the Lord, Satan, and their own natural corruptions, will not instruct them in the way to hell? Consider this, ye careless parents: if you will not teach your children, the devil will teach them: if you shew them not how to pray, he will shew them how to curse and swear, and take the name of the Lord in vain; if you grudge time and pains about their souls, the devil doth not. Oh! it is a sad consideration, that so many children should be put to school to the devil.

Qu. 4. What comfort are you like to have from them when they are old, if you bring them not up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord when they are young? Many parents have lived to reap in their old age the fruit of their own folly and carelessness, in the loose and vain education of their children. By Lycurgus's law, no parent was to be relieved by his children in age, if he gave them no good education in their youth; and it is a law at this day among the Switzers, That if any child be condemned to die for a capital offence, the parents of that child are to be his executioners: these laws were made to provoke parents to look better to their charge. Believe this as an undoubted truth, That that child which becomes through the default, an instrument to dishonour God, shall prove, sooner or later, a son or daughter of sorrow to thee.

1. God hath found out my sin this day. This hath been my practice ever since I had a family committed to my charge; I have spent more time and pains about the bodies of my beasts, than the souls of my children: beast that I am for so doing! Little have I considered the preciousness of my own, or their immortal souls. How careful have I been to provide fodder to preserve my cattle in the winter, whilst I leave my own and their souls to perish in eternity, and make no provision for them? Surely my children will one day curse the time that ever they were born unto such a cruel father, or of such a merciless mother. Should I bring home the plague to my family, and live to see all my poor children lie dead by the walls; if I had not the heart of a tyger, such a sight would murther my heart: and yet the death of their souls, by the sin which I propagated to them, as I have done for a beast that perisheth!

A reflection for careless parents.

2. But, unhappy wretch that I am! God cast a better lot for me; I am the off-spring of religious and tender parents,

A reflection for the disobedient child of a gracious parent.

own practice before me; many a time when I have sinned, Lord, have they stood over me, with a rod in their hands in their eyes, using all means to reclaim me; but like a wretch, I have slighted all their counsel, grieved them, embittered their lives to them by my sinful courses. thou art a degenerate plant; better will it be with the infidels than with thee, if repentance prevent not: not my family with them, but shortly I shall be separated from them as hell is from heaven; they now tenderly pity my misdeeds, they shall approve and applaud the righteous sentence pronounced on me: so little privilege shall I then have from my relations that they shall be produced as witnesses against me, and their rejected counsels, reproofs and examples, charged home on me, the aggravations of my wickedness; and better it will be when it shall come to that, that I had been brought forth by thee, sprung from the loins of such parents.

THE POEM.

YOUR cattle in fat pastures thrive and grow,
 There's nothing wanting that should make them so.
 The pamper'd horse commends his master's care,
 Who neither pains nor cost doth grudge or spare.
 But art not thou mean while the vilest fool,
 That pamper'st beasts, and starves thy precious soul?
 'Twere well if thou couldst die as well as live
 Like beasts, and had no more account to give.
 O that these lines your folly might detect!
 Who both your own and children's souls neglect
 To care for beasts. O man! prepare to hear
 The doleful'st language that e'er pierc'd thine ear;
 When you your children once in hell shall meet,
 And with such language their damn'd parents greet
 "O cursed father! wretched mother! why
 "Was I your off-spring? Would to God that I
 "Had sprung from tygers, who more tender be
 "Unto their young than you have been to me.
 "How did you spend your thoughts, time, care, and
 "About my body, whilst my soul was lost?
 "Did you not know I had a soul, that must
 "Live, when this body was dissolv'd to dust?
 "You could not chuse but understand if I,

“ Their child to endless torments. Now must I
 “ With, and through you, in flames for ever lie.”

Let this make every parent tremble, lest
 He lose his child, whilst caring for his beast :
 Or lest his own poor soul do starve and pine,
 Whilst he takes thought for horses, sheep and kine.



CHAP. II.

Upon the hard Labour, and cruel Usage of Beasts.

*When under loads your beasts do groan, think then
 How great a mercy 'tis that you are men.*

OBSERVATION.

THOUGH some men be excessively careful and tender over their beasts, as was noted in the former chapter ; yet others are cruel and merciless towards them, not regarding how they ride or burden them. How often have I seen them fainting under their loads, wrought to their legs, and turned out with galled backs into the fields or highways to shift for a little grass ; many times have I heard and pitied them groaning under unreasonable burdens, and beaten on by merciless drivers, till at last, by such cruel usage, they have been destroyed, and then cast into a ditch for dog's meat.

APPLICATION.

SUCH sights as these should make men thankful for the mercy of their creation, and bless their bountiful Creator, that they were made such creatures themselves. Some beasts are made *ad esum* only for food, being no otherwise useful to men, as *swine*, &c. These are only fed for slaughter ; we kill and eat them, and regard not their cries and strugglings when the knife is thrust to their very hearts ! others are only *ad usum*, for service whilst living, but profitable when dead, as *horses* ; these we make to drudge and toil for us from day to day, but kill them not ; others are both *ad esum et usum*, for food when dead, and service whilst alive, as the oxen. These we make to plow our fields, draw our carriages, and afterwards prepare them for the slaughter.

But man was made for nobler ends, created lord of the low

the lowest condition of creatures, and to bless God that any creature below themselves, give us a famous instance of a lowing story: Two cardinals (saith he) riding in a great coach to the council of Constance, by the way they heard a man in the fields, weeping and wailing bitterly; they rode to him and asked him what he ailed? Perceiving his eye intently fixed upon the ground, he told them that his heart melted with the consideration of this mercy, that God had not made him such a deformed creature, though he were formed out of the same matter. *Hoc est quod amare fleo*, said he, this is that which makes me weep bitterly. Whereupon one of the cardinals cried out, Woe to our father, the unlearned will rise and take heaven, when our learning shall be thrust into hell. That which melted the heart of this poor man, should melt every heart when we consider our misery to which these poor creatures are subjected. And it appears a mercy of no slight consideration, if we but draw a comparison betwixt ourselves and these irrational creatures, in the following particulars.

1. Though they and we were made of the same mould, yet how much better hath God dealt with us, even as to our bodies? The structure of our bodies is much more excellent than that of any other good creatures by a word of command, and without counsel; it was not, *Be thou*, but, *Let us make man*. We have seen how God hath made stones without sense, or beasts without reason, but we were made men. The noble structure and symmetry of our bodies invite our souls not only to thankfulness but admiration. In speaking of the curious frame of the body, saith, "I am fully made," Psal. cxxxix. 14. or, as the vulgar read it, as with a needle, like some rich piece of needle-work embroidered with nerves and veins. Was any part of this lump of clay thus fashioned? Galen gave Epicurus an hour's time to imagine a more commodious situation, configuration, or position of any one part of a human body: and (as one of the angels in heaven had studied to this day, they could not cast the body of man into a more curious mould.

2. How little ease or rest have they? They live not in ease, and those they do are in bondage and misery, groaning under the effects of sin; but God hath provided better for us, even in our outward condition in the world; we have the more rest, they have so little. How many refreshments and comforts are provided for us, of which they are incapable? If we be

THE HEAVENLY USE OF EARTHLY THINGS.

end to: but how comprehensive are our souls in their capacities. We are made in the image of God; we can look beyond present things, and are capable of the highest happiness, and that to eternity: the soul of a beast is but a material form, which, when depending upon, must needs die with the body; but our souls are a divine spark or blast; and when the body dies, it dies not with it, but subsists even in its separated state.

REFLECTIONS.

1. How great a sin is ingratitude to God for such a common, but choice mercy of creation and provision for me in this world? There is no creature made worse by kindness, but man. There is no kind of gratitude which I may observe, even in these brute beasts; they do in their way acknowledge their benefactors; "The ass knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib." How ready are they to serve such as feed and cherish them? But I have been both unthankful and unserviceable to my Creator and Benefactor, to whom he hath done me good all my days; those poor creatures that sweat and groan under the load that I lay upon them, never sinned against God, nor transgressed the laws of their creation, as I have done; and God hath dealt better with me than with them. O that the bounty of God, and his distinguishing mercy between me and the beasts that perish, might move and melt my heart into thankfulness! O that he might consider seriously what the higher and more excellent end of my creation is, and might more endeavour to answer and live up to it! Or else, O my soul, it will be worse with thee than the beasts; it is true, they are under bondage and misery; but it is but for a little time; death will end all their pains, and ease them of all their heavy loads; but I shall groan to all eternity, under a heavier burden than ever they felt; they have no account to give, but so have I. What comfort is it, that I have a larger capacity than a beast hath? That God hath endowed me with reason, which is denied them? Alas! this will but augment my misery, and enlarge me to take in a greater measure of anguish.

2. By how many steps, O my soul! mayest thou ascend in the praises of thy God, when thou considerest the mercies that God hath bestowed upon thee; not only in that he made thee not a stone or tree without sense, or an horse or dog without reason; but that thou art not an infidel without light, or an unregenerate person.

*A reflection for
unthankful sinners.*

*A reflection for
an elect soul.*

sanctified have not ! O my soul ! how rich, how bountiful God been to thee ! These are the overflowings of his who wast moulded out of the same lump with the *beasts* on earth, yea, with the damned that howl in hell : well that God hath been a good God to me !

THE POEM.

WHEN I behold a tired jade put on
 With whip and spur till all his strength be gone ;
 See streams of sweat run down his bleeding sides,
 How little mercy's shewn by him that rides.
 If I more thankful to my God would prove
 Than such a rider merciless, 'twill move
 My soul to praise : For who sees this, and can
 But bless the Lord that he was made a man.
 And such a sight the rider ought to move
 This meditation duly to improve.

What hath this creature done, that he should be
 Thus beaten, wounded, and tir'd out by me ?

He is my fellow-creature ; 'tis mere grace
 I had not been in his, he in my case.

Ungrateful, stupid man ! God might have made
 Me bear the saddle, as I see this jade.

He never sinn'd, but for my sin doth lie
 Subjected unto all this misery.

Lord, make my heart relent, that I should be
 To thee more useless than my horse to me :

He did his utmost, went as long as ever

His legs could bear him ; but for me I never

Thus spent my strength for God, but oft have
 Too prodigal thereof in ways of sin.

Though he's the horse, and I the man, 'twill be
 Far better with my horse one day than me :

Unless thy grace prevent and superadd
 A new creation unto that I had.

Could every reader fix a serious thought
 On such a subject, and hereby be taught
 To spiritualize it, and improve it thus ;

How sweet would tedious journeys be to us !

But such a task a graceless heart tires out,

CHAP. III.

Upon the seeking of lost Cattle.

*When seeking your lost cattle, keep in mind,
That thus Christ Jesus seeks your souls to find.*

OBSERVATION.

WHEN cattle are strayed away from your fields, you use care and diligence to recover them again; tracing their footsteps, crying them in the market-towns, sending your servants abroad, and enquiring yourselves of all that you think can give news of them. What care and pains men will take in such cases, was exemplified in Saul, 1 Sam. ix. 4, 5. who with his servant, passed through mount Ephraim to seek the asses that were strayed from his father, through the land of Shalisha, and through the land of Shalim, they were not there, and through the land of the Benjamites, found them not.

APPLICATION.

THE care and pains you take to recover your lost cattle, can be a sweet and lively representation of the love of Jesus Christ, in the recovery of lost sinners. Jesus Christ came on purpose from heaven upon a like errand, to seek and to save that which was lost. Matth. xviii. 11. There are several particulars in which this glorious design of Christ, in seeking and saving lost man, and the care and pains of husbandmen in recovering their lost cattle, do meet and touch, though there be as many particulars also in which they differ, all which I shall open under the following heads.

1. We sometimes find that cattle will break out of those very fields where they have been bred; and where they want nothing that is needful for them. Just thus lost man departed from his God, broke out of that pleasant enclosure where he was abundantly provided for, both as to soul and body; yet then he brake over the hedge of God's command, and went astray, Eccles. vii. 29. "Lo, this only have I found, that God made man upright, but he sought out to himself many inventions:" He was not content and satisfied with the blessed state God had put him into, but would be trying new conclusions, to the loss and ruin both of himself and his posterity.

2. Strayers are evermore sufferers for it; all they get by it is that they be pined and pointed: and what did man get by departing from God?

of sin; he lost the liberty and freedom of his will to good jewel of inestimable value. This is a real misery incurred though some have so far lost their understandings and not to own it; he hath lost his God, his soul, his happiness, his very bowels of compassion towards himself in this miserable state.

3. When your cattle are strayed, yea, though it be but a single flock or herd, you leave all the rest, and go after that which is lost. So did *Jesus Christ*, who, in the forecited place, Matt. ix. 13. compares himself to such a shepherd; he left heaven and the blessed *angels* there, to come into this world to seek and to save that which was lost. O the precious esteem, and dear love that Christ had to his sheep! How did his bowels yearn towards us in our low state! How did he pity us in our misery! As if he had said, poor creatures, you have lost yourselves, and are become a prey to the devil in this state; I will seek after them, and save them. The son of man is come to seek and to save.

4. You are glad when you have found your strayers, and rejoice in them. So is Christ when he hath found a lost soul. O it is a great joy to him to see the fruit of the travail of his soul, Isa. liii. "For I will be glad in heaven over one sinner that repenteth." "Is it more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, or over ninety-nine just persons that need no repentance?" What demonstrations of joy and gladness did the father of the prodigal give when he had found his son that was lost? Luke xv. 20.

5. When you have brought home your strayers, you stop them with a clog to prevent their wandering again, and stop them with thorns; and so doth God oftentimes by such souls that are recovered and brought home to Christ; he hangs a clog of law to prevent their departure from God again, 2 Cor. xii. 7.

But then there are five particulars in which Christ's servants and your seeking lost cattle differ.

1. Your cattle sometimes find the way home themselves, and turn to you of their own accord; but lost man never can do so; he was his own destroyer, but can never be his own redeemer. It was possible for him not to have lost his God, but he lost him, can never find him again of himself. Alas! He is bent to backsliding, he hath no will to return. Hear how he complains, John v. 40. "Ye will not come unto me." He is covered by his own iniquity, and his recovery begins in God, not in himself.

2. Your servants can find, and bring back your lost cattle as you; but so cannot Christ's servants: Ministers may find them, but cannot recover them: they daily see, but cannot

creatures, and such as by nature were more excellent, that lost th
God and themselves: I mean, the apostate angels; but he came
to seek them: herein his singular love to man appears.

4. When you have recovered and brought home your lost cat
you may lose them the second time, and never recover them aga
but so cannot Christ. Man once recovered is for ever secured
him. "All that thou hast given me, I have kept, and not one
"them is lost but the son of perdition;" and he was never saving
found, John xvii. 12.

5. Though you prize your cattle, yet you will not venture yo
life for the recovery of them; rather let them go than regain th
with such an hazard; but Jesus Christ not only ventured, but actu
ly laid down his life to recover and save lost man: he redeemed th
at the price of his own blood; he is that good shepherd that laid do
his life for the sheep. O the surpassing love of Christ to lost sou

REFLECTIONS.

1. Lord, I am a lost creature! an undone soul! and herein lies
misery, that I have not only lost my God, but
have no heart to return to him: nay, I fly from *A reflection fo*
Christ, who is come on purpose from heaven to *lost soul.*
seek and to save me: his messengers are abroad,
seeking for such as I am, but I avoid them, or at least refuse to ob
their call and persuasions to return. Ah, what a miserable state
I in! Every step I go is a step towards hell; my soul, with the p
dial, is ready to perish in a strange country: but I have no mi
with him, to return home. Wretched soul! what will the end
this be? If God have lost thee: the devil hath found thee; he ta
up all stravers from God: yea, death and hell will shortly find th
if Christ do not; and then thy recovery, O my soul! will be i
possible! Why sit I here perishing and dying? I am not yet
irrecoverably lost as the damned are. O let me delay no long
lest I be lost for ever!

2. O my soul! for ever bless and admire the love of Jesus Chr
who came from heaven to seek and save such a
lost soul as I was. Lord, how marvellous! how *A reflection*
matchless is thy love! I was lost, and am found: *one that was lo*
I am found, and did not seek; nay, I am found *but is found.*
by him from whom I fled. Thy love, O my Sa-
viour! was a preventing love, a wonderful love; thou lovedst
much more than I loved myself; I was cruel to my own soul, b
thou wast kind; thou soughtest for me a lost sinner, and not for l
angels: thy hand of grace caught hold of me, and both let go th

shall I ever straggle again from thee? O let it for ever be to me, how I turn aside into the by-paths of sin any more.

THE POEM.

WHEN cattle from your fields are gone astray,
 And you to seek them through the country ride;
 Enquiring for them all along the way,
 Tracking their footsteps where they turn'd aside;
 One servant this way sent, another that,
 Searching the fields and country round about;
 This meditation now falls in so pat,
 As if God sent it to enquire you out:
 My beasts are lost, and so am I by sin;
 My wretched soul from God thus wand'ring wen
 As I seek them, so was I sought by him,
 Who from the Father's bosom forth was sent.
 Pursu'd by sermons, follow'd close by grace,
 And strong convictions, Christ hath sought for m
 Yea, though I shun him, still he gives me chase,
 As if resolv'd I should not damned be.
 When angels lost themselves, it was not so;
 God did not seek, or once for them enquire;
 But said, Let these apostate creatures go,
 I'll plague them for it with eternal fire.
 Lord! what am I, that thou should'st set thine ey
 And still seek after such a wretch as I?
 Whose matchless mercy, and rich grace despise,
 As if, in spite thereof, resolv'd to die.
 Why should I shun thee? Blessed Saviour, why
 Should I avoid thee thus? Thou dost not chase
 My soul to slay it; O that ever I
 Should fly a Saviour that's so full of grace!
 Long hast thou sought me, Lord, I now return,
 O let thy bowels of compassion sound;
 For my departure I sincerely mourn,
 And let this day thy wand'ring sheep be found.

CHAP. IV.

Upon the Feeding of fat Cattle.

linquantur: Oxen for use are daily yoked and kept short, whilst those that are designed for the shambles, are let loose in green pastures to feed at pleasure. Store beasts fare hard, and are kept lean and low; feeding beasts are excused from the yoke, whilst others are labourers and wrought hard every day; the one hath more than he can eat, the other would eat more if he had it.

APPLICATION.

THUS deals the Lord oft-times with his own elect, whom he designs for glory; and with the wicked, who are preparing for the day of wrath: thus are they filled with earthly prosperity and creature-enjoyments, like lusty and wanton beasts turned out at liberty in a fat pasture, whilst poor saints are kept hard and short; Amos 1. "Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan, that are in the mountains of Samaria, which oppress the poor, crush the needy." These metaphorical kine are the prosperous oppressors of the world, full fed, and wanton, wicked men. It is true, heaven hath not all the poor, nor hell all the rich; but it is a very common dispensation of providence to bestow most of the things of this world upon them that have no portion in heaven; and to keep them short on earth, for whom the kingdom is provided. Let me draw forth the similitude in a few particulars.

1. The beasts of slaughter have the fattest pastures; so have the ungodly in the world; "Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish," Psal. lxxiii. 7. Their hearts are fat as grease, Psal. cxix. 70. These be they that fleet off the cream of earthly enjoyments, "whose bellies are filled with hidden treasure," Psal. xvii. 14. "The earth is given into the hand of the wicked," Job ix. 24. O what full estates! what an affluence of earthly lights hath God cast in upon some wicked men! There is much wantonness, but no want in their dwellings: some that know the way to turn themselves in hell, once knew not where to bestow their goods on earth.

2. Feeding beasts grow wanton in their full pastures; there you shall see them tumble and frisk, and kick up their heels. The same effect hath the prosperity of the wicked; it makes them wanton: their life is but a diversion from one pleasure to another, Job 11, 12, 13. "They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance: they take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ: they spend their days in wealth, and in the moment go down to the grave." The same character doth

cattle: the sooner they are fatted, the sooner they are slain, and the prosperity of the wicked serves to the same end: the prosperity of fools shall destroy them; i. e. it shall be the means and instrument of heating and heightening their lusts, and thereby exposing them for destruction; their prosperity is food and fuel to their passions and corruptions. Many wicked men had not been so soon ripe for destruction, if they had not grown in the sunshine of prosperity.

4. Fatted beasts do not in the least understand the meaning of the husbandman, in allowing them such large portions of food, which he denies to his other cattle; and as little do the wicked men understand the scope and end of God's providence in casting prosperity and wealth upon them; little do they consider that their tables are a snare, a gin, and a trap for their souls; they know not what is before them, but do not at all understand the tendency and end of these their sensual delights.

5. Though the husbandman keeps his store-cattle in the stalls, yet he intends to preserve them: these shall remain when the others are driven to the slaughter.

Such a design of preservation is carried on in all the dispensations, straits, wants, and hardships which the Lord exposes his people to. I confess, such dispensations, for the present, are very strange and puzzling things, even to gracious and wise persons. To see a godly man, not only exempted from their troubles, but even to see a wicked man with prosperity: to see a godly man in wants and straits, and a wicked man have more than his heart can wish, is a case which puzzles the wisest Christian, till he considers the designs and issues of those providences, and then he acquiesces in the wisdom of God in ordering it, Psal. lxxiii. 5, 14, 18, 23.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Doth my prosperity fat me up for hell, and prepare me for the day of slaughter? Little cause have I then to glory in it, and lift up my heart upon these things. *A reflection.* Indeed, God hath given (I cannot say *voluptuous* things, but blessed me with) a fulness of creature-enjoyments; upon these my carnal heart seizeth greedily and is not at all suspecting a snare lying in these things for the soul. What are all these charming pleasures, but so many snares to quiet my soul, whilst its damnation steals insensibly upon it. Are all my businesses and employments in the world, but diversions from the business of life? There are but two

prosperity, if I were taken captive by cruel cannibals, and fed with the richest fare, but withal understood, that the design of it were fat me up like a beast for them to feed upon, how little stomach should I have to their dainties! O my soul! it were much better for thee to have a sanctified poverty, which is the portion of many saints, than an ensnaring prosperity, set as a trap to ruin thee for ever.

2. The wisdom of my God hath allotted me but short commons here; his providence feeds me, but from hand to mouth; but I am, and well may be, contented with my present state; that which sweetens it is, that I am one of the Lord's preserved. How much better is a morsel of bread and a draught of water here, with an expectancy of glory hereafter, than a fat pasture given in, and a fitting for the wrath to come? Well, since the case stands thus, blessed be God for my present lot! Though I have but a little in hand, I have much in hope; my present troubles will serve to sweeten my future joy, and the sorrows of this life will give a lustre to the glory of the next; that which is now hard to suffer, will then be sweet to remember; my songs will then be louder than my groans now are.

*A reflection of
a poor Christian*

THE POEM.

THOSE beasts which for the shambles are design'd,
In fragrant flow'ry meadows you shall find,
Where they abound with rich and plenteous fare,
Whilst others graze in commons thin and bare:
Those live a short and pleasant life, but these
Protract their lives in dry and shorter leas.
Thus live the wicked; thus they do abound
With earthly glory, and with honour crown'd.
Their lofty heads unto the stars aspire,
And radiant beams their shining brows attire.
The fattest portion's serv'd up in their dish;
Yea, they have more than their own hearts can wish.
Dissolv'd in pleasures, crowned with buds of May;
They, for a time, in these fat pastures play,
Frisk, dance and leap, like full-fed beasts; and even
Turn up their wanton heels against the heaven;
Not understanding that this pleasant life,
Serves but to fit them for the butcher's knife.
In fragrant meads they tumbling are to-day,
To-morrow to the slaughter led away.

Cheer up, poor flock, although your fare be thin,
 Yet here is something to take comfort in:
 You here securely feed, and need not fear,
 Th' infernal butcher can't approach you here.
 'Tis somewhat that; but, oh! which far transcends,
 Your glorious shepherd's coming, who intends
 To lead you hence unto that fragrant hill,
 Where, with green pastures, he his flocks will fill;
 Or which he from celestial casements pours
 The sweetest dews, and constant gracious show'rs;
 Along whose banks rivers of pleasures glide,
 There his bless'd flocks for ever shall abide,
 O envy not the worldlings present joys.
 Which to your future mercies are but toys,
 Their pasture now is green, your's dry and burn'd,
 But then the scene is chang'd, the tables turn'd.

CHAP. V.

Upon the Husbandman's Care for Posterity

*Good husbands labour for posterity;
 To after-ages saints must have an eye.*

OBSERVATION.

PROVIDENT and careful husbandmen do not only supply their own necessities, while living, but lay up so for their posterity when they are gone: they do not only leave their children what their progenitors left them, but they desire to leave them improved and bettered. None but bad husbands and sons are of the mind with that heathen emperor Tiberius, who put all into such confusions in the empire, that it might be said, the world would end with him; yet pleased himself with the reflection, That he should be out of the reach of it; and said, When I am dead, let heaven and earth mingle; I will but hold my time, let it break when I am gone. Provident men look beyond their own time, and do very much for themselves in the good or evil of their posterity.

APPLICATION.

convey the truths of God to posterity : but since the sacred truth has been consigned to writing, no such tradition (except fully consented with that written word) is to be received as authentic ; but the truths therein delivered to the saints, are, by verbal *declarations*, open *confessions*, and constant *sufferings*, to be preserved and delivered from age to age. This was the constant care of the whole cloud of witnesses both ancient and modern, who have kept the word of God's patience and would not accept their own lives, liberties, or estates, no, nor the whole world in exchange for that invaluable treasure of truth : they have carefully practised Solomon's counsel, Prov. xxiii. " Buy the truth, but sell it not ;" they would not alienate that inheritance for all the inheritances on earth. Upon the same reason that you refuse to part with, or imbezzle your estates, Christians also refuse to part with the truth of God.

1. You will not waste or alienate your inheritance, because it is precious, and of great value in your eyes ; but much more precious are God's truths to his people. Luther professed, he would not take the whole *world* for one leaf of his Bible. Though some profane persons may say with Pilate, What is truth ? Yet know, that any one truth of the gospel is more worth than all the inheritances upon earth ; they are the great things of God's law ; and he that sells them for the greatest things in this world, makes a soul-undoing bargain.

2. You will not waste or part with your inheritance, because you know your posterity will be much wronged by it. They that drink or drink away an estate, drink the tears of their sad widows, and the very blood of their impoverished children. The people of God also consider, how much the generations to come are concerned in the conservation of the truths of God for them : It cuts them to the heart, but to think that their children should be brought up to worship dumb idols, and fall down before a wooden and breasted God. The very birds and beasts will expose their own bodies to apparent danger of death to preserve their young. Religion doth much more tender the hearts and bowels than nature doth.

3. You reckon it a foul disgrace to sell your estates, and become bankrupts ; it is a word that bears ill among you : and a Christian accounts it the highest reproach in the world, to be a *traitor* to, an apostate from the truths of God. When the primitive saints were strictly required to deliver up their Bibles, those that did not were justly branded, and hissed out of their company, under the odious title of *traditores*, or deliverers.

4. You are so loth to part with your estates, because you know it

recovered, her Naphtalies; for with great wrestlings she led for them; "earnestly contending for the faith once "them," Jude 3.

5. To conclude; rather than you will part with your will choose to suffer many wants and hardships all your will fare hard, and go bare, to preserve what you have for posterity: but the people of God have put themselves to greater hardships than these to preserve truth? they have to suffer reproaches, poverty, prisons, death, and the torments, rather than the loss of God's truth, all the more will inform you what their sufferings have been, to keep of God's patience; they have boldly told their enemies might pluck their hearts out of their bodies, but should not the truth out of their hearts.

REFLECTIONS.

1. Base unbelieving heart! How have I flinched and truth, when it hath been in danger? I have chosen to leave it than my life, liberty, or a prey to the enemy. I have left truth for a false one; it is that the God of truth should leave me an unbelieving soul! that durst not make a stand for truth: yea, rather bold and daring soul! that would rather look a wrathful God, than an angry man in the face. I will own and preserve the truth, and the God of truth will maintain it. 2 Tim. ii. 12. "If we deny him, he will deny us."

2. Lord! unto me hast thou committed the precious trust of truth; and as I received it, I have a desire to deliver it to the generation that shall come after me, that the people which are yet unborn may praise the Lord. God forbid I should part with such a fair inheritance, and thereby beggar millions of thousands of souls! Thou hast given me thy truth, and I hate to lose it; I well know that it is the ground of the quarrel between us and the world. I but throw truth over the walls, how soon would a retreat be made to all persecutors? But, Lord, thy truth is invaluable. What a vile thing is my blood, compared with the least of thy truths? Thou hast charged me not to sell it; and, in thy love, I resolve never to pass a fine, and cut off that golden link which thy truths are entailed upon thy people from generation to generation: my friends may go, my liberty may go, my blood may go, but as for thee, precious truth, thou shalt never go.

souls, heated with the love of Christ, and care for our souls, many bold and brave adventures for it; and yet at what a low rate do we value what cost them so dear? Like young heirs that never knew the getting of an estate, we spend it freely. Lord, help us thankfully and diligently to improve thy truths, while we are in quiet possession of them. Such intervals of peace and rest are usually of no long continuance with thy people.

THE POEM.

A PUBLIC spirit scorns to plant no root
 But such from which himself may gather fruit.
 For thus he reasons, If I reap the gains
 Of laborious predecessors pains,
 How equal is it, that posterity
 Should reap the fruits of present industry?
 Should every age but serve its turn, and take
 No thought for future times, it soon will make
 A bankrupt world, and so entail a curse
 From age to age, as it grows worse and worse.
 Our Christian predecessors careful thus
 Have been to leave an heritage to us.
 Christ's precious truth conserved in their blood,
 For no less price those truths our fathers stood.
 They have transmitted, would not alienate
 From us, their children, such a fair estate.
 We eat what they did set: and shall truth fail
 In our days? Shall we cut off th' entail,
 Or end the line of honour? Nay, what's worse,
 Give future ages cause to hate, and curse
 Our memories? Like Naboth, may this age
 Part with their blood sooner than heritage.
 Let pity move us, let us think upon
 Our children's souls, when we are dead and gone:
 Shall they, poor souls, in darkness grope, when we
 Put out the light, by which they else might see
 The way to glory? Yea, what's worse, shall it
 Be said in time to come, Christ did commit
 A precious treasure, purchased by his blood,
 To us, for ours, and for our children's good!
 But we, like cowards, false, perfidious men,

CHAP. VI.

Upon the Husbandman's care to prove and preserve

*Deeds for our lands you prove, and keep with care
O that for heaven you but as careful were!*

OBSERVATION.

WE generally find men are not more careful in trying to keep it, than they are in examining their deeds, and their titles; these are virtually their whole estate, and therefore concern them to be careful of them: if they suspect a flaw in their title or deed, they repair to the ablest council, submit it to him, and make the worst of their cause, and query about all the danger with him. If he tell them their case is suspicious and hazardous, how much are they perplexed and troubled; they neither eat, drink, nor sleep in peace, till they have a verdict; and willing they are to be at much cost and pains.

APPLICATION.

THESE cares and fears with which you are perplexed in these cases, may give you a little glimpse of those troubles of which the people of God are perplexed about their eternal inheritance; which, perhaps you have been hitherto unacquainted with, till you have fore slighted them, as fancies and whimsies: I say, you are perplexed and troubles, if ever you were engaged by a cunning and crafty adversary in a law-suit for your estate, may give you a little glimpse of spiritual troubles; and indeed it is no more but a comparison of them: for, as the loss of an earthly, though fair inheritance is but a trifle to the loss of God and the soul to eternity; so the loss of these things, are much, very much, beyond yours. Let us consider the cases, and see how they answer to each other.

1. You have evidences for your estate, and by them you know what you have in the world: They also have evidences for their estate in Christ, and glory to come; they hold all in common by the virtue of their intermarriage with Jesus Christ; they come to inherit in that glorious inheritance contained in the covenant of grace. You have their tenure in that scripture, 1 Cor. iii. 22, "yours, for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

falls out with the people of God, who after their believing and sealing time, have doubts and scruples raised in them about their title. Nothing is more common, than for the devil, and their own unbelief, to start controversies, and raise strong objections against their interest in Christ, and the covenant of promises. These are cunning and potent adversaries, and do maintain long debates with the gracious soul, and reason so cunningly and sophistically with it, that it can by no means extricate and satisfy itself; always alleging, that their title is worth nothing, which they, poor souls, are but too apt to suspect.

3. All the while that a suit of law is depending about your title, you have but little comfort or benefit from your estate; you cannot look upon it as your own, nor lay out monies in building or dressing for fear you should lose all at last. Just thus stands the case with doubting Christians; they have little comfort from the most comfortable promises, little benefit from the sweetest duties and ordinances. They put off their own comforts, and say, if we were sure that all this were ours, we would then rejoice in them. But, alas! our title is dubious: Christ is a precious Christ; the promises are comfortable things; but what, if they be none of ours? Ah! how little do the doubting Christian make of his large and rich inheritance?

4. You dare not trust your own judgments in such cases, but stand your case to such as are learned in the laws, and are willing to give the ablest counsel you can to advise you. So are poor doubting Christians; they carry their cases from Christian to Christian, and from minister to minister, with such requests as these: Pray tell me, what do you think of my condition? Deal plainly and faithfully with me; these be my grounds of doubting, and these my grounds of hope. O hide nothing from me! And if they all agree that the case is good, yet they cannot be satisfied till God say so too, and confirm the word of his servants; and therefore they carry the case often before him in such words as those, Psalm cxxxix. 23, 24. "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me."

5. You have little quiet in your spirits, till the case be resolved; your meat and drink doth you little good; you cannot sleep in the night, because these troubled thoughts are ever returning upon you: what if I should be turned out of all at last? So it is with gracious souls; their eyes are held waking in the night, by reason of the troubles of their hearts, Psalm lxxvii. 4. Such fears as these are frequently returning upon their hearts, what if I should be found a self-deceiver at last? What if I but hug a phantasm instead

(poor pensive souls) they make it much worse than if they charge themselves with that which God never charged them with; though this be neither their wisdom, nor their duty; but of miscarrying make them suspect fraud in all they do.

7. Lastly, When your title is cleared, your hearts are not only eased, but overjoyed; though not in that degree as the same kind of joy with which the hearts of Christians overflowed, when the Lord speaks peace to their souls. O sweet morning light, after a tedious night of darkness, can eat their bread with comfort, and drink their wine, but water, with a merry heart, Eccles. ix. 7.

REFLECTIONS.

The careless soul's reflection. 1. O how hath my spirit been tossed and tried, when I have met with troubles and sorrows about my estate! But as for spirit

and those soul-perplexing cases, that Christians speak of, I stand but little of them. I never called my everlasting question, nor broke an hour's sleep upon any such account, my supine and careless soul! little hast thou regarded thy condition, stand in reference to eternity! I have strongly conceited, and thoroughly examined the validity of my title to Christ, and my miseries; nor am I able to tell, if my own conscience should whereupon my claim is grounded.

O my soul! why art thou so unwilling to examine thy condition, stand betwixt God and thee? Art thou afraid to look upon thy condition, lest by finding thine hypocrisy, thou shouldst lose thy peace, or rather, thy security? To what purpose will it be to turn thine eyes against the light of conviction, unless thou couldst find a way to prevent thy condemnation? Thou seest others attentively they wait under the word, for any thing that may lead to their condition. Doubtless thou hast heard, how frequently and seriously they have stated their condition, and opened it to the ministers of Christ. But thou, O my soul! hast not done so, to put, no doubts to be resolved; thou wilt leave all to the day of the great day, and not trouble thyself about it now. The Lord will decide it; but little to thy comfort.

The doubting soul's reflection. 2. I have heard how some have been troubled by litigious adversaries; but I have not. I have been so tost with fears, and doubts,

as I have been about the state of my soul. Lord, what do I do? I have often carried my doubts and scruples to this

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enjoy any good, whilst things are thus with me; all my earthly joyments are dry and uncomfortable things; yea, which is more worse, all my duties and thine ordinances, prove so too, by reason of the troubles of my heart: I am no ornament to my profession, nay, I am a discouragement and stumbling-block to others. "will hearken and hear what God the Lord will speak:" O that it might be peace! If thou do not speak it, none can; and when I must do so, keep thy servant from returning again to folly, lest I receive fresh work for an accusing conscience, and give new matter to the adversary of my soul.

3. But thou, my soul, enjoyest a double mercy from *The ass* thy bountiful God, who hath not only given thee a *Christia* sound title, but also the clear evidence and knowledge *reflection* thereof. I am gathering, and daily feeding upon the full-ripe fruits of assurance, which grow upon the top bough of faith; whilst many of my poor brethren drink their own tears, have their teeth broken with gravel stones. Lord, thou hast set my soul upon her high-places; but let me not exalt myself, because thou hast exalted me, nor grow wanton, because I walk at liberty; for the abuse of such precious liberty, thou clap my old chains upon me, and shut up my soul again in prison.

THE POEM.

MEN can't be quiet till they be assur'd
That their estate is good, and well secur'd.
To able counsel they their deeds submit,
Intreating them with care t' examine it:
Fearing some clause an enemy may wrest,
Or find a flaw; whereby he may divest
Them and their children. O who can but see
How wise men in their generation be!
But do they equal cares and fears express
About their everlasting happiness?
In spiritual things 'twould grieve one's heart to see
What careless fools these careful men can be.
They act like men of common sense bereaven;
Secure their lands, and they'll trust God for heaven.
How many cases have you to submit
To lawyers' judgments? Ministers may sit
From week to week, and yet not see the face
Of one that brings a soul-concerning case.
Yea, which is worse, how seldom do you cry

Compar'd with yours ? Or is eternity
 A shorter term than yours, that you should ply
 The one so close, and totally neglect
 The other, as not worth your least respect.
 Perhaps the devil, whose plot from you's conceal'd
 Persuades your title's good, and firmly seal'd
 By God's own Spirit ; though you never found
 One act of saving grace to lay a ground
 For that persuasion. Soul, he hath thee fast,
 Tho' he'll not let thee know it till the last.
 Lord, waken sinners, make them understand,
 'Twixt thee and them, how rawly matters stand :
 Give them no quiet rest until they see
 Their souls secur'd better than lands can be.

Occasional MEDITATIONS upon Birds, Beasts
 Flowers, Rivers, and other Objects.

MEDITATIONS ON BIRDS.

MEDITATION I.

Upon the singing of a Nightingale.

WHO that hears such various, ravishing, and exquisite
 would imagine the bird that makes it, to be of so snuggly
 tempting a body and feather ? Her charming voice e'er
 only mine attentive ear, but my feet also to make a near
 to that shady bush in which that excellent musician sat
 the nearer I came, the sweeter the melody still seemed
 when I had descried the bird herself, and found her
 bigger, and no better feathered than a sparrow, it gave me
 the occasion of this following application.

This bird seems to me the lively emblem of the formalist
 (1.) In that she is more in sound than substance, a loud
 voice, but a little despicable body ; and it recalled to my
 story of Plutarch, who hearing a nightingale, desired to
 be fed upon, not questioning but she would please
 as well as the ear : but when the nightingale was brought
 he saw what a poor little creature it was, Truly, said he,

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charm most sweetly, and set her spirits all on work, when she perceives she hath engaged attention; so doth the hypocrite, who lives and feeds upon the applause and commendation of his admirers, cares little for any of those duties which bring in no return of praise from men: he is little pleased with a silent melody and private pleasure betwixt God and his own soul.

Scire tuum nihil est nisi te scire hoc sciat alter.

Alas! his knowledge is not worth a pin,
If he proclaims not what he hath within.

He is more for the theatre than the closet; and of such Christ says, "Verily they have their reward." (3.) Naturalists observe the nightingale to be an ambitious bird that cannot endure to be outvied by any: she will rather chuse to die than be excelled; a notable instance whereof we have in the following pleasant poem, translated out of Starda, concerning the nightingale and a lutanist.

Now the declining sun did downward bend
From higher heavens, and from his looks did send
A milder flame, when near to Tyber's flow,
A lutanist allay'd his careful woe
With sounding charms; and in a greeny seat
Of shady oak, took shelter from the heat;
A nightingale o'erheard him, that did use
To sojourn in the neighbour groves, the muse
That fill'd the place, the syren of the wood
(Poor harmless syren!) stealing near, she stood
Close lurking in the leaves attentively
Recording that unwonted melody:
She conn'd it to herself; and ev'ry strain
His fingers play'd her throat return'd again.
The lutanist perceiv'd an answer sent
From th' imitating bird, and was content
To shew her play more fully: then in haste
He tries his lute, and giving her a taste
Of the ensuing quarrel, nimbly beats
On all his strings: as nimbly she repeats;
And wildly raging o'er a thousand keys,
Sounds a shrill warning of her after-lays:
With rolling hand the lutanist then plies
The trembling threads, sometimes in scornful wise
He brushes down the strings, and strikes them all

Sometimes as one unexpert, and in doubt,
How she might weild her voice, she draweth out
Her tone at large, and doth at first prepare
A solemn strain, nor wear'd with winding air,
But with an equal pitch, and constant throat,
Makes clear the passage for her gliding note;
Then cross division diversly she plays,
And loudly chanting out her quickest lays,
Poises the sound, and, with a quivering voice,
Falls back again. He wondering how so choice,
So various harmony could issue out
From such a little throat, doth go about
Some harder lessons, and with wond'rous art,
Changing the strings, doth up the treble dart,
And downward smite the base, with painful stroke
He beats; and as the trumpet doth provoke
Sluggards to fight, ev'n so his wanton skill
With mingled discord joins the hoarse and shrill.
The bird this also tunes: and whilst she cuts
Sharp notes with melting voice, and mingled puts
Measures of middle sound, then suddenly
She thunders deep, and jugs it inwardly
With gentle murmur, clear and dull she sings
By course, as when the martial warning rings.
Believ't the minstrel blusht, with angry mood:
Inflam'd (quoth he) thou chantress of the wood,
Either from thee I'll bear the prize away,
Or vanquish'd break my lute without delay.
Inimitable accents then he strains,
His hands flies on the strings; in one he chains
Far different numbers, chasing here and there,
And all the strings he labours every where?
Both flat and sharp he strikes, and stately grows
To prouder strains, and backward as he goes
Doubly divides, and closing up his lays
Like a full choir, a shiv'ring consort plays:
Then pausing, stood in expectation
Of his co-rival, nor durst answer on.
But she, when practice long her throat had whet,
Enduring not to yield, at once doth set
Her spirits all to work, and all in vain:

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She faints, she dies, falls on his instrument
That conquer'd her! a fitting monument,
How far ev'n little souls are driven on,
Struck with a virtuous emulation.

And even as far are hypocrites driven on by their ambitious
pride, which is the spur that provokes them in their religious d

MEDITATION II.

Upon the Sight of many small Birds chirping about a dead I

HEARING a whole choir of birds chirping and twinkling
ther, it engaged *my* curiosity a little to enquire into the occasi
that convocation, which mine eye quickly informed me of; for
ceived a dead hawk in the bush, about which they made such a
seeming to triumph at the death of their enemy; and I coul
blame them to sing his knell, who, like a Cannibal, was wont t
upon their living bodies, tearing them limb from limb, and se
them with his frightful appearance. This bird, which living w
formidable, being dead, the poorest wren or titmouse fears n
chirp, or hop over. This brings to my thoughts the base and
ble ends of the greatest tyrants, and greedy ingrossers of the v
of whom, (whilst living) men were more afraid, than birds of a
but dead, became objects of contempt and scorn. The death o
tyrants is both inglorious and unlamented: "When the w
"perish, there is shouting," Prov. xi. 10. Which was exem
to the life, at the death of Nero, of whom the poet thus sings

*Cum mors crudelem rapuisset sæva Neronem,
Credibile est multos Romam agitasse jocos.*

When cruel Nero dy'd th' historian tells,
How Rome did mourn with bonfires, plays, and bells.

Remarkable for contempt and shame have the ends of many b
tyrants been. So Pompey the Great, of whom Claudian the poet

*Nudus pascit aves, jacetne qui possidet orbem
Exiguæ telluris inops*——

Birds eat his flesh. Lo, now he cannot have
Who rul'd the world, a space to make a grave.

world, that I may live, when I am dead, in the affections and leave an honourable testimony in the consciences that I may oppress none, do good to all, and say when I Ambrose did,—I am neither ashamed to live, nor afraid

MEDITATION III.

Upon the Sight of a Blackbird taking Sanctuary in a Bush, pursuing Hawk.

WHEN I saw how hardly the poor bird was put to it self from her enemy, who hovered just over the bush in which she was fluttering and squeaking, I could not but hasten to her (pity and succour being a due debt to the distressed;) what I had done, the bird would not depart from the bush, if her enemy were gone; this act of kindness was abundantly the subject of this meditation, with which I returned to my walk: methought this bird, was once distressed, pursued, yea, seized by her enemy; had certainly made a prey of it, had not Jesus Christ been to it in that hour of danger. How readily did I find him to take my poor soul into his protection? Then did he make me a sweet promise to my experience, Those that come unto me, I will not cast out. It called to mind that pretty and pious parable of the philosopher, who walking in the fields, a bird, pursued by a hawk, flew into his bosom; he took her out, and said, 'I will neither wrong thee, nor expose thee to thine enemy; for thou camest to me for refuge.' So tender, and more merciful is the Lord Jesus to distressed souls that come unto him than the philosopher! Jesus! how should I love and praise thee, glorify and ascribe glory to thee for that great salvation thou hast wrought for me? If thou hadst fallen into the claws of her enemy, she had been torn to pieces, and devoured, but then a few minutes had disappeared, and ended all her pain and misery: but had my soul fallen into the hands of Satan, there had been no end of its misery.

Would not this scared bird be flushed out of the bush if I had chased away her enemy? And wilt thou, O my soul, ever be enticed or scared from Christ thy refuge? O my soul, ever engage thee to keep close to Christ, and make me a part of him. Ezra, "And now, O Lord, since thou hast given me this deliverance as this, should I again break thy commandments?"

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shining and various coloured feathers (like scarlet, richly laid gold and silver lace) are those? How plainly clad, in a home-country russet are these? *Fine feathers* (saith our proverb) *proud birds*; and yet the feathers of the sparrow are as useful and beneficial, both for warmth and flight, though not so gay and ornamental, as the others; and if both were stript out of their feathers the sparrow would prove the better bird of the two: by which it is evident that the greatest worth doth not always lie under the finest clothes. And besides, God can make mean and homely garments as useful and beneficial to poor and despised Christians, as the ruffling and shining garments of wanton gallants are to them: and when God strips men out of all external excellencies, these will be found to excel their glittering neighbours in true worth and excellency.

Little would a man think such rich treasures of grace, wisdom, and humility, lay under some russet coats.

Sape sub attrita latitat sapientia veste.

Under poor garments more true worth may be
Than under silks that whistle, who but he.

Whilst, on the other side, "the heart of the wicked (as Solomon hath observed) is little worth," how much soever his clothes are worth. Alas! it falls out too frequently among us, as it doth among men in the Indies, who walk over the rich veins of gold and silver which lie hid under a ragged and barren surface, and know it not. For my own part, I desire not to value any man by what is external and worldly, but by that true internal excellency of grace which makes the face to shine in the eyes of God and good men. I would contemn a vile person, though never so glorious in the eyes of the world; but honour such as fear the Lord, how sordid and despicable soever to appearance.



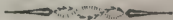
MEDIT. V.

Upon the sight of a Robin-red-breast picking up a Worm from a mole-hill, then rising.

OBSERVING the mole working industriously beneath, and the bird watching so intently above, I made a stand to observe the issue. When in a little time the bird descends and seizes upon a Worm.

my pride, like the aspiring bird, watches for it above ; necessity, like the subterranean mole, digging for it beneath. What a sad dilemma art thou brought to ? If thou goest into the caverns of this earth, there thou art a prey to thy enemy that hunts thee ; and if thou aspire, or but creep upward, pride waits to ensnare thee. Distressed soul ! whither wilt thou ascend thou mayest, not by vain elation, but by heavenly contemplation, beside which there is no way for thy preservation. " of life is above to the wise," &c.

Again, I could not but observe the accidental benefit the harmless bird obtained by the labour of the mole, who was unintentionally for herself, unburroughed and ferreted out for the bird, who, possibly, was hungry enough, and could not have been relieved for this time, but by the mole, the fruit of whose labour she now feeds upon. Even thus the Lord oft-times fulfils his word to his people : " The wealth of the wicked is laid in ruins." " just." And again, " The earth shall help the poor." This was fully exemplified in David, to whom Nabal, that cruel and unfeeling worm, speaks all in possessives : " Shall I take my bread and give it to one I know not whom ?" And yet David reaped the fruit of all the pains and toils of Nabal at last. Let it never enter into idleness, that God sometimes gives his people the fruit of their sweat, but if providence reduce me to necessity, and disengage me from helping myself, I doubt not then, but it will provide instead for me. The bird was an hungry, and could not dig.



MEDIT. VI.

Upon the shooting of two Finches fighting in the

HOW soon hath death ended the quarrel betwixt the two combatants ! had they agreed better, they might have lived longer ; it was their own contention that gave both the cause and the provocation of their death ; and though living no longer, yet, being dead, they can lie quietly together in my hand.

Foolish birds, was it not enough that birds of prey wait to devour them, but they must peck and scratch one another ? I have seen the birds of paradise (saints I mean) tearing and devouring each other, like so many birds of prey, and by their uncharitable tests giving the occasion of their common ruin ; yea, and

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together, as if they had lovingly embraced each other, who fell together by a duel: *Quanta amicitia se invicem amplectuntur mutua et implacabili inimicitia perierunt!*

*Embracing one another, now they lie,
Who by each other's bloody hands did die.*

Or, as he said, who observed how quietly and peaceably the and bones, even of enemies, did lie together in the grave; *Non tibi vivi pace conjuncti essetis*; you did not live together so peaceably conscience of Christ's command will not, yet the consideration of common safety should powerfully persuade to unity and amity

MEDIT. VII.

Upon the singing of a blind finch by night.

A DEAR friend, who was a great observer of the works of in nature, told me, that being entertained with a sight of rarities at a friend's house in London; among other things his friend shewed him a *finch*, whose eyes being put out, would frequently sing even at midnight. This bird, in my opinion, is the lively emblem of such careless and unconcerned persons as the prophet describes Amos vi. 4, 5, 6. who chant to the viol, when a dismal night of trouble and affliction hath overshadowed the church. You will have thought it strange to have heard this bird sing in the night when all others are in a deep silence except the owl, an unclean bird and the nightingale, which before we made the emblem of the hypocrite. And as strange it is, that any, except the profane and hypocritical, should so unseasonably express their mirth and joy, that any of Sion's children should live in pleasure, whilst she lies in tears. The people of God, in Psalm cxxxvii. tell us in postures of sorrow they sat; even like birds, with their heads under their wings, during the night of their captivity. "How shall we sing the Lord's songs in a strange land?" It is like enough, such a singing and chant in the night of the church's trouble, have well feared their nests in the days of her prosperity; however, let them know that God will turn their unseasonable mirth into a sadder note: those that now sit sad and silent shall shortly sing for joy of him when "the winter is past, the rain over and gone, the flowers appear again upon the earth, and the time of the singing of birds is come."

reason and counsel, but only by natural instinct, yet it could hardly have contrived a neater building of such materials. How neatly hath the *thrush* ceiled or plastered his nest, by an admirable art and industry! how warmly hath the *finch* lined his nest, And both well fenced against the injury of the weather.

How comfortably hath nature provided convenient habitation for these weak and tender young ones, who have warm lodgings, a variety of provisions hourly brought them, without the pains? This trifling object suggests to my thoughts a more serious contemplation, even the wonderful and unbecoming abasement of Jesus Christ, who for my sake voluntarily subjected himself to a more destitute and neglected state, than that of the birds of the air: For Matth. viii. 20. he saith, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."

"The craggy rock to foxes holes afford,

"The pleasant woods a resting-place to birds

"For Christ no fixed habitation's found,

"But what was borrow'd, or the naked ground."

O melting consideration! that the glorious Son of God, 14. "The Lord of glory," James ii. 1. "The brightness of the Father's glory," Heb. i. 3. "Who was rich," 2 Cor. viii. 9. "thought it not robbery to be equal with God," Phil. ii. 6. from *all eternity* was infinitely and ineffably "delighting himself in the bosom of his Father," Prov. viii. 30. that he, I say, manifested himself in flesh, 2 Tim. iii. 16. yea, "in the likeness of sinful flesh," Rom. viii. 3. that is, in flesh that had the effects of sin upon it, as hunger, thirst, pain, weariness, and not only so, but to chuse such a state of outward misery and poverty, never being possessed of a house in this world; but being a stranger in other men's houses, and stooping in this lower condition than the very birds of the air, and all the creatures. O let it work both admiration and thankfulness in my heart, that my body is better accommodated than the body of my Lord Jesus! by how much the viler thou madest thyself for me, so much the dearer shalt thou be to me."†

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with their cheerful and delightful warblings! They set their li-
spirits all a-work betimes, whilst my nobler spirits are bound v
the bonds of soft and downy slumbers. For shame, my soul!
fer not that publican sleep to seize so much of thy time, yea,
best and freshest time! reprove and chide thy sluggish body,
good bishop once did, when, upon the same occasion, he said, *S*
reaverunt passeret, et stertnunt pontifices.

*The early chirping sparrows may reprove
Such lazy bishops as their beds do love.*

Of many sluggards it may be said, as Tully said of Verres,
deputy of Sicily, *Quod nunquam solem nec orientem, nec occiden-*
tiderat: that he never saw the sun rising, being in bed after;
setting, being in bed before.

It is pity that Christians of all men, should suffer sleep to cut s
large thongs out of so narrow a hide as their time on earth is.
alas! it is not so much early rising, as a wise improving those fresh
free hours with God that will enrich the soul; else, as our prov
saith, *A man may be early up, and never the nearer*; yea, far bett
is to be found in bed sleeping, than to be up doing nothing, or t
which is worse than nothing. O my soul! learn to prepossess thy
every morning with the thoughts of God, and suffer not those fir
and sweet operations of thy mind to be prostituted to earthly thin
for that is experimentally true, which * one, in this case hath pe
nently observed, that if the world get the start of religion in
morning, it will be hard for religion to overtake it all the day af

MEDIT. X.

Upon the haltering of Birds with a grain of Hair.

OBSERVING, in a snowy season, how the poor hungry b
were haltered and drawn in by a grain of hair cunningly cast o
their heads, whilst, poor creatures, they were busily feeding,
suspected no danger; and even whilst their companions were dra
away from them, one after another, all the interruption it gave
rest was only for a minute or two, whilst they stood peeping into
hole through which their companions were drawn, and then fel
their meat again as busily as before; I could not chuse but
‘ Even thus surprizingly doth death steal upon the children of

“ Death steps as swift, and yet no noise it makes ;
 “ Its hand unseen, but yet most surely takes *.”

And even as the surviving birds for a little time seem affrighted, peeping after their companions, and then as to their meat again ; just so it fares with the careless, in this world, who see others daily dropping into eternity round about them, and for the present are a little startled, and will look in after their neighbours, and then fall as busily to their earthly pursuits and pleasures again, as ever, till their own turn comes.

I know, my God, that I must die as well as others ; but I do not die as others do, let me see death before I feel it, and before it kill me ; let it not come as an enemy upon me, but rather let me meet it as a friend, half way. Die I must, but I will lay up that good treasure before I go, Matt. vi. 19. Carry a good conscience when I go, 2 Tim. iv. 6, 7. and leave a good example when I am gone, and then let death come.



MEDITATIONS upon BEASTS.

MEDIT. I.

Upon the clogging of a straying beast.

HAD this bullock contented himself, and remained quiet within his own bounds, his owner had never put such an heavy yoke upon his neck ; but I see the prudent husbandman chuses rather to clog him with this clog, than lose him for want of one. This clog is to him, that is affliction and trouble to me ; had I not been so close with God in liberty and prosperity, he would never have clogged me with adversity ; yea, and happy were it that I might stray from God no more, who hath thus clogged me with preventive afflictions. If, with David I might say, “ I was afflicted I went astray, but now I have kept thy word, Ps. cxix. 67. O my soul ! it is better for thee to have thy part with poverty, thy ambition with reproach, thy carnal desires with constant disappointments, than to be at liberty without God and duty.

It is true, I am sometimes as weary of these troubles as a beast is of the clog he draws after him, and after which

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the removal of it; at last God removed it, but instead thereof was sorely exercised with the motions and temptations of lust, when he perceived, he as earnestly desired his head-ach again to prevent a greater evil. Lord! if my corruptions may be prevented by my afflictions, I refuse not to be clogged with them; but my soul rather desires thou wouldest hasten the time when I shall be for ever freed from them both.



MEDIT. II.

Upon the love of a Dog to his Master.

HOW many a weary step, through mire and dirt, hath this dog followed my horse's heels to day, and all this for a very small reward? for all he gets by it at night, is but bones and blows, yet will he not leave my company, but is content upon such hard terms to travel with me from day to day.

O my soul! what conviction and shame may this leave upon thee who art oftentimes even weary of following thy master, Christ, whose rewards and encouragements of obedience are so incomparably sweet and sure! I cannot beat back this dog from following me, but even an inconsiderable trouble is enough to discourage me in the way of duty. Ready I am to resolve as that scribe did, Matth. viii. "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest;" but yet doth my heart falter, when I must encounter with the difficulties of the way? Oh! let me make a whole heart-choice of Christ for my portion and happiness! and then I shall never leave him, nor turn back from following him, though the present difficulties were much more, and the present encouragements much less.



MEDIT. III.

Upon the fighting of two Rams.

TAKING notice how furiously these sheep, which by nature are mild and gentle, did yet, like bulls, push each other, taking advantage by going back to meet with a greater rage and fierceness. I saw in this a plain emblem of the unchristian contentions and animosities which fall out amongst them that call themselves the people of God, who are in scripture also stiled sheep, for their meekness and innocency: and yet, through the remaining cor-

Shall Christians one another wound and push,
Like furious bulls, when they together rush?

The fighting of these sheep doth in two respects note with the sinful practices of contending Christians, 1. That they engage with their heads one against another : and w but those head-notions, or *opposition of sciences* falsely so have made so many broils and uproars in the Christian what clashings have these heady opinions caused in the First heads, and then hearts have clashed. Christians h tinguished betwixt *adversarius litis, et personæ* ; an a the *opinion*, and to the *person* ; but dipt their tongues vinegar and gall, shamefully aspersing and reproaching because their understandings were not cast into one mou heads all of a bigness. But, 2. That which country- from the fighting of sheep, *That it presages foul and stor* is much more certainly consequent upon the fighting of C Do these clash and push? Surely *it is an infullible p an ensuing storm*, Mal. iv. 6.

MEDIT. IV.

Upon the Catching of an Horse in a fat Pasture

WHEN this horse was kept in poor short leas, w much scope, but little grass, how gentle and tractable v He would not only stand quiet to be taken, but come to own accord, and follow me up and down the field for a cr or handful of oats ; but since I turned him into this fat comes no more to me, nor will suffer me to come ne throws up his heels wantonly against me, and flies from were rather his enemy than a benefactor. In this I bel riage of my own heart towards God, who the more he h me, the seldomer doth he hear from me ; in a low and a how tractable is my heart to duty ? Then it comes to God voluntarily. But in an exalted condition, how wil heart run from God and duty ? With this ungrateful r faulted his own people, Jer. iii. 31. teachable and trac wilderness, but when fatted in that rich pasture of Can. “ we are lords, we will come no more to thee.” How God’s former benefits forgotten ? And now often is tha

THE HEAVENLY USE OF EARTHLY THINGS.

But that is a bad tenant, that will maintain a suit at law against landlord with his own rent ; and a bad heart, that will fight against God with his own mercies. I wish it may be with my heart, as reported to be with the waters in the kingdom of Congo, that never so sweet to the taste, as when the tide is at the highest.

MEDIT. V.

Upon the hunting of a Deer.

THE full-mouthed cry of these dogs, which from the morning have hunted this poor tired deer, which is now no longer able to stand before them, but is compassed round with them, who threaten for, and will presently suck her blood, brings to my thoughts the condition and state of Jesus Christ, in the days of his flesh, who was thus hunted from place to place by blood-thirsty enemies. Upon this very account, the 22d Psalm, which treats of his death, is inscribed with the title of *Ajieleth Shuhar*, which signifies the *hind of the morning*, and fully imports the same notion which this occasion presented with ; for look, as the *hind* or *deer*, which is intended to be run down that day, is roused by the dogs early in the morning, so was Christ in the very morning of his infancy, by bloody Herod, and that cruel pack confederated with him. Thus was he chased from place to place till that was fulfilled which was prophetically written of him in v. 16. of the forecited Psalm : “ For dogs have compassed me about ; the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me ; they pierced my hands and my feet.”

And canst thou expect, O my soul ! to fare better than he did, to escape the rage of bloody men ? Surely, if the Spirit of Christ dwell in thee, if his holiness have favoured thee, these dogs will wind about thee, and give thee chase too : they go upon the scent of holiness still, and would hunt to destruction every one, in whom there is *aliquid Christi*. Any thing of Christ, if the gracious providence of the Lord did not sometimes rate them off : for it is no less a pleasure which some wicked ones take in hunting the people of God, than what * Claudian the poet observes men use to take in hunting wild beasts.

“ Whilst every huntsman in the night do sleep,

“ Their fancies in the woods still hunting keep.”

Lord ! should I with the hypocrite decline the profession and practice of holiness, to escape the rage of persecuting enemies, at what time their cease, my own conscience would begin to hunt me like a hare.

before pursuing enemies, than be dogged from day to guilty conscience.

MEDITATIONS upon TREES.

MEDIT. I.

Upon the fall of Blossoms, nipt by a frosty morn

BEHOLDING in an early spring, fruit-trees embossed with beautiful blossoms of various colours, which breathed forth sweet odours into the circumambient air, and adorned the landscape which they grew, like so many rich jewels, or glittering gems; and further observing, how these perfumed blossoms drooping with the frost, and discoloured all the ground, as if snow had fallen; I said within myself, these sweet and early blossoms are not unlike my sweet and early affections to the Lord, of my first acquaintance with him. O what fervent longings and desires, and heavenly delights beautified my soul in those days, and the odoriferous scent of the sweetest blossoms, the morning breeze, the most fragrant flowers, hath not half that sweetness with me, my first affections were enriched. O! happy time, thou art gone! spring! My soul hath it still in remembrance, and is hungry for thee; for these also were but blossoms which now are nipt, and that first flourish is gone; my heart is like the winter's ear, which thy face, Lord, is to me like a winter sun. "Awake, O Lord, and come, south wind, blow upon my garden, that the odour thereof may flow out, then let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruit!"

MEDIT. II.

Upon the knitting, or setting of Fruit.

I HAVE often observed, that when the blossoms of a tree are knit, though the flourish thereof be gone, and nothing but the rudiment of the expected fruit be left; yet then the fruit is better secured from the danger of frosts and winds, than when it remained in the flower or blossom; for now it hath past its *critical periods*, in which so many trees miscarry and lose their fruit. And methought this *natural observation* fairly led me to a *spiritual application*. 'That good motions, and holy purposes,

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Spirit been thus knit and fixed in thee. Oh, how have mine affections blown and budded under the warm beams of the gospel! A chill blast from the cares, troubles and delights of the world without, and the vanity and deadness of the heart within, have blasted my goodness hath been but as a morning-dew, or early cloud, vanisheth away. And even of divine ordinances, I may say as is said of human ordinances, "They have perished in the use." A blossom is but *fructus imperfectus, et ordinabilis*, an imperfect thing in itself, and something in order to fruit; a good motion to a holy purpose is but *opus imperfectum, et ordinabile*, an imperfect work, in order to a complete work of the Spirit; when that *primus impetus*, those first motions were strong upon my heart, had I pursued them in the force and vigour of them, how many difficulties might I have overcome? Revive thy work, O Lord, and give me my soul a miscarrying womb, or dry breasts.

MEDIT. III.

Upon the sight of a fair spreading Oak.

WHAT a lofty flourishing tree is here? It seems rather to be a little wood, than a single tree, every limb thereof having the divisions and branches of a tree in it; and yet as great as it is, it is but once but a little slip, which one might pull up with two fingers; that vast body was contained virtually and potentially in a small acorn. Well then, I will never despise the day of small things, nor despair of arriving to an eminency of grace, though at present it be but a bruised reed, and the things that are in me be ready to die. As the things in nature, so the things of the Spirit, grow up to their fullness and perfection by slow and insensible degrees. The famous and heroical acts of the most renowned believers were such as themselves could not once perform, or it may be think they ever should. O that things, both in nature and grace, come from small and contemptible beginnings.

MEDIT. IV.

*Upon the sight of many sticks lodged in the branches of a
Fruit-tree.*

HOW is this tree battered with stones, and loaded with sticks that have been thrown at it, whilst those that grow about it, are

Even thus it fares in both respects with the best of more holy, the more envied and persecuted; every one by will have a sling at them. Methinks I see how devils and men walk round about the people of God, whom he hath in his arms of power, like so many boys about an orchard, ready to have a sling at them. But God turns all the stone of reproach into precious stones to his people; they bear the being thus battered. And in them is that ancient * verified.

“ The palms and crowns of virtue thus increase ;

“ Thus persecution’s turned into peace.”

Let me be but fruitful to God in holiness, and ever about the work of the Lord, and then whilst devils and men are against me, either by hand or tongue persecutions, I will sing and praise all with the divine poet :

“ What open force, or hidden charm,

“ Can blast my fruit, or bring me harm,

“ Whilst the inclosure is thine arm.” *Herb. Poem*

MEDIT. V.

Upon the gathering of choice Fruit from a scrubbed unpromising tree.

WOULD any man think to find such rare delicious fruit from such an unworthy tree to appearance as this is? I should not have expected the most delicious fruit from the most handsome and flourishing trees; but I see I must neither judge the worth of things by their external form and appearance. This is no time I have been deceived in judging by that rule; under unpromising outsides I have found nothing of worth; and under deformed despicable bodies I have found precious and richly furnished souls. The sap and juice of this scrubbed tree is concocted into excellent fruits, whilst the juice and sap of some other but barren trees, serves only to keep them from rotting, without the use that many souls (which dwell in beautiful bodies) they have (as one saith) *animam pro sale*; their souls are sold to their bodies. Or thus,

The only use to which their souls do serve,

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beautiful, or not, yet let my soul be so: for as the esteem of a tree, so the esteem and true honour of every man, rises rather from his fruitfulness and usefulness, than from his shape and form.

MEDIT. VI.

Upon an excellent, but irregular Tree.

SEEING a tree grow somewhat irregular, in a very neat orchard, I told the owner it was pity that tree should stand there; and if it were mine I would root it up, and thereby reduce the orchard to an exact uniformity. It was replied to this purpose, 'Thou art rather regarded the fruit than the form;' and that this slight inconveniency was abundantly preponderated by a more considerable advantage. This tree, *said he*, which you would root up, yielded me more fruit than many of those trees which have nothing else to commend them but their regular situation. I could not yield to the reason of this answer; and could wish it had been spoken so loud, that all our uniformity-men had heard it, who will stick to root up many hundred of the best bearers in the orchard, because they stand not in an exact order with other trees conformable, but less beneficial trees, who *perdunt substantiam propter accidentia*, destroy the fruit to preserve the form.

Not much unlike, such foolish men are those,
That strive for shadows, and the substance lose.

MEDITATIONS upon a GARDEN.

MEDIT. I.

Upon the new-modelling of a Garden.

A Gentlewoman who had lately seen a neat and curious garden, returns to her own with a greater dislike of it than ever; resolves to new-model the whole plat, and reduce it to a better form. The garden is now become so curious and neat, that not a weed or stone is suffered in it, but all must lie in exquisite order; and whatever improvement she had observed in her neighbour's, she is now restless till she sees it in her own.

Happy were it, thought I, if in an holy emulation every one would thus endeavour to rectify the disorders of their own conversation.

self-conviction and shame; but few are so happy to be provoked to self-reformation by such rare patterns. I see it is much easier to pull up many weeds out of a garden, than one corruption out of a heart; and to procure an hundred flowers to adorn a lady, than one grace to beautify the soul. It is more natural to covet to be envied, than to imitate the spiritual excellencies of others.

MEDIT. II.

Upon the pulling up of a Leek.

A WHITE head and a green tail! How well doth this resemble an old wanton lover, whose green youthful lusts are not extirpated, though his white head declares that nature is almost spent. Gray hairs should be always matched with grave deportments; and the sins of youth should rather be the griefs than pleasures of old age. It is sad when the sins of the soul, like the diseases of the body, grow stronger, as nature grows weaker: and it recalls to my mind an ancient observation of * Menander:

“It is the worst of evils, to behold

“Strong youthful lusts to rage in one that’s old.”

It is a thousand pities, that those who have one foot in heaven, should live as if the other were in hell! that their lusts should be so lively, when their bodies are three parts dead! Such sinfulness brings upon them more contempt and shame, than their hoar and reverend faces can procure them honour.

“Gray hairs, and aged wrinkles, did of old

“Procure more reverence than bags of gold†.”

But alas! how little respect or reverence can the hoariness obtain amongst wise men, except it be found in the way of holiness? I think the lowest esteem is too much for an old man; and the devil; and the highest honour little enough for an old faithful servant of Christ.

MEDIT. III.

Upon a heedless tread in a curious Garden.

P

I was very careful to shun these flowers, which indeed had no other worth to commend them, but their exquisite colour; and unadvisedly trod upon and spoiled an excellent choice herb, which, though it grew obscurely, yet had rare physical virtues in it.

When I was made sensible of the involuntary trespass I had committed, I thought I could scarcely make the owner a better compensation, than by telling him, that herein (though against my will) I did but tread in the footsteps of the greatest part of the world who are very careful (as I was) to keep their due distance from splendour, though worthless gallants, mean while trampling upon, and crushing under foot the obscure, but most precious servants of God in the world. As little do they heed these most excellent persons, as I did this precious herb.

Summa ingenia in occulto sæpe latent, saith Plautus.

Rare wits, and herbs, sometimes do skulk and shrink
In such blind holes, as one would little think.

For my own part, I desire to tread upon no man with the foot of contempt and pride, much less upon any good man; and that I may not, it concerns me to look before I step; I mean, to consider before I censure: had I done so by this rare herb, I had never hurt it.



MEDIT. IV.

Upon a withered posy taken up in the way.

FINDING in my walk, a posy of once sweet and fragrant, now dry and withered flowers, which I suppose to be thrown away by one that had formerly worn it: thus, said I, doth the unfaithful world use its friends, when providence hath blasted and withered them; whilst they are rich and honourable, they will put them in their bosoms, as the owner of this posy did, whilst it was fresh and fragrant, and as easily throw them away as useless and worthless things, when thus they come to be withered. Such usage as this Petronius long since complained of.

“Are they in honour? Then we smile like friends;

“And with their fortunes all our friendship ends.”

But this loose and deceitful friend stinks so odiously in the nostrils of nature, that a † *heathen poet* severely taxes and condemns it as most unworthy of a man.

“ 'Tis base to change with fortune, and deny
 “ A faithful friend, because in poverty.”

And is this indeed the friendship of the world? Doth
 them whom once it honoured? Then, Lord! let me ne
 friendship. O let me esteem the smiles and honours o
 and thy love and favour more! thy love is indeed un
 being pure, free, and built upon nothing that is mutable;
 servest thy friends as the world doth its darlings.

MEDIT. V.

Upon the sudden withering of a Rose.

BEING with my friend in a garden, we gathered
 rose; he handled his tenderly, smelled to it but seldom, a
 ly; I always kept it to my nose, or squeezed it in my han
 in a very short time it lost both colour and sweetness,
 remained as sweet and fragrant as if it had been growi
 own root. These roses, said I, are the true emblems of
 sweetest creature-enjoyments in the world, which being
 and cautiously used and enjoyed, may for a long time
 ness to the possessor of them; but if once the affecti
 greedily upon them, and squeeze them too hard, they qu
 in our hands, and we lose the comfort of them, and
 through the soul's surfeiting upon them, or the Lord
 and just removal of them, because of the excess of our
 them; earthly comforts, like pictures, shew best at a d
 It was therefore a good saying of * Homer, Ἀνδρὶ ξεινοδ

“ I like him not, who at the rate
 “ Of all his might doth love or hate.”

It is a point of excellent wisdom to keep the golden l
 deration upon all the affections we exercise upon earthly
 never to slip those reins, unless when they move tow
 whose love there is no danger of excess.

MEDIT. VI.

Upon the sudden withering of beautiful Flow

HOW fresh and sweet did these flowers lately appea

round about them, but now are withered and shrivelled up, and have neither any desirable beauty or savour in them.

So vain a thing is the admired beauty of creatures, which so captivates the hearts, and exercises a pleasing tyranny over the affections of vain man, yet it is as suddenly blasted as the beauty of a flower.

“How frail is beauty in how short a time

“It fades, like roses, which have past their prime.

“So wrinkled age the fairest face will plow,

“And cast deep furrows on the smoothest brow.

“Then where’s that lovely tempting face? Alas!

“Yourselves would blush to view it in a glass.”

If then thou delightest in beauty, O my soul! chuse that which is lasting. There is a beauty which never fades, even the beauty of holiness upon the inner man; this abides fresh and orient for ever, and sparkles gloriously, when thy face (the seat of natural beauty) is become an abhorrent and loathsome spectacle. Holiness enameled and sprinkles over the face of the soul with a beauty, upon which Christ himself is enamoured; even imperfect holiness on earth is like a rose that breathes sweetly in the bud; in heaven it will be full-blown and abide in its prime to all eternity.



MEDIT. VII.

Upon the tenderness of some choice Flowers.

HOW much care is necessary to preserve the life of some flowers; they must be boxed up in the winter, others must be covered with glasses in their springing up, the finest and richest mould must be sifted about the roots, and assiduously watered, and all this labour enough, and sometimes too little to preserve them; whilst other common and worthless flowers grow without any help of ours: Yet we have no less to do to rid our gardens of them, than we have to make the former grow there.

Thus stands the case with our hearts, in reference to the motions of grace and sin. Holy thoughts of God must be assiduously watered by prayer, earthed up by meditation, and defended by watchfulness; and yet all this is sometimes too little to preserve them alive in our souls. Alas! the heart is a soil that agrees not with them, the

are tender things, and a small matter will nip and kill
this purpose is the complaint of the divine Poet:

Who would have thought a joy
so coy
To be offended so,
and go
So suddenly away?
Hereafter I had need
take heed.
Joys among other things
have wings,
And watch their opportunities of flight,
Converting in a moment, day to night. He

But vain thoughts, and unholy suggestions, these s
selves and root deep in the heart; they naturally ag
soil: So that it is almost impossible, at any time, to be
It is hard to forget what is our sin to remember.

MEDIT VIII.

Upon the strange means of preserving the life of

I OBSERVE that plants and herbs are sometimes kil
and yet without frosts they would neither live nor thri
sometimes drowned with water, and yet without water
subsist: They are refreshed and cheered by the hea
and yet that sun sometimes kills and scorches then
lives my soul: Troubles and afflictions seem to kill all
and yet without these, its comforts could not live. T
of prosperity sometimes refresh me, and yet those sun-
likeliest way to wither me: By what seeming contrad
life of my spirit preserved! what a mystery, what a p
life of a Christian?

Welcome my health, this sickness makes me w
Med'cines adieu.
When with diseases I have list to dwell,
I'll wish for you.

When I again grow greedy to be poor,
I'll wish for you.

Welcome, my credit, this disgrace is glory,
Honours adieu.

When for renown and fame I shall be sorry,
I'll wish for you.

Welcome content, this sorrow is my joy.
Pleasures adieu.

When I desire such griefs as may annoy,
I'll wish for you.

Health, strength, and riches, credit and content,
Are spared best sometimes when they are spent.
Sickness and weakness, loss, disgrace and sorrow,
Lend most sometimes, when most they seem to borrow.

And if by these contrary and improbable ways the Lord preserve our souls in life, no marvel then we find such strange and seemingly contradictory motions of our hearts, under the various dealings of God with us, and are still restless, in what condition soever he put us; which restless frame was excellently expressed in that pious epigram of the reverend Gataker, made a little before his death.

I thirst for thirstiness, I weep for tears,
Well pleas'd I am to be displeas'd thus:
The only thing I fear, is want of fears,
Suspecting I am not suspicious.
I cannot chuse but live, because I die;
And when I am not dead, how glad am I?
Yet when I am thus glad for sense of pain,
And careful am, lest I should careless be;
Then do I grieve for being glad again,
And fear, lest carefulness take care for me.
Amidst these restless thoughts this rest I find,
For those that rest not here, there's rest behind.
Jam tetigi portum, valete.

NAVIGATION

SPIRITUALIZED:

OR, A NEW COMPASS for SEAMEN,

Consisting of XXXII-POINTS;

Of { Pleasant OBSERVATIONS,
Profitable APPLICATIONS, AND
Serious REFLECTIONS.

All concluded with so many Spiritual POE

~~~~~  
*What good might seamen get, if once they were  
But heavenly minded? If they could but steer  
The Christian's course, the soul might then enjoy  
Sweet peace, they might like seas o'erflow with joy  
Were God our all, how would our comforts doubt  
Upon us! thus the seas of all our trouble  
Would be divinely sweet: men should endeavour  
To see God now, and be with him for ever.*

~~~~~  
*To all Masters, Mariners, and Seamen; especially
to the Borough of Clifton, Dartmouth, and Ham-
psire county of Devon.*

SIRS,

I FIND it storied of Anacharsis, that when one asked
the living or the dead were more? He returned this answer
' must first tell me (saith he) in which number I must
Intimating thereby, that seamen are, as it were, a third
sons, to be numbered neither with the living nor the dead
hanging continually in suspense before them. And it is
accounted the most desperate employment, and they live
lost men that used the seas. 'Through all my life (saith
' three things do especially repent me: 1. That ever I
' secret to a woman. 2. That ever I remained one
' will. 3. That ever I went to any place by sea, where
' have gone by land.' 'Nothing (saith another) is more
' than to see a virtuous and worthy person upon the
though custom, and the great improvement of the art

to such a frame, than the lively apprehensions of eternity do; and none have greater external advantages for that, than you have. But alas! for the generality, what sort of men are more ungodly, and stupidly insensible of eternal concerns? living, for the most part, as if they had made a covenant with death, and with hell were at agreement. It was an ancient saying, *Qui nescit orare, discat navigare*, He that knows not how to pray, let him go to sea. But we may say now, (alas! that we may say so in times of greater light) he that would learn to be profane, to drink and swear, and dishonour God, let him go to sea. As for prayer, it is a rare thing among seamen, they count that a needless business: they see the profane and vile delivered as well as others; and therefore what profit is there if they pray unto him? Mal. iii. 4. As I remember, I have read of a profane soldier, who was heard swearing, though he stood in a place of great danger; and when one that stood by him warned him, saying, 'Fellow-soldier, do not swear, the bullets fly;' he answered, 'They that swear come off as well as they that pray.' Soon after a shot hit him, and down he fell. Plato diligently admonishes all men to avoid the sea; 'For (saith he) it is the schoolmaster of all vice and dishonesty.' Sirs! it is a very sad consideration to me that you who float upon the great deeps, in whose bottom so many thousand poor miserable creatures lie, whose sins have sunk them down, not only into the bottom of the sea, but of hell also, whither divine vengeance hath pursued them: That you, I say, who daily float, and hover over them, and have the roaring waves and billows that swallowed them up, gaping for you as the next prey, should be no more affected with these things. Oh what a terrible voice doth God utter in the storms! "It breaks the cedars, shakes the wilderness, makes the hinds to calve," Psal. xxix. 5. And can it not shake your hearts? This voice of the Lord is full of majesty, but his voice in the word is more efficacious and powerful, Heb. iv. 12. to convince and rip up the heart. This word is exalted above all his name, Psal. cxxxviii. 3. and if it cannot awaken you, it is no wonder you remain secure and dead, when the Lord utters his voice in the most dreadful storms and tempests. But if neither the voice of God uttered in his dreadful works, or in his glorious gospel, can effectually awaken and rouse, there is an Euroclydon, a fearful storm coming, which will so awaken your souls, as that they shall never sleep any more, Psal. xi. 6. "Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: This is their portion of their cup." You that have been at sea in the most violent storms, never felt such a storm as this, and the Lord grant the

office above; but for the generality, alas! they mind things. How many of you are coasting to and fro, from one to another? But never think of that *heavenly* count how you may get the merchandize thereof, which is the gold of Ophir. How oft do you tremble to see the dance about you, and wash over you? Yet considerable it will be to have all the waves and billows of God over your souls, and that for ever. How glad are you been long tossed upon the ocean, to descry land? And eagerly do you look out for it, who yet never had your with the consideration of that joy which shall be among them when they arrive at the *heavenly strand*, and set foot of glory.

O Sirs! I beg of you, if you have any regard to immortal souls of yours, which are also embarked forther all winds blow them, and will quickly be at the heaven or hell, that you will seriously mind these things, steer your course to heaven, and improve all winds (opportunities and means) to waft you thither.

Here you venture life and liberty, run through many dangers, and all to compass a perishing treasure; do you return disappointed in your design? Or if not, a fading short-lived inheritance, which like the flowing tide covers the shore, and then returns, and leaves it naked, and are not everlasting treasures worth venturing for? be wise for eternity: I here present you with the fruit of many hours, redeemed for your sakes, from my other studies and labours, which I have put into a new dress and mode. I have ventured to clothe spiritual matters in your own dialect, that they might be the more intelligible to you; and I have mixed pious poems, with which the several chapters are connected, by all means to assault your several affections, and I hope to speak, "to catch you with guile." I can say nothing of it, it cannot be without its manifold imperfections, since I am full of so many in myself; only this I will adventure to say, it is not defective or empty soever it be in other respects, yet it is filled with much true love to, and earnest desires after the peace and prosperity of your souls. And for the other defects, I have only two things to offer, in way of excuse; the first is, that I ever made in this kind, wherein I find many faults, and it was hastened for your sakes, too soon out of me, so that it might be ready to wait upon you, when you understand

meditations to the conversion of any among you, you will be the gainers, and my heart shall rejoice, even mine. How comfortable should we shake hands with you, when you go abroad, were we persuaded your souls were interested in Christ, and secured from perishing, in the new covenant? What life would it put into our prayers for you, when you are abroad, to consider that Jesus Christ is interceding for you in heaven, whilst we are your remembrancers here on earth? How quiet would our hearts be, when you are abroad in storms, did we know you had a special interest in him whom winds and seas obey? To conclude, what joy would it be to your godly relations, to see you return new creatures? Doubtless more than you came home laden with the riches of both Indies.

Come Sirs! set the heavenly Jerusalem upon the point of your *new compass*; make all the sail you can for it; and the Lord give you a prosperous gale, and a safe arrival in that land of rest.

So prays

Your most affectionate friend to serve you

in soul-concernments,

JOHN FLAVEL.

To every SEAMAN sailing Heavenward.

Ingenious Seamen,

THE art of Navigation, by which islands especially are enriched and preserved in safety from foreign invasions; and the wonderful works of God in the great deep, and foreign nations, are most delightfully and fully beheld, &c. is an art of exquisite excellency, ingenuity, rarity, and mirability; but the *art of spiritual navigation* is the art of arts. It is a gallant thing to be able to carry a ship richly laden round the world; but it is much more gallant to carry a soul (that rich loading, a pearl of more worth than all the merchandize of the world in a body (that is as liable to leaks and bruises as any ship is) through the sea of this world (which is as unstable as water, and hath the same brinish taste and salt gust which the waters of the sea have) safely to heaven (the best haven) so as to avoid splitting upon any soul-sinking rocks, or striking upon any soul-drowning sands. The art of natural navigation is a very great mystery; but the art of spiritual navigation is by much a greater mystery. Human wisdom may teach us to con-

port in all the world, but no mere man can carry a soul. He must be a saint, he must be a divine (so all saints are) a *pilot* to carry a soul to the *fair-haven* in Emmanuel's land. The art of natural navigation is wonderfully improved since the coming of Christ, before which time (if there be truth in history) the *loadstone* was never known in the world; and before that was revealed unto the mariner, it is unspeakable what certain wanderings seamen *floated* here and there, rather than the right and direct way. Sure I am, the art of spiritual navigation is wonderfully improved since the coming of Christ; the clearest and fullest discovery to the coming of Christ. The art is now perfectly revealed in the scriptures of the Old Testament; but the rules thereof are dispersed up and down. The collecting and methodizing of the same cannot be very useful unto souls: though, when all is done, there is a *lute* necessity of the teachings of the Spirit, and of the aid that is from above, to make souls *artists* in sailing heaven. The *ingenious author* of the *Christian's Compass*, or the *Mariner's Companion*, makes three parts of this art (as the schoolmen divide) viz. *speculative*, *practical*, and *affectionate*. The things necessary to be known by a spiritual *seamen*, in steering rightly and safely to the *port* of happiness, he divides into four heads, answerably to the four general points of the compass, making *God* our *north*; *Christ* our *east*; *holiness* our *south*; *death* our *west* points. Concerning God, we must know (1.) That he is, Heb. xi. 6. and that there is but one God, 1 Cor. viii. 6. (2.) That this God is that supreme good, in the enjoyment of which all true happiness lies, Psal. iv. 6, 7. Mat. v. 8.—xviii. 1. That, life eternal lying in God, and he being incomprehensible in essence, as being a Spirit, our best way to know him in his attributes, Exod. xxxiv. 5, 6, 7. and works, Rom. viii. 3. especially in his Son, 2 Cor. iv. 6. (4.) That as God is the way to our chiefest, yea, only way of knowing, enjoying, serving, and living with him, is in the Spirit likewise, Job iv. 24. Concerning Christ, we must know, (1.) That he is the true Sun which arises upon the world, by which all are enlightened, John i. 9. Mal. ii. 17. 78, 79. (2.) That God alone is in him, reconciling to himself, 2 Cor. v. 19. 1 Cor. i. 30. John xiv. 6. (3.) That Christ is only made ours by the union and indwelling of the Spirit, 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10. and vi. 17. John i. 14. 1 Cor. xii. 3, 13. (4.) That the way of the Spirit's union with Christ is by faith, and love, and obedience, and the

Christ our Sun is at the highest in our hearts, when they are most holy. (4.) This holiness is that which is directly opposite to sin; it eclipses holiness, and holiness scatters sin, Heb. vii. 26. Phil. ii. 2 Pet. iii. 11. Concerning death, we must know, (1.) Death is certain; the sun of our life will set in death; when our days come about to this western point, it will be night, Heb. ix. 27. Psal. xlix. 7. (2.) If we die in our sins out of Christ, we are undone for ever, Job viii. 24. Phil. i. 21. (3.) It is our benighting to die, but it is not our annihilating, 1 Cor. xv. Rev. xx. 12. (4.) After death comes judgment; all that die shall arise to be judged, either for life or death, a second time, Heb. ix. 27. Matt. xxv. Heb. vi. 2. These four heads and the particulars under them, are as necessary to be known in spiritual navigation, as the four points of the compass are in natural navigation. The things which we ought to do in order to our arrival at our happiness, our author makes as many as there be points in the compass. And for an help to memory we may begin every particular with the initial, known letters on the points of the compass. (1.) N. Never stir or steer any course, but by light from God, Psal. cx. 105. Isa. viii. 10. (2.) N. and by E. Never enter upon any desire but such as tends towards Christ, Acts x. 43. (3.) N. N. E. Never nothing enviously, which thrives without God, Psal. lxxiii. 12, 13. (4.) N. E. and by N. Never enterprize not warrantable courses to procure any of the most prized and conceited advantages, 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. (5.) N. E. Now entertain the sacred commands of God, hereafter thou expect the sovereign consolations of God, Psal. cx. 48. (6.) N. E. and by E. Never esteem Egypt's treasures so much as for them to forsake the people of God, Heb. xi. 26. (7.) E. N. Err not, especially in soul affairs, Jam. i. 16. 1 Tim. i. 19, 20. Tim. ii. 18. (8.) E. and by N. Eschew nothing but sin, 1 Pet. i. 11. Job i. 7, 8—31, 34. (9.) E. Establish thy heart with grace, Heb. xiii. 9. (10.) E. and by S. Eye sanctity in every action, 1 Pet. i. 15. Zech. xiv. 29. (11.) E. S. E. Ever strive earnestly to live undisturbed and to improve the means of grace. (12.) S. E. and by E. Suffer every evil of punishment or sorrow, rather than leave the ways of Christ and grace. (13.) S. E. Sigh earnestly for more enjoyment of Christ. (14.) S. E. and by S. Seek evermore some evidences of Christ in you the hope of glory. (15.) S. S. E. Still set eternity before you, in regard of enjoying Jesus Christ, John xvii. 24. (16.) S. and by E. Settle it ever in your soul as a principle which you will never depart from, That holiness and true happiness are in Christ, and in Christ. (17.) S. Set thyself always as before the Lord, Psal. xvi. 1. Acts ii. 25. (18.) S. and by W. See weakness hastening thee

things under your feet, before death come to look you (22.) S. W. and by W. Still weigh and watch with loins lamps trimmed, Luke xii. 35, 36, 37. (23.) W. S. W. works, and all in the balance of the sanctuary. (24.) V. Walk in sweet communion with Christ here, and so thou in peace, Luke ii. 29. (25.) W. Whatsoever thy condition, world, eye God as the disposer of it, and therein be content. iv. 11. (26.) W. and by N. Walk not according to the most, but after the example of the best. (27.) W. N. not what men speak or think of thee, so God approve thee. x. 18. Rom. ii. 28, 29. (28.) N. W. and by W. Never but watch against small sins, nor neglect little duties, (29.) N. W. Never wish rashly for death, nor love life hatefully, Job iii. 4. (30.) N. W. and by N. Now work night come, Job xii. 35, 36. Eccles. ix. 10. (31.) N. N. nothing when thou pleadest with God for thy soul, but free-grace, Dan. ix. 17. (32.) N. and by W. Now welcome if at death thou wouldst be welcomed by Christ. A true enlivened, and enlightened conscience, is the only point must erect these practical rules of our Christian compass, 2 Cor. i. 12. Our memory, that is the *box*, in which this compass be kept, in which these rules must be treasured, that we be ready and expert in them as the *mariner* is in his sea-compass much for the speculative and practical parts of the art of navigation. The affectionate part doth principally lie in the motions or movings of the soul towards God in the affections are raised and warmed, and especially appear active in meditation being, as it were, the limbec, or still, in which the affections heat and melt, and, as it were, drop sweet spiritual words. The affectionate author of the *Christian's compass* doth indeed in the last part of his undertaking, hint at several meditation spiritual seaman is to be acquainted with, unto which treatise an excellent supplement in this *New Compass for Seamen*. The preface is prefixed, that at once thou mayest view all the rules (both speculative, practical, and affectionate) by which the seaman may go heaven-ward. What further shall be added by way of preface to commend this new compass, which indeed (2 Cor. iii. 14) *συστατικῶν ἐπιστολῶν*, *letters of commendation*, or any panegyric, I will not put it into an honest heart; but to stir up all, especially seamen, to the conscience of using such choice helps for the promoting of their salvation and salvation of their souls, for the making of the

AN EPISTLE TO SEAMEN SAILING HEAVENWARD.

in natural navigation carry safe all the treasures of the Indies to thine own port, yea, gain the whole world, and for want of skill in spiritual-navigation lose thy own soul, thou wouldest be the greater loser in the world. So far wilt thou be from profiting by any of sea-voyages. There is a plain *μειωσις* in those words of Christ, "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? More is meant than is spoken *.

2. What a leaking vessel thy body is, † in which this unspeakable and inconceivable rich treasure, thy soul, is embarked! O the many diseases and distempers in the humours and passions that thy body is subject to! It is above 2000 years ago, that there have been reckoned up 300 names of diseases; and there be many under one name, and many nameless, which pose the physicians not only how to cure them, but how to call them. And for the affections and passions of the mind, the distempers of them, are no less deadly to some, than the diseases of the body; but besides these internal causes, there are many external causes of leaks in this vessel, as ‡ poisonous malignities, wrathful hostilities, and casual mishaps; very small matters may be of great moment to the sinking of this vessel. The least gale in the air may choak one, as it did Adrian, a pope of Rome; a little hair in milk may strangle one, as it did a counsellor in Rome; a little stone of a raisin may stop one's breath, as was the case of the poet Archilochus. Thus you see what a leaking vessel you sail in. Now the more leaky any ship is, the more need there is of skill to steer wisely.

3. Consider what a dangerous sea the world is in which thy soul is to sail in the leaking ship of thy body. As there are not more changes in the sea, than are in the world, the world being only constant in its constancy, "The fashion of this world passeth away," 1 Cor. vii. 31. So there are not more dangers in the sea for ships, than there are in the world for souls. In this world souls meet with rocks and sandbanks, syrens and pirates; worldly temptations, worldly lusts, and worldly company cause many to "drown themselves in perdition," 1 Tim. vi. 9. The very things of this world endanger your souls. By worldly objects we soon grow worldly. It is hard to touch pitch, and not be defiled. The lusts of this world stain all our glory, and the men of this world pollute all they converse with. A man that keeps company with the men of this world, is like him that walketh in the sun, and is tanned insensibly. Thus I have hinted to you the dangerousness of the sea wherein you are to sail. Now the more dangerous the sea is, the more requisite it is that the sailor be an artist.

4. Consider what if through want of skill in the heavenly art

spiritual navigation, thou shouldst not steer thy course an instance only in two consequents thereof. 1. Thou wilt at the haven of happiness. 2. Thou shalt be drowned of God's wrath. As true as the word of God is true, as the heavens are over thy head, and the earth under thy feet, thou yet livest, and breathest in this air; so true and so certain, thou shalt never enter into heaven, but sink into the bottomless pit. Am I not herein a messenger of the sad tidings that ever yet thy ears did hear? Possibly now thou mayest doubt the matter of these things, because thou dost not know what heaven is, of heaven, what it is for ever to lie under the wrath of God hereafter thou wilt know fully what it is to have thy soul so lost, as that God's mercies, and all the good there shall never save it; and as God hath set and ordered his decrees, he will never save it. Hereafter thou wilt be perfectly sensible of the evil that thou mightest have had, and of the evil that shall befall thee (this is God's peculiar prerogative, to make a creature as miserable as he pleaseth) then thou wilt have other thoughts than thou now hast. Then the thoughts of thy misery will be busied about thy lost condition, both as to the pain of loss, and pain of sense *, so that thou shalt not be able to take a moment; then, that thy torments may be increased, thou shalt not budge the truth of thy apprehensions, yea, the strength of thy grief shall be increased; thou shalt have the true and deep apprehension of the greatness of that good that thou shalt miss of, and of the misery which thou shalt procure unto thyself; and then thou shalt not be able to chuse, but to apply all thy loss, all thy misery, all thy grief, which will force thee to roar out, O my loss! O my misery! O my inconceivable, irrecoverable loss and misery! yea, for the consideration of thy torments, thy affections and memory shall be exercised, that, to prevent that loss and misery, these things may now be laid to heart! O that a blind understanding, a stupid heart, a bribed conscience, a hard heart, a bad memory, may not make heaven and hell to seem but trifles to thee! thou shalt not easily be persuaded to make it thy main business hereafter to be an artist in *spiritual navigation*. But to shut up this discourse, I shall briefly acquaint *seamen*, why they should, of a kind of men of singular piety and heavenliness, and therefore more than ordinarily study the heavenly art of *spiritual navigation*. *Seamen* would then consider,

1. How nigh they border upon the confines of death

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rocks, in another perilous sands, and every where stormy w ready to destroy them. * Well may the *seamen* cry out, *Ego finium non habui*; I have not had a to-morrow in my hands many years. Should not they then be extraordinary serious and venly continually! Certainly (as the reverend *author* of this *compass* well observes) nothing more composeth the heart to su frame, than the lively apprehensions of eternity do; and none greater external advantages for that, than *seamen* have.

2. Consider (*seamen*) what extraordinary help you have by book of the creatures; "The whole creation is God's voice; " God's excellent † hand-writing, or the sacred scriptures of " most High," to teach us much of God, and what reasons we to bewail our rebellion against God, and to make conscience of o ing God only, naturally, and continually. The heavens, the e the waters, are the three great leaves of this book of God, and al creatures are so many lines in those leaves. All that learn not to and serve God by the help of this book, will be left inexcusa Rom. i. 20. How inexcusable then will ignorant and ungodly men be! *Seamen* should, in this respect, be the best scholars in Lord's school, seeing they do, more than others, see the work the Lord, and his wonders in the great deep, Psal. cvii. 24.

3. Consider how often you are nearer heaven than any peop the world. "They mount up to heaven," Psal. cvii. 26. It has said of an ungodly minister, that contradicted his preaching in life and conversation, that it was pity he should ever come out of pulpit, because he was there as near heaven as ever he would Shall it be said of you, upon the same account, that it is a pity should come down from the high towering waves of the sea? Sho not *seamen* that in stormy weather have their feet (as it were) u the battlements of heaven, look down upon all earthly happiness this world but as base, waterish, and worthless? The great citie Campania seem but small cottages to them that stand on the A Should not *seamen*, that so oft mount up to heaven, make it t main business here, once at last to get into heaven? What! (*seam* shall you only go to heaven against your wills? When *seamen* mo up to heaven in a storm, the *Psalmist* tells us, That "their s "are melted because of trouble." O that you were continually unwilling to go to hell, as you are in a storm to go to heaven!

4. And lastly, Consider what engagements lie upon you to be gularly holy, from your singular deliverances and salvations. T that go down to the sea in ships, are sometimes in the valley of

have been far out of sight of any land ; or by his bringing perishing ship safe to shore. Sometimes they have been in danger of being taken by pirates, yet wonderfully preserved by God's calming of the winds in that part of the sea where pirates have sailed, or by giving the poor pursued ship a strong wind to run away from their pursuers, or by sinking the pirates. Sometimes their ships have been cast away, and yet they wonderfully got safe to shore upon planks, yards, masts, &c. be endless in enumerating their deliverances from drowning, burning, from slavery, &c. Sure (*seamen*) your extraordinary actions lay more than ordinary engagements upon you, to fear, obey, and trust in your Saviour and Deliverer. I have seen the enthralled Greeks were so affected with their liberty by Flaminius the Roman general, that their shrill acclamation, *Σωτήρ, Σωτήρ, a Saviour, a Saviour!* made the very birds fall from the heavens astonished. O how should *seamen* be affected with their *sea-deliverances!* many that have been delivered from *Tyranny*, have vowed to be servants to their *redeemers* all the days of their lives. Ah! Sirs, will not you be more than ordinarily affected with the days of your lives, seeing you have been so oft, so wonderfully redeemed from death itself by him? Verily, do what you can to die in God's debt. "As for me, God forbid that I should cease," the Lord in ceasing to pray for you," 1 Sam. xii. 23, 24. In the perusal of this short and sweet treatise, wherein the judicious and ingenious author hath well mixed *utile dulci*, profit and pleasure, you may learn the good and right way, even to fear the Lord, to love him in truth with all your hearts, considering how great he hath done for you. This is the hearty prayer of

*Your cordial friend, earnestly desirous of a prosperous issue
for your precious and immortal souls.*



THE AUTHOR TO THE READER

WHEN dewy-cheek'd Aurora doth display
Her curtains, to let in the new-born day,
Her heav'nly face looks red, as if it were
Dy'd with a modest blush, 'twixt shame and fear.
Sol makes her blush, suspecting that he will
Scorch some too much, and others leave too chill.

A NEW COMPASS FOR SEAMEN, &c.

'Tis gone from me too young, and now is run
To sea, among the tribe of Zebulun.
Go, little book, thou many friends wilt find
Among that tribe, who will be very kind;
And many of them care of thee will take,
Both for thy own, and for thy father's sake.
Heav'n save it from the dang'rous storms and gusts
That will be rais'd against it by men's lusts.
Guilt makes men angry, anger is a storm,
But sacred truth's thy shelter, fear no harm.
On times, or persons, no reflection's found!
Though with reflections few books more abound.
Go, little book, I have much more to say,
But seamen call for thee, thou must away:
Yet ere you have it, grant me one request,
Pray do not keep it prisoner in your chest.

A

NEW COMPASS

FOR

SEAMEN:

OR,

NAVIGATION SPIRITUALIZED.

CHAP. I.

*The launching of a ship plainly sets forth
Our double state, by first and second birth.*

OBSERVATION.

NO sooner is a ship built, launched, rigged, victualled, manned, but she is presently sent out into the boisterous ocean where she is never at rest, but continually fluctuating, tossing, labouring, until she be either overwhelmed, and wrecked in the or through age, knocks, and bruises, grow leaky, and unserviceable.

troubles. Job v. 7. "Yet man is born to trouble, as the
 "upwards." The spark no sooner comes out of the fire,
 up naturally; it needs not any external force, help, or gun,
 ascends from a principle in itself; so naturally, so easily do
 rise out of sin. There is *radically* all the misery, anguish, and
 in the world in our corrupt natures. As the spark lies on
 the coals, so doth misery in sin; every sin draws a rod after
 these sorrows and troubles fall not only on the body, in the
 es, flaws, deformities, pains, aches, diseases, to which it
 which are but the groans of dying nature, and its cruel
 degrees, into dust again! but on all our employments and
 also, Gen. iii. 17, 18, 19. These are full of pain, trouble,
 appointment, Hag. i. 6. We earn wages, and put it into
 holes, and disquiet ourselves in vain; all our relations full
 The apostle speaking to those that marry, saith, 1 Cor.
 "Such shall have trouble in the flesh." Upon which
 glosseth thus: Flesh and trouble are married together, v.

*See Mr. What-
 ley's Care-cloth.*

marry or no; but they that are married
 with, and match into new troubles: As
 have their burdens, as well as their crosses.
 were endless to enumerate the sorrows of this kind, and
 troubles of the body are but the body of our troubles; the
 the curse falls upon the spiritual and noblest part of man.
 and body, like to Ezekiel's roll, are written full with sorrows
 within and without. So that we make the same report of
 when we come to die, that old Jacob made before Pharaoh
 xlvii. 9. "Few and evil hath the days of the years of our
 Eccl. ii. 22, 23. "For what hath man of all his labour,
 "vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under
 "For all his days are sorrows, and his travail grief; yea
 "taketh no rest in the night: This is also vanity."

Neither doth our new birth free us from troubles, though
 they be sanctified, sweetened, and turned into blessings to
 put not off the human, when we put on the divine nature.
 we then freed from the sense, though we are delivered from
 and curse of them. Grace doth not presently pluck out
 arrows that sin hath shot into the sides of nature. 2 Cor.
 "When we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no
 "we were troubled on every side: Without were fightings,
 "within were fears." Rev. vii. 14. "These are they that
 "of great tribulations." The first cry of the new-born
 (says one) gives hell an alarm, and awakens the rage both of

and not comforted." [Tossed] as Jonah's ship was; for the same word is there used, Jonah i. 11, 13. as a vessel at sea, stormed and violently driven without rudder, mast, sail, or tackling. Nor are we to expect freedom from those troubles, until harboured in heaven; see 2 Thess. i. 7. O what large catalogues of experiences do the saints carry to heaven with them, for their various exercises, dangers, trials, and marvellous preservations and deliverances out of all! and yet all these troubles without, are nothing to those within them, from temptations, corruptions, desertions, by passion and compassion. Besides their own, there come daily upon them the troubles of others; many rivulets fall into this channel and brim, yea, often overflow the bank. Psalm xxxiv. 19. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous." "ous."

REFLECTION.

Hence should the graceless heart thus reflect upon itself, O my soul! into what a sea of troubles art thou launched forth! and what a sad case art thou in! full of trouble, and full of sin; and these mutually produce each other. And that which is the most dreadful consideration of all, is that I cannot see the end of them. As for the saints, they suffer in the world as well as I; but it is but for a while; 1 Pet. v. 10. and then they suffer no more, 2 Thess. i. 7. "But their tears shall be wiped away from their eyes," Rev. vii. 17. But our troubles look with a long visage, ah! they are but the beginning of sorrows, but a parboiling before I be roasted in the flames of God's eternal wrath. If I continue as I am, I shall but deceive myself, if I conclude I shall be happy in the other world, because I have met with so much sorrow in this: For I read, Jude, ver. 7. that the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, though consumed to ashes, with all their estates and relations, (a sorer temporal judgment than ever yet befel me) do, notwithstanding that continue still in "everlasting chains, under darkness, in which they are reserved unto the judgment of the great day." These troubles of the saints are sanctified to them, but mine are fruits of the curse. They have spiritual consolations to balance them, which flow into their souls in the same height and degree, as troubles do upon their bodies, 2 Cor. i. 5. But I am a stranger to their comforts, and "intermeddle not with their joys," Prov. xiv. 10. If their hearts be surcharged with troubles, they have a God to go to; and when they have opened their cause before him, they are eased, return with comfort, and their "countenance is no more sad," 1 Sam. i. 18. When their belly is as a bottle full of new wine, they can give it vent by pouring out the

look round about thee ! what a miserable case art thou longer satisfied in it, but look out for a Christ also. W I am a vile, unworthy wretch ? yet he promiseth to *love* xiv. 4. and invites such as are heavy laden to him, Mat

Hence also should the gracious soul reflect sweetly upon this manner : And is the world so full of trouble ? O my cause hast thou to stand admiring at the indulgence and God to thee ? Thou hast hitherto had a smooth passagely to what others have had. How hath Divine Wisdom my condition, and cast my lot ? Have I been chastised others with scorpions. Have I had no peace without ? neither had peace without or within, but terrors round have I felt trouble in my flesh and spirit at once ? yet been extreme, either for time or measure. And hath been a Sodom, an Egypt to thee ? Why then dost thou in it, and hanker after it ? Why do I not long to be gone more heartily for deliverance ? Why are the thoughts of coming no sweeter to me, and the day of my full deliverance panted for ? And why am I no more careful to maintain in, since there is so much trouble without ? Is not this weight into all outward troubles, and makes them sink fall upon me when my spirit is dark, or wounded ?

THE POEM.

My soul, art thou besieg'd
With troubles round about ;
If thou be wise, take this advice,
To keep these troubles out.

Wise men will *keep* their conscience as their eyes ;
For in their *conscience* their best treasure lies.
See you be *tender* of your inward peace,
That shipwreck'd, *then* your mirth and joy must cease
If God from *you* your outward comforts rend,
You'll find what *need* you have of such a friend.
If this be *not* by sin destroy'd and lost,
You need not *fear*, your peace will quit your cost.
If you'd know *how* to sweeten any grief,
Tho' ne'er so *great*, or to procure relief
Against th' *afflictions*, which, like deadly darts,
Most fatal *are* to men of carnal hearts ;

CHAP. II.

*In the vast ocean spiritual eyes descry
God's boundless mercy, and eternity.*

OBSERVATION.

THE ocean is of vast extent and depth, though supposedly measurable, yet not to be sounded by man. It compasseth about the whole earth, which, in the account of Geographers, is twenty thousand and six hundred miles in compass; yet the ocean environeth it on every side, Psalm civ. 35. and Job xi. 9. Suitable to which is that of the poet *.

“He spread the seas, which then he did command,
“To swell with winds, and compass round the land.”

And for its depth, who can discover it? The sea in Scripture is called the *deep*, Job xxxviii. 30. the *great deep*, Gen. vii. 11. the gathering together of the *waters* into one place, Gen. i. 9. If the vastest mountain were cast into it, it would appear no more than the head of a pin in a tun of water.

APPLICATION.

This, in a lively manner, shadows forth the infinite and incomprehensible mercy of our God, whose mercy is said to be over all his works, Psal. cxlv. 9. In how many sweet notions is the mercy of God represented to us in the Scripture? He is said to be *plenteous*, Psalm ciii. 8. *abundant*, 1 Pet. i. 3. *rich in mercy*, Eph. ii. 4. then, that his mercies are *unsearchable*, Eph. iii. 8. “High as the heavens above the earth,” Psal. x. 4. which are so high and vast, that the whole earth is but a small point to them; yea, they are not only comparable to the heavens, but to come home to the *metaphor*, to the depth of the sea, Mic. vii. 19. which can swallow up mountains as well as mountains; and in this sea God hath drowned sins of a dreadful height and aggravation, even *scarlet*, *crimson*, i. e. deep dyed with many intensive aggravations, Isa. i. 18. In this sea was the sin of Manasse drowned, and of what magnitude that was, may be seen, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 3. yea, in this ocean of mercy did the Lord drown and cast away the sins of Paul, though a blasphemer, a persecutor, injurious, Tim. i. 13. “None (saith Augustine) more fierce than Paul and

men ! How hath it stopped the slanderous mouths of men ! It hath yearned upon "fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners;" to such a sceptre of mercy been stretched forth, upon their unfeigned obedience and submission, 1 Cor. vi. 9. What doth the Spirit aim at in such a large accumulation of names of mercy ? To convince poor sinners of the abundant fulness and riches of mercy ; but will but submit to the terms on which it is tendered to them.

In the vastness of the ocean, we have also a lively emblem of eternity. Who can comprehend or measure the ocean, but he that can comprehend eternity but he that is said to *inhabit* it. lvi. 5. Though shallow rivers may be drained and dried up, the ocean cannot. And though these transitory days, years will at last expire and determine ; yet eternity shall remain. It is a long word ! and amazing matter ! what is eternity ! the constant permanency of persons and things, in one and the same condition for ever ; putting them beyond all possibility of change. The heathens were wont to shadow it by a circle, or a sphere. It will be to all of us, either a perpetual day or night. It will not be measured by watches, hours, minutes. And if it cannot be measured, so neither can it ever be diminished. When years are gone, there is not a minute less to come. O Drexelius do both illustrate it by this known similitude. If an eagle were to come once in a thousand years to some vast mountain, and carry away in her bill one grain in a thousand. O what a vast time would it be ere that immortal bird should come, should carry off the mountain ! and yet in time it should be done. For there would still be some diminution ; but in eternity there can be none. There be three things in time, which are not competent to eternity : In time there is a *succession*, one year, and day passeth, and another comes ; but eternity is *now*. In time there is a *diminution* and wasting, the more is the less is to come. But it is not so in eternity. In time there is an *alteration* of condition and states : A man may be poor to-day, and rich to-morrow ; sickly and diseased this week and well the next ; now in contempt, and anon in honour : But no changes pass in eternity. As the tree falls at death and judgment, so shall we ever. If in heaven, there thou art a pillar, and shalt not be removed more, Rev. iii. 12. If in hell, no redemption thence, but of their torment ascendeth for ever and ever, Rev. xix.

mercy? O my soul, bless thou the Lord, and let his high praise ever be in thy mouth. Mayest thou not say, that he hath gone as high an extent and degree of mercy in pardoning thee as ever he did in any? O my God, who is like unto thee! that pardoneth iniquity, transgression and sin. What mercy, but the mercy of a God could cover such abomination as mine?

But O! what terrible reflections will conscience make from hence unto all despisers of mercy, when the sinner's eyes come to be open too late for mercy, to do them good! We have heard indeed, that the king of heaven was a merciful king, but we would make no address to him, whilst that sceptre was stretched out. We heard of balm in Gilead, and a physician there, that was able and willing to cure all our wounds, but we would not commit ourselves to him. We read, that the arms of Christ were open to embrace and receive us, but we would not. O unparalleled folly! O soul-destroying madness! Now the womb of mercy is shut up, and shall bring forth no more mercies to me for ever. Now the gates of grace are shut, and no cries can open them.

Mercy acted its part, and is gone off the stage: and now justice enters the scene, and will be glorified for ever upon me. How often did I hear the bowels of compassion sounding in the gospel for mercy. But my hard and impenitent heart could not relent; and now, it is too late. I am now past out of the ocean of mercy, into the ocean of eternity, where I am fixed in the midst of endless misery, and shall never hear the voice of mercy more!

O dreadful eternity! O soul-confounding word! An ocean of deed, to which this ocean is but as a drop; for in thee no soul can see either bank or bottom. If I lie but one night under strong pains of body, how tedious doth that night seem! And how do I tell the clock, and wish for day! In the world I might have had life, and would not. And now, how fain would I have death, but cannot. How quick were my sins in execution? And how long is the punishment in duration? O! how shall I dwell with everlasting burnings? Oh that God would but vouchsafe one treaty more with me! But alas, all tenders and treaties are now at an end with me. On earth peace, Luke ii. 13. but none in hell. O my soul! consider these things; come, let us debate this matter seriously, before we launch out into this ocean.

THE POEM.

WHO from some high rais'd tower views the ground

The scourge of hell, whose very lash doth rend
 The damned souls in twain: What! never end?
 The more thereon they ponder, think, and pore,
 The more, poor wretches, still they howl and roar.
 Ah! though more years in torments we should lie
 Than sands are on the shores, or in the sky
 Are twinkling stars; yet this gives some relief!
 The hope of ending. Ah! but here's the grief!
 A thousand years in torments past and gone,
 Ten thousand more afresh are coming on;
 And when these thousands all their course have run
 The end's no more than when it first begun.
 Come then, my soul, let us discourse together
 This weighty point, and tell me plainly whether
 You for these short-liv'd joys, that come and go,
 Will plunge yourself and me in endless woe.
 Resolve the question quickly, do not dream
 More time away. Lo, in an hasty stream
 We swiftly pass, and shortly we shall be
 Ingulphed both in this eternity.

CHAP. III.

*Within these smooth fac'd seas strange creatures creep
 But in man's heart far stranger than them all.*

OBSERVATION.

IT was an unadvised saying of Plato, *Mare nil memorabile*: the sea produceth nothing memorable. But surely the wisdom, power, and goodness of God manifested in the inhabitants of the watery region; notwithstanding the sea's smiling face, strange creatures are bred in its womb. "saith David) how manifold are thy works: In wisdom made them all; the earth is full of thy riches. So is the wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both great beasts," Psal. civ. 24, 25. And we read, *Laræ* sea-monsters, which draw out their breasts to their young; and Purchas tell incredible stories about them. About the Capricorn, our seamen meet with flying fishes, that have a rere-mouse, but of a silver colour; they fly in flocks like star-

sword-fish and thresher, that fight with the whale: Even our seas produce creatures of strange shapes, but the commonness takes off the wonder.

APPLICATION.

Thus doth the heart of man naturally swarm and abound with strange and monstrous lusts and abominations, Rom. i. 29, 30, "Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful." O what a swarm is here! and yet there are multitudes more, in the depths of the heart! And it is no wonder, considering that with this nature, we received the spawn of the blackest and vilest abominations. This original lust is productive of them all, James i. 14, 15. Which lust, though it be in every man *numerically*, different from that of others, yet it is one and the same *specifically*, for sort and kind, in all the children of Adam; even in the reasonable soul, though every man hath his own soul, viz. a soul individually distinct from another man's, yet it is the same for kind in all men. So that whatever abominations are in the hearts and lives of the vilest Sodomites, and the most profligate wretches upon heaven; there is the same matter in thy heart out of which they were shaped and formed. In the depths of the heart they are conceived, and thence they crawl out of the eyes, hands, lips, and all the members, Mat. xv. 18, 19. "Those things (saith Christ) which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart, and defile a man." "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:" even such monsters as would make a gracious heart tremble to behold. "What are my lusts (saith one*) but so many toads spitting of venom, and spawning of poison; croaking in my judgment, creeping in my will, and crawling into my affections?" The apostle in 1 Cor. 1. tells us of a sin, "not to be named;" so monstrous, that nature itself startles at it: even such monsters are generated in the depths of the hearts. Whence come evils? was a question that much puzzled the philosophers of old. Now here you may see whence they come and where they are begotten.

REFLECTION.

And are there such strange abominations in the heart of man

stately fabric was the soul at first ! And what holy inhabitant possessed the several rooms thereof ! But now, as God speaks Isa. xxxiv. 11. "The line of confusion is stretched out over the stones of emptiness. The cormorant and the owl and the raven dwell in it." Yea, as Isa. xli. 11. "The wild beasts of the desert lie there : it is full of thorns, the satyrs dance in it, and dragons cry in those pleasant places." O sad change ! how sadly may we look backwards our first state ! and take up the words of Job, "I was as in months past, as in the days of my youth. The Almighty was yet with me, when I put on righteousness : he clothed me, when my glory was fresh in me," Job xxi. 29.

Again, think, O my soul, what a miserable condition thou now generate abide in ! Thus swarmed and over-run with hellish passions, the dominion and vassalage of divers lusts, Tit. iii. 3. "The tumultuous sea is such a soul : how do these lusts rage within it, how do they contest and scuffle for the throne ! and usurp by turns : for as all diseases are contrary to health, yet so contrary to each other, so are lusts. Hence poor creatures are held in different kinds of servitude, according to the nature of the lust that is in the throne ; and, like the lunatic, Mat. xviii. 13. sometimes cast into the water, and sometimes into the fire. As the prophet says, "The wicked is like a troubled sea, that shall not be quiet. They have no peace now in the service of Baal, shall they have hereafter, when they receive the wages of their sin ?" Isa. vii. 20. "There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God." They cry for *Peace, peace* ; but my God doth not so. The last issue of this is eternal death ; no sooner is it delivered of its disorders, but presently it falls in travail again, and brings forth Jam. i. 15.

Once more : and is the heart such a sea, abounding with so many monstrous abominations ? Then stand astonished, O my soul, at the grace which hath delivered thee from so sad a condition ; and kiss the feet of mercy that moved so freely and seasonably to thy rescue ? Let my heart be enlarged abundantly here. Let me ask, I, that I should be taken, and others left ? Reflect, O my soul, on the conceptions and bursts of lusts in the days of vanity, when thou now blushest to own. O what black imaginations, hellish and vile affections are lodged there ! Who made me to differ from others ? came I to be thus wonderfully separated ? Surely, it is by the grace, and nothing else, that I am what I am ; and by

THE POEM.

MY soul's the sea, wherein, from day to day,
 Sins like Leviathans do sport and play.
 Great master-lusts, with all the lesser fry,
 Therein increase, and strangely multiply.
 Yet strange it is not, sin so fast should breed,
 Since with this nature I receiv'd the seed
 And spawn of ev'ry species, which was shed
 Into its caverns first, then nourished
 By its own native warmth; which like the sun
 Hath quick'ned them, and now abroad they come :
 And like the frogs of Egypt creep and crawl
 Into the closest rooms within my soul.
 My fancy swarms, for there they frisk and play,
 In dreams by night, and foolish toys by day.
 My judgment's clouded by them, and my will
 Perverted, every corner they do fill.
 As locusts seize on all that's fresh and green,
 Unclothe the beauteous spring, and make it seem
 Like drooping autumn; so my soul, that first
 As Eden seem'd, now's like a ground that's curst.
 Lord purge my streams, and kill those lusts that lie
 Within them; if they do not, I must die.

*Seas purge themselves, and cast their filth ashore,
 But graceless souls retain, and suck in more.*

OBSERVATION.

SEAS are in a continual motion and agitation, they have their flux and reflux, by which they are kept from putrefaction : like a fountain it cleanses itself, Isa. lvii. 20. "It cannot rest, but casts up mire and dirt;" whereas lakes and ponds, whose waters are standing, and dead, corrupt and stink. And it is observed by seamen that in the southern parts of the world, where the sea is more calm and settled, it is more corrupt and unfit for use; so is the sea Scodom, called the *dead sea*.

APPLICATION.

qualitativo, with a qualitative touch, as the loadstone t leaving an impression of its nature behind it. They are eing in cleanness, Isa. xxxiii. 15. "He despiseth the ga
 "sion, he shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, stop
 "from hearing blood, and shutteth his eyes from seei
 how all senses and members are guarded against sin : h
 contrary with the wicked ; there is no principle of hol
 to oppose or expel corruption. It lies in their hearts as
 or well, which settles and corrupts more and more.
 xlvii. 11. their hearts are compared to miry or marshy
 cannot be healed, but are given to salt : the meaning is,
 est streams of the gospel, which cleanse others, make the
 before, as abundance of rain will a miry place. The
 cause it meets with an obstacle in their souls, so that i
 through them and be glorified, as it doth in gracious so
 means and endeavours used to cleanse them are in vain ;
 of God they receive in vain, "they hold fast deceit, th
 "let it go," Jer. viii. 5. Sin is not in them as floating
 the sea, which it strives to expel and purge out, but as
 leopard's skin, Jer. xiii. 21. or letters fashioned and eng
 very substance of marble or brass with a pen of iron, a
 diamond, Jer. xvii. 1. or as ivy in an old wall, that hat
 in its very entrails. "Wickedness is sweet to their mou
 "it under their tongues," Job xx. 12. No threats nor
 divorce them from it.

REFLECTION.

Lord ! this is the very frame of my heart, may the g
 say. My corruptions quietly settle in me, my heart labour
 them : I am a stranger to that conflict which is daily mai
 the faculties of the regenerate soul. Glorified souls have
 flict, because grace in them stands alone, and is perfectly
 over all opposites ; and graceless souls can have no such
 cause in them corruption stands alone, and hath no other
 make opposition to it. And this is my case, O Lord ! I a
 hopes indeed, but had I a living and well-grounded h
 for ever with so holy a God, I could not but be daily p
 self. But O ! what willt he end of this be ? I have cause
 that last and dreadfulest curse in the book of God, Rev. x
 "him that is filthy be filthy still." Is it not as much as if

THE POEM.

MY heart's no fountain, but a standing lake
Of putrid waters; if therein I rake,
By serious search, O! what a noisome smell,
Like exhalations rising out of hell;
The stinking waters pump'd up from the hold,
Are as perfumes to seamen: but my soul
Upon the same account that they are glad,
(Its long continuance there) is therefore sad.
The scripture saith, "No soul God's face shall see,"
Till from such filthly lusts it cleansed be.
Yet though unclean, it may that way be rid,
As Hercules the Augean stable did.
Lord turn into my soul that cleansing blood,
Which from my Saviour's side flow'd as a flood.
Flow, sacred fountain, brim my banks; and flow
Till you have made my soul as white as snow.

CHAP. V.

*Seamen foresee a danger, and prepare;
Yet few of greater dangers are aware.*

OBSERVATION.

HOW watchful and quick-sighted are seamen to prevent danger if the wind die away, and then fresh up southerly: or if they see the sky hazy, they provide for a storm: if by the prospective-glass they know a pirate at a great distance, they clear the gun-rooms, prepare for fight, and bear up, if able to deal with him; if not, they keep close by the wind, make all the sail they can, and beat away. If they suppose themselves, by their reckoning, near land, how often do they sound? And if upon a coast with which they are unacquainted, how careful are they to get a pilot that knows the coast and is acquainted with it?

APPLICATION.

Thus watchful and suspicious ought we to be in spiritual concerns. We should study, and be acquainted with Satan's wiles and policy. The apostle takes it for granted, that Christians are not ignorant of his devices. 2 Cor. ii. 11. "The serpent's eye."

though he have no wisdom to do himself good, yet he is enough to do us mischief. He lies in ambush behind comforts and employments; yet, for the generality of men, careless and pine and careless are they, suspecting no danger? Their senses dwell carelessly, their senses unguarded; O woe to them, prize, and conquest, doth the devil make of them!

Indeed, if it were with us as with Adam in innocence, as was with Christ in the days of his flesh (who by reason of the flowing fulness of grace that dwelt in him, the purity of his nature, and the hypostatical union, was secured from the danger of temptation) the case then were otherwise; but we have a tempter without: 1 Pet. v. 8. James i. 14, 15. as well as a tempter without: 1 Pet. v. 8. "adversary the devil goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour:" And, like the beasts of the forest, prey down before him, and become his prey. All the sagacity, policy, and foresight of some men, is summoned in to guard their bodies, and secure their fleshly enjoyments.

REFLECTION.

Lord! how doth the care, wisdom, and vigilance of the wise men of old, condemn my carelessness in temporal and external things, condemn my carelessness in the dear concernments of my precious soul! what care is there to secure a perishing life, liberty, or treasure! I am thus solicitous for my soul, though its value be inestimable, and the danger far greater! Self-preservation is one of the deepest principles in nature. There is not the poorest fly, or worm, but it is in danger, if it can: yet I am so far from shunning those dangers which my soul lies continually exposed, that I often yield to temptations, and voluntarily expose it to its enemies. How watchful, jealous, and laborious thy people are; with tears, and groans, searching of heart, mortification of lusts, and of senses; and all accounted too little by them. Have we not to save or lose eternally, as well as they? Yet I cannot resist fleshly lust, nor withstand one temptation. O how I am exposed and condemned, not only by other's care and vigilance, but my own too, in lesser and lower matters?

THE POEM.

I AM the ship whose bills of lading come
To more than man's or angel's art can sum,

NAVIGATION SPIRITUALIZED.

Temptations give it chace, 'tis grappled sure,
And boarded, whilst it thinks itself secure.
It sleeps, like Jonah, in the dreadful storm,
Altho' its case be dang'rous, and forlorn.
Lord, rouse my drowsy soul, lest it should knock,
And split itself upon some dang'rous rock.
If it of faith and conscience shipwreck make,
I am undone for ever; soul, awake!
Till thou arrive in heav'n, watch, and fear;
Thou may'st not say, till then, the coast is clear.

CHAP. VI.

*How small a matter turns a ship about,
Yet we, against our conscience, stand it out.*

OBSERVATION.

IT is just matter of admiration, to see so great a body as a ship, and when under sail too, before a fresh and strong wind, by which it is carried, as the clouds, with marvellous force and speed, yet be commanded with ease, by so small a thing as the helm is. The scripture takes notice of it as a matter worthy of our consideration. Jam. iii. 4. "Behold also the ships, which though they be great, and driven of fierce winds; yet they are turned about with a small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth." Yea, * Aristotle himself, that eagle-eyed philosopher, could not give a reason of it, but looked upon it as a very marvellous and wonderful thing.

APPLICATION.

To the same use and office has God designed conscience in man, which being rectified and regulated by the word and spirit of God, to steer and order his whole conversation. Conscience is as the oracle of God, the judge and determiner of our actions, whether they be good or evil? And it lays the strongest obligation upon the creature to obey its dictates, that is imaginable; for it binds under the reason and consideration of the most absolute and sovereign will of the great God. So that as often as conscience from the word convinceth us of any sin or duty, it lays such a bond upon us to obey it, as no power under heaven can relax or dispense with. Angels cannot do it, much less man; for that would be to exalt themselves above God. No

necessity of changing their way and course; arguing in the clearest and most allowed maxims of right reason, as was the indisputable sovereignty of God.

As for instance: it convinceth their very reason that eternal duration are infinitely to be preferred to all momentary perishing things, Rom. viii. 18. Heb. xi. 26. and it is to choose them, and make all secular and temporary concerns stand aside, and give place to them. Yet though men boast of this, their stubborn will stands out, and will not yield to the conviction.

Further, It argues from this acknowledged truth, that light and pleasures in this world are but a miserable portion; it is the highest folly to adventure an immortal soul for them. ix. 15. Alas! what remembrance is there of them in heaven? are as the waters that pass away. What have they left, mirth and jollity, but a tormenting sting? It convinceth them also, that in matters of deep concernment it is an high privilege, to apprehend and improve the right seasons and opportunities of them, Prov. x. 5. "He that gathers in summer is a wise man." Eccl. viii. 5. "A wise man's heart discerns both time and season." "There is a season to every purpose," Eccl. iii. 1. viz. the time, an happy juncture, when if a man strikes in, he does so effectually, and with much facility: such seasons convince the soul of, and often whispers thus in its ear: "Strike in, close with this motion of the Spirit, and be happy; thou mayest never have such a gale for heaven any more." Though these be allowed maxims of reason, and conscience, they strike them strongly on the soul, yet cannot it prevail; the proud will rebels, and will not be guided by it. See Eph. ii. 3. 37. Isa. xlvi. 12. Ezek. ii. 4. Jer. xlv. 16,

REFLECTION.

Ah! Lord, such an heart have I had before thee; thus rebellious, so uncontroulable by conscience. Many times conscience thus whispered in mine ear, many a time hath it opposed my way, as the angel did in Balaam's, or the cherubims in the way of the tree of life with flaming swords turning every way that I had to oppose me in the way of my lusts. How calmly debated the case with me alone? and how sweetly postulated with me? How clearly hath it convinced of my duty, with strong demonstration? How terrible hath it

I have violated the strongest bonds that ever were laid upon a creature. If my conscience had not thus convinced and warned, sin had not been so great and crimson-coloured, Jam. iv. 17. this is to sin with an high hand, Numb. xv. 30. to come near to great and unpardonable transgression, Psal. xix. 13. O how dreadful a way of sinning is this, with opened eyes! and as my sin is t out of measure sinful, so my punishment will be out of measure dreadful, If I persist in this rebellion. Lord! thou hast said, such shalt be beaten with many stripes, Luke xii. 48. yea, Lord, and if ever my conscience, which by rebellion is now grown silent, should be in judgment awakened in this life; O! what an hell should I have within me! would it thunder and roar upon me, and surround me with terror

Thy word assures me, that no length of time can wear out of memory what I have done, Gen. xlii. 21. no violence or force can suppress it, Mat. xxvii. 4. no greatness of power can stifle it; it can take the mightiest monarch by the throat, Exod. x. 16. Dan. vi. 10. no music, pleasures, or delights, can charm it, Job xx. 22. O conscience! thou art the sweetest friend, or the dreadfullest enemy of the world; thy consolations are incomparably sweet, and thy punishments insupportable. Ah! let me stand it out no longer against conscience; the very ship in which I sail is a confutation of my madness that rushes greedily into sin against both reason and conscience, will not be commanded by it; surely, O my soul, this will be bitterness in the end.

THE POEM.

A SHIP of greatest burthen will obey
 The rudder; he that sits at helm, may sway
 And guide its motion: If the pilot please,
 The ship bears up, against both wind and seas.
 My soul's the ship, affections are its sails,
 Conscience the rudder. Ah! but Lord, what ails
 My naughty heart, to shuffle in and out,
 When its convictions bid it tack about?
 Temptations blow a counter blast, and drive
 The vessel where they please, tho' conscience strive.
 And by its strong persuasions it would force
 My stubborn will to steer another course.
 Lord, if I run this course, thy word doth tell
 How quickly I must needs arrive at hell.
 Then rectify my conscience, change my will;
 Fan in thy pleasant gales, my God, and fill

CHAP. VII.

*Thro' many fears and dangers seamen run,
Yet all's forgotten when they do return.*

OBSERVATION.

WE have an elegant and lively description of their dangers, Psal. cvii. 25, 26, 27. "He commandeth and "stormy winds, which lift up the waves thereof: they "to heaven, they go down again to the depths; they "melted because of trouble; they reel to and fro, they "a drunken man; they are at their wits end." Or, as Hebrew, "All wisdom is swallowed up." Suitable to that of the poet *.

"The pilot knows not what to chuse, or flee;
"Art stands amaz'd in ambiguity."

O what a strange and miraculous deliverance have many had? How often have they yielded themselves for dead, verily thought the next sea would have swallowed them; earnestly then do they cry for mercy? and, like the man who can pray in a storm, though they regard it not at other times. cvii. 28. Jonah i. 5, 6.

APPLICATION.

These dreadful storms do at once discover to us the mercy of God in raising them, and the abundant goodness of God in serving poor creatures in them.

1. The power of God is graciously manifested in raising the wind is one of the Lord's wonders, Psal. cvii. 24, 25. "that go down to the sea, see the works of the Lord, and his [wonders] in the deep; for he commandeth and raiseth "winds." Yea, ver. 18. God appropriates it as a peculiar power; "he causeth his [wind to blow]." Hence he is said in Psal. cxxxvii. 7. "bring them forth out of his treasury," Psal. cxxxvii. 7. "are locked up, and reserved; not a gust can break forth without his command and call for it to go and execute his pleasure: Ye shall be able to "hold them in his fist," Prov. xxx. 4. What is more difficult of holding than the wind? yet God holds it: although it is a most and terrible creature, he controls and rules it: yea, t

horse, or chariot; so the Lord, to manifest the greatness of his power, rides upon the wings of the wind, and will be admired in so terrible a creature.

And no less of his glorious power appears in remanding them than in raising them. The heathens ascribe this power to their god Æolus, but we know this is the royalty and sole prerogative of the true God who made heaven and earth; it is he that "makes the storm a calm," Psal. cvii. 29. and it is he that shifts and changes them from point to point, as he pleaseth; for he hath appointed them their circuits, Eccl. i. 6. "The wind goeth towards the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and returneth again according to its circuits."

2. And as we should adore his power in the winds, so ought we to admire his goodness in preserving men in the height of all their fury and violence. O what a marvellous work of God is here! that men should be kept in a poor weak vessel, upon the wild and stormy ocean, where the wind hath its full stroke upon them, and they are driven before it, as a wreck upon the seas; yet, I say, that God should preserve you there, is a work of infinite goodness and power. That those winds which do rend the very earth, mountains, and rocks, 1 Kings xix. 11. "Breaks the cedars, yea, the cedars of Lebanon," Psal. xxv. 5, 8, 9. which naturalists say bring forth with greatest difficulty surely your preservation, in such tempests, is an astonishing work of mercy. O how dreadful is this creature, the wind, sometimes to you! and how doth it make your hearts shake within you? If but a plank spring, or a bolt give way, you are all lost. Sometimes the Lord, for the magnifying of the riches of his goodness upon you, drives you to such exigencies, that, as Paul speaks, in a like case, Acts xxvii. 20. "All hope of being saved is taken away;" nothing but death before your eyes. The Lord commands a wind out of his treasury, bids it go and lift up the terrible waves, lock you in upon the shore, and drive you upon the rocks, so that no art can save you, and then sends you a piece of wreck, or some other means, to lay you safe: And all this to give you an experiment of his goodness and pity, that you may learn to fear that God in whose hand your soul and breath are.

And it may be, for the present, your hearts are much affected, your conscience works strongly, it smites you for sins formerly committed, such and such counsels of ministers, or relations slighted. Now saith conscience, God is come in this storm to reckon with thee for these things. But, alack, all this is but a warning, and a

REFLECTION.

How often hath this glorious power and goodness of before me in dreadful storms and tempests at sea? He his voice in these stormy winds, and spoken in a terrible them; yet how little have I been affected with it? "Th his way in the whirlwind, and in the storm," Nah. i. 3 he hath walked in ways of judgment and wrath, sending in a moment to hell: but to me in a way of forbearance Ah! how often have I been upon the very brink of et not God shifted or allayed the wind in a moment, I had into hell. What workings of conscience were at present And what terrible apprehensions had I then of my et tion? What vows did I make in that distress? And he did I then beg for mercy? But, Lord, though thy vo me, yet have I been the same; yea, added to, and t measure of my sins. Neither the bonds of mercy th upon me, nor the sacred and solemn vows I have laid u could restrain me from those ways of iniquity, which th so dreadful to me.

Ah! Lord, what an heart have I? What love, pity ness have I sinned against? If God had but respited j long, what a merey were it. Sure I am, the damned w it so; but to give me such a space to repent, ah! what a mercy is this? And do I thus requite the Lord, Deut. pervers and abuse his goodness thus? Surely, O my so the fruit of all thy preservations, they are rather reservat farther and sorer judgments. How dreadfully will j avenge the quarrel of abused mercy, Josh. xxiv. 20. Ho did God take it from the Israelites, that they provoked sea, even at the red-sea? Psal. cvi. 7. where God had w deliverance in such a miraculous way. Even thus have I the similitude of their transgressions; not only against God, but against the love of God. In the last storm he warning-piece, in the next he may discharge his mur against my soul and body. O my soul! hath he given "deliverances as these, and darest thou again break hi "ments," Ezra ix. 13, 14. O let me pay the vows that uttered in my distress, lest the Lord recover his glory f way of judgment.

THE POEM.

Into their cabins now the seamen go,
 And then turns out again, with, *What cheer, ho?*
 All on a sudden darken'd are the skies,
 The lamp of heav'n obscured, the winds doth rise;
 Waves swell like mountains; Now their courage flags,
 The masts are crack'd, the canvas torn to rags.
 The vessel works for life; anon one cries,
The main mast's gone by th' board; another plies
 The pump, until a third does strike them blank,
 With, *Sirs, prepare for death, we've sprung a plank*,
 Now to their knees they go, and on this wise
 They beg for mercy, with their loudest cries:
 Lord, save us but this once, and thou shalt see
 What persons, for the future, we will be:
 Our former time's mis-spent, but, with a vow,
 We will engage, if thou wilt save us now,
 To mend what is amiss. The gracious Lord,
 Inclined to pity, takes them at their word;
 The winds into their treasures he doth call,
 Rebukes the stormy sea, and brings them all
 To their desired haven: once a-shore,
 And then their vows are ne'er remember'd more.
 Thus soul's are shipwreck'd tho' the bodies live,
 Unless in time thou true repentance give.

CHAP. VIII.

*The navigator shifts his sails to take
 All winds, but that which for his soul doth make.*

OBSERVATION.

THE mariner wants no skill and wisdom to improve several winds
 and make them serviceable to his end; a bare side wind, by his skill
 in shifting and managing the sails, will serve his turn: He will not
 lose the advantage of one breath or gale, that may be useful to him.
 I have many times wondered to see two ships sailing in a direct
 counter motion, by one and the same wind: Their skill and wisdom
 herein is admirable.

APPLICATION.

Thus prudent and skilful are men in secular and lower matters.

place, south or north, measuring it by the degrees in the
by the second they can tell you the longitude of a place
west, from the Meridian, measuring it by the degrees of
and by the third they can discern the divers risings and
the stars. And so in other arts and sciences, we find men
with rare abilities, and singular sagacity. Some have
prehensions, solid judgments, stupendous memories, rapid
and excellent elocution; but put them upon any spiritual
tural matter, and the weakest Christian, even a babe in
excel them therein, and give a far better account of the
work of grace, the life of faith, than these can. 1 Cor.
“many wise men after the flesh, &c. But God hath
“foolish things of this world,” &c.

REFLECTION.

How inexcusable, then, art thou, O my soul! and how
confounded must thou needs stand before the bar of
great day? Thou hadst a talent of natural parts committ-
ed to thee; but which way have they been improved? I had an
understanding, but it was not sanctified; a memory, but it was
not improved; that let go the corn, and retained nothing but husks and
chaff, and invention, but, alas! none to do myself good. All
these rise in judgment against me, and stop my mouth. What
count shall I give for them in that day?

Again, are men (otherwise prudent and skilful) such
in spiritual things; Then let the poor, weak Christian, whose
parts are blunt and dull, admire the riches of God's free gift.
O what an astonishing consideration is this! that God
chose by men of the profoundest natural parts, and chose me
me, whose natural faculties and endowments, compared
are but as lead to gold! Thus under the law he passed
the lamb and eagle, and chose the lamb and dove. O how should
I be advanced to grace, as Christ doth upon the same account,
“I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou
“these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them
unto babes. And let it ever be a humbling consideration to me; for what
to differ? Is not this one principal thing God aims at, in
as I am; that boasting may be excluded, and himself alone

And will not this one day in judgment rise
Against your souls? Ah! can you be so wise
In smaller matters; what, and yet not know
How to improve fresh gales of grace that blow?
Fast moor'd in sin your wind-bound souls can lie,
And let these precious gales rise, blow, and die.
Sometimes on your affections you may feel
Such gracious breathings: Ah, but hearts of steel,
They move you not, nor cause you to relent;
Tho' able, like Elijah's wind, to rent
The rocks asunder: If you do not prize
Those breathings, other winds will shortly rise,
And from another quarter; those once gone,
Then next look out for an Euroclydon,
A dreadful storm: how soon, no man can tell;
But when it comes, 'twill blow such souls to hell.

CHAP. IX.

*If seamen lose a gale, there they may lie;
The soul, when once becalm'd in sin, may die.*

OBSERVATION.

SEAMEN are very watchful to take their opportunity of wind and tide, and it much concerns them so to be; the neglect of a few hours sometimes loses them their passage, and proves a great detriment to them. They know the wind is an uncertain, variable thing; they must take it when they may: they are unwilling to lose one flow, or breeze that may be serviceable to them. If a prosperous gale offers, and they are not ready, it repents them to lose it, as much as it would repent us to see a vessel of good wine, or beer, tapped and run to waste.

APPLICATION.

There are also seasons, and gales of grace, for our souls, golden opportunities of salvation afforded to men, the neglect of which proves the loss and ruin of souls. God hath given unto man a day of visitation, which he hath limited, Heb. iv. 7. and keeps an exact account of every year, month, and day that we have enjoyed it, Luke xiii. 7. xxv. 3. Luke xix. 42. The longest date of it can be but the time of this life; this is our day to work in, Job ix. 4. and upon this small time the weight of eternity hangs. But many neglect the use of these golden seasons, and when the day of visitation is past, they find themselves in a state of ruin and despair.

and then the blessing, power, and efficacy is gone from stead thereof a curse seizeth the soul, Heb. vi. 7, 8. and

Therefore it is a matter of high importance to our souls these seasons. How pathetically doth Christ bewail Jerusalem this account! Luke xix. 42. "O that thou hadst known this thy day, the things of thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." If a company of seamen are set a-shore upon a remote, uninhabited island, with this advice, to be aboard at such an hour, else they must be left behind; how do they then expect them to be punctual to their time? The lives of those who are upon a quarter of an hour. Many a soul hath perished in the gospel leaving them behind in their sins, because they neglected the time of their visitation.

REFLECTION.

What golden seasons for salvation hast thou enjoyed? what halcyon days of gospel-light and grace hast thou known? have the precious gales of grace blown to no purpose upon thee? the Spirit waited and striven with thee in vain? "Thou hast despised heaven, (being opened in the gospel dispensation) I will send violence." Multitudes have been pressing into it in vain. I myself have sometimes been almost persuaded, and not entered the kingdom of God: I have gone as far as conviction for sin, yea, I have been carried by the power of the gospel, to the purpose to turn to God, and become a new creature; but I have been too subtle and deceitful for me: I see, my resolution has been as an early cloud, or morning dew; and now my heart is dead again, settled upon its lees. Ah! I have caused my soul to tremble, lest God hath left me under that curse, Rev. xix. 2. "him that is filthy be filthy still." I fear I am become filthy in this place, Ezek. xlvi. 11. that shall not be healed by the spirit of the gospel, but *given to salt*, and cursed into perpetual barrenness. Lord! wilt thou leave me so! and shall thy Spirit strive with me? Then it had been good for me that I had never known thee. Ah! if I have trifled out this season, and irrecoverably lost it, I may take up that lamentation, Jer. viii. 20. and say, "My summer is past, my summer is ended, and I am not saved."

Every creature knows its time, even the turtle, crane, and all birds, know the time of their coming, Jer. viii. 7. How brutish are we, who have not known the time of my visitation! O thou, Lord of life and time, command one gracious season more, and make it effectual to me, before I go hence, and

And wait the seamen's leisure. Well, to-morrow
 They will put out; but then, unto their sorrow,
 That wind is spent, and by that means they gain
 Perchance a month's repentance, if not twain.
 At last another offers, now they're gone;
 But ere they gain their port, the market's done.
 For ev'ry work and purpose under heav'n,
 A proper time and season God hath giv'n.
 The fowls of heaven, swallow, turtle, crane,
 Do apprehend it, and put us to shame.
 Man hath his season too, but that mis-spent,
 There's time enough his folly to repent.
 Eternity's before him, but therein
 No more such golden hours as these have been:
 When these are pass'd away, then you shall find
 That proverb true,—*Occasion's bald behind.*
 Delays are dang'rous, see that you discern
 Your proper seasons: O that you would learn
 This wisdom from those fools that come too late
 With fruitless cries, when Christ hath shut the gate.



CHAP. X.

*By navigation one place stores another,
 And by communion we must help each other.*

OBSERVATION.

THE most wise God hath so dispensed his bounty to the several nations of the world, that one standing in need of another's commodities, there might be a sociable commerce and traffick maintained amongst them all, and all combining in a common league, may, the help of navigation, exhibit mutual succours to each other. The staple commodities proper to each country, I find expressed by poet, Bart. Coll.

Hence comes our sugars from Canary isles;
 From Candy currants, muskadels, and oils;
 From the Molucco's, spices; balsamum,
 From Egypt; odours from Arabia come;
 From India, gums, rich drugs, and ivory;

From Holland, hops; horse from the banks of R.
 From France and Italy the choicest wine;
 From England, wool; all lands as God distribute
 To the world's treasure pay their sundry tributes.

APPLICATION.

Thus hath God distributed the more rich and precious graces of his Spirit among his people; some excelling in some, some in another, though every grace, in some degree, be common even as in *nature*, though there be all the faculties in *nature*, yet some faculties are in some more lively and vigorous than in others. Some have a more vigorous eye, others a more ready ear, others a more voluble tongue; so it is in *spirituals*. Abraham excelled in *faith*, Job in *patience*, John in *love*. These were their peculiar graces. All the elect vessels are not of one quantity; yet some that excel others in some particular grace, come short in other respects of those they so excelled in the former, and may be improved by converse with such as in some respects are superior to them. The solid, wise, and judicious Christian may want the softness of affections and tenderness of heart that appear in the weak; and one that excels in gifts and utterance may learn humbleness of the very babes in Christ.

And one principal reason of this different distribution is to promote fellowship among them all, 1 Cor. xii. 21. "The head cannot say to the feet, I have no need of you." As in a family where there is much business to be done, even the little children bear a part according to their strength, Jer. vii. 18. "The children gather the wood, the fathers kindle the fire, the women knead the dough." In the family of Christ, the weakest Christian is serviceable to the strongest.

There be precious treasures in these earthen vessels, for they should trade by mutual communion. The preciousness of these treasures should draw out our desires and endeavours after them. The consideration of the brittleness of those vessels in which they are stored should cause us to be the more expeditious in our trading, and make the quicker returns. For when those vessels (the bodies of the saints) are broken by death, there is no more communion out of them. That treasure of grace which made them so profitable, fitable, pleasant, and desirable companions on earth, they carry with them into heaven, where every grace receives its adorning and perfection: and then, though they be ten thousand times more excellent and delightful than ever they were on earth, yet there is no more communion with them till we come to glory ourselves.

cribe all the choice notions we meet with in it, that they may be own when the book is called for, and we can have it no longer by u

REFLECTION.

Lord, how short do I come of my duty in communicating to, receiving good by others! My soul is either empty and barren, if there be any treasure in it, yet is but as a treasure locked up some chest, whose key is lost, when it should be opened for the u of others. Ah Lord! I have sinned greatly, not only by vain word but sinful silence. I have been of little use in the world.

How little also have I gotten by communion with others? Some it may be, that are of my own size, or judgment, or that I am otherwise obliged to, I can delight to converse with: but O, where is that largeness of heart and general delight I should have to, and in all thy people? How many of my old dear acquaintance are now in heaven, whose tongues were as *choice silver*, while they were here. Prov. x. 20. And blessed souls! how communicative were they what thou gavest them? O what an improvement had I made of my talent this way, had I been diligent! Lord pardon my neglect those sweet and blessed advantages. O let all my delight be in the saints, who are the excellent of the earth. Let me never go out their company, without an heart more warmed, quickened, and enlarged, than when I came amongst them.

THE POEM.

TO several nations God doth so distribute
His bounty, that each one must pay a tribute
Unto each other. Europe cannot vaunt,
And say, Of Africa I have no want.
America and Asia need not strive,
Which of itself can best subsist and live.
Each country's want, in something, doth maintain
Commerce betwixt them all. Such is the aim
And end of God, who doth dispense and give
More grace to some, their brethren to relieve.
This makes the sun ten thousand times more bright,
Because it is diffusive of its light;
Its beams are gilded gloriously; but then
This property doth gild them o'er again.
Should sun, moon, stars, impropriate all their light,
What dismal darkness would the world benight?
On this account men hate the vermin brood,
Because they are so dark and so unclean.

Grace is a treasure in an earthen pot;
 When death hath dash'd it, no more can be got
 Out of that vessel: then, while it is whole,
 Get out the treasure to enrich your soul.

CHAP. XI.

*The rocks abide, though seas against them rage
 So shall the church, which is God's heritage.*

OBSERVATION.

THE rocks, though situate in the boisterous and ocean, yet abide firm and immoveable from age to age. furious waves dash against them with great violence, but cannot move them out of their place. And although sometimes they are covered over them, and make them to disappear, yet there they remain and impregnable.

APPLICATION.

This is a lively emblem of the condition of the church in dangers and oppositions wherewith it is encountered and assailed in this world. These *metaphorical* waves roar and beat against it, but with as little success as the sea against the rock. xvi. 18. "Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The gates of power and policy of hell; for it is conceived to be an allusion to the gates of the Jews, wherein their ammunition was lodged, which also were the seats of judicature, there sat the judges, but yet these gates of hell shall not prevail. Nay, the church is only invincible in the midst of their violence, but not when they dash against it, Zech. xii. 3. "In that day I will make salem a burdensome stone for all people; all that build upon it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it." An allusion to the essays to roll some great stone against the hill, which was upon him, and crushes him to pieces.

And the reason why it is thus firm and impregnable, is not in itself; for alas, so considered, it is weak, and obnoxious to the almighty power of God, which guards and protects it day and night, Psal. xli. 5, 6. "God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right ear shall hear her."

“about it.” Some think this phrase alludes to the cherubim that kept the way of the tree of life with flaming swords: others to the fiery chariots round about Dathan, where Elisha was; but most think it to be an allusion to an ancient custom of travellers in the desert; who, to prevent the assaults of wild beasts in the night, made a circular fire round about them, which was as a wall to them. Thus will God be to his people a wall of fire, which none can scale. Exod. iii. 3, 4 5. we have an excellent emblem of the church’s low and dangerous condition, and admirable preservation. You have here both a *marvel* and a *mystery*. The marvel was to see a bush all on fire and yet not consumed. The mystery is this, the bush represented the sad condition of the church of Egypt; the fire flaming upon it, the grievous afflictions, troubles, and bondage it was there; the remaining of the bush unconsumed, the strange and admirable preservation of the church in those troubles. It lived there as the three noble Jews, untouched in the midst of a burning furnace: and the angel of the Lord in a flame of fire, in the midst of the bush was nothing else but the Lord Jesus Christ, powerful and graciously present with his people amidst all their dangers and sufferings. The Lord is exceeding tender over them, and jealous of them, as that expression imports, Zech. ii. 8. “He that toucheth them toucheth the apple of mine eye.” He that strikes at the face strikes at the face of God, and at the most excellent part of the face, the eye, and at the most tender and precious part of the eye, the apple of the eye. And yet, as a learned modern observes, this people whom he uses this tender and dear expression, were none of the blood of Israel neither; but the residue that staid behind in Babylon, while their brethren were gone to rebuild the temple; and yet over them he is as tender as a man is over his eye.

REFLECTION.

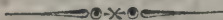
And is the security of the church so great! and its preservation so admirable, amidst all storms and tempests! then why art thou prone and subject to despond, O my soul, in the day of Zion’s trouble? Sensible thou wast, and oughtest to be: but no reason to have down the head through discouragement, much less to forsake Zion in her distress, for fear of being ruined with her.

What David spake to Abiathar, 1 Sam. xxii. 23. that may Zion speak to all her sons and daughters in all their distresses: “Thou art my strength, O Lord: he that seeketh thy life seeketh mine also; yet with me shalt thou be in safeguard.” God hath entailed great salvation and deliverances upon Zion; and blessed are all her friends and favourers; the Rock of ages is its defence. Fear not therefore, O my soul, thou

storms, yet there they abide; and so shall Zion, when waves have spent their fury and rage against it.

THE POEM.

MESOPOTAMIA, situate in the seas,
 May represent the church; or, if you please,
 A rock, o'er which the waves do wash and swell,
 May figure it; chuse either, which you will.
 Winds strive upon those seas, and make a noise,
 The lofty waves sometimes lift up their voice,
 And, swelling high successively, do beat
 With violence against it, then retreat.
 They break themselves, but it abides their shock;
 And when their rage is spent, there stands the rock.
 Then they are out that do affirm and vote,
 Peace, pomp, and splendor is the church's note.
 And they deserve no less reproof that are
 In Zion's troubles ready to despair.
 This rock amidst far stronger rocks doth lie,
 Which are its fence; so deep, so thick, so high,
 They can't be batter'd, seal'd or undermin'd:
 And these, environ'd by them, daily find
 Their bread ascertain'd; waters too secur'd:
 Then shout and sing, ye that are thus immur'd.



CHAP. XII.

*What dangers run they for little gains,
 Who, for their souls, would ne'er take half the pains*

OBSERVATION.

HOW exceeding solicitous and adventurous are some small portion of the world? How prodigal of strength it? They will run to the ends of the earth, engage in dangers, upon the hopes and probability of getting a share. *Per mare, per terras, per mille pericula currunt.* Hopes of them willing to adventure their liberty, yea, their life, and them to endure heat, cold, and hunger, and a thousand difficulties, to which they are frequently exposed.

APPLICATION.

How hot and eager are men's affections after the world.

NAVIGATION SPIRITUALIZED.

“there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain,” James iv. 13. This is the *το εργον*, the *master-design*, which engrosseth all their time, cares, and contrivances. The will hath past a decree for it, the passions and affections are fully let out to it, *They will be rich*, 1 Tim. vi. 9. This decree of the will, the Spirit of God takes deep notice of; indeed it is the clearest and fullest discovery of a man’s portion and condition: for look what is highest in the estimation, first and last of the thoughts, and upon which we spend our time and strength with delight; certainly, that is our treasure, Matth. vi. 20, 21. The heads and hearts of saints are full of solicitous cares and fears about their spiritual condition; the great design they drive on, to which all other things are but *παρεργα*, things by the by, is to make sure of their calling and election. This is the *pondus*, the weight and bias of the spirit; if their hearts stray and wander after any other thing, it reduces them again.

REFLECTION.

Lord, this hath been my manner from my youth, may the carping and unkind minded man say; I have been labouring for the meat that perishes, and disquieting myself in vain, full of designs and projects for the world, and unwearied in my endeavours to compass an earthly treasure; therein I have either been checked and disappointed by Providence, or if I have obtained, yet I am no sooner come to enjoy that contentment and comfort I promised myself in it, but I am ready to leave it to be stript out of it by death, and in that day all my thoughts will be turned to earth and ashes: But, in the mean time, what have I done for my soul? What did I ever break a night’s sleep, or deny and pinch myself for? Ah! fool that I am! to nourish and pamper a vile body, which must shortly lie under the clods, and become a loathsome carcase: and in the mean time, neglect and undo my poor soul, which partakes of the nature of angels, and must live for ever. I have kept other men’s vineyards, but mine own vineyard I have not kept. I have been a perpetual drudge and slave to the world; in a worse condition than my soul been, than others that are condemned to the mines. Lord, change my treasure, and change my heart: O let it suffice that I have been thus long labouring in the fire for very vanity: now turn up my heart and affections in thyself, and let my great desire now be, to secure a special interest in thy blessed self, that I may once say, “To me to live is Christ.”

THE POEM.

THE face of man impress’d and stamp’d on gold,

the one is, that the gift of Jesus Christ amounts to more than all the things come to; yea, in bestowing him, he has given that which v^{er}itually and eminently comprehends all these inferior mercies in Rom. viii. 32. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; how shall he not with him freely give us all things?" And 1 Cor. iii. 22. "All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." Another argument is, that God gives these temporal things to those he never gave his Christ unto, and therefore there is no great matter in them; yea, to those which, in a little while, are to be thrust into hell, Psal. xvii. 14. Now if God cloth and feed his enemies, if (to allude to that, Luke xii. 28.) he cloth the grass, which to-day is in its pride and glory in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, into hell: how much more will he clothe and provide for you that are saints?

This God, that feeds all the creatures is your Father, and a Father that never dies; and therefore you shall not be as exposed orphans that are the children of such a Father. "For he hath said, I will never leave you nor forsake you," Heb. xiii. 3. I have read of a good woman, that in all wants and distresses was wont to encourage herself with that word, 2 Sam. xxii. 47. *The Lord liveth*. But one time, being in a deep distress, and forgetting that consolation, one of her little children came to her, and said, 'Mother, why weepest so? What! is God dead now?' Which words, from a child, shamed her out of her unbelieving fears, and quickly brought her spirits to rest. O saint, whilst God lives thou canst not want what is good for thee.

How sweet a life might Christians live, could they but bring their hearts to a full subjection to the disposing will of God? to be content not only with what he commands and approves, but also with what he allots and appoints. It was a sweet reply that a gracious woman once made upon her death-bed, to a friend that asked, 'Whether she were more willing to live, or die?' She answered, 'I am pleased with what God pleaseth.' 'Yea, (saith her friend) but if God should refer it to you, which would you chuse?' 'Truly, (saith she) if God would refer it to me, I would refer it to him again. Ah! blessed life, when the will is swallowed up in the will of God, and the heart at rest in his care and love, and pleased with all his appointments.

REFLECTION.

I remember my fault this day, may many a gracious soul say. Alas! how faithless and distrustful have I been, notwithstanding the great security God hath given to my faith, both in his word and works.

my Father, though I have ten thousand times more reason than they have to trust me, Matth. vii. 21. Surely, jealous of my Father's affection, I could not be so dubious of his vision for me. Ah! I should rather wonder that I had than repine that I have no more. I should rather have been troubled that I have done no more for God, than that I have received no more from God. I have not proclaimed it to the world in conversation, that I have found a sufficiency in him which the saints have done, Hab. iii. 17, 18. How have I debated the fulness and all-sufficiency of God, and magnified these things by my anxiety about them? Had I had more faith, I would not have made such an heavy heart. Lord, hast thou convinced me of this folly, and put me to the blush? Hast thou confuted my unbelief! so that I have resolved never to trust thee more, and yet new exigencies renew this corruption? Contradictory also hath my heart and my prayers been? I have prayed conditionally, and with submission to thy will; I dare not ask thee, I must have them; yet this hath been the last of my heart and life. O convince me of this folly!

THE POEM.

VARIETY of curious fish are caught
Out of the sea, and to our tables brought;
We pick the choicest bits, and then we say,
We are sufficed; come, now take away.
The table's voided, you have done; but fain
I would persuade to have it brought again.
The sweetest bit of all remains behind,
Which, through your want of skill, you could not find.
A bit for faith, have you not found it? Then
I've made but half a meal; come, taste again,
Hast thou consider'd, O my soul! that hand
Which feeds those multitudes in sea and land!
A double mercy in it thou shouldst see;
It fed them first, and then with them fed thee.
Food in the waters we should think were scant
For such a multitude, yet none do want.
What num'rous flocks of birds about me fly?
When saw I one, through want, fall down, and die?
They gather what his hand to them doth bring,
Tho' but a worm, and at that feast can sing.

CHAP. XIV

*Sea-waters drained through the earth, are sweet ;
So are th' afflictions which God's people meet.*

OBSERVATION.

THE waters of the sea, in themselves, are brackish and unpleasant, yet being exhaled by the sun, and condensed into clouds, they fall down into pleasant showers; or if drained through the earth, their property is thereby altered, and that which was so salt in the sea, becomes exceeding sweet and pleasant in the springs. This we find by constant experience, the sweetest crystal spring came from the sea, Eccl. i. 7.

APPLICATION.

Afflictions in themselves are evil, Amos ii. 6. very bitter and unpleasant. See Heb. xii. 11. Yet not morally and intrinsically evil as sin is; for if so, the holy God would never own it for his own act as he doth, Mic. iii. 2. but always disclaimeth sin, James i. 2. Besides, if it were so evil, it could, in no case or respect, be the object of our election and desire, as in some cases it ought to be, Heb. xi. 25. but it is evil, as it is the fruit of sin, and grievous unto sensuality. Heb. xii. 11. But though it be thus brackish and unpleasant in itself, yet, passing through Christ and the covenant, it loses this ungrateful property, and becomes pleasant in the fruits and effects thereof unto believers.

Yea, such are the blessed fruits thereof, that they are to account it all joy when they fall into divers afflictions, Jam. i. 2. David could bless God that he was afflicted, and many a saint hath done the like. A good woman once compared her afflictions to her children: 'For' (saith she) they put me in pain in bearing them; yet as I know not which child, so neither which affliction I could be without.'

Sometimes the Lord sanctifies afflictions to discover the corruption that is in the heart, Deut. viii. 2. it is a furnace to shew the dross. Ah! when a sharp affliction comes, then the pride, impatience, and unbelief of the heart appear: *Matura vexatio prodit seipsam*. When the water is stirred, then the mud and filthy sediment that lay at the bottom rise. Little, saith the afflicted soul, did I think there had been in me that pride, self-love, distrust of God, carnal fear, and unbelief, as I now find. O where is my patience, my faith, my glory in tribulation? I could not have imagined the sight of death would have

truly observed) is then only great in our eyes, when w sense and self: but now affliction makes us more spiritu it is nothing. It drives them nearer to God, makes necessity of the life of faith, with multitudes of other b

But yet these sweet fruits of afflictions do not natur their own accord, spring from it; no, we may as well loo from thorns, or figs from thistles, as for such fruits fro till Christ's sanctifying hand and art have passed upon

The reason why they become thus sweet and pleasant before) is, because they run now in another channel; hath removed them from mount Ebal to Gerizim; they the effects of vindictive wrath, but paternal chastisemen

* Mr. Case well notes, 'a teaching affliction is to the sa
' sult of all the offices of Jesus Christ. As a king, he c
' a prophet, he teacheth, *viz.* by chastening; and, as
' hath purchased this grace of the Father, that the dr
' blossom, and bear fruit.' Behold, then, a sanctified a
cup, whereinto Jesus hath wrung and pressed the juice
all his mediatorial offices. Surely, that must be a cup
royal wine, like that in the supper, a cup of blessing to
of God.

REFLECTION.

Hence may the unsanctified soul draw matter of fear even from its unsanctified troubles. And thus it may itself: O my soul! what good hast thou gotten by all, o afflictions? God's rod hath been dumb to thee, or the I have not learned one holy instruction from it; my t left me the same, or worse than they found me; my hear earthly, and vain before, and so it remains still; th purged out, but only given vent to the pride, murmur, of my heart. I have been in my afflictions, as that v was in his, 2 Chron. xxviii. 22. who, "in the midst of
" yet trespassed more and more against the Lord." V been in storms at sea, or troubles at home, my soul wit been as a raging sea, casting up mire and dirt. Surel not the rod of God's children; I have proved but dros nace, and I fear the Lord will put me away as dross, as to do to the wicked, Psal. cxix. 119.

Hence also should gracious souls draw much encour comfort amidst all their troubles. O these are the fru fatherly love to me! why should I fear in the day of e

Lord, what a mystery of love lies in this dispensation! that which first brought afflictions into the world, is now itself carried out of the world by affliction, Rom. v. 12. Isa. vii. 9. O what can frustrate my salvation, when those very things that seem most to oppose it, are made subservient to it, and, contrary to their own nature, do promote and further it?

THE POEM.

TIS strange to hear what different censures fall
Upon the same affliction; some do call
Their troubles sweet, some bitter; others meet
Them both mid-way, and call them bitter sweet.
But here's the question still, I fain would see,
Why sweet to him, and bitter unto me?
Thou drink'st them, dregs and all, but others find
Their troubles sweet, because to them refin'd
And sanctify'd; which difference is best,
By such apt similies as these express:
From salt and brackish seas fumes rise and fly,
Which, into clouds condens'd, obscure the sky;
Their property there alter'd, in few hours,
Those brackish fumes fall down in pleasant show'rs:
Or as the dregs of wine and beer, distill'd
By limbec, with ingredients, doth yield
A cordial water, tho' the lees were bitter,
From whence the chymist did extract such liquor.
Then marvel not, that one can kiss that rod,
Which makes another to blaspheme his God.
O get your troubles sweeten'd and refin'd,
Or else they'll leave bitter effects behind.
Saints troubles are a cord, let down my love,
To pully up their hearts to things above.

CHAP. XV.

*The seas within their bounds the Lord contains:
He also men and devils holds in chains.*

OBSERVATION.

IT is a wonderful work of God to limit and bound such a vast and furious creature as the sea, which, according to the judgment of many learned men, is higher than the earth, and that it hath a

“ Who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth
 “ issued out of the womb? I brake up for it my decrees
 “ set bars and doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou
 “ further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed

APPLICATION.

And no less is the glorious power and mercy of God in bridling the rage and fury of Satan and his instruments, that they break not in upon the inheritance of the Lord, and as
 “ Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, and the
 “ wrath thou shalt restrain,” Psal. lxxvi. 10. By which is
 than hinted, that there is a world of rage and malice in the
 wicked men, which fain would, but cannot vent itself. The
 Lord restrains, or, as in the Hebrew, *girds it up*. Satan is a
 vious one, and his rage is great against the people of God.
 12. But God holds him, and all his instruments in check, for
 vidence; and it is well for God’s people that it is so.

They are limited as the sea, and so the Lord in a proverb
 speaks to them, “ Hitherto shall ye come, and no further.”
 times he ties them up so short, that they cannot touch the
 though they have the greatest opportunities and advantages.
 cv. 12, 13, 14, 15. “ When they were but a few men,
 “ yea, very few, and strangers in it; when they went
 “ tion to another, from one kingdom to another people,
 “ no man to do them wrong; yea, he reproveth kings for
 “ saying, touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets harm.”
 And sometimes he permits them to touch and trouble his
 but then sets bounds and limits to them, beyond which they
 not pass. That is a pregnant text to this purpose.
 “ Behold the devil shall cast some of you into prison,
 “ be tried, and ye shall have tribulation ten days.”

Here are four remarkable limitations upon Satan and his
 reference to the people of God: a limitation as to the *persons*
 but some; a limitation of the *punishment*, a prison, not
 hell; a limitation upon them as to the *end*, for trial, not
 lastly, as to the *duration*, not as long as they please,

REFLECTION.

O my soul! what marrow and fatness, comfort and
 mayest thou suck from the breast of this truth in the
 of trouble? Thou seest how the flowing seas drive
 the earth. Who has arrested it in its course, and stoppeth

Thus the fiercest element is repressed by the feeblest things: thou seest also how full of wrath and fury wicked men are, how they rage like the troubled sea, and threaten to overwhelm thee, and all the Lord's inheritance: and then the floods of ungodly men make thee afraid; yet are they restrained by an invisible, gracious hand, that they cannot execute their purpose, nor perform their enterprize. How full of devils and devilized men is this lower world? Yet, in the midst of them all, hast thou hitherto been preserved. O! my soul, admire and adore that glorious power of God, by which thou art kept unto salvation. Is not the preservation of a saint in the midst of such host of enemies as great a miracle, though not so sensible as the preservation of those three noble Jews in the midst of the fiery furnace, Daniel in the den of lions? For there is as strong a propension of Satan and wicked men, to destroy the saints, as in the fire to burn, or the lion to devour. O! then, let me cheerfully address myself to the faithful discharge of my duty, and stand no longer in a slavish fear of creatures, who can have no power against me but what is given them from above, John xix. 11. And no more shall be given than shall turn to the glory of God, Psal. lxxvi. 10. and the advantage of my soul. Rom. viii. 28.

THE POEM.

THIS world's a forest, where, from day to day,
 Bears, wolves, and lions, range and seek their prey;
 Amidst them all poor harmless lambs are fed,
 And by their very dens in safety led.
 They roar upon us, but are held in chains;
 Our shepherd is their keeper, he maintains
 Our lot. Why then should we so trembling stand?
 We meet them, true, but in their keeper's hand.
 He that to raging seas such bounds hath put,
 The mouths of rav'nous beasts can also shut.
 Sleep in the woods, poor lambs, yourselves repose
 Upon his care, whose eyes do never close.
 If unbelief in you don't lose their chain,
 Fear not their struggling, that's but all in vain.
 If God can check the waves by smallest sand,
 A twined thread may hold these in his hand.
 Shun sin, keep close to Christ; for other evils
 You need not fear, tho' compass'd round with devils.

they can coast a little way by the shore, yet they dare not go far into the ocean without it: it is their guide, and directs their course for them: and if by the violence of wind and waves they are driven beside their due course, yet by the help of this guide, they are reduced, and brought to rights again. It is wonderful to observe, by the help of this guide, they can run in a direct line many leagues, and at last fall right with the smallest island; whereas the ocean comparatively, but as the head of a small pin upon a

APPLICATION.

What the compass and all other mathematical instruments are to the navigator, that and much more is the word of God to the Christian, to direct his course to heaven. This is our compass to steer our course by, if it is truly touched; he that orders his conversation by this rule, will arrive in heaven at last. Gal. vi. 16. "As many as walk by this rule, peace be on them and mercy."

This word is as necessary to us in our way to glory, as a lantern or a lantern is in a dark night, Psal. cxix. 105. that is a light in a dark place, till the day dawn, and the day-star arise. 2 Pet. i. 19. If any that profess to know it and own it, do not arrive in heaven at last, let them not blame the word for misguiding them, but their own negligent and deceitful hearts, that shuffle in their shape not their course and conversation according to its

What blame can you lay upon the compass, if you steer by it? How many are there, that neglecting this rule, will never arrive in heaven by their own reason? No wonder such fall short in the way. This is a faithful guide, and brings all that follow it to a blessed end; "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and thy hand shall uphold me," Psal. lxxiii. 24. The hundred and nineteenth psalm is spent in commendation of this rule, for its prudent excellency and usefulness. Luther professed that he valued it highly, that he would not take the whole world in exchange for it. Lay but this rule before you, and walk according to it, and you cannot be out of your way to heaven, Psal. cxix. 105. "I have chosen the way of truth, (or the true way;) thy statutes have I laid before me." Some indeed have opened their blasphemous mouths against it; as Julian, that vile heretic, feared not to say, there was as good matter in Phocillon, in Pindarus's odes, as in David's psalms.

And the papists generally slight it, making it a lame, invalid guide, yea, making their own traditions the touchstone of doctrine.

tions. And thus do they make it void, or, as the word *μηδυναι* signifies, Matth. xv. 6. unlord it, and take away its authority and rule. But those that have thus slighted it, and followed the by-paths unto which their corrupt hearts have led them, they take not hold of the paths of life, and are now in the depths of hell. All other lights to which men pretend, in the neglect of this, are but false fires that will lead men into the pits and bogs of destruction at last.

REFLECTION.

And is thy word a compass, to direct my course to glory? O where am I then like to arrive at last, that in all my course have neglected it, and steered according to the counsel of my own heart! Lord, have not made thy word the man of my council, but consulted with flesh and blood; I have not enquired at this oracle, nor studied it, and made it the guide of my way, but walked after the sight of mine eyes, and the lust of my heart. Whither, Lord! can I come at last but to hell, after this way of reckoning? Some have slighted thy word professedly, and I have slighted it practically. I have a precious soul embarked for eternity, it is now floating on a dangerous ocean, rocks and sands on every side, and I go a-drift before every wind of temptation, and know not where I am. Ah, Lord! convince me of the danger of this condition. O convince me of my ignorance of thy word, and the fatal consequence and issue thereof. Lord, let me now resolve to study, prize, and obey it; hide it in my heart, that I may not sin against it. Open my understanding, that I may understand the scriptures; open my heart to entertain it in love. O thou that hast been so gracious to give a perfect rule, give me a perfect heart to walk by that rule to glory!

THE POEM.

THIS world's a sea, wherein a num'rous fleet
Of ships are under sail. Here you shall meet
Of ev'ry rate and size; frigates, galleons,
The nimble ketches, and small pickeroons:
Some bound to this port; some where winds and weather
Will drive them, they are bound they know not whither.
Some steer away for heaven, some for hell;
'To which some steer, themselves can hardly tell.
The winds do shape their course, which tho' it blow
From any point, before it they must go.
They are directed by the wind and tide,
That have no compass to direct and guide:

O let me understand, and be so wise,
 To know upon what point my country lies :
 And having set my course directly thither,
 Great God preserve me in the foulest weather.
 By reason some will coast it; but I fear,
 Such coasters never will drop anchor there.
 Thy word is truly touch'd, and still directs
 A proper course, which my base heart neglects.
 Lord, touch my iron heart, and make it stand
 Pointing to thee its loadstone. To that land
 Of rest above, let ev'ry tempest drive
 My soul, where it would rather be than live.

CHAP. XVII.

*Look as the sea, by turns, doth ebb and flow
 So their estates, that use it, come and go.*

OBSERVATION.

THE sea hath its alternate course and motion, its flowings; no sooner is it high water, but it begins to ebb, and leave the shore naked and dry, which but a little before was covered and overflowed. And as its tide, so also its waves are of inconstancy, still rolling and tumbling, this way and that, and then fixed and quiet. *Instabilis unda: as fickle as a wave* is a proverb, See Jam. i. 6. "He that wavereth is like a ship driven with the wind, and tossed." So Isa. xli. 26. "cannot rest."

APPLICATION.

Thus mutable and inconstant are all outward things depending on them: nothing of any substance, or any continuance in them, 1 Cor. vii. 31. "The fashion of this world passeth away." It is an high point of folly to depend upon such things. Prov. xxiii. 5. "Why wilt thou set (or, as it is in the Hebrew) thine eyes to fly upon that which is not? For riches make themselves wings, and fly away, as an eagle toward heaven. In flying to us (saith Augustine) they have, *alas vixit serinas*, scarce a sparrow's wings; but in flying from us, they have an eagle. And those wings they are said to make to themselves, the cause of its transitoriness is in itself; the creature

estate and honour, and stands in the world as a bare dry stalk in a field, whose flower, beauty, and bravery are gone: one puff of wind blows it away, one churlish easterly blast shrivels it up, 1 Pet. iv.

How mad a thing is it, then, for any man to be lifted up in pride upon such a vanity as this is! to build so lofty and over-jetting a tower upon such a feeble, tottering foundation! We have seen meadows of such curious flowers, mown down and withered; men of great estates impoverished suddenly; and when, like a meadow that is mown, they have begun to recover themselves again, (as the phrase is) the Lord hath sent "grasshoppers in the beginning of the shooting up," "the latter growth," Amos vii. 2. Just as the grasshoppers and other creatures, devour the second tender herbage as soon as the field begins to recover its verdure; so men, after they have been humbled and blasted by Providence, they begin after a while to flourish again; but then comes some new affliction and blasts all. None have more frequent experience of this than you that are merchants and seamen, whose estates are floating; and yet such as have had the highest security in the eye of reason, have, notwithstanding, experienced the vanity of these things. Henry IV. a potent prince was reduced to such a low ebb, that he petitioned for a prebend's place in the church of Spire. Gallimer, king of the Vandals, was brought low, that he sent to his friends for a sponge, a loaf of bread, and a harp: a sponge to dry up his tears, a loaf of bread to maintain his life, and an harp to solace him in his misery. The story of Bellisarius is very affecting: he was a man famous in his time, general of an army, yet having his eyes put out, and stripped of all earthly comforts, was led about crying, *Date obolum Bellisario*. Give one penny to poor Bellisarius. Instances in history of this kind are infinite. Men of the greatest estates and honours have nevertheless become the very *ludibria fortunæ*, as one speaks, the very scorn of fortune.

Yea, and not only wicked men that have gotten their estates by rapine and oppression, have lived to see them thus scattered by Providence: but sometimes godly men have had their estates, how just soever acquired, thus scattered by providence also. Whoever had a great estate, better gotten, better bottomed, or better managed, than Job's, yet all was overthrown and swept away in a moment; though God showed mercy to him, as the issue demonstrated.

Oh then! what a vanity is it to set the heart, and let out the affections on them! you can never depend too much upon God, nor too little upon the creature, 1 Tim. vi. 17. "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded and trust in

I am to enrich my soul with solid and everlasting treasure, ever a sensual lust should be more operative in them than of God in me! O my soul, thou dost not lay out thy earnestness for heaven with any proportion to what the world. I have indeed higher motives, and a surer reward, but as I have an advantage above them herein, so they have an advantage above me in the strength and entireness of the motives by which they are acted. What they do for the world, they do with all their might; they have no contrary principle to oppose their thoughts, strength, and affections are entirely carried in one channel; but I find "a law in my members warring against a law of my mind;" I must strive through a thousand difficulties and contradictions to the discharge of a duty. O my God, may my heart be more enlarged in zeal, love, and delight in thy things than theirs are after their lusts? O let me once find it so.

Again, is the creature so vain and unstable? Then why are my affections so hot and eager after it? And why am I so drawn out upon its beauty, especially when God is staining all its beauty with glory! Jer. xlv. 5, 6. Surely it is unbecoming the spirit of a Christian at any time, but at such a time we may say of it, as Abithophel's counsel, "It is not good at this time."

O that my spirit were raised above them, and my feet were more in heaven! O that like that angel, Rev. x. 1, 2. he came down from heaven, and set one foot upon the sea, and another upon the earth, having a crown upon his head, so I might tread upon all the cares, fears, and terrors of the world, and all the tempting splendor and glory of the world, tread underfoot in the dust, and crowning myself with nothing but excellencies and glory!

THE POEM.

JUDGE in thyself, O Christian! is it meet
To set thy heart on what beasts set their feet?
'Tis no hyperbole, if you be told,
You dig for dross with mattocks made of gold.
Affections are too costly to bestow
Upon the fair-fac'd nothings here below.
The eagle scorns to fall down from on high,
(The proverb saith) to catch the silly fly.
And can a Christian leave the face of God,
To embrace th' earth, or doat upon a clod?

Or like the silly bird that to her nest
Doth carry straws, and never is at rest,
Till it be feather'd well, but doth not see
The axe beneath, that's hewing down the tree.
If on a thorn thy heart itself repose
With such delight, what if it were a rose?
Admire, O saint, the wisdom of thy God,
Who of the self-same tree doth make a rod,
Lest thou shouldst surfeit on forbidden fruit,
And live not like a saint, but like a brute.

CHAP. XVIII.

*Like hungry lions, waves for sinners gape :
Leave then your sins behind, if you'll escape.*

OBSERVATION.

THE waves of the sea are sometimes raised by God's commission to be executioners of his threatenings upon sinners. When J fled from the presence of the Lord to Tarshish, the text saith, " Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mi " tempest, so that the ship was like to be broken," Jonah These were God's bailiffs to arrest the run-away prophet. And exlviii. 8. The stormy winds are said to *fulfil his word*; not his word of command, in rising when God bids them, but his of *threatening* also. And hence it is called a *destroying wind*, li. 1. and a *stormy wind in God's fury*, Ezek. xiii. 18.

APPLICATION.

If these be the executioners of God's threatenings, how sad is their condition that put forth to sea under the guilt of all their Or, if God should commissionate the winds to go after and a thee for all thou owest him, where art thou then? How dare put forth under the power of a divine threat, before all be cle betwixt God and thee? Sins in scripture are called debts, M vi. 12. They are debts to God; not that we owe them to him ought to sin, but *metonymically*, because they render the sinner noxious to God's judgments, even as pecuniary debts oblige him hath not wherewith to pay, to suffer punishment. All sinners undergo the curse, either in their own person, according to the press letter of the law, Gen. ii. 17. Gal. iii. 10. or their surety cording to the tacit intent of the law, manifested to be the mi

“And be sure thy sin will find thee out, wherever thou shalt go,” Numb. xxxii. 23. i. e. God’s revenging hand for sin will be against thee. Thou mayest lose the sight and memory of thy sins, but God will not the sight of thee; they follow after, as the hound doth the running game upon the scent, till they have fetched thee up to the bar to consider, “How fearful a thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God,” Heb. x. 31. How soon may a storm bring thee before the bar of God?

REFLECTION.

O my soul, what a case art thou in, if this be so? Art thou laden with sins yet upon thine own score? Hast not thou made light of his blood and that precious blood of his, and hitherto persisted in rebellion against him? And what can the issue of this be at last? There is abundant mercy indeed for returning sinners; but grace speaks of none for persisting and impenitent sinners. How many who are going on in their sins are overtaken by grace, and find there is no grace promised to such as go on in sin. O! if God should call me by the next storm, and call me to an account for all my sins, I must then lie in the prison of hell to all eternity, and never pay the debt; nay, all the angels in heaven cannot ransom me. Being christless, I am under all the curses in the book of the child of Hagar. Lord pity and spare me a little longer, till I bring thee thy Christ unto me, and give me faith in his blood, and thou art fully satisfied at once, and I discharged for ever. O my soul, pay the debt at my hand, for then thou wilt never be satisfied till thou art acquitted. What profit, Lord, is there in my blood! O my soul, come with haste to this Christ, thy refuge city; thou knowest not how soon thy avenger of blood may overtake thee.

THE POEM.

THY sins are debts, God puts them to account
Canst tell, poor wretch, to what thy debts amount
Thou fill’st the treasure of thy sins each hour.
Into his vials God doth also pour
Proportionable wrath: Thou seest it not;
But yet assure thyself, there’s drop for drop.
For every sand of patience running out,
A drop of wrath runs in. Soul, look about!
God’s treasure’s almost full, as well as thine:
When both are full, O then the dreadful time
Of reck’ning comes; thou shalt not gain a day
Of patience more, but there hastes away

The sum is great, but if a Christ thou get,
 Fear not, a prince can pay a beggar's debt.
 Now if the storm should rise, thou need'st not fear;
 Thou art, but the delinquent is not there.
 A pardon'd soul to sea may boldly go:
 He fears not bailiffs, that doth nothing owe.

CHAP. XIX.

*To save the ship, rich lading's cast away,
 Thy soul is shipwreck'd if thy lusts do stay.*

OBSERVATION.

IN storms and distresses at sea, the richest commodities are overboard; they stand not upon it, when life and all is in jeopardy and hazard, Jonah i. 5. The mariners cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it. And, Acts xxvii. 18. they cast out the very tacklings of the ship. How highly do men prize such commodities, yet reason tells them, it were better these should perish, than life. Satan himself could say, Job
 "Skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life."

APPLICATION.

And surely, it is every way as highly reasonable, that men should mortify, cast out, and cut off their dearest lusts, rather than their mortal souls should sink and perish in the storm of God's wrath. Life indeed is a precious treasure, and highly valued by men: You know what Solomon saith, Eccl. ix. 4. That "a living dog is better than a dead lion." And we find men willing to part with their estates, limbs, or any outward comfort for the preservation of it. The woman in the gospel spent all she had on the physicians for her healing, a degree below life. Some men indeed do much overvalue their lives, and part with Christ and peace of conscience for it; but that thus saves it, shall lose. Now if life be so much worth, what then is the soul worth? Alas! life is but "a vapour, which appears for a little while, and then vanisheth away," Jam. iv. 14.

Life indeed is more worth than all the world, but my soul is more worth than ten thousand lives. *Nature* teacheth you to value the first so high, and *grace* should teach you to value the second much higher. Mat. xix. 20. Now here is the case: Either you must part with your sins, or with your souls; if these be not cast out, both must sink.

REFLECTION.

And must sin or the soul perish? Must my life, yea, life go for it if I spare it? O then let me not be cruel to soul in sparing my sin; O my soul, this foolish pity and clemency will be thy ruin: If I spare it, God hath said, "I will spare me," Deut. xxvi. 20. It is true the pains of men are sharp, but yet is easier than the pains of hell. To cut off a hand, or pluck out a right eye is hard; but to have my soul eternally from God is harder. Is it as easy (O my soul!) to send them in hell, as to mortify them on earth? Surely, it is "for me, that one member perish, rather than that all be lost," Matt. v. 24. I see the merchant willing to pay his wares if embarked with them in a storm: And those that have mangled legs or arms, willingly stretch them out to be cut off to serve life: And shall I be willing to endure no difficulties for Christ reckoned souls worth his blood: And is it not worth denial? Lord, let me not warm a snake in my bosom, lest it last sting me to the heart.

THE POEM.

THY soul's the ship, its lading is its lusts,
 God's judgments, stormy winds, and dangerous gusts,
 Conscience the master; but the stubborn will
 Goes *supra cargo*, and doth keep the bill:
 Affections are the men. The winds do rise,
 The storm increases: Conscience gives advice
 To throw those lusts o'erboard, and so to ease
 The vessel, which else cannot keep the seas.
 The will opposes, and th' affections say,
 The master's counsel they will not obey.
 The case is dang'rous, that no man can doubt,
 Who sees the storm within, and that without.
 Lusts and affections cannot part; no, rather,
 They are resolv'd to swim or sink together.
 Conscience still strives, but they cannot abide
 That it or reason should the case decide
 Lust knows that reason, in like cases, still
 Determines well: Then chuse ye whom ye will.
 Shall make the devil judge? This case has been
 Before him, and he judg'd that skin for skin,

CHAP. XX.

*Christ, with a word, can surging waves appease :
His voice a troubled soul can quickly ease.*

OBSERVATION.

WHEN the sea works, and is tempestuous, it is not in the power of any creature to appease it. When the Egyptians would by hieroglyphics express an impossibility, they did it by the picture of a man treading upon the waves. It is storied of Canute, an ancient Danish king, that when a mighty storm of flattery arose upon him he appeased it by shewing that he could not appease the sea : one of his courtiers told him as he rode near the sea-side, ‘Thou art Lord of the sea as well as land.’ ‘Well, (said the king) we will see that by and by ;’ and so went to the water-side, and with a loud voice cried, ‘O ye seas and waves, come no further, touch not my shore.’ But the sea came up notwithstanding that charge, and confuted the flattery. But now Jesus Christ hath command of them indeed : he said of him, Mat. viii. 20. *That he rebuked them.* And Mark iv. 39. *He quieted them with a word, Peace, be still ;* as one would hush a child, and it obeyed him.

APPLICATION.

Conscience, when awakened by the terrors of the Lord, is like a raging tempestuous sea ; so it works, so it roars ; and it is not in the power of all creatures to hush or quiet it. Spiritual terrors, as well as spiritual consolations are not known till felt. O when the arrows of the Almighty are shot into the spirit, and the terrors of God set themselves in array against the soul ; when the venom of those arrows drink up the spirits, and those armies of terrors charge violently and successively upon it, as Job vi. 4. What creature then is able to stand before them ! Even God’s own dear children have felt such terrors as have *distracted them*, Psal. lxxxi. 15. Conscience is the seat of guilt : it is like a burning glass, so it contracts the beams of the threatenings, twists them together, and reflects them on the soul, till it smoke, scorch, and flame. If the wrath of the king be like the roaring of a lion, then what is the Almighty’s wrath ! which is *burning wrath*, Job xix. 11. *Tearing wrath*, Psal. l. 22. *Surprising wrath*, Job xx. 23. And *abiding wrath*, Job iii. 36.

In this case no creature can relieve : all are physicians of no value ; some under these terrors have thought hell more tolerable, and have with a violent hand have thrust themselves out of the world into it to avoid these gnawings : Yet Jesus Christ can quickly calm these mys-

man, justice and mercy meet and kiss each other, Eph. i. hence fetches in peace to the soul, Rom. v. 1.

REFLECTION.

Can none appease a troubled conscience but Christ? Thy my soul, to understand, and daily more and more to save, precious name, even Jesus, that delivers not only from the wrath but that which is felt here also. O, if the foretaste of hell be able, if a few drops, let fall on the conscience in this life be and insufferable, what is it to have all the vials poured out, when there shall be nothing to divert, mitigate, or

Here men have somewhat to abate those terrors, so mercy, at least a possibility: but there is none. O my soul, thou loaded with guilt! and what a *Magormissabib* would should God rouse that sleepy lion in thy bosom! My comfort at all the better because my conscience is quiet. Ah, coming when it must awake, and will lighten and thunder within me, if I get not into Christ the sooner. O Lord, the power of thy wrath? O let me not carry this guilt world with me, to maintain those everlasting flames, let sleep to mine eyes, nor slumber to mine eye-lids, till I find fort of that blood of sprinkling, which alone speaketh peace.

THE POEM.

AMONG the dreadful works of God, I find
No *metaphors* to paint a troubled mind.

I think on this, now that, and yet will neither
Come fully up, though all be put together.

'Tis like the raging sea that casts up mire,
Or like to *Ætna*, breathing smoke and fire;
Or like a roused lion, fierce and fell;

Or like those furies that do howl in hell.

O conscience! who can stand before thy power,
Endure thy gripes and twinges but an hour?

Stone, gout, strappado, racks, whatever is
Dreadful to sense, is but a toy to this.

No pleasures, riches, honours, friends can tell
How to give ease: In this 'tis like to hell.

Call for the pleasant timbrel, lute, and harp;
Alas! the music howls, the pain's too sharp
For these to charm, divert, or lull asleep:

These cannot reach it, no, the wound's too deep.

NAVIGATION SPIRITUALIZED.

There goes a pow'r, with his majestic voice,
To hush the dreadful storm, and still its noise.
Who would but fear and love this glorious Lord,
That can rebuke such tempests with a word?

CHAP. XXI.

*Our food out of the sea God doth command;
Yet few therein take notice of his hand.*

OBSERVATION.

THE providence of God in furnishing us with such plenty variety of fish, is not slightly to be past over. We have not several sorts of fish in our own seas, which are caught in their sons; but from several parts, especially the western parts of England, many sail of ships are sent yearly to the American parts of world; as Newfoundland, New-England, &c. Whence every is brought home, not only enough to supply our own nation, many thousand pounds worth also yearly returned from Spain, other countries; by which trade many thousand families do sub

APPLICATION.

But now, what returns do we make to heaven for these mercies? O what notice is taken of the good hand of Providence, which supplies and feeds us with the blessings of the sea? I fear there but few that own, or act in submission to it, and are careful to return according to received benefit. Men do not consider, "That thy works are in the hand of God," Eccl. ix. 1. And even those who have the most immediate dependence upon Providence, as merchants and seamen, yet are very prone to undertake designs in the confidence of their own wisdom and industry; not looking higher for the blessing, Jam. iv. 13. They often "sacrifice to their own net, and burn incense to their drag, because by them their portion is fat, their meat plenteous," Hab. i. 16. viz. They attribute what is due to God unto the creature: now this is a sin highly provoking to the Lord; for look in what degree the heart cleaves to the second cause, in the same degree it departs from the living God, Jer. x. 5.

And how do you think the blessed God will take it, to see himself thus debased, and the creature thus exalted into his place: to see you carry yourselves to the creature as to a God, and to the blessed

But certainly all endeavours will be unsanctified, if not which God is not eyed and engaged.

“ It is in vain for you to rise up early, and sit up late, to eat bread of sorrows; for so he giveth his beloved sorrow. xxxvii. 2. i. e. It is to no purpose for men to beat their heads against the wall, and rack their consciences for an estate. The way of acquiring and enjoying the creature, is by submitting to the will of God, in a prudent and diligent, yet moderate and lawful means: Nothing can thrive with us till then.

REFLECTION.

Why then should I disquiet myself in vain; and rob myself of peace, by these unbelieving cares and distractions? O thou my sin! I have acted, as if my condition had been at my choice. I have eyed creatures and means too much, and God too little. I have my hands hanged down with discouragement, my hopes are causes have disappeared, or wrought cross to my designs. I am ready to transfer the fault on this thing, or that! And how apt am I to be vainly lifted up in carnal confidence, when I am self competently furnished with creature munition, and arms. Oh, what a God-provoking wickedness, is this! How providence checked my carnal presumption, and dashed my projects? Yet have I not owned it, as I ought, and submitted. Oh, it is a wonder this hath not closed the hand of providence upon me, and pulled down a curse upon all! Ah Lord, let me be brought to acquaint myself with thee, then shall I decree a testimony shall be established,” Job xxii. 28.

THE POEM.

IN all the gifts of God we should advance
His glorious name; not say, it came by chance.
Or to the idol of our prudence pay
The tribute of our praise, and go our way.
The waves do clap their hands, and in their kind
Acknowledge God; and what! are they more blind
That float upon them? Yea, for what they get
They offer sacrifices to their net.
This is your manner, thus to work you go:
Confess the naked truth; is't not so?
This net was wisely cast, 'tis full, 'tis full:
O well done mates, this is a gallant pull.

CHAP. XXII.

*Whilst thou by art the silly fish doth kill,
Perchance the devil's hook sticks in thy gill.*

OBSERVATION.

THERE is skill in fishing; they that go to sea in a fishing voyage use to go provided with their craft (as they very fitly call it) without which they can do nothing. They have their lines, hooks of several sizes, and their bait. They carefully observe their season when the fish fall in, then they ply their business day and night.

APPLICATION.

But how much more skilful and industrious is Satan to ensnare and destroy souls? The devil makes a voyage as well as you; he has his baits for you, as you have for the fish: He hath his devices and wiles to catch souls, 2 Cor. ii. 11. Eph. vi. 11. He is a serpent, an old serpent, Rev. xii. 9. Too crafty for man in his perfection, much more in his collapsed and degenerated state, his understanding being cracked by the fall, and all his faculties poisoned and perverted.

Divines observe four steps, or degrees of Satan's tempting power.

First, He can find out the constitution-evils of men; he knows to what sin their natures are more especially prone, and inclinable.

Secondly, He can propound suitable objects to those lusts, he exactly and fully hit every man's humour: as Agrippa mixed poison in that meat her husband loved best.

Thirdly, He can inject and cast motions into the mind, to combat with those tempting objects; as it is said of Judas, John xiii. "The devil put it into his heart."

Fourthly, He can solicit, irritate, and provoke the heart, and those continual restless solicitations weary it: and hereby he overdraws men to commit such things as startled them in the first motion.

All this he can do, if he finds the work sticks, and meets with resistance and difficulties; yet doth he not act to the utmost of his skill and power, at all times, and with all persons; neither indeed need he so; the very propounding of an object is enough to some, without any further solicitation; the devil makes an easy conquest of them.

And, beside all this, his policy much appears in the election of place, time, and instruments to tempt by: And thus are poor souls caught, "as fishes in an evil net," Eccl. ix. 12. The carnal man is led by sense, as the beast; and Satan handles and fits him accordingly.

the fatal hook in their jaws, and thus they are led captive at his will.

REFLECTION.

And is Satan so subtil and industrious to entice souls? he thus cast out his golden baits, and allure souls with pleasure to ruin? Then how doth it behove thee, O my soul, to be wary! how strict a guard should I set upon every sense, not so much regard how sin comes towards me in the temptation, how it goes off at last. The day in which Sodom was consumed began with a pleasant sun-shine, but ended in fire and ruin. I may promise myself much content in the satisfaction of sin. But O how certainly will it end in my ruin? Ahab doubted himself much content in the vineyard of Naboth, but lost it for it in the portion of Jezreel. The harlot's bed was set to entice the simple young man, Prov. vii. 17. But those chambers of light proved the chambers of death, and her house the house of death. Ah! with what a smiling face doth sin come on towards temptations? how doth it tickle the carnal fancy, and deceive the heart? But what a dreadful catastrophe and upbraidment. The delight is quickly gone; but the guilt thereof remains, and terrify the soul with ghastly forms, and dreadful revelations of the wrath of God. As sin hath its delights attending it, and fasten it, so it hath its horrors and stings to torment. And as certainly as I see those go before it to make a way, shall I find these follow after, and tread upon its heels. When the conscience is awakened, but all those delights vanish like a vision, or as a dream when one awakes; and then I shall find the hook, but where is the bait? Here is the guilt and the punishment, where the delight that I was promised? And I, whither shall I go? Ah, my deceitful lusts! you have enticed and led me into the midst of all miseries.

THE POEM.

THERE's skill in fishing, that the devil knows,
For when for souls Satan a fishing goes,
He angles cunningly; he knows he must
Exactly fit the bait unto the lust.
He studies constitution, place and time,
He guesses what is his delight, what thine:
And so accordingly prepares the bait,
Whilst he himself lies closely hid, to wait
When thou wilt nibble at it. Dost incline

O think on this! when you cast in the hook,
 Say, Thus for my poor soul doth Satan look.
 O play not with temptations, do not swallow
 The sugar'd bait, consider what will follow.
 If once he hitch thee, then away he draws
 Thy captive soul close pris'ner in his paws.

CHAP. XXIII.

*Doth trading fail, and voyages prove bad;
 If you cannot discern the cause, 'tis sad.*

OBSERVATION.

THERE are many sad complaints abroad (and, I think not without cause) that trade fails, nothing turns to account. And though all countries are open and free for traffic, a general peace with all nations, yet there seems to be a dearth, a secret curse upon trading. Y^e run from country to country, and come losers home. Men can hardly render a reason of it; few hit the right cause of this judgment.

APPLICATION.

That prosperity and success in trade are from the blessing of God. I suppose few are so *atheistical*, as once to deny or question. The devil himself acknowledges it, Job i. 10. "Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land." It is not in the power of any man to get riches, Deut. viii. 18. "Thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth." It is his blessing that makes good men rich, and his permission that makes wicked men rich. That maxim comes from hell, *Quisque fortunæ suæ faber*: Every man is the contriver of his own condition. Certainly, "The good of man is not in his own hand," Job xxi. 16. "Promotion cometh not from the east, nor the west," Psal. lxxvi. 6, 7.

This being acknowledged, it is evident that in all disappointments and want of success in our callings, we ought not to stick in secondary causes, but to look higher, even to the hand and disposal of God. For whose it is to give the blessing, his also it is to withhold. And this is as clear in scripture as the other: It is the Lord that takes away the fishes of the sea, Hos. iv. 3. Zeph. i. 3. "It is the Lord that curseth our blessings," Mal. ii. 3.

sins among many others, that provoke the Lord to employments.

1. Our undertaking designs without prayer. Alas! let us begin with God! interest him in our dealings, and give him the direction at his mouth. Prayer is that which sanctifies our employments and enjoyments, 1 Tim. iv. 5. The very saying, *A Jove principium*. They must begin with God, who had more prayers, and fewer oaths!

2. Injustice and fraud in our dealings. A sin to which we are prone, as appears by that expression, Hos. xii. 7. which will blast all your enjoyments.

3. An over-earnest endeavour after the world. Men, in their business, they will be rich: and hence it is, they are unmerciful to themselves, in wearying and wasting their time with carking cares, but to such also as they employ; neglecting the souls or bodies of men: scarce affording them the Lord's day, (as has been too common in our Newfangled employments,) or if they have it, yet they are so worn out with labours, that that precious time is spent either in sleep or idleness. It is no wonder God gives you more rest than you would have; that day of rest hath been no better improved. That hath not been the least cause of our undoing.

Lastly, Our abuse of prosperity, when God gave it, and made mercies the food and fuel of our lusts. When we had the confluence of outward blessings, "this made us kick against the goad," as, Deut. xxxiii. 15. "forget God," Deut. iv. 14. yea, we abuse our strength and riches, Ezek. xvi. 13. and Jer. ii. 31. How many of us in the days of our prosperity, behaved ourselves as hophaphat did? 2 Chron. xvii. 5, 6. "He had silver and gold in abundance, and his heart was lifted up in the way of his commandments;" not in pride and insolence.

REFLECTION.

Are these the sins that blast our blessings, and wither our mercies? O then let me cease to wonder it is no better, and rather let me be content it is no worse with me; that my neglect of prayer, injustice, earthly-mindedness, and abuse of former mercies have provoked God to strip me naked of all my enjoyments. Let me accept from the Lord the punishment of my iniquities, and lay his hand upon my mouth. And O that these disappointments might convince me of the creature's vanity, and cause me to leave all other trade for heaven; then shall I adore thy wisdom, O God, and praise thy name for ever.

“ A little that a righteous man hath, is better than the riches
 “ many wicked,” Psal. xxxvii. 16.

THE POEM.

THERE's great complaint abroad that trading's bad,
 You shake your head, and cry, 'Tis sad, 'tis sad.
 Merchants lay out their stock, seamen their pains,
 And in their eye they both may keep their gains.
 Your fishing fails, you wonder why 'tis so,
 'Tis this (saith one) or that; but I say—no,
 'Twill ne'er be well till you confess and say,
 It is our sin that frights the fish away.
 No wonder all goes into bags with holes,
 Since so the gospel hath been in your souls.
 We kick'd like Jeshurun, when the flowing tide
 Of wealth came tumbling in, this nourish'd pride.
 'Twixt soul and body, now I wish it may
 Fare, as betwixt the Jews and us this day
 O that our outward want and loss may be
 To us a soul-enriching poverty!
 If disappointments here advance the trade
 For heaven, then complain not; you have made
 The richest voyage, and your empty ships
 Return deep laden with soul-benefits.

CHAP. XXIV.

*In seas the greater fish the less devour:
 So some men crush all those within their power.*

OBSERVATION.

THERE are fishes of prey in the sea, as well as birds and beasts of prey on the land. Our seamen tell us, how the devouring whales, sharks, dolphins, and other fishes, follow the caplein, and other smaller fish, and devour multitudes of them. It is frequent with us in our own seas to find several smaller fish in the bellies of the greater ones; yea, I have often heard seamen say, that the poor fry, when pursued are so sensible of the danger, that they sometimes seen multitudes of them cast themselves upon the shore and perish there to avoid the danger of being devoured by the

APPLICATION.

Thus cruel, merciless, and oppressive are wicked men, whose

geance, Exod. xxii. 23. "If thou afflict the widow and
 "less, and they cry unto me, I will surely hear their cry."
 27. "I will hear his cry, for I am gracious. Nay, God
 only hear their cry, but avenge their quarrel. That is a
 text, 1 Thes. iv. 6. "That no man go beyond and defra
 "ther in any matter, because that the Lord is the [ave
 "such." This word **avenger*, is but once more used
Testament, Rom. xiii. 4. and there it is applied to the
 trate, who is to see execution done upon offenders. But
 a sin that sometimes may be out of the reach of man's
 therefore God himself will be their avenger. You may
 the poor in this world, and it may be they cannot conte
 at man's bar, therefore God will bring you before his b

Believe it, sirs, it is a sin so provoking to God, that h
 it escape without severe punishment, sooner or later. T
 Habakkuk, chap. i. ver. 13. wondered how the holy Go
 bear such till the general day of reckoning, and that he
 exemplary vengeance on them in this life. "Thou
 "eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look upon iniqu
 "fore then lookest thou upon them that deal treache
 "holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the
 "more righteous than he?" And Prov. xxiii. 10, 11.
 "into the fields of the fatherless," i. e. of the poor a
 But why is it more dangerous violently to invade their
 another's? The reason is added, "for their Redeemer
 "and he shall plead their cause with thee." It may
 not able to retain a counsel to plead their cause here
 God will plead their cause for them.

REFLECTION.

Turn in upon thyself (O my soul) and consider, hast th
 guilty of this crying sin! Have I not (when a servant) o
 and defrauded others, and filled my master's house with
 deceit? and so brought myself under that dreadful threat
 i. 9. Or since I came to trade and deal upon mine own ac
 not the balances of deceit been in my hand? I have (it m
 many in my service and employment; have not I used t
 without reward, and so am under that woe? Jer. xxii.
 given them wages proportionable to their work? Isa. lv
 bad payment and unjust deductions and allowances, defi
 of a part of their due? Mal. iii. 5. or at least delayed p
 of a covetous disposition to gain by it; whilst their nece

against them, breaking their estates? O my soul, examine thy
 upon these particulars: rest not quiet until this guilt be removed
 the application of the blood of sprinkling. Hath not the Lord s
 Jam. ii. 13. "That they shall have judgment without mercy, t
 "have shewed no mercy? And is it not a fearful thing to fall i
 "the hands of the living God, who hath said, He will take v
 "geance for these things?"

THE POEM.

DEVOURING whales, and rav'nous sharks do follow
 The lesser fry, at one gulp to swallow
 Some hundreds of them, as our seamen say:
 But we can tell far stranger things than they.
 For we have sharks ashore on every creek,
 That to devour poor men do hunt and seek.
 No pity, sense, or bowels in them be,
 Nay, have they not put off humanity?
 Extortioners and cheaters, whom God hates
 Have dreadful open mouths, and through those gates
 Brave persons with their heritages pass
 In fun'ral state, friends crying out, alas!
 O give me Agur's wish, that I may never
 Be such myself, nor feel the hands of either.
 And as for those that in their paw's are grip'd,
 Pity and rescue, Lord, from that sad plight.
 When I behold the squeaking lark, that's borne
 In faulcon's talons, crying, bleeding, torn;
 I pity its sad case, and would relieve
 The prisoner, if I could, as well as grieve.
 Fountain of pity! hear the piteous moans
 Of all thy captive and oppressed ones.

 CHAP. XXV.

*In storms to spread much sail endangers all:
 So carnal mirth, if God for mourning call.*

OBSERVATION.

IN storms at sea, the wise navigator will not spread much sa
 that is the way to lose masts and all. They use then to furl
 the sails, and lie a hull, when not able to bear a knot of sail, or e
 to lie a try, or scud before the wind and seas. It is no time the

It contemneth the rod of my son as every tree." i. e. A common rod and ordinary affliction : whereas the rod of such as may be had of every tree ; but it is an iron rod to pise it, Psal. ii. 9. O it is a provoking evil, and commeverely punishes it. Of all persons such speed worst in calamity. Amos vi. 1. " Woe to them that are at ease ; ' are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph," as ver. 6. (as one observes upon the text) they did not laugh at jests upon him ; but they did not condole with him. And be their punishment ? see ver. 7. " Therefore now shall " tive with the first that go captive : " God will begin with Solomon tells us, Ecces. iii. 4. " There is a time to " time to laugh ; a time to mourn, and a time to dance : " M. Trap notes upon the text) we must not invert th " weep with men, that we may laugh with angels." To be frolic in a day of tribulation, is to disturb the order of s is a terrible text, Isa. xxii. 12. which should make the h as are guilty in this kind to tremble : " In that day do " hosts call to mourning, and to girding with sackcloth " joy and gladness, slaying oxen, killing sheep, drinkin Well, what is the issue of this ? " Surely, this iniquity " purged from you till ye die." O dreadful word ! su thren) sympathy is a debt we owe to Christ mystical. V constitution, condition, or personal immunities be, yet w for mourning, we must hear and obey that call. David an expert musician, a man of a sanguine and cheerful yet who more sensible of the evil of those times than h water ran down his eyes at the consideration of them. was so affected with the miseries of the church in his seemed to take little or no notice of the death of his ch entirely loved. At such a time we may " say of laugh " mad, and of mirth, what doth it !"

REFLECTION.

Blush then, O my soul ! for thy levity and insens God's angry dispensations. How many of the precie daughters of Zion, lie in tears abroad, while I have been " my heart as in a day of slaughter ? The voice of G " to the city, and men of understanding have hear Micah vi. 9. But I have been deaf to that cry. How lo have I been to urge my sensual heart to acts of sorrow ing ! Thou hast bid me weep with them that weep,

children weeping and trembling? Then I may justly fear, "when they shall sing for joy of heart, I shall howl for vexation of spirit," Isa. lxx. 13, 14. Surely, O my soul! such laughter be turned into mourning; either here or hereafter.

THE POEM.

IN troublous times, mirth in the sinner's face
Is like a mourning-cloak with silver lace.
The lion's roaring make the beasts to quake:
God's roaring judgments cannot make us shake.
What belluine contempt is this of God,
To laugh in's face when he takes up the rod?
Such laughter God in tears will surely drown,
(Unless he hate thee) e'er he lay it down.
These rods have voices, if thou hear them well;
If not, another rod's prepar'd in hell;
And when the arm of God shall lay it on,
Laugh if thou canst; no, then thy mirth is gone.
All Zion's children will lament and cry,
When all her beauteous stones in dust do lie?
And he that for her then laments and mourns,
Shall want no joy, when God to her returns.

CHAP. XXVI.

*A little leak neglected, dangerous proves :
One sin connived at, the soul undoes.*

OBSERVATION.

THE smallest leak, if not timely discovered and stopt, is enough to sink a ship of the greatest burden: Therefore seamen are w frequently to try what water is in the hold; and if they find it fr and increasing upon them, they ply the pump, and presently set carpenters to search for it and stop it; and till it be found t cannot be quiet.

APPLICATION.

What such a leak is to a ship, that is the smallest sin neglected the soul; it is enough to ruin it eternally. For as the greatest sin covered, lamented, and mourned over by a believer, cannot ruin him, so the least sin indulged, covered, and connived at, will certainly pr the destruction of the sinner. No sin, though never so small, is lerated by the pure and perfect law of God. Psalm cxix. 96.

very nature of sincerity and uprightness, to set the h
[every] way of wickedness, Psal. cxxxix. 23, 24. Job x
especially against that sin which was its darling in the
vanity, Psal. xviii. 23. True hatred (as the philosoph
is of the * whole kind: He that hates sin as sin, and s
upright soul, hates all sins as well as some.

Again, the soul that hath had a saving sight of Jesus
a true discovery of the evil of sin, in the glass both of
gospel, can account no sin small. He knows the de
smallest sin is God's eternal wrath, and that not the lea
remitted without the shedding and application of the blo
Heb. ix. 22. which blood is of infinite value and price,

To conclude, God's people know, that little as w
sins, are dangerous, deadly, and destructive in their ow
little poison will destroy a man. Adrian was choaked
Cæsar stabbed with bodkins. A man would think Ad
been no great matter, yet what dreadful work did it m
not as a single bullet to kill himself only; but as a chain
cut off all his poor, miserable posterity. Indeed, no sin
because its object against whom it is committed is so gre
receives a kind of infiniteness in itself; and because the
redeem us from it is so invaluable.

REFLECTION.

And is the smallest sin not only damning in its own
will certainly prove the ruin of that soul that hides and
then let my spirit accomplish a diligent search. Look
soul! that no sin be indulged by thee; set these conside
many flaming swords in the way of thy carnal delights and
me never say of any sin as Lot did of Zoar, "It is a litt
"it." Shall I spare that which cost the blood of Jesus C
Lord would not spare him, "When he made his soul an
sin," Rom. viii. 32. Neither will he spare me, if I
hide it, Deut. xxix. 20. Ah! if my heart were right,
versation sound, that lust, whatever it be, that is so
me, would especially be abhorred and hated, Isa. ii. 9
22. Whatever my convictions and reformatations have
there be but one sin retained and delighted in, thi
devil's interest in my soul. And though for a time he
part, yet at last he will return with seven worse spirits
the sin that will open the door to him, and deliver

lose all for want of one thing? Lord, let me shed the blood of
dearest lust for his sake that shed his dearest blood for me!

THE POEM.

THERE's many a soul's eternally undone
For sparing sin, because a little one.
But we are much deceiv'd; no sin is small,
That wounds so great a God, so dear a soul.
Yet say it were, the smallest pen-knife may
As well as sword or lance, dispatch and slay,
And shall so small a matter part and sever
Christ and thy soul? What! make you part for ever?
Or wilt thou stand on toys with him, when he
Deny'd himself in greatest things for thee?
Or will it be an ease in hell to think
How easily thy soul therein did sink?
Are Christ and hell for trifles sold and bought?
Strike souls with trembling, Lord, at such a thought!
By little sins belov'd, the soul is lost,
Unless such sins do great repentance cost.

CHAP. XXVII.

*Ships make much way when they a trade-wind get:
With such a wind the saints have ever met.*

OBSERVATION.

THOUGH in most parts of the world the winds are variable, sometimes blow from every part of the compass, by reason where sailing is slow and dangerous; yet about the Equinoctial, sea meet with a trade-wind blowing, for the most part one way; there they sail jocund before it, and scarce need to lower a top for some hundreds of leagues.

APPLICATION.

Although the people of God meet with many seeming rubs set-backs in their way to heaven, which are like contrary wind a ship; yet they are from the day of their conversion to the day of their complete salvation, never out of a trade-wind's way to heaven. Rom. viii. 21. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his

velation, God has told us so; and partly by our own experience find it so.

(*That all things*) Not only things that lie in a natural tendency to our good; as *ordinances, promises, blessings*, even such things as have no natural fitness and tendency to that end; as *afflictions, temptations, corruptions, desertions*, &c. help onward. They

(*Work together*) Not all of them directly, and of the same nature and inclination; but by being over-ruled and directed to such an issue by the gracious hand of God: nor yet do they bestow such goods to the saints singly and apart, but as adjuncts or helps, standing under, and working in subordination to the preme and principal cause of their happiness.

Now, the most seeming opposite things, yea, sin in itself, in its own nature is really opposite to their good, yet eventually contributes to it. Afflictions and desertions seem to work against their good, being once put into the rank and order of causes, they work with such blessed instruments, as word and prayer to an holy God. And though the faces of these things that so agree and yet so differ, look contrary ways; yet there are, as it were, secret connexions of providence betwixt them, to unite them in one issue. There may be many instruments employed about one work, that do not communicate counsels, or hold intelligence with each other. Joseph's brethren, the Midianites, Potiphar, &c. knew not one another's mind, nor aimed at one end, (much less the end that God designed about by them) one acts out of revenge, another for gain, another out of policy; yet all meet together at last, in that issue which God designed to bring about by them, even Joseph's advancement. So it is here, Christian, there are more instruments at work about thy eternal good than thou art aware of.

REFLECTION.

Cheer up then, O my soul, and lean upon this pillar of strength in all distresses. Here is a promise for me, if I am a called Christian, like the philosopher's stone, turns all into gold it touches. This promise is my security; however things go in the world, "he will do me no hurt," Jer. xxv. 6. Nay, he will do me good in every dispensation. "O that I had but an heart to make all to work for his glory, that thus causeth every thing to work for good." My God, dost thou turn every thing to my good? O let me return all to thy praise; and if by every thing thou art doing for my eternal good, then let me in every thing give thanks.

are within the line of this promise? All things friendly and beneficial to them; friends helpful; enemies helpful; every thing conspiring and conducing to their happiness. With others it is not so; every thing works for their good; nay, every thing works against them: their very mercies are snares, and their prosperity destroys them. Prov. i. 32. even the blessed gospel itself is a savour of death to them: when evil befalls them, "it is an only evil," Ezek. vii. 5. it is, not turned into good to them; and as their evils are not turned into good, so all their good is turned into evil. As this promise hath an influence into all that concerns the people of God, so the curse hath an influence into all the enjoyments of the wicked. O my soul, bless the Lord, who hath cast thy lot into such a pleasant place, and given thee such a glorious heritage, as this promise is.

THE POEM.

WHEN once the dog-star rises, many say,
 Corn ripens then apace, both night and day.
 Souls once in Christ, that morning-star lets fall
 Such influences on them, that all
 God's dispensations to them, sweet or sour,
 Ripen their souls for glory ev'ry hour.
 All their afflictions, rightly understood,
 Are blessings; ev'ry wind will blow some good.
 Sure at their troubles saints would never grudge,
 Were sense deposed, and faith made the judge.
 Falls make them warier, amend their pace;
 When gifts puff up their hearts, and weaken grace.
 Could Satan see the issue, and th' event
 Of his temptations, he would scarcely tempt.
 Could saints but see what fruits their troubles bring,
 Amidst those troubles they would shout and sing.
 O sacred wisdom! who can but admire
 To see how thou dost save from fire, by fire!
 No doubt but saints in glory wond'ring stand
 At those strange methods few now understand.

 CHAP. XXVIII.

*Storms make discovery of the pilot's skill:
 God's wisdom in affliction triumphs still.*

shews the utmost of his art and skill, and yet sometime little. They are (as the scripture speaks) *at their wit's end*; not what to do more; but are forced to commit all to God and the seas.

APPLICATION.

In the storms and tempests of affliction and trouble, the most evident and full discoveries of the wisdom of our God: it is indeed continually active for his people's deliverations, Isa. xxvii. 3. "Lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." Psal. cxxi. 4. "He that keepeth Israel neither slumbereth nor sleepeth." His people's dangers are without intermission, and his preservations are so too. But now, when they come into the *strait* of affliction and deadly dangers, which threatens them on every side; now the wisdom of their God rides triumphantly and visibly upon the waves of that stormy sea: and this wisdom is then especially discovered in these particulars.

1. In leaving them still somewhat in the *lieu* and room of their comforts that they are deprived of; so that they see God change their comforts, and that for the better; and that to their profit. So John xiv. 1, 2, 3. Christ's bodily presence was taken away, but the Spirit was sent in the room of it, which was better.

2. In doubling their strength, as he doubles their burdens. As we observed that the saints have many times very strong and great afflictions, a little before their greatest trials: and this is so commonly when they have had their extraordinary assistance from God, they have then looked for some eminent trial. The Lord appeared to Abraham, and sealed the covenant with him; then put him upon that great trial of his faith. So Luke xxiv. 49. it was commanded them that they should tarry in Jerusalem till they were endowed with power from on high. The Lord knew what a hard providence they were like to have, and great oppositions and difficulties they must encounter in preaching the everlasting gospel to the world; and therefore first endows them with power from on high, viz. with eminent gifts and graces of the Spirit; as faith, patience, &c. So Paul had first his revelations, then his buffetings.

3. In coming in so opportunely in the time of their greatest need with relief and comfort, 1 Pet. iv. 14. "Then the Spirit of the Lord is revealed, and of God resteth on them." As that martyr and friend Austin, at the very stake, *He is come, he is come*.

4. In appointing and ordering the several kinds of afflictions, and allotting to every one that very affliction which is most

was sanctified to his good in that particular. Hezekiah's sin vain-glory, therefore spoilers are sent to take away his treasure.

5. In the duration of their troubles, they shall not lie always upon them, Ps. cxxxv. 3. Our God is a God of judgment, Is. xxx. 18. Know the due time of removing it, and is therein punctual to a day, Rev. 10.

REFLECTION.

If the wisdom of God do thus triumph, and glorify itself in the tresses of the saints, then why should I fear in the day of evil? Ps. xlix. 4. Why doth my heart faint at the foresight and apprehension of approaching trouble? Fear none of those things that thou shalt suffer, O my soul: if thy God will thus be with thee in fire and water, thou canst not perish. Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, yet let me fear no evil, whilst my God is thus with me. Creatures cannot do what they please, his wisdom limits and over-rules them all to gracious and sweet ends. If God cast me into the furnace to melt and try me, yet I shall not be consumed there; for he will sit by the furnace himself all the while I am in it, and curiously pry into it, observing when it hath done its work, and then will presently withdraw the fire. O my soul, bless and adore this God of wisdom! who himself will see the ordering of all thine afflictions, and not trust it in the hands of men or angels.

THE POEM.

THOUGH tost in greatest storms, I'll never fear,
If Christ will sit at th' helm to guide and steer;
Storms are the triumph of his skill and art;
He cannot close his eyes, nor change his heart.
Wisdom and power ride upon the waves,
And in the greatest danger helps and saves.
From dangers it by dangers doth deliver,
And wounds the devil out of his own quiver;
It countermines his plots, and so doth spoil,
And makes his engines on himself recoil.
It blunts the politician's restless tool,
And makes Ahithophel the veriest fool;
It shews us how our reason us misled,
And if he had not we had perished.
Lord, to thy wisdom I will give the reins,
And not with cares perplex and vex my brains.

irrecoverably lost, it is as good it were cast into the sea there lies obscure from all eyes but the eyes of God.

APPLICATION.

Thus are the judgments of God and the ways of his profound and unsearchable, Psal. xxxvi. 6. "Thy righteousness the great mountains, thy judgments are a great deep; thy providences are secret, obscure, and unfathomable; but in those providences, his righteousness stands up like mountains, visible and apparent to every eye. Though man cannot see the one, yet they can clearly discern the other. Jeremiah was at a stand; so was Job in the like case, Job was Asaph, Psal. lxxiii. and Habakkuk, chap. i. 3. Thy judgments and providence are dreadful for their height, Ezek. i. 18. Thy judgments are mysteries of providence, as well as of faith. It may be said of them, as of Paul's epistles, That they are hard to be understood, as darkness and clouds are round about the throne of God, who can say what will be the particular issue and event of some dispensations. Luther seemed to hear God say to him, when he was fortunate to know his mind in some particular providence, *non sequax*: I am a God not to be traced. Sometimes providences in Hebrew letters, must be read backward, Psal. xcii. 7. Thy judgments pose men of the greatest parts and graces. "His judgments are deep as the sea, his paths in the great waters, and his footsteps are not known," Psal. lxxvii. 19. Who can trace footsteps in the bottom of the sea? "The angels," Ezek. i. "have their hands under their wings. The hand is either, *symbolum roboris*, The symbol of strength; or *instrumentum operationis*, The instrument of action: though their hands are put forth, they work effectually, but very secretly; they are hid under their wings. There be some of God's works, such secrets, as that they may not be enquired into; they are to be believed and adored, but not pryed into, Rom. xi. 33. They may be enquired after, but yet are so profound, that few can understand them, Psal. cxi. 2. "The works of the Lord are great, and they are out of all those that have pleasure therein." When we look up into heaven, then all those mysteries, as well in the works as in the judgments of God, will lie open to our view.

REFLECTION.

O then, why is my heart disquieted, because it cannot discern the way of the Lord, and see the connection and order of his providential dispensations? Why art thou so perplexed in thy soul, at the confusions and disorders that are in the world?

to call the God of heaven to account? Must he render a reason his ways, and give an account of his matters to such a worm as I am? Be silent (O my soul) before the Lord, subscribe to his wisdom, and submit to his will whatsoever he doth. However it be, yet God is good to Israel; the event will manifest it to be all over a design of love. I know not how to reconcile them to each other, or many of them to the promise; yet are they all harmonious betwixt themselves and the certain means of accomplishing the promises. O what a favour is this, that in the midst of the greatest confusions in the world, God hath given such abundant security to his people, that it shall be well with them; Amos ix. 8. Eccles. viii. 12.

THE POEM.

LORD! how stupendous, deep, and wonderful
 Are all thy draughts of providence! So full
 Of puzzling intricacies, that they lie
 Beyond the ken of any mortal eye.
A wheel within a wheel's the scripture notion,
 And all those wheels transverse, and cross in motion,
 All creatures serve it in their place; yet so,
 As thousands of them know not what they do.
 At this or that their aim they do direct;
 But neither this nor that is the effect:
 But something else they do not understand,
 Which sets all politicians at a stand.
 Deep counsels at the birth this hand doth break,
 And deeper things performeth by the weak.
 Men are, like horses, set at ev'ry stage,
 For providence to ride from age to age;
 Which, like a post, spurs on, and makes them run
 From stage to stage, until their journey's done;
 Then take a fresh; but they the business know
 No more than horses the post-letters do.
 Yet tho' its works be not conceal'd from sight,
 'Twill be a glorious piece when brought to light.

 CHAP. XXX.

*Millions of men are sunk into the main;
 But it shall not those dead always retain.*

APPLICATION.

But though the sea has received so many thousand into its devouring throat, yet it is not the absolute lord of them, but rather a steward intrusted with them, till it can give an account of them; and then it must deliver up what it has received, even to a person. Rev. xx. 11, 12. "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: And the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the book according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it."

The doctrine of the resurrection of the body is a doctrine of singular consolations to believers, 1 Cor. xv. and most clearly set forth in scripture, Acts xxvi. 8. Job xix. 25. 1 Cor. xv. &c. As well for us this point is so plainly revealed; because a comfortable truth to the people of God, so there is scarce any difficulty that lies under more prejudice, as to sense or reason, and is more difficult to receive than this is. The Epicures and Stoics used to scorn when he preached it to them, Acts xvii. 32. The Turks and Quakers at this day reject it as a fable. The Socinians say the same body shall not rise, but an aerial body. And, instead of setting up reason as the only judge of supernatural things, they are apt to think, that a body should be restored that hath been buried, and those ashes scattered in the wind; as history tells us is frequently done by the bodies of the saints in Dioclesian's time, when drowned in the sea, and there devoured by several fishes, and those again devoured by others. But yet this is not to be ascribed to the almighty power of God, that gave them their first being, and impossibilities are for men, but not for him. "Why should I have thought a thing incredible with you that God should do it?" "dead?" Acts xxvi. 8.

REFLECTION.

And must I rise again where-ever my body falls at death? O Lord, how am I concerned to get union with Christ by virtue thereof only my resurrection can be made comfortable and blessed to me. Ah! let my body lie where it will, in the dust, let my bones be scattered, and flesh devoured by worms, I know thou canst, and wilt re-unite my scattered parts to my body I must stand before thine awful tribunal, to receive what I have done therein. 2 Cor. v. 10. Thou that canst

trumpet, shall awaken me; and thy mighty power, to which all things are possible, shall bring me before thy bar.

O Lord, I know that I shall stand in that great assembly at the day, when multitudes, multitudes, even all the sons and daughters Adam, shall appear together. O if I die christless, it were good me that there were no resurrection; for then those eyes that have been windows of lust, must behold Christ the Judge, not as a Judge, but as a Revenger. That tongue that hath vented so much of the filthiness of my heart, will then be struck speechless before him; and this flesh which I so pampered and provided for, condensed to everlasting flames. O my God let me make sure work for such a day! if I now get real union with thy Son, I shall awake with singing out of the dust; and then, as thou saidst to Jacob, so to me, when I go down into the sea, or grave, Gen. xlv. 3, 4. "Fear not to go down into the deep; for I will surely bring thee up again."

THE POEM.

IT should not seem incredible to thee,
That God should raise the dead in seas that be:
We see in winter, swallows, worms, and flies
Depriv'd of life, yet in the spring they rise.
What tho' your bodies sev'ral fish devour,
Object not that to the Almighty pow'r.
Some chymists in their art are so exact,
That from one herb they usually extract
Four different elements; what think ye then
Can pose that God who gave this skill to men?
The gard'ner can distinguish thirty kinds
Of seeds from one another, tho' he finds
Them mix'd together in the self-same dish;
Much more can God distinguish flesh from fish.
They seem as lost, but they again must live;
The sea's a steward, and stewards account must give.
Look what you are, when in the ocean drown'd,
The very same at judgment you'll be found.
I would not care where my vile body lies,
Were I assur'd it should with comfort rise.

dangerous: the sight of the shore is to them (as Solomon of the morning in another case) like the shadow of death to weather it. For one ship swallowed up in the ocean, upon the coast.

APPLICATION.

The greatest straits and difficulties that many saints all their lives, is when they come nearest to heaven, and finished their course. Heaven indeed is a glorious place, a glorious and royal mansion of the Great King; but *difficilis* it hath a strait and narrow entrance, Luke xiii. 24. Of arriving there! how many hard tugs in duty, watchfulness and striving even to an agony! as that word in xiii. 24. Multitudes put forth, and by profession are like a *fair haven*: but of the multitudes that put out, how many are there? A man may set out by a glorious profession and resolution, and continue long therein; he may offer vows and not be far from the kingdom of God, and yet not enter at the last, Matth. vii. 22.

Yea, and many of those who are sincere in their prayers do arrive at last, yet come to heaven (as I may say) by a narrow strait, and not by a wide one; they are like a vessel come to a harbour, more like a wreck than a ship, neither master nor crew. The righteous themselves are scarcely saved, i. e. they come in with very much difficulty. They have not all an *abundant entrance* as the apostle speaks, 2 Pet. i. 11.

‘Some persons (as *one well notes) are *afar off*, E. 1.
 ‘touched with no care of religion: some come near, but
 ‘as semi-converts. See Matth. xii. 34. Others enter, but
 ‘with difficulty, they are saved as by fire, 1 Cor. iii. 13. Many
 ‘shift. But then there are some that go in with full
 ‘wind, and have an abundant entrance; they go triumphantly
 ‘into the world.” Ah! when we come into the narrow strait, at the
 ‘very point of entrance into life, the soul is then in the narrow
 ‘frame: all things look with a new face; conscience searches
 ‘the conscience most critically; then, also, Satan falls upon us, and
 ‘sorest assaults and batteries. It is the last encounter; and
 ‘him now, they are gone out of his reach for ever: and he can
 ‘not hinder their salvation, yet if he can but cloud their
 ‘eyes, he may make them go groaning and howling out of the world
 ‘at another end by it, even to confirm and prejudice the
 ‘weakness of others that are looking towards it.

an ungodly creature as I appear? O Lord! if they that have made religion their business, and have been many years pursuing a way of mortification, have gone mourning after the Lord Jesus, and walked humbly with God; yet if some of these have such an hard tug at last, then what will become of such a vain, sensual, careless flesh-pleasing wretch as I have been?

Again, Do saints find it so strait an entrance? Then, though I have well grounded hopes of safe arrival at last; yet let me look on it, that I do not increase the difficulty. Ah! they are the things that are now done, or omitted, that put conscience into such agony then; for then it comes to review the life with the most searching eye. O let me not stick my death-bed full of thorns, against the day I come to lie down upon it. O that I may turn to the wall in that hour, as Hezekiah did, 2 Kings xx. 2, 3. and say, "Remember now, O Lord, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart," &c.

THE POEM.

AFTER a tedious passage, saints descry
The glorious shore, salvation being nigh:
Death's long-boat's launch'd, ready to set ashore
Their panting souls. O how they tug at oar,
Longing to be at rest! but then they find
The hardest tug of all is yet behind.
Just at the harbour's mouth they see the wreck
Of souls there cast away, and driven back.
A world of dang'rous rocks before it lie;
The harbour's barr'd, and now the winds blow high;
Thoughts now arise, fears multiply apace;
All things above them have another face.
Life blazes, just like an expiring light,
The soul's upon the lip prepar'd for flight.
Death, till the resurrection, tears and rends,
Out of each other's arms two parting friends,
The soul and body. Ah! but more than so,
The devil falls upon them ere they go,
With new temptations, back'd with all his power,
And scruples kept on purpose for that hour.
This is the last encounter, now, or never;
If he succeedeth now, they're gone for ever.
Thus in they put, with hardship at the last,
As ships out of a storm, nor sail, nor mast:

CHAP. XXXIII.

*How glad are seamen when they make the shore
And saints, no less, when all their danger's o'er*

OBSERVATION.

WHAT joy is there among seamen, when at last, after a tedious and dangerous voyage, they descry land, and see their haven before them? Then they turn out of their lodgings and come upon open deck with much joy. Psal. cviii. "they are glad, because they be quiet: So he bringeth them to their desired haven." Now they can reflect with thankfulness on the many dangers they have past, *Olim hæc meminisse* is sweet to recount them.

APPLICATION.

But O what a transcendent joy, yea, ravishing, will fill the hearts of saints, when, after so many conflicts, temptations, they arrive in glory, and are harboured in heaven, where they shall rest for ever! 2 Thess. i. 7. The scripture saith, "sing the song of Moses, and of the Lamb," Rev. xv. This song of Moses was a triumphant song composed for the celebration of his glorious deliverance at the red sea. The saints are now delivered from upon a troublesome and tempestuous sea; their hearts are no longer ready to sink, and die within them, at the apprehensions of the many and great dangers and difficulties. Many a hard storm they have weathered out, and many straits and troubles they here encountered, till at last they arrive at their desired and long-expected haven, where heaven rings and resounds with their joyful acclamations. Can it be otherwise, when as soon as ever they set foot on the glorious shore, Christ himself meets and receives them with the words, "ye blessed of my Father," Matth. xxv. 34. O joy, O much desired word! saith Paræus, what tribulation must a man undergo for this word's sake!

Besides, then they are perfectly freed from all evil, from sin or suffering, and perfectly filled with all desired good. They shall join with that great assembly, in the high praise of God, what a day will this be! If (said a * worthy divine) I were away with an excess of joy, whilst he embraced his triumph, he were crowned as victors in the Olympic games in one day. Simeon, when he saw Christ but in a body subject to the infirmities of our nature, cried out "Now let thy servant

natus saith, make a choir, as it were, about that star that appeared at Christ's incarnation, and there is such joy in heaven at the conversion of a sinner; no wonder then, the morning stars sing together and the sons of God shout for joy, when the general assembly meets in heaven. O how will the arches of heaven ring and echo, when the high praises of God shall be in the mouth of such a congregation! then shall the saints be joyful in glory, and sing aloud upon their beds of everlasting rest.

REFLECTION.

And is there such a day approaching for the sons of God, indeed and have I [*authority*] to call myself one of the number! John i. O then let me not droop at present difficulties, nor hang down my hands when I meet with hardships in the way. O my soul, when a joyful day will this be! for at present we are tossed upon an ocean of troubles, fears, and temptations; but these will make heaven sweeter.

Cheer up, then, O my soul, thy salvation is now nearer than when thou first believedst, Rom. xiii. 11. and it will not now be long. I receive the end of my faith, 1 Pet. i. 9. and then it will be sweet to reflect even upon these hardships in the way. Yet a few days more, and then comes that blessed day thou hast so long waited and panted for. Oppose the glory of that day, O my soul, to thy present abasements and sufferings, as blessed Paul did, Rom. i. 8. and thou shalt see how it will shrink them all up to nothing; oppose the inheritance thou shalt receive in that day, to thy losses at Christ now; and see how joyfully it will make thee bear the cross, Heb. x. 34. oppose the honour that will be put upon thee in that day, to thy present reproaches, and see how easy it will make them to thee, 1 Cor. iv. 5. What condition can I be in, wherein the believing thoughts of this blessed day cannot relieve me?

Am I poor, here is that which answers poverty: James iii. "Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom?"

Am I tempted? here is relief against that: Rev. xii. 16. "Nathan shall come salvation and strength; for the accuser of our brethren shall be cast down," &c.

Am I deserted? here is a remedy for that too, Rev. xxii. 5. "And there shall be no night there," &c. Come, then, my soul, let us enter upon our inheritance by degrees, and begin the life of heaven upon earth.

How will the ravish'd souls transported be
 At the first glimpse of Christ! whom they shall
 In all his glory; and shall live and move,
 Like salamanders, in the fire of love.
 A flood of tears convey'd them to the gate
 Where endless joys receiv'd them. Now the da
 Of all their sorrow's out; henceforth they walk
 In robes of glory. Now there's no more talk
 Of fears, temptations, of that snare or this:
 No serpent in that paradise doth hiss.
 No more desertions, troubled thoughts, or tears
 Christ's full enjoyment supersedes those fears.
 Delights of princes courts are all but toys
 To these delights, these are transcendent joys,
 The joys of Christ himself; of what they are,
 An angel's tongue would stammer to declare.
 Were our conceptions clear, did their tongues g
 Unto their *Ela*, yet the note's too low.
 What! paint the sun too bright! it cannot be;
 Sure heaven suffers no hyperbole.
 My thoughts are swallow'd up, my muse doth t
 And hang her wings, conception soars no higher
 Give me a place among thy children there,
 Altho' I lie with them in dungeon here.

A CONCLUDING SPEECH.

I HAVE now done, and am looking to heaven for a
 these weak labours; what use you will make of them
 but this I know, that the day is coming, when Go
 with you for this, and all other helps and means aff
 and if it be not improved by you, be sure it will be
 witness against you. Sirs, I beg you, in the name of
 whom both you and I must shortly appear, that yo
 these things in vain. Did I know what other lawfu
 that might reach your hearts, they should not be in
 but I cannot do God's part of the work, nor yours:
 you all, both masters, common men, and all others int
 this shall come, that you will lay to heart what you re
 him that hath the key of the house of David, that o
 man shutteth, to open your hearts to give entertain
 truths. Alas! if you apply it not to yourselves, I ha

“and have not obeyed the voice of my teacher, nor inclined my ear to them that instructed me?” And O what a dreadful shriek will such souls give, when the Lord opens their eyes to see that miseries that they are here warned of! But if the Lord shall bless these things to your conversion, then we may say to you, as Moses did to Zebulun, the mariners tribe, Deut. xxxiii. 12. “Rejoice Zebulun in thy going out.” The Lord will be with you, which way soever you turn yourselves; and being in the bosom of the covenant, you are safe in the midst of all dangers. O thou, that art the Father of spirits, that formedst and canst easily reform the heart, open thou the blind eye, unstop the deaf ear, let the world take hold upon the heart. If thou wilt but say the word, these weak labours shall prosper, and bring home many lost souls unto thee. *Amen.*



A PATHETICAL AND SERIOUS

DISSUASIVE

FROM THE

Horrid and detestable SINS of Drunkenness, Swearing, Uncleanness, Forgetfulness of Mercies, Violation of Promises, and arististical Contempt of Death.

Applied by way of CAUTION to SEAMEN, and now added as APPENDIX to their NEW COMPASS.

Being an ESSAY toward their much-desired Reformation, fit to be seriously recommended to their profane Relations, whether Seamen or others, by all such as feignedly desire their eternal Welfare.



To the right worshipful Sir JOHN FREDERICK, Kt. one of the worshipful Aldermen of the City of London, and their honourable BURGESS in the present Parliament: and to the true religious and ever honoured Mr. JOHN LOVERING, of the City of London, Merchant.

Much honoured and esteemed,

ALTHOUGH dedications are too often abused to a vain flattery yet there is an excellent use and advantage to be made of the

Upon the first account, a dedication would be needful for I am persuaded, you do not only in your judgment design I here manage, *viz.* The reformation of the looser sort of our seamen; but are also heartily willing your interest to the uttermost for the promotion of look upon you as persons acted by that low and common the most of your profession are acted by, who little regard to be good servants to them, whether God have any service or not; and if they pay them the wages due for their sin, they think of the wages they are to receive for their sin. You are to be persons of another spirit, who do not only mind Christ's interest above your own, and negotiate for his as for your own gain: and yet herein you consult your own as well as God's: *Subordinata non pugnant.* Your interest more prosperously managed, or abundantly secured, is carried on in a due subordination to God's. Their reasons apparently tend to your advantage. Those sins of which I have here engaged, are the Jonahs in your souls that sinks them, and drives them against the rocks. "destroyeth much good," Eccl. viii. 11. How much crew of them conspiring to provoke God! the death is the more probable means to give life to your trade. These counsels prosper in their hearts, so will your business prosper in your hands. Piety and prosperity are married together, Psal. i. 3. Onesimus was never so profitable a servant as when he became his brother in a *spiritual*, as a servant in a *civil* capacity, Phil. ver. 11. and 16. compare if your interest were forced to step back, to give way to hope you would (notwithstanding) rejoice therein. Sent business is, not so much to persuade you, whose God hath already persuaded to so good a work; as to fame and respects, which are great among them, and to tempt them to their duty. And if either your name may be useful to such an end, I presume I may use them as welcome; for, sure I am, they can never be put to a

Well then, I will make bold to send this small advertisement; and if the return of it be but the conversion to God, I shall reckon that I have made a better voyage than your returns be never so rich.

How these things will affect them I know not. I will produce different effects upon them, according to the tempers of their spirits, and according as God shall call

A SOBER CONSIDERATION, &c.

guilty can be supposed to be angry at them, they will thereby reproach themselves a great deal more than ever I intended to do.

I confess it is a bitter pill and compounded of many operative strong ingredients, which do acute it; but not a jot more than is necessary. I shall beg the assistance of your prayers to God for them, and of your grave admonitions and exhortations to them for God, which will much help its operation, and facilitate my design, to their souls a piece of everlasting service; with which design I truly say, I even travail in pain for them. Your assistance therein in this good work, will put the highest obligation upon

Your most affectionate

Friend and Servant,

to be commanded,

JOHN FLAVEL

A

SOBER CONSIDERATION

OF THE SIN OF

DRUNKENNESS.

IN the former treatise I have endeavoured to spiritualize earthly objects, and elevate your thoughts to more sublime and excellent contemplations; that earthly things may rather be a step, than a hindrance to heavenly. You have therein my best advice to guide you in your course to that port of your eternal rest and happiness.

In this I have given warning of some dangerous rocks and quicksands that lie upon your left hand; upon which millions of souls have perished, and others are wilfully running to their own perdition. Such are the horrid sins of *drunkenness, uncleanness, profane swearing, violation of promises, engagements made to God, and atheism, slighting and contempt of death and eternity*. All which I have given warning of, and held forth a light to discover where your danger is. If after this you obstinately prosecute your lusts, and will not be reclaimed; you perish without apology, I have freed mine own soul.

Let none interpret this necessary plainness as a reproach to sear as if I represented them to the world worse than they are. If, upon that account, any of them be offended, methinks these three or

upon one side, if we do not speak plain and home, as of the case requires; and man's wrath if we do: what this strait? Either God or you, it seems, must be offended. cannot be avoided, I shall rather hazard your anger than think it far more tolerable.

Secondly, If you did but see the necessity and end of dealing with your souls, you would not be offended. a more sensible case, and you will see and acknowledge. If I should see an high-built wall giving way, and ready to fall, you, would you be angry with me, if by plucking your arm out of joint, I should pluck your arm out of joint; certainly not. Why, this is the case here: See Isa. xxx. 13. "iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swaying like a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly, at an instant."

Thirdly, What a madness is it to abide in a condition where all woes and curses hang, and yet not be able to endure them. Why, what will it profit you to have your misery hid from your eyes, and kept from your ears a little while? You must see that you hear louder volleys of woes from your own consciences, in this condition. You cannot bear that from us, whose conscience will one of these days preach themselves to you more dreadful dialect than I have used here.

Fourthly, I do not charge these sins indifferently upon all men. No, I know there are some choice and good men, some men, that fear an oath, and hate even the garments spotted with the flesh, who are (I question not) the credit and glory of our nation, in the eyes of strangers that converse with them. I do not think that all that are wicked amongst them are equally guilty of these evils; for though all that are graceless be equally under the dominion of original corruption, yet it follows not from thence, therefore actual sins must reign alike in them: there is a difference, even among ungodly men themselves in this respect. The difference ariseth from their various customs, constitutions, educations, and the different administrations of the Spirit, enlightening, convincing, and putting checks upon conscience. God be not the author, yet he is the orderer of sin. A great disparity, even among wicked men themselves. Some are sons of good morals, though not gracious principles, walk in a civil and sober, though not a holy and religious life, though they live in some one of these lusts, yet are not the worst of others of them. For it is with original corruption, that

OF THE SIN OF DRUNKENNESS.

to some sinful object; and therefore look as it is with the appetite with respect to food, so it is with the vitiated appetites of soul and sin. One man loves this food best, and another that; there is less variety in that, and so in this.

Having spoken thus much to remove offence, I shall now beg to peruse the following discourse. Consider what evidence the things carry with them. Search the alleged scriptures, see if they be truly recited and applied to the case in hand: And if so, tremble at the truth you read! bring forth your lusts, that they may die the death. Will you not part with these abominable practices till death and hell make the separation? Ah! how much better it for you that grace should do it? And because many of you do not see the danger, and therefore prize not the remedy, I do here request all those that have the bowels of pity in them, for their poor relations, who are sinking, drowning, perishing, to spread these following cautions before the Lord for a blessing, and then put them into their hands. And O that all pious masters would persuade those that are under their charge to buy this ensuing treatise, and diligently peruse it. And the first caution I shall give them is this

CAUTION I.

TAKE heed, and beware of the detestable sin of drunkenness, which is a beastly sin, a voluntary madness, a sin that unmans the man and makes thee like the beasts that perish; yea, sets thee below the beasts, which will not drink to excess; or, if they do, yet it is not their sin. * One of the ancients calls it, 'A distemper of the head, a subversion of the senses, a tempest in the tongue, a storm of the body, the shipwreck of virtue, the loss of time, a wild madness, a pleasant devil, a sugared poison, a sweet sin, which a man that has, has not himself, and he that commits it, doth not offend himself, but he himself is altogether sin.' It is a sin at which the most sober heathens blushed. The Spartans brought their children up to loath it, by shewing them a drunkard, whom they gazed at as a monster: Even Epicurus himself, who esteemed happiness to consist in pleasure, yet was temperate, as Cicero observes. Among the heathens he was accounted the best man, that spent more oil in the lamp, than wine in the bottle. Christianity could once glory in its professors: Tertullian saith of the primitive Christians, they sat not down before they prayed; they eat no more than might suffice hunger; they drank no more than was sufficient for temperate men; they did so eat and drink, as those that remembered they must pray afterwards. But now we may blush to behold such beastly sensualists adorning themselves with its name, and sheltering themselves under its vain

And amongst those that profess Christianity, how ord sin committed by seamen? This insatiable dropsy is a reigns, especially among the inferior and ruder sort of of them have gone aboard drunk, and laid the founda voyage in sin. O what a preparation is this! They know ever they shall see the land of their nativity any more: th may send them into eternity: Yet this is the farewell th is their preparation to meet the Lord. And so in their withstanding the terrible and astonishing works of the they have beheld with their eyes, and their marvellous in so great and terrible extremities; yet thus do they requ as soon as their dangers are over, as if they had been commit all these abominations. But a few hours or da were reeling to and fro upon a stormy ocean, and sta drunken men, as it is said, Psal. cvii. 27. and now you reeling and staggering in the streets, drowning the sens precious mercies and deliverances in their drunken cu

Reader, if thou be one that is guilty of this sin, f sake bethink thyself speedily, and weigh, with the rea what I shall now say, in order to thy conviction, hun reformation. I need not spend many words, to open this sin to you; we all grant, that there is a lawful us strong drink to support nature, not to clog it; to cu not to cause them. "Drink no longer water, but use "for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmity," Timothy, 1 Tim. v. 23. Mark, drink not water, bu modice, (i. e.) *medice: pro remedio, non pro deliciis*, said that is, use it modestly, viz. medicinally, not for plea remedy. Yea, God allows it, not only for bare nece cheerfulness and alacrity, that the body may be more expedite for duty, Prov. xxxi. 7. but further no man p out the violation of sobriety. When men sit till wine them, and reason be disturbed, (for drunkenness is th reason, caused by immoderate drinking,) then do the the guilt of this horrid and abominable sin. To the s refreshment of nature, you may drink; for it is a part drink, and not be satisfied; but take heed and go no f "wine is a [mockery,] strong drink is raging, and wh "ceived thereby, is not wise," Prov. xx. 1. The thro place; how easily may a sin slip through it into the sensual pleasures have a kind of enchanting power and by custom gain upon it, till they have enclaved

word. Eph. v. 18. "Be not drunken with wine, wherein is excess." Rom. xiii. 13. "Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness," Isa. v. 11. "Woe to them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink, that continue until night, till wine inflame them:" with many other of dreadful importance. Now, to startle thee for ever from this abominable and filthy lust, I shall here propound to thy consideration these ten suing arguments; and oh that they might stand in the way, as an angel did in Balaam's, when thou art in the prosecution of thy sensual pleasures! And the first is this:

Argument 1. It should exceedingly dissuade from this sin, to consider that it is an high abuse of the bounty and goodness of God, affording us those sweet refreshments, to make our lives comfortable to us upon earth. In Adam we forfeited all right to all earth as well as heavenly mercies: God might have taken thee from womb, when thou wast a sinner but of a span long, and immediately have sent thee to thine own place; thou hadst no right to a drop of water more than what the bounty of God gave thee: And when he might have thrust thee out of the world as soon as thou camest into it, and so all those days of mercy thou hast had on earth might have been spent in howling and unspeakable misery in hell: Behold the bounty and goodness of God to thee; I say, behold it, and wonder: He hath suffered thee for so many years to live upon the earth which he hath prepared and furnished with all things fit for thy necessity and delight: Out of the earth, on which thou treadest, "bringeth forth thy food, and [wine] to make glad thy heart," Gen. i. 14, 15. And dost thou thus requite the Lord? Hath man armed an enemy to fight against it with its own weapons? Hath that ever the riches of his goodness, bounty, and long-suffering, which are arguments to lead thee to repentance, should be abused! If God had not been so bountiful, thou couldst not have been so sinful.

Arg. 2. It degrades a man from the honour of his creation, equalizeth him to the beast that perisheth: Wine is said to stupefy away the heart, Hos. iv. 11. i. e. the wisdom and ingenuity of man, and so brutifies him, as Nebuchadnezzar, who lost the heart of a man, and had the heart of a beast given him, Dan. iv. 32. The heart of a man hath its generosity and sprightliness, brave, vigorous spirits in it, capable of, and fitted for noble and worthy actions and employments; but his lust effeminates, quenches, and drowns his masculine vigour in the puddle of excess and sensuality: For

beast is only fitted for such low, sensitive, and dreg. Thou hast something of the *angel*, and something of thee; thy soul partakes of the nature of angels, thy nature of beasts. Oh! how many pamper the *beasts* starve the *angel*? God, in the first chapter, put all the subjection to thee; by this lust thou putttest thyself in the creature, and art brought under its power, 1 Cor. God had given thee the head or feet of a beast, oh! wouldst thou have esteemed it? and is it nothing to have of a beast? Oh! consider it sadly.

Arg. 3. It is a sin by which thou greatly wrongest and own body. The body is the soul's instrument; it is as to a skilful artificer; this lust both dulls and spoils it, utterly unfit for any service of him that made it. Thy body is a precious piece, not made by a word of command, as other creatures by a word of counsel; "I am fearfully and wonderfully," "curiously wrought," saith the Psalmist, Psal. cxxxix. vulgar, *Acupictus sum*, Painted as with needle-work of diamonds like a garment richly embroidered. Look how many wonders! There are miracles enough, saith one, to fill a foot to fill a volume. There is, saith another, such comeliness in the eye, that upon the first sight of it, some have been forced to acknowledge a God; especially that fifth eye is wonderful, whereby, (as a learned * author observes) differeth from all other creatures, who have but four; one eye downward, a second to hold it forward, a third to the right-hand, a fourth to the left; but none to turn it upward. Now, judge in thyself; Did God frame such a creature and enliven it with a soul, which is a spark, a ray of his light whose motions are so quick, various, and indefatigable, whose powers of reason are so transcendent; did God, thinkest thou, send such a curious peace, the top and glory of the creation, the *index* of the whole world, Eccl. xii. 2. did God, I say, send such a picture of his own perfection, to be but as a strainer for filthy drinks, a sponge to suck in wine and beer? Or canst thou see the abuse and destruction of it? By this excess thou fillest withnumerable diseases, under which it languisheth; and at last like a lamp, is extinguished, being drowned with too much. 'finite diseases are begotten by it, (saith Zanchius); hence 'plexies, gouts, palsies, sudden death, trembling of the 'legs;' herein they bring Cain's curse upon themselves. Drunkenness does more than a sword. Oh!

OF THE SIN OF DRUNKENNESS.

and aches are the fruits of thy intemperance and excess! "Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow? Who hath contentions? Who hath babbling? Who hath wounds without cause? Who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine, they that go to sleep of mixed wine," Prov. xxiii. 29, 30. By this *enumeration* and *manner of interrogation*, he seems to make it a difficult thing to recount the miseries that drunkenness loads the outward man with; for loo vermin abound where there is store of corn, so do diseases in the dens of drunkards, where crudities do so abound. Now, methinks if thou hast no regard to thy poor soul, or the glory of God, yet surely a sensible argument as this, from thy body, should move thee.

Arg. 4. Drunkenness wastes and scatters thine estate, poverty tends excess; the drunkard shall be clothed with rags, and brought to a morsel of bread. Solomon hath read thy fortune, Prov. 17. "He that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich;" luxury and beggary are seldom far asunder. When Diogenes heard a drunkard's house cried to be sold; 'I thought (quoth he) it would not be long 'e'er he vomited up his house also.' The Hebrew word יורש the Greek word *ασωρια*, which signifies luxury; the former is compounded of two words, which signify, *Thou shalt be poor*; and the latter signifies the losing of the possession of that good which is in our hand. "The drunkard and the glutton shall surely come to poverty," Prov. xxiii. 21. In the Hebrew it is, he shall be disinherited or dispossessed. It doth not only dispossess a man of his inheritance, which is a rich and fair inheritance given to him by God, but it also dispossesses him of his estate: It wastes all that either the provident care of thy progenitors, or the blessing of God upon thy own industry, hath obtained for thee. And how will this sting thee as an adder, when thou shalt consider it? Apicius the Roman, hearing that there were seven hundred crowns only remaining of a fair estate that his father had left him, fell into a deep melancholy, and fearing want, hanged himself, saith Seneca. And not to mention the miseries and sorrows they bring hereby upon their families, drinking tears, yea, the blood of their wives and children: Oh! what an account will they give to God, when the reckoning day comes! Believe it, sirs, there is not a shilling of your estates, but God will reckon with you for the expence thereof. If you have spent it upon your lusts, whilst the necessity of your families, or the poor, call upon you for it; I should be loth to have your account to make for a thousand times more than ever you possessed. O woful pence, that is followed with such dreadful reckonings!

or women. So Psal. lxxix. 12. "They that sit in the
"against me, and I am the song of drunkards," i. e.
and vilest of men, as the opposition plainly shews
opposed to them that sit in the gate, that is honour.
The Lord would have his people shun the society of s
not to eat with them, 1 Cor. v. 11. Yea, the scripture
with atheism; they are such as have lost the sense an
of the day of judgment; mind not another world, nor
for the coming of the Lord, Mat. xxiv. 27, 28. He s
delayeth his coming, and then falls a drinking with t
The thoughts of that day will make them leave their
cups will drown the thoughts of such a day. And w
contempt, shame and infamy which the Spirit of God
on the head of this sin cause thee to abhor it? Do
yea, moral persons, abhor the drunkard? Oh! methin
that attends it, should be as a fence to keep thee from

Arg. 6. Sadly consider, there can be nothing of th
Spirit in a soul that is under the dominion of this lu
the first discovery of the grace of God, the soul reno
vernment of sensuality: "The grace of God that bring
"teacheth men to live soberly," Tit. ii. 11, 12. Tha
first effects. Drunkenness indeed may be found amo
that are lost in the darkness of ignorance; but it ma
named among the children of the day. "They that
"are drunken in the night; but let us that are of the d
1 Thess. v. 7, 8. And the apostles often oppose win
rit as things incompatible, Eph. v. 18. "Be not dru
"wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit."
"Sensual, not having the Spirit." Now what a drea
ation is this? "If any man have not the Spirit of Chr
"of his," Rom. viii. 9. Sensual persons have not
Christ, and so can be none of his. It is true, Noah,
once fell into this sin; but, as Theodoret saith, and
proceeded *ab inexperientia, non ab intemperantia*, fro
perience of the force and power of the grape, not fr
ance; and, besides, we find not that ever he was ag
with that sin; but thou knowest it, and yet persistest
creature! the Spirit of Christ cannot dwell in thee. T
thee to lay it to heart sadly!

Arg. 7. It is a sin over which many direful woes and
in the word, like so many low'ring clouds, ready to po

too long to be enumerated here. Now, consider what a fearful thing it is to be under these woes of God ! Sinner, I beseech thee, do make light of them, for they will fall heavy ; assure thyself none of them shall fall to the ground ; they will all take place upon thee except thou repent.

There are woes of men, and woes of God : God's woes are eternal, and make their condition woful, to purpose, on whom they fall. Other woes, as one saith, do but touch the skin, but these strike the soul ; other woes are but temporal, these are eternal ; others do only part betwixt us and our outward comforts, these twist God and us for ever.

Arg. 8. Drunkenness is a leading sin, which has a great retinue and attendance of other sins waiting on it ; it is like a sudden land-flood, which brings a great deal of dirt with it. So that love and faith excels among the graces, because it enlivens, actuates, and gives strength to them, so is this amongst sins. It is not so much a special sin against a single precept of God, as a general violation of the whole law, saith accurate Amesius. It doth not only call off the guard, warms and quickens all other lusts, and so exposes the soul to be constituted by them. (1.) It gives occasion, yea, is the real cause of many contentions, and fatal quarrels, Prov. xxiii. 29. "Who is my woe ? Who hath sorrow ? Who hath [contentions,] babbled words and wounds without cause ? They that tarry long at the wine," Contentions and wounds are the ordinary effects of drunken meetings. When reason is deposed, and lust heated, what will not men attempt ? (2.) Scoffs and reproaches of the ways and people of God. Psal. lxxix. 12. "David was the song of the drunkards." (3.) It is the great incendiary of lust : You shall find rioting and drunkenness joined with chambering and wantonness, Rom. xiii. 13. *Nunc ego ebrium castum putabo*, saith Hierom ; I will never think a drunkard to be chaste. Solomon plainly tells us what the issue will be, Prov. xxiii. 33. "Thine eyes shall behold a strange woman, thy heart shall utter perverse things," speaking of the drunkard. It may be called *Gad*, for a troop followeth it. Hence one aptly calls it, *The devil's bridle*, by which he turneth the sinner which way he pleases ; he that is overcome by it, can overcome no other sin.

Arg. 9. But if none of the former considerations can prevail, let us hope these two last may, unless all sense and tenderness be lost. Consider, therefore, in the 9th place, that drunkards are in scripture marked out for hell ; the characters of death are upon them. You shall find them pinioned with other sons of death, 1 Cor. vi. 9, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God ? neither the filthy, nor the covetous, nor the idolaters, nor the

Lord, how are guilty sinners able to face such a text a soul ! darest thou for a superfluous cup, adventure to drink pure unmixed wrath ? O think when the wine sparkles and gives its colour, think, I say, what a cup of trembling is in the hand of the Lord for thee. Thou wilt not now believe but the day is coming, when thou shalt know the price of these brutish pleasures. Oh ! it will then sting like an adder. A short-lived beastly pleasure is the price for which thou shalt sell thy soul and rivers of pleasure that are at God's right hand.

Obj. *But I hope I shall repent, and then this text will not come to my salvation.*

Sol. True ; if God shall give thee repentance, it could be in the last place, to awaken thee thoroughly, and startle thy conscience, which sensuality hath brawned and cautioned thee,

Arg. 10. That it is a sin out of whose power few, or none are rescued and reclaimed. On this account it was that St. Augustine called it the *pit of hell*. He that is addicted to this sin becomes irreclaimable, saith a * reverend divine ; for seldom or never have I known any reclaimed. And its power to hold the soul in subjection lies in two things especially : (1.) As it becomes habitual, and therefore are not easily broken. Be pleased to view an example in Prov. xxiii. 35. " They have stricken me, shalt thou say, I was not sick ; they have beaten me, and I felt it not. I will not awake ? I will seek it yet again." (2.) As it " taketh away the heart," Hos. iv. 11. that is, the understanding, reason, and integrity of a man, and so makes him incapable of being reclaimed. Upon this account it was that Abigail would not speak more to Nabal, until the wine was gone out of him, 1 S. xxv. 27. Plainly intimating, that no wholesome counsel could be given until the wine be gone out. When one asked Cleostratus, why men were not ashamed to be drunken, he tartly replied, " Are you ashamed to admonish a drunkard ?" Intimating that a man would cast away an admonition upon such an one. Drunkenness only renders them incapable of counsel for the time, but it does not besots and infatuates them ; which is a very grievous stroke laid upon them, making way to their eternal ruin. So then consider the whole what a dangerous gulph the sin of drunkenness is to you, for the Lord's sake, and by all the regard you have for your souls, bodies, and estates, beware of it. O consider the arguments I have here produced against it. I should have

THE ART OF PRESERVING THE FRUITS OF THE LIPS.

Drink not the third glass, which thou canst not tame
When once it is within thee; but before
May'st rule it as thou list: and pour the shame
Which it will pour to thee upon the floor.
It is most just to throw that on the ground,
Which would throw me there, if I kept the round.

He that is drunken, may his mother kill,
Lie with his sister: he hath lost the reins;
Is outlaw'd by himself; all kind of ill
Did with the liquor slide into the veins.
The drunkard forfeits man, and doth divest
All worldly right, save what he has by beast.

Shall I, to please another's wine-sprung mind,
Lose all my own? God has given me a measure
Short of his Can, and body; must I find
A pain in that wherein he finds a pleasure?
Stay at the third glass; if thou lose thy hold,
Then thou art modest, but the wine grows bold,

If reason move not gallants quit the room,
(All in a shipwreck shift their several way.)
Let not a common ruin thee intomb:
Be not a beast in courtesies; but stay,
Stay at the third glass, or forego the place:
Wine, above all things, doth God's stamp deface.

CAUTION II.

THE second evil I shall deal with is the evil of the tongue, which as St. James saith, is full of deadly poison, oaths, curses, blasphemy, and this poison it scatters up and down the world in all places; and this tamed member that none can rule, Jam. iii. 7, 8. The fiercest of beasts have been tamed by man, as the apostle there observes, which is a sign of his old superiority and dominion over them; but this is an untamed member that none can tame but he that made it; no beast so fierce and crabbed as this is. It may be, I may be bitten by it for my labours, and endeavours to put a restraint upon it: but I shall adventure. My design is not to dishonour, or exasperate you; but if my fulness to God and you should accidentally do so, I cannot help it. Friends, Providence oftentimes confines many of you together

do you daily behold, who go down into the deeps? O what employment is here for your tongues! how should they be filled with all his wonders? How should you call upon each other to praise him who hath done for my soul," at such a time, in such an hour. How should you call upon one another to pay "the voice which hath uttered in your distress?" Thus should one proceed in this angelic work, as one lively bird sets the whole flock chirping.

But tell me, Sirs, should a man come aboard you at sea, and find you as Christ did of those two disciples going to Emmaus, 17. "What manner of communication is this that ye have?" O what a sad account would he have from them! It may be he should find one *jesting*, and another *sweating*, and *reviling* godliness, and the professors of it; so that it would be little hell for a serious Christian to be confined to your society. It is not, I am confident, the manner of all. We have a few more sober seamen, and blessed be God for them; but for the most part, stands the case with most of you. O what stuff is here! professing Christianity, and bordering close upon the gates of eternity as you do?

It is not my purpose to write of all the diseases of the tongue, that would fill a volume, and is inconsistent with my intention. Who can recount the evils of the tongue? The apostle saith, "a world of iniquity," Jam. iii. 6. And if there be a world of iniquity in one member, who can number the sins of all the members? The apostle thus reckons as many sins of the tongue as there are letters in the alphabet. And it is an observable note that one hath more sins in the tongue, than in the body. 1 Pet. iii. 13, 14. That when Paul anatomizeth the natural man, he insisteth longer upon the organs of speech, than all the organs of the body; "Their throat is an open sepulchre, with their tongue they have used deceit: the poison of asps is under their tongue, their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness."

But, to be short, we find the Spirit of God in scripture comparing the tongue to a tree, Prov. xv. 4. "A wholesome tongue is like a tree of life." And words are the fruit of the tree, Isa. lvii. 18. "The fruit of the lips." Some of these trees bear precious fruit, and it is a lovely sight to behold them laden with them, Psal. cxxxv. 6. "A word fitly spoken, is like apples of gold, and pictures of silver." Such a tongue is a tree of life. Other trees bear evil fruit, grapes of Sodom, and clusters of thorns. I shall not here mention the names of these fruits, viz. (1)

Spirit of God prescribes an excellent way to season our words, and keep them sweet and sound, that they may neither wither nor become idle and sapless, or putrify and become rotten, as profane words are. Col. iv. 6. "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how to answer every man." Oh! if the salt of grace were once cast into the fountain, the heart-streams must needs become more savoury and pleasant, as the waters of Marah when they were healed. My present work is to attempt the cure of this double evil of *idle words* and *profane oaths*, whereof thousands among you are deeply guilty. I shall begin with the first, viz.

I. IDLE WORDS. That is, useless chat, unprofitable talk that is not referred any way to the glory of God. This is a common evil, and little regarded by most men; but yet a sin of several aggravations than the most imagine: light words weigh heavy in God's balance.

Arg. 1. For, first, The evil of them is exceedingly aggravated by this: they abuse and pervert the tongue, that noble member, from that employment and use which God by the law of creation designed it to. God gave not to man the organs and power of speech, (which is his excellency above the beasts) to serve a passion or vain humour to vent the froth and vanity of his spirit; but to extol the Creator and render him the praise of all his admirable and glorious works. For though the creation be a curious well-tuned instrument, yet man is the musician that must touch it, and make the melody. This was the end of God in forming those instruments and organs: but now hereby they are subject to Satan and lust, and employed to the dishonour of God who made them. God is pleased to suspend the power of speech (as we see in children) until reason begins to bud in them: they have not the liberty of one, until they have the use of the other; which plainly shews, that God is not willing to have our words run waste.

Arg. 2. It is a sinful wasting of our precious time; and that produces a further aggravation upon it. Consider, sirs, the time of life is but a little spot betwixt two eternities. The long-suffering God wheels about those glorious celestial bodies over your heads in constant revolution to beget time for you; and the preciousness of every minute thereof results from its use and end: it is intended and afforded as a space to you to repent in, Rev. ii. 21. And therefore great things depend upon it: no less than your eternal happiness or misery hangs upon those precious opportunities. Every minute of it hath an influence into eternity. How would the damned value

Arg. 3. It is a sin that few are sensible of as they are and therefore the more dangerous. It is commonly committed that without checks of conscience. Other sins, as murder, though they be horrid sins, yet are but seldom committed when they are, conscience is startled at the horridness of them except they be prodigious wretches indeed, dare make. But now for idle and vain words, there are innumerable committed these every day, and few regard them. The interest of the heart and tongue is quick; they are quickly committed and easily forgotten.

Arg. 4. And then, 4thly, They have mischievous effects on others. How long doth an idle word, or foolish jest, stay in the minds, and become an occasion of much sin to them? The vanity of thy spirit, which thy tongue so freely vents to thy companions, may be working in their minds when thou art turned into dust, and so be transmitted from one to another; for more is requisite than an *objective existence* of those sins in their memories. And thus mayest thou be sinning in the hearts of thy companions, when thou art turned into dust. A reason that Suarez gives for a general judgment, after men have received their particular judgment immediately after their death, is (saith he) after this, multitudes of sins by their means are committed in the world, for which they must yet be judged. 'measure of wrath.' So that look as many of the prelates of God, now in glory, have left many weighty and holy commands behind them, by which many thousands of souls have been saved, and God glorified on earth, after they had left it: so that vanity upon the minds of others behind thee, by which thou mayest be dishonoured to many generations. And then,

II. For PROFANE OATHS, the corrupt fruit of a carnal heart; oh! how common are these among you? Yet swearing is so strengthened in some, that they have lost the conscience of the sin. Now, oh! that I might prevail with you to repent of this wickedness, and break the force of this curse among you! will you but give me the reading of a few verses, and weigh with the reason of men, what you read? If you hearken to counsel, it is a fatal sign, 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16. Do not mourn for this obstinacy hereafter, Prov. v. 12, 13. But repent of that evil that scorns the remedy. And if you have perished, the Lord give you an heart to consider what you have done, the counsels of God: or else it were better thine eyes

glorious; Mal. i. 14. "I am a great king, and my name is dreaded among the Heathen." The heathens would not ordinarily mention the names of such as they revered. Suetonius saith, Augustus prohibited the common use of his name: he thought it indignity to have his name tossed up and down in every one's mouth. Yea, says Dr. Willet on Exod. xx. it was an use among them to keep secret such names as they would have in reverence. They durst not mention the name of Demogorgon, whom they held to be the first god: they thought when he was named, the earth would tremble. Also the name of Mercurius Tresmegistus, was very sparingly used because of that reverence the people had for him. Now, consider shall poor worms be so tender of preserving the reverence of the names! Shall not heathens dare to use the names of their idols; shall the sacred and dreadful name of the true God be thus bandied up and down by tongues of his own creatures? Will not God be avenged for these abuses of his name? Be confident, it shall one day be sanctified upon you in judgment, because ye did not sanctify according to your duty.

Arg. 2. Swearing is a part of the worship of God; and therefore profane swearing can be no less than the profanation of his worship and robbing him of all the glory he has thereby; Deut. vi. "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name." So Jer. iv. 2. "Thou shalt swear the Lord thy God, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness." If a man swears by God after this manner, God is exceedingly glorified thereby. Now, that you may see what revenue of glory God hath from this part of his worship, and how it becomes a part of Divine worship, you must know then an oath is nothing else but the *asking or desiring of Divine testimony, for the confirmation of the truth of our testimony*. Heb. vi. 16. "For men verily swear by the greater; and an oath [confirmation] is to them an end of all strife." The corruption of human nature by the fall has made man such a false and fickle creature, that his single testimony cannot be sufficient security for another, especially in weighty cases, to rest upon; and therefore in swearing he calleth God for a witness of the truth of what he affirms, or promises: I say, calleth God to be a witness of the truth of what he saith, because he is *truth* itself, and cannot lie, Heb. vi. 18. Now this calling for, or asking of a testimony from God, makes an oath become a part of God's worship, and gives him a great deal of glory and honour; for hereby he that sweareth acknowledgeth his *omniscience* and *infallible truth and righteousness*. His *omniscience*

laid under the foundation of them, which, when justice shall set fire to it, O what work will it make! woe to the inhabitants thereof! Well to break off this sin by repentance, unless you intend to ruin your families and bring all the curses of God into your houses. If you have pity for yourselves, yet pity your posterity; have mercy for your wives and children; do not ruin all for the indulgence of a lust.

Arg. 4. But that is not all; it brings soul-judgments and spiritual plagues upon you: it brings hell along with it. And if thou beest afraid to sin, yet methinks, thou shouldst be afraid to *burn*: if the love of God can work nothing upon thy brawny heart, yet, methinks, the terrors of the Lord should startle and affright it. To this purpose, I beseech you to weigh these scriptures; and methinks, unless God hath lost all his authority with you, and hell all its terrors, should startle you. The first is that dreadful scripture, James v. 12. "But above all things, my brethren, swear not; neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath, but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into [condemnation.]" View this text seriously! methinks it should be like the fingers of God came forth and wrote upon the wall that dreadful sentence that charmed the countenance of a king, and that in the height of a frolic humor, he made his knees smite together. Mark, [*above all things*] a former vehemency and earnestness, like that, Eph. vi. 16. "But above all, taking the shield of faith." As faith hath a prelation there before the graces, so swearing here before all other vices. [*Swear not, vainly, rashly, profanely*; for otherwise it is a lawful thing, and a part of God's worship, as I have shewed: but swear not vain oaths, by creatures, heaven, or earth, &c. which is to advance the creature in the room of God: a sin to which the Jews were much addicted. I will "let your yea, be yea; and your nay, nay;" i. e. accustom yourselves to short and plain affirmations and negations, to a simple and candid expression of your minds. And the thundering argument that backs it, is this, [*lest ye fall into condemnation*]; i. e. lest for these things Judge of heaven and earth pass a sentence of condemnation to hell upon you. O sirs! dare you touch with this hot iron? Dare you from henceforth commit that sin, that you know will bring you under the condemnation and judgment of God? Do you know what it is for a sinner to be cast at God's bar? Did you never see a poor malefactor tried at the assizes, and observe how his face gathers paleness, how his limbs tremble, and death displays its colours in his cheeks, when sentence is given upon him? But what is that to God's condemnation? What is a gallows to hell? Another text I would recommend to your consideration, James v. 12. "The Lord will visit the sinners."

over to answer to God for them. O terrible sentence can bear it, or stand before it! "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity:" Surely that man to whom God will impute them: and to the shall all be imputed, if he break not off his sin by repenting to a Christ the sooner. Oh, how darest thou think of the Lord with the guilt of all thy sins upon thee? He would administer the very spirit of joy into one sentence to a sinner, Mat. ix. 2. He said, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven." And when God would contract the sum of all his sins into one word, he saith, "His sins shall lie down with him as dust," Job xx. 11. Ah, soul! one of these days thou shalt be laid on thy death-bed, or see the waves that shall enter into thee, roaring and roaring upon every side; and then thou wilt have no other thoughts of the happiness that lies in remission of sin than thou hast now. Observe the most incorrigible sinner then; he sighs and groans, and cries, Ah, Lord! and must I die? He sees how the tears trickle down his cheeks, and his heart is burst within him. Why, what is the matter? Oh! if God would not pardon him, he holds him guilty! If he were sure he should be forgiven, then he could die: but, oh! to appear before God, that appals him, daunts him, kills the very heart within him; he would fain cry for mercy, but conscience stops his mouth; conscience, how canst thou move that tongue to God for mercy, that hath so often rent and torn his glorious name with sin and curses? Sirs, I pray you do not make light of this; they will look wishfully upon you one of these days, and repent it by sound conversion.

Arg. 5. And then, lastly, to name no more, I pray you that a custom of vain words and profane oaths, is as plain indication and discovery of an unregenerate soul, as any other; for this is a sure sign thou art none of Christ's, nor hast thou communion with the promises and privileges of his people; for by their nature distinguisheth the state of saints and sinners, Eccl. x. 2. "It is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the just, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner: and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath." Mark, he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath, do as manifestly distinguish the righteous from God from wicked men, as clean and unclean, righteous and unrighteous, sacrificing and not sacrificing. The fruit of the tongue

“wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment; for the law of the Lord is in his heart.” To this sense we must understand the scripture, Mat. xii. 37. “By thy words thou shalt be justified, by thy words thou shalt be condemned.” Certainly justification and condemnation, in the day of judgment shall not pass upon us merely for the good or bad words we have spoken; but according to the state of the person and frame of the heart. But the meaning is, that our words shall justify or condemn us in that day, as evidence of the state and frame of the soul. We use to say, such witnesses have condemned a man; the meaning is, the evidence they gave cast and condemned him. O think seriously of this; if words evidence the state of the soul, what a woful state must thy soul needs be in, when thy mouth overflows with oaths and curses! How many witnesses shall be brought in, to cast thee in the great day? “Your own tongue shall then fall upon you,” as the expression is, Psal. lxiv. 8. And out of your own mouth God will fetch abundant evidence to condemn you. And thus I have opened unto you the evil of vain words and profane oaths; and presented to your view their several aggravations. If by these things there be a relenting pang upon thine heart, and a serious resolution of reformation, then I shall recommend to thee a few helps or means to thy perusal, and conclude this head: And the first help is this,

Help 1. Seriously fix in thy thoughts that scripture, Mat. xii. 37. “But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment.” O let this sound in thine ears day and night! O ponder them in thy heart! [I say unto you] I that have always been in the Father’s bosom, and fully know his mind, that I am constituted the Judge of quick and dead, and do fully understand the rule of judgment, and the whole process thereof, I say, and do assure you, that [every idle word that men shall speak,] i. e. every word that hath not a tendency and reference to the glory of God, though there be no other obliquity of evil in them than this, that they want a good end: how much more the scurrilous words, bloody oaths, and blasphemies? [Men shall give an account thereof;] that is, shall be cast and condemned to suffer the wrath of God for them; as appears by that parallel scripture, 1 Pet. iv. 4, 5. For as the learned observe, there is plainly a *metalepsis* in these words; the *antecedent* to give an account, is put for the *consequent*, punishment, and condemnation to hell-fire: the certainty which it admits but of this one exception, viz. intervenient repentance or pardon obtained through the blood of Christ here before you be presented at that judgment. O then, my dear friends, be diligent to

CAUTION III.

THE next danger I shall give you warning of, is the sin of *cleanness*; with which I fear too many of the rude and looser sort of seamen defile themselves; and possibly, the temptations to this are advantaged, and strengthened upon them more than others, by their condition and employments. Let no man be offended that I here give warning of this evil: I intend to asperse no man's person, or raise up jealousy against any; but would faithfully discharge my duty to all, and that in all things. It was the complaint of Salvia many hundred years ago, that he could not speak against the vices of men, but one or other would thus object; 'There he meant not to hit me:' and so storm and fret. Alas (as he replieth) it is not we that speak to you, but your own conscience; we speak to your order, but conscience speaks to the person.' I shall use no other apology in this case. That this sin is a dreadful gulph, a quick-sand that hath sucked in, and destroyed thousands, is truly apparent both from scripture and experience. Solomon tells us, Prov. xxii. 14. that it is a "deep ditch, into which such as are abhorred of the Lord shall fall." Oh! the multitudes of dead that are there! and if so, cannot in duty to God, or in love to you, be silent, where the danger is so great. It is both needless, and besides my intention here is to insist largely upon the explication of the particulars in which uncleanness is distributed: the more ordinary and common sins of this kind are known by the names of adultery and fornication. The latter is when single persons come together out of the state of marriage. The former is, when at least one of the persons committing uncleanness is contracted in marriage. This now is the evil I shall warn you of. And, that thou mayest never fall into this pit, I shall endeavour to hedge and fence up the way to it by these ensuing arguments: and oh! that the light of every argument may be powerfully reflected upon your conscience! Many men are wise in generals, but very vain in *εν διαλογισμοις*, in the reasonings or imaginations, as the apostle calls them, Rom. i. 21. i. e. in their *practical inferences*. They are good at speculation, but bunglers at application: but it is truth in the particulars, that, like an hot iron, pierces; and, oh! that you may find these to be such in your soul! To that end consider,

Arg. 1. The names and titles by which this sin is known in scripture are very vile and base. The Spirit of God, doubtless, hath put such odious names upon it, on purpose to deter and affright men from it. In general it is called *lust*; and so (as one notes) it beareth the

persons, such as are not fit for the society of men, such as are hissed out of all men's company: they are rather to be reckoned as beasts than men. Yea, the scripture compares them with beasts, even to dogs. When Ishbosheth charged this man, 2 Sam. iii. 8. "Am I a dog's head (saith he) that thou shouldst be so cruel to me with a fault concerning this woman?" And in Jer. v. 8. "The hire of a whore, and the price of a dog," are used. The expression of this lust in words or gesture, is called adultery. Even as fed horses do, that scatter their food about them. Or, if the scripture speaks of them as men, it is only in respect of their outward shape, not the understanding. Among the Jews they were called fools in Israel, 2 Sam. x. 3. and so Prov. vi. 32. "Whoso committeth adultery without understanding." And sinners, Luke vii. 36. "hold a woman that was a [sinner,]" that is, an eminent sinner: by which term the scripture decyphers an uncleanness. If, among sinners, there were none of such a prodigious sin as they. And we find, that when the Spirit of God denounceth any sin by an odious name, he calls it adultery; as when he calls it adultery, Ezek. xvi. 32. And indeed this spiritual adultery oftentimes are found in the same persons that give themselves up to the one, are, by the right of God given up to the other, as it is too manifestly and fully exemplified in the world. So earthly-mindedness hath taken upon it on purpose to affright men from it, James iv. 4. Surely God would never borrow the name of this sin to describe the evil of other sins. If it were not most vile and abominable, he would not have called the sin of the Gentiles, or heathens, 1 Thess. iv. 5. that we could say, it were only among them that knew not God. How then are you able to look these scriptures in the face without blush? O what a sin is this! Art thou willing to be reckoned as fools, dogs, sinners, heathens, and take thy lot with them? Hath planted that affection of shame in thy nature to be against such filthy lusts; it is a sin that hath filthiness to defile the tongue that mentions it, Eph. v. 3.

Arg. 2. It is a sin that the God of heaven hath often and severely condemned in the word, which abundantly expresses the abhorrence of it. You have prohibition upon prohibition, threatening upon threatening in the word against it; Eph. v. 3. "Thou shalt not commit adultery." This was delivered from mount Sinai with the greatest solemnity and terror by the voice of God himself. Turn to, and consider the following scriptures.

to have so many words of God, and such terrible ones too as most of those are, to be brought in and pleaded against thy soul in the day ! Mountains and hills may depart, but these words shall not depart : heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one tittle of the words shall pass away. Believe it, sinner, as sure as the heavens are over thy head, and the earth under thy feet, they shall one day take hold of thee, though we poor worms who plead them with thee, die and perish : Zech. i. 5, 6. The Lord tells us it shall not fall to the ground. Which is a borrowed speech from a dart that is flung with a weak hand ; it goes not home to the mark, but falls to the ground by the way. None of these words shall so fall to the ground.

Arg. 3. It is a sin that defiles and destroys the body ; 1 Cor. 18. " He that committeth adultery, sinneth against his own body. In most other sins the body is the *instrument*, here it is the *object* against which the sin is committed : that body of thine, which should be the temple of the Holy Ghost, is turned into a sty of filthiness ; yea, it not only *defiles*, but destroys it. Job calls it a " fire that burneth to destruction," Job xxxi. 12. or as the Septuagint reads it, " fire that burneth in all the members. It is a sin that God hath plagued with strange and terrible diseases ; that Morbus Gallicus and Sudor Anglicus, and that Plica Polonica, whereof you may read in Bolton's four last things, page 30. and Selater on Rom. i. 8. These were judgments sent immediately by God's own hand, to correct the new sins and enormities of the world ; for they seem to be the best physicians besides their books. O how terrible is it to groan under the sad effects of this sin ! As Solomon tells us, Prov. 11. " And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy bones are consumed." To this sense some expound that terrible text, Haggai xiii. 4 " Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled ; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge ;" i. e. with some remarkable judgment inflicted on them in this world : if it escape punishment of men, it shall not escape the vengeance of God. And with what comfort may a man lie down upon a sick-bed, when sickness can be looked upon as a fatherly visitation coming in mercy ! But thou that shortenest thy life, and bringest sickness on thyself by such a sin, art the devil's martyr ; and to whom canst thou turn for such a day for comfort ?

Arg. 4. Consider what an indelible blot it is to thy nature, which can never be wiped away ; though thou escape with thy life, yet one says, thou shalt be burnt in the hand, yea, branded in the forehead. What a foul scare is that upon the face of David himself

tending it should be a preservative from it. Indeed thou art to it by hopes of secrecy and concealment; but thou knowest thy sins lie hid, and possibly shall never come to light until the manifestation of all hidden things, yet this is a sin that is finally discovered. Under the law, God appointed an easy way for the discovery of it, Numb. v. 13. And to this evidence of God doth often very strangely bring it to light, that be a deed of darkness: the Lord hath many times brought down the sons, either by terror of conscience, phrensy, or some other way, to be the publishers and proclaimers of their own shame. He that serves this, said the reverend Mr. Hildersham on the former occasion, even those that are most cunning to conceal and hide it from the eyes of the world, yet through the just judgment of God, are exposed and condemns them for it: this dashes in pieces, that vessel in which the precious ointment of a good name is contained. A fool in Israel shall be thy title; and even children shall be ashamed of thee.

Arg. 5. It scatters thy substance, and roots up the foundation of thy estate; Job xxxi. 12. "It roots up all thy increase, and shall be filled with thy wealth, and thy labours shall be as the house of a stranger," Prov. v. 10. "For by means of a woman, a man is brought to a morsel of bread," Eccl. i. 19. It gives rags for its livery (saith one) and though it be clothed in the fulness, yet it is *followed* with a morsel of bread. To mix those temporal judgments with which God punishes the ungodly son in this life. The word Delilah, which is the name of a woman conceived to come from a root that signifies to exhaust, or to dry. This sin will quickly exhaust the fullest estate; and it is a dreadful thing will this be, when God shall require an account of thy stewardship in the great day! how righteous is it, that should be fuel to the wrath of God, whose health and happiness has been so much fuel to maintain the flame of lust! O how many of their estates are sinners to satisfy their lusts! if the members be sick or in prison, they may there perish and starve, and no man will relieve them; but to obtain their lusts, O how many will do it! "Ask me never so much, and I will give it," saith Solomon xxxiv. 12. "Ask what thou wilt, and it shall be given thee." Herod to the daughter of Herodias. Well, you are libelling your treasures upon your lusts; and believe it, God will send measures of wrath to punish you for your lusts. It had been a hundred times better for thee thou hadst never had an estate, than

THE HARLOT'S FACE IN THE SCRIPTURE-GLASS.

infatuating sin. The danger of falling this way must needs be great, and the fall very desperate; because few that fall into it do ever rise again. I shall lay two very terrible scriptures before you to this purpose, either of them enough to drive thee speedily to Christ, or to drive thee out of thy wits; the one is that, Eccl. vii. 26. "A woman find more bitter than death, the woman whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands: Whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her, but the sinner shall be taken by her." The argument which the Spirit of God uses here to dissuade from this sin, is taken from the *subject*; they that fall into it, for the most part, are persons in whom God has no delight, and so in judgment are delivered up to it, and never recovered by grace from it. The other is that in Prov. xxii. 14. "The mouth of a strange woman is a deep pit; he that is fallen therein shall be abhorred of the Lord shall fall therein." O terrible word! to daunt the heart of the securest sinner. Your whores *embrace* you, yea, but God *abhors* you! You have their *love*, Oh but you have under God's *hatred*! What say you to these two scriptures? If you are not atheists, methinks such a word from the mouth of God should strike like a dart through thy soul. And upon this account it is, that they never are recovered, because God has no delight in them. If this be not enough, view one scripture more, Prov. ix. 18, 19. "For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths lead to the dead: None that go to her, return again, neither take hold of the paths of life." Reader, if thou be a person addicted to this sin, go thy way, and think seriously what a case thou art in. *None return again*, i. e. a very few of many: The examples of persons who have been recovered are very rare. Pliny tells us, the mermaids are commonly seen in green meadows, and have enchanting voices; but there are always found heaps of dead men's bones lying by the shore. This may be but a fabulous story: But I am sure, it is true of the harlot, whose syren songs have allured thousands to their inevitable destruction. It is a captivating sin that leads away the sinner in triumph; they cannot deliver their souls; Prov. vii. 22. "He goes after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool goes to the correction of the stocks." Mark, a fool; it dementeth and befools men, takes away their understanding; the Septuagint renders it, *ὡς κύνες ἐπὶ δεσμῶν*, as a dog to the collar; or, like what we use to say, a dog in a string. I have read of one, that having by this sin wasted his body, was told by physicians, that except he left it, he would quickly lose his eyes: He answered, if it be so, then *vale lumen amicum*, farewell sweet light. And I remember

O think sadly upon this argument ! God often gives the pertinency, and will not spend a rod upon them to See Hos. iv. 14. Rev. xxii. 11.

Arg. 7. And then in the 7th place, those few that have been covered by repentance out of it, O how bitter hath God made their souls ! “ I find it (saith Solomon) more bitter than death, Eccl. vii. 26. Death is a very bitter thing ; O what a strong reluctance is there in nature against it ; but this is so to the Poor David found it so, when he roared under those loadings of conscience for it, in Psal. li. Ah ! when the Lord shall open the poor sinner’s eyes, to see the horror and guilt he hath contracted upon his own poor soul, it will haunt him as day and night, and terrify his soul with dreadful forms and visions ! O dear bought pleasure, if this were all it should cost ! What is now become of the pleasure of sin ? O what gall and wormwood wilt thou taste, when once the Lord shall bring thee to the end of it ! The Hebrew word for repentance (*Nacham*,) and the Greek word (*Metamelia*,) the one signifies, an irking of the soul, the other signifies, after-grief : Yea, it is called, a renting of the soul, as if it were torn in pieces in a man’s breast. Ask such a sinner what it thinks of such courses now ? Oh ! now it loathes itself for them. Ask him, if he dare sin in that kind again, he may as well ask me (will he answer) whether I will put my hand into the fire. Oh ! it breeds an indignation in the soul against himself. That word, *αγανακτησις*, 2 Cor. vii. 11. signifies, a sickness of the stomach with very rage, and being sick with anger, the fiercest wrath. O what a furnace is the breast of the penitent ! what fumes, what heats do abound in it, which even before him, and the sense of the guilt upon him, the remembrance of carnal pleasure will keep thee many days and nights in a rack of horror, if ever God give thee repentance unto life.

Arg. 8. And if thou never repent, as indeed but few do, who fall into this sin, then consider how God will follow thee with vengeance : Thou shalt have flaming fire for burning lust, for a sin that hath the scent of fire and brimstone with it, which is meet with it in scripture. The harlot’s guests are lodged in the flames of hell, Prov. ix. 18. No more perfumed beds ; they are cast down in flames. Whoremongers shall have their part of the punishment that burneth with fire and brimstone ; which is the sentence of Rev. xxi. 8. Such shall not inherit the kingdom of God. 1 Cor. vi. 9. No dog shall come into the New Jerusalem.

them, therefore he himself will torment them for ever with his immediate power: Now he will *stir up all his wrath*, and sinners shall know the price of their pleasures. The punishment of Sodom is a little map of hell, as I may say. O how terrible a day was that upon those unclean wretches! But that fire was not of many days continuance: When it had consumed them, and their houses, it went out for want of matter: but here, the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, kindles it. The pleasure was quickly gone, but the sting and torment abide for ever. "Who knoweth the power of his anger? Even according to his fear, so is his wrath," Psal. xc. 11. Oh consider, how will his almighty power rack and torment thee! Think on this when sin comes with a smiling face towards thee in the temptation. O think! If the human nature of Christ recoiled, when his cup of wrath was given him to drink, how were sore amazed at it, how shalt thou, a poor worm, bear and grapple with it for ever?

Arg. 9. Consider further, how closely soever thou carriest thy wickedness in this world, though it should never be discovered here, yet there is a day coming when all will out, and that before angels and men. God will rip up thy secret sins in the face of that great congregation at the day of judgment: Then that which was done in secret shall be proclaimed as upon the house-top, Luke xii. "Then God will judge the secrets of men," Rom. ii. 16. "All hidden things of darkness will be brought into the open light." Sinner, there will be no sculking for thee in the grave, no declining at this bar; thou refusedst, indeed, to come to the *throne of grace*, when God invited thee, but there will be no refusing to appear before the *bar of justice*, when Christ shall summon thee. And thou canst not decline appearing, so neither canst thou then palliate and hide thy wickedness any longer; for then shall the books be opened; the book of God's omniscience, and the book of thine own conscience, wherein all thy secret villany is recorded: for though he ceased to speak to thee, yet it ceased not to write and record thy actions. If thy shameful sins should be divulged now, it would make thee tear off thy hair with indignation; but then all will be discovered: Angels and men shall point at thee, and say, lo, this is the man, this is he that carried it so smoothly in the world. Mr. Thomas Fuller relates a story of Ottocar king of Bohemia, 'who refusing to do homage to Rodolphus the first emperor, being at last sorely chastised with war, condescended to do him homage privately in a tent; the tent was so contrived by the emperor's servants, (saith

Arg. 10. Lastly, consider but one thing more, and By this sin thou dost not only damn thine own soul, but ther to hell with thee. This sin is not as a single bullet but one, but as a chain-shot, it kills many, two at least give repentance. And if he should give thee repentance, other party may never repent, and so perish for ever wickedness; and oh! what a sad consideration will that be that such a poor soul is in hell, or likely to go thither by thee. Thou hast made fast a snare upon a soul, which thou canst not undo; thou hast done that which may be matter of sorrow to thee as thou livest; but though thou canst grieve for it, thou canst not remedy it. In other sins it is not so: If thou hadst stolen goods, restitution might be made to the injured party, but if thou hadst murdered another, thy sin would be none: if thou hadst murdered another, thy sin would be not his that was murdered by thee: but this is a compound sin, defiling both at once; and if neither repent, then, oh! how greeting will these poor wretches have in hell! how will they see the day that ever they saw each other's face! O what a consideration of their misery will this be! For look, as it will be in heaven, to behold such there as we have been instruments of, so must it needs be a stinging aggravation of the misery to look upon those who have been the instruments of their damnation. Oh, methinks if there be any tender conscience, if this sin have not totally brawned and seared, these arguments should pierce like a sword through the heart. Reader, I beseech thee, by the mercies of God, if thou art guilty of thy soul by this abominable sin, speedily to repent. O that there were a sprinkling upon thee; there is yet mercy for such as thou art, if thou wilt accept the terms of it. "Such as will, you, but ye are washed," 1 Cor. vi. 11. Publican may enter into the kingdom of God, Matth. xxi. 31. few such are recovered, yet how knowest thou but that mercy may pull thee as a brand out of the fire, if now thou turn and seek it with tears? Though it be a *fire that leads unto destruction*, as Job calls it, Job xxxi. 12. yet it is a quenchable fire, the blood of Christ can quench it.

And for you, whom God hath kept hitherto from falling into it, O bless the Lord, and use all God's means for the preventing of it. The seeds of this sin are in thy nature; no temptation but to restraining grace, that thou art not delivered up to it. And that thou mayest be kept out of this pit, conscio

12. "Abstain from fleshly lusts——having your conversation honest." The lust must first be subdued, before the conversation can be honest.

Direct. 2. Walk in the fear of God all the day long, and in the sense of his omniscient eye that is ever upon thee. This kept Joseph from this sin, Gen. xxxix. 9. "How can I do this wickedness and be against God?" Consider, the darkness hideth not from him, but shineth as the light. If thou couldst find a place where the eyes of God should not discover thee, it were somewhat: thou dares not venture to act this wickedness in the presence of a child, and wilt thou venture to commit it before the face of God? see that argument Prov. v. 20, 21. "And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with the eyes of a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger? For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings."

Direct. 3. Avoid lewd company, and the society of unclean persons; they are but *panders* for lust. *Evil communication corrupts good manners.* The tongues of sinners do cast fire-balls into the hearts of each other, which the corruption within is easily kindled and enflamed by.

Direct. 4. Exercise thyself in thy calling diligently; it will be an excellent means of preventing this sin. It is a good observation of one hath, That Israel was safer in the brick-kilns in Egypt, than in the plains of Moab, 2 Sam. xi. 2. "And it came to pass in the evening tide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked on the roof of the king's house;" and this was the occasion of his fall. 1 Tim. v. 11, 13.

Direct. 5. Put a restraint upon thine appetite: feed not to excess. Fulness of bread and idleness were the sins of Sodom, that occasioned such an exuberancy of lust *. "They are like fed horses, eating and neighing after his neighbour's wife. When I had fed them to the full, then they committed adultery, and assembled themselves together by troops in the harlots' houses," Jer. v. 7, 8. This is a sad requital of the bounty of God, in giving us the enjoyment of the creature, to make them fuel to lust, and instruments of sin.

Direct. 6. Make choice of a meet yoke-fellow, and delight in him whom you have chosen. This is a lawful remedy: See 1 Cor. vii. 9. God hath ordained it, Gen. ii. 21. But herein appears the corruption of the nature, that men delight to tread by-paths, and forsake the way which God hath appointed; as that divine poet, Mr. Herbert, saith,
If God had laid all common, certainly

O what were man, might he himself misplace !
Sure, to be cross, he would shift feet and face.

Stolen waters are sweeter to them than those water
lawfully drink at their own fountain : But withal know
having, but the delighting in a lawful wife, as God re-
do, that thou must be a fence against this sin. So S
v. 19. " Let her be as the loving hind, and pleasant
" breasts satisfy thee at all times, and be thou ravished
" her love."

Direct. 7. Take heed of running on in a course of
superstition and idolatry : in which cases, and as a
which evils God often gives up men to these vile affec-
25, 16. " Who changed the truth of God into a lie ;
" and served the creature more than the Creator, who
" ever, Amen. [For this cause] God gave them up
" tions," &c. They that defile their souls by idolatry
God suffers, as a just recompence, their bodies also to
uncleanness, that so their ruin may be hastened. Let
of traditions beware of such a judicial tradition as that
him that is thus delivered by the hand of an angry God
ment in the world like this, when God punishes sin w
he shall suffer those *κοινὰς ἐννοίας*, those common notices
to be quenched, and all restraints to be moved out of t
it will not be long e'er that sinner come to his own pl

CAUTION IV.

IN the next place I shall make bold to expostulate a l
consciences concerning the precious mercies you have
the solemn promises you have bound yourselves with
taining of those mercies. I fear God hath many bankr
mong you, that have dealt slipperily and unfaithfully w
have not rendered to the Lord according to the great
done for them, nor according to those good things the
to the mighty God of Jacob. But truly if thou be a de
cy, thou shalt be a *pattern* of wrath. God will remem
fury who *forget* him in his favours. I will tell you wha
eminent minister once told his people (dealing with th
sin of unthankfulness for mercy) ; and I pray God it r
duly. * ' Let us all mourn (saith he) and take on ; we
' hand with God. The Christian's duty to his

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'ing all. He cannot have what he would have, what he shall have, he will take what he can get : for money he will take your limbs, arms, legs ; he will have his own out of your skin, your blood, out of your bodies and souls. He is setting the Christian world as light and as low as they have set his love. Ah, what a time do we live in ! long-suffering is at an end, mercy will be righted in justice, justice will have all behind, it will be paid to the utmost farthing ; it will set abroad your blood, but it will have all behind,' &c.

Do you hear, souls ? Is not this sad news to some of you, who have received vast sums of mercy, and given God your bond for repayment of him in praise and answerable fruit, and yet forfeited and lost your credit with God ? O how can you look God in the face with whom you have dealt so perfidiously ! I am now come in the name of God to demand his due of you ; to call to remembrance your former receipts of mercy which you mind not, but God doth. There is a witness in your bosom that doth, and will one day witness to your faces, that you have dealt perfidiously with your God. Your souls have been the *graves* of mercy, which should have been many gardens where they should have lived and flourished. I come now to open those graves, and view those mercies that your unthankfulness hath killed and buried, to lay them before your eyes and see whether your ungrateful hearts will bleed upon them. Buried mercies are not lost for ever ; they shall as certainly have a double resurrection as thyself : it were better for thee they should have a resurrection now in thy heart, than to rise as witnesses against thee when thou shalt rise out of the dust : that will be a terrible resurrection indeed, when they shall come to plead against thy soul. No man pleads more dreadfully against a soul than abused mercy doth. I shall come to the particulars upon which I interrogate your consciences ; and I pray deal truly and ingenuously in answering these questions.

Quer. 1. And, first, I shall demand of you, whether you never experienced the power and goodness of God, in restoring your health from dangerous sickness and diseases ? Have you not sometimes had the sentence of death in yourselves ? And that possibly when you have been in remote parts, far from your friends and relations, destitute of all means and accommodations. Did you not say in your condition, as Hezekiah did in a like case ? Isa. xxxviii. 10, 11. " I said, in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave : I am deprived of the residue of my years. I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living : I shall

you began your voyage, and yet they were cast for de
 life, and that when there was but an hair's breadth bet
 the grave? Tell me, soul, what friend was that who
 then, when thou wast forsaken of all thy friends? Wh
 thy companions stood ready to throw thee over-board, w
 pitied and remembered thee in thy low estate? Who v
 buked thy disease! or, (as * one very aptly expresses it
 ' the humours of thy body from overflowing and drown
 ' For, when they are let out in a sickness, they would
 ' drown it, as the waters would the earth, if God shou
 ' them, stay, you proud waves.' Who was it, man, th
 body was brought low and weak, and like a crazy rot
 storm, took in water on all sides, so that all the physicia
 could not have stopped those leaks? Consider what h
 which quieted and calmed the tempestuous sea, *careen*
 ed thy crazy body, and launched thee into the world ag
 as sound, as strong as ever? Was it not the Lord that
 this for thee? Did he not keep back thy soul from the
 life from perishing? Yea, when thou wast chastened wi
 thy bed, (as Elihu speaks) Job xxxiii. 19, 20, 21. and
 tude of thy bones with strong pains, so that thy life abh
 and thy soul dainty meat; thy flesh consumed away, a
 not be seen, and thy bones that were not seen, stuck ou
 as it is ver. 28. he delivered thy soul from going down
 and caused thy life to see the light. Had the lamp of l
 extinguished, thou hadst gone down into endless darkn
 shut her mouth upon thee. Now tell me soul, what ha
 with this precious mercy? Hast thou walked before the L
 sense thereof, and answered his end therein, which was
 to repentance? Or hath thy stupid or disingenuous heart
 and lost all sense of it, so that God's end is frustrated, a
 tion not a jot furthered thereby? Oh! if it be so, woe
 the blood of this mercy, which thy ingratitude hath mu
 the blood of Abel cries to God against thee. What s
 thou thus to requite the Lord for such a mercy! He sa
 and heard thy groans, and said within himself, he shall
 live. Alas, poor creature! if I cut him off now, he is et
 I will send him back a few years more into the world. I
 once more, it may be he will bear some fruits to me fro
 verance; and if so, well; if not, I will cut him down he
 shall be set at liberty upon his good behaviour a little lon

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nity, for a mere intermission of their torments, much more as of patience and mercy. O consider what pity and goodness thou abused !

Query 2. Wast thou never cast upon miserable straits and calamities, wherein the good providence of God relieved and supported thee ? How many of you have been beaten so long at sea, by reason of contrary winds and other accidents, until your provisions have been exhausted and spent. To how short allowance have you kept. And what a mercy would you have esteemed it, if you had but have satisfied nature with a full draught of water. Certainly this hath been the case with many of you. O what a price and value did you then set upon these common mercies, which at other times have been slightly overlooked ! And when you have seen need of relief, have you not looked sadly one upon another ? As may be, said, as that widow of Sarepta did to the prophet, 1 Kings xvii. 12. “ And she said, as the Lord thy God liveth, I have no cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse ; and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may make a fire, and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it and die.” Such hath been your case ; yet hath that God, whose mercies are in all his works, heard your sorrows, and provided relief for you, by some ship, which providence sent to relieve you in that distress by altering the winds, and sending you safe to the land before all your provisions have been spent. And hast thou kept no records of these gracious providences ? Yea, dost thou abuse the creature, when thou art brought again to the full enjoyment of it ; and possibly reproach the creatures, (whose worth thou hast lately seen in the want of them) without thanksgiving, or a sensible acknowledgment of the goodness of God in them ? I say, dost thou thus answer the expectations of God ? Well, beware lest God teach such an ungrateful creature, by woeful experience, that the opening of his hand to thee a mercy, is worth the opening thy lips to bless him for it. Beware lest that unthankful mouth that will not bless the Lord for bread and water, have neither the one nor the other to bless him for. I can give you a sad instance in the case, and I have found it in the writing of an eminent divine, who said he had it from an eye- and ear-witness of the truth of it. A young man lying upon his bed, was always calling for meat ; but when the meat he called for was brought unto him, he shook and trembled dreadfully at the sight of it, and that in every part of his body, and so continued until the food was carried away. And thus he did as often as any food

Lord, in the greatest dangers and hazards of life; in when men have dropt down at your right hand, and and yet the Lord hath covered your heads in the day. And though you have been equally obnoxious to death with others, yet your name was not found among them of the dead. Or, in shipwrecks, ah, how narrowly have you escaped! a plank hath been cast in, you know not you, when your companions, for want of it, have gone bottom; or you have been enabled to swim to the shore, while others have fainted in the way, and perished? In what strange and astonishing providences hath God worked for some of you, and what returns have you made to God for his mercies? I beseech you, consider but these two or three things, and shall now lay before you to consider of.

Consid. 1. An heathen will do more for a dung-hill than thou, that callest thyself a Christian, wilt do for the true God who made heaven and earth, Dan. v. 4. They praised the silver, and of gold, and of brass, of iron, wood, and stone, while the Philistines were delivered from the hand of Samson. He saith, Judg. xvi. 24. "They praised their god," &c. That shall not be extolled. O let shame cover thy face!

Consid. 2. That the abuse of mercy and love is a sin that comes to the heart of God. Oh! he cannot bear it. It is not the want of mercy that troubles him, for that he doth with delight; but the recoiling of his mercies upon him by the creatures that he loves, this wounds. "Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid." And again, "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth," Isa. i. 2. q. d. O you innocent creatures, which observe the law of your creation, be you all astonished and amazed in black, to see nature cast by sin so far below itself, and a creature so much superior to you as man, who in the beginning was crowned a king, and admitted into the highest order of angels, and set as lord and master over you; yet doth he act not as such, but below the very beasts. "The ox knoweth his owner, (i. e.) there is a kind of gratitude in the beasts, by which they acknowledge their benefactors that feed and preserve them." What a pathetical exclamation is that, Deut. xxxii. 6. "I will requite the Lord, O foolish people, and unwise."

Consid. 3. It is a sin that kindles the wrath of God, and it burn dreadfully against thee, unthankful sinner: It is the anger of God, in whomsoever it be found, though in the

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7. "How shall I pardon thee for this?" This forgetting of the mercies that saves us in our extremities is a sin that brings desolation and the effects of God's high displeasure upon all our temporal enjoyments. See that remarkable scripture, Isa. xvii. 10, 11. "Because thou hast [forgotten] the God of [thy salvation,] and hast not been [mindful] of the rock of [thy strength:] Therefore shalt thou plant pleasant plants, and shalt set it with strange slips: In the morning shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish; but the harvest shall be an heap of stones, and the day of grief, and desperate sorrow." The meaning is, that God will blast and curse all thine employments, and thou shalt be under desperate sorrow. The meaning is, that God will blast and curse all thine employments, and thou shalt be under desperate sorrow by reason of the disappointment of thy hopes.

Consid. 4. It is a sin that cuts off mercy from you in future straits. If you thus requite the Lord for former mercies, never expect that he will be merciful to you in future distresses. God is not weary of his blessings, to cast away upon such souls as are but graves to them. Mark what mercy God made to the Israelites, when they cried unto him for being invaded by the Amorites, Judg. x. 11, 12, 13. "Did not I deliver you from the Egyptians, and from the Amorites, from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines? The Zidonians, and the Amalekites, and ye cried unto me, and I delivered you out of their hand. Yet ye have forsaken me, and served other gods, wherefore I will deliver you no more." O sad world! as if the Lord had said, I have tried what mercy and deliverance I can do with you, and I see you are never the better for it: Deliverance is but seed sown upon the rocks. I will cast away no more favours upon you; now look to yourselves, shift for yourselves for time to come; wade through your troubles as well as you can. O brethren, there is nothing more quickly works the ruin of a people than the abuse of mercy. O, methinks, this text should strike terror into your hearts? How often hath God delivered you? Remember your eminent deliverance at such a time, in such a country, out of such a deep distress: God was gracious to thy cry then, thou hast forgotten and abused his mercy: what now, if God should say as in the text, therefore I will deliver thee no more? Ah, poor soul! what wilt thou do then, or to whom wilt thou turn? It may be thou wilt turn to the creatures for help and pity; but, alas! to what purpose! They will give as cold and as comfortless an answer as Samuel gave Saul, 1 Sam. xxviii. 15, 16. "And Samuel said unto Saul, What dost thou?"

thou wilt be a poor shiftless creature, if once by abusing make it thine enemy !

Consid. 5. It is breach of vows made in distress to mercies ; they have been easily forgotten and violated when thou hast obtained thy desire : A word or two to convince a further evil lies in this, and how by this consideration come to be buoyed up to a greater height and aggravation ; and then I have done with this head.

A vow is a promise made to God, in the things of obligation of it is, by casuists, judged to be as great an oath. It is a sacred and solemn bond, wherein a soul is bound in lawful things ; and being once bound by it, it is as great an evil to violate it. It is an high piece of dishonesty to fail in what we have promised to men, saith * Dr. Hall ; but to disappoint in what we have vowed to God, is no less than sacrilege. The act is free and voluntary, if once a just and lawful vow or promise hath past your lips, you may not be false to God in keeping it. It is with us as it was with Ananias and Sapphira, for their substance was sold, " it remained (saith Peter) was it not thine own ? " He must sell and give it ; but if he will give, he may not reserve part to save some ; he lies to the Holy Ghost, that defalks from what he engaged himself to bestow. If thou hast vowed to God of Jacob, look to it that thou be faithful in thy promise, for he is a great and jealous God, and will not be mocked.

Now I am confident there be many among you, that, in your mer distresses, have solemnly engaged your souls thus to God, if he would deliver you out of those dangers, and spare you, that you would walk more strictly, and live more holy lives than ever. You have, it may be, engaged your souls to the Lord against such sins, as drunkenness, lying, swearing, uncleanness, or such like ; and evil it was that your conscience then smote you for ; but now God (I say) are upon many of you. But have you kept those vows that your lips have uttered ? Have you dealt faithfully with God ? or have you mocked him, and lied unto him with your lips, and omitted those very duties you promised to perform ? returned to the self-same evils you have promised to forsake ? I put the question, let your consciences answer it. But if thou art indeed, that thou art a person that makest light of thy promises to God, as indeed seamen's vows and sick men's promises, for the most part, deceitful and slippery things, being broken from them by fear of death, and not from any deep reflection on the necessity of keeping them.

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lips have promised. And to move you thereunto, let these considerations among many others, be laid to heart.

Consid. 1. Think seriously upon the greatness of that man whom thou hast wronged by lying to him, and falsifying thy engagements. O think sadly on this! it is not man whom thou hast abused, but God; even that God in whose hand thy life and breath is. For although (as one truly observes) there be not in every formal invocation of God, (God being the proper correlate, as it were, a party to every vow, and therefore not formally invoked for the contestation of it;) yet, there is in every vow implicit calling God to witness; so that certainly the obligation of a vow is not one jot beneath that of an oath. Now if God be a party to whom thou hast past thy promise, and that obligation on that ground be so great; Oh what hast thou done! for a poor man to mock the most glorious Majesty of heaven, and break faith with God; what a dreadful thing is that? if it were but to thy fellow creature, though the sin would be great; yet not like unto this. Let me say to thee as the prophet Isaiah, chap. vii. 13. "Is this a small thing for you to weary men, but will you weary my God also?" If you dare to deceive and abuse men, dare you do so to God also? Oh! if the exceeding vileness of the sin do not move thee, yet methinks the danger of provoking so dreadful a Majesty against thee should! And therefore consider,

Consid. 2. That the Lord will most certainly be avenged on thee for these things, except thou repent. O read, and tremble at the word of God! Eccl. v. 4, 5, 6. "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it: for he hath no pleasure in fools that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow, and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin, neither say thou, before the Lord, that it was an error; wherefore [should God be angry with thy voice, and [destroy] the works of thy hands?" Mark, God will be angry, and in that anger he will destroy the work of thy hands, i. e. saith Deodate, 'bring thee and all thy actions to naught by reason of thy perjury.' Now, the anger of God, which is kindled by breach of promise kindles, as appears by this text, is a dreadful thing. O, what creature can stand before it! as Asaph speaks, Psal. lxxvi. 7. "Thou, even thou art to be feared; and who may stand in thy sight, when once thou art angry?"

Consid. 3. Consider, that all this while thou sinnest against God without ledge and conviction; for did not thy conscience plainly con-

rule: and if so, poor sinner, what a case art thou in, to day to day sinning against light and knowledge? Is not that a fearful way of sinning? and will not such sinners be plunged into hell than the poor Indians, that never saw the evil of the way thou dost? Ponder but two or three scriptures in thy heart, and see what a dreadful way of sinning this is: Rom. ii. 9. "Terror, anguish, and wrath, to every soul of man that doeth evil." "The [Jew first], and also to the Gentile." To the Jew especially and principally; he had a precept of the law and light, and so let him have in punishment. So James ii. 10. "To him that knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him shall be added sin with a witness, horrid sin, that surpasses the sin of the wicked." So Luke xii. 47. "And that servant that knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes." Which is a plain proof of the custom of the Jews in punishing an offender, who being bound, the judge was to see him bound fast to a pillar, his clothes were taken off, and an executioner with a scourge to beat him with many stripes: but now those stripes came but from the arm of God. Of the former there was a determinate number set in their law, as forty stripes; and sometimes they would exceed that number too, in mercy to the offender, as you see in the case of Paul, 2 Cor. xi. 24. "Of the Jews I received forty stripes;" but in hell no mitigation at all, nor allay of mercy. The arm of his power supports the creature in its being; while the arm of his justice lays on eternally. Soul, consider these things, and do not persist any longer then in such a desperate way of sinning. Let the clear conviction of thine own conscience, which in thy heart needs give testimony against thee.

Well then, go to God with the words of David, Ps. lvi. 14. and say unto him, "I will pay thee my vows which I have uttered, and my tongue hath spoken when I was in trouble." Pay it, soul, and pay it speedily unto God, else he will punish thee by justice, and fetch it out of thy bones in hell. O thou art no longer with God, and that in such serious matters as these.

And now I have done my endeavour to give your former mercies and promises a resurrection in your consciences. O that you would sit down and pause a while upon these things, and then review the past mercies of your lives, and on what hath passed by, and your souls in your former straits and troubles? Let

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“sed be the Lord God of Israel, which sent thee this day to
“me; and blessed be thy advice.”

CAUTION V.

THE fifth and last danger I shall warn you of, is your contempt and slighting of death. Ah! how little a matter do many of you at least in words, make of it? It seems you have light reverence and fear of this king of terrors, not only that you speak slightly of it, but also because you make no more preparations for it, and are not more sensible of your preservations and deliverances from it. In ancient times the heathen philosophers did many of them profess a contempt of death upon the account of wisdom and fortitude; and they were counted the bravest men that most despised and slighted it: but alas, poor souls! they saw not their enemy against whom they fought, but skirmished with their eyes shut; they saw indeed its pale face, but not its sting and dart. There is also a lawful contempt of death. We freely grant that in two cases a believer may condemn it. *First*, When it is propounded to them a temptation on purpose to separate them from Christ and duty, then they should slight it; as Rev. 11. “They loved not their lives unto the death.” *Secondly*, When the natural evil of death is set in competition with the enjoyment of God in glory, then a believer should despise it, as Christ is said to do, Heb. xii. 2. though his was a shameful death. But upon other accounts and considerations, it is the height of stupidity and security to despise it.

Now, to the end that you might have right thoughts and apprehensions of death, which may put you upon serious preparation for it; and that whenever your turn comes to conflict with this king of terrors, under whose hand the Pompeys, Cæsars, and Alexander the world, who have been the terrors of nations, have bowed down themselves; I say, that when your turn and time comes, as the Lord only knows how soon it may be, you may escape the stroke of the dart and sting, and taste no other bitterness in death, than the natural evil of it: To this end I have drawn the following questions and answers, which, if you please, may be called *The Seaman's Catechism*. And, oh! that you might not dare to launch forth into the deep until you have seriously interrogated and examined your hearts upon those particulars. Oh! that you would resolve, before you go forth, to withdraw yourselves a while from all clamours and distractions, and calmly and seriously catechise your own selves in this manner.

Quest. 1. What may the issue of this voyage be?

Ans. Death, Prov. xxvii. 1. “Boast not thyself of to-morrow.”

Quest. 2. What is death?

Ans. Death is a separation of soul and body until
tion, 2 Cor. v. 1. "We know that if our earthly house
"nacle be dissolved." Job xiv. 10, 11, 12. Read the

Quest. 3. Is death to be despised and slighted if it

Ans. O no! it is one of the most weighty and serious
ever a creature went about: so dreadful doth it appear
the fear of it subjects them to bondage all their lives,
"And to deliver them who, through fear of death, v
"life-time subject to bondage." And in scripture it is
king of terrors, Job xviii. 14. Or the black prince, a
late. Never had any prince such a title before. To
been so terrible, that none might mention its name bef

Quest. 4. What makes it so terrible and affrighting

Ans. Several things concur to make it terrible to
men; as, *first*, Its harbingers and antecedents, which
pains, conflicts, and agonies. *Secondly*, Its office and v
about, which is to transfer us into the other world.
vi. 8. it is set forth by a *pale horse*: an horse for its u
to carry you away from hence into the upper, or low
eternity; and a pale horse, for its ghastliness and terror
But above all, it is terrible in regard of its consequen
the door of eternity, the parting point betwixt the prese
that to come; the utmost line and boundary of all tem
Hence, Heb. ix. 27. "It is appointed unto men once
"after this the judgment." Rev. vi. 8. "And I look
"hold, a pale horse, and his name that sat on him was
"hell followed him." Ah! it makes a sudden and str
tion upon men's conditions, to be plucked out of hous
among friends and honours, and so many delights, and
moment into the land of darkness, to be clothed with
drink the pure wrath of the Almighty for ever. Th
makes it terrible.

Quest. 5. If death be so weighty a matter, am I prep

Ans. I doubt not; I am afraid I want many things
cessary to a due preparation for it.

Quest. 6. What are those things wherein a due pre
death consisteth?

Ans. Many things are necessary. *First*, Special and s
with Jesus Christ. This is that which disarms it of its
"death, where is thy sting? Thanks be to God who hat

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death comfortably, the evidence and knowledge of this union is necessary, 2 Cor. v. 1. "For [we know,] that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, and then he cannot only be content, but groan to be unclothed, 2. A mistake in the former will cost me my soul; and a mistake here will lose me my peace and comfort. *Thirdly*, In order to evidence it is necessary that I keep a good conscience in all things both towards God and man, 2 Cor. i. 12. "This is our rejoicing, even the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and good sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world." This good conscience expects all and every part of our work and duty to be done, and all every sin to be renounced and denied: so that he that is early united unto Christ by faith, hath the clear evidence of that union; and evidence fairly gathered from the testimony of a good conscience witnessing his faithfulness, as to all duties to be done, and sins to be avoided, he is fit to die; death can do him no harm; but, as these things are not to be found in me.

Quest. 7. But what if I die without such a preparation as this? What will the consequence of that be?

Ans. Very terrible, even the separation of my soul and body from the Lord to all eternity; John iii. 36. "He that believeth not the Son, the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." *shall not see life*; there is the privative part of his misery, separation from the blessed God. *And the [wrath,]* mark it, not anger or wrath, not the wrath of man, but of [God,] at whose rebukes mountains skip like frightened men, and the hills tremble: the wrath of God not only flashes out upon him, as a transient flash of lightning, but [*abideth,*] dwells, sticks fast; there is no power in the world to loose the soul from it. [*Upon him,*] not the body only, nor the soul only, but on [*him,*] (*i. e.*) the whole person, the whole man. This is the principal positive part of that man's misery.

Quest. 8. Can I bear this misery?

Ans. No: my heart cannot endure, nor my hands be strong when God shall have to do with me upon this account. I cannot bear his wrath; angels could not bear it; it hath sunk them into the depths of misery. Those that feel but a few sparks of it in their consciences here, are even distracted by it, Psalm lxxxviii. 15. "Christ himself had never borne up under it, had it not been supported by the infinite power of the divine nature, Isa. xliii. 1. "Behold my

Quest. 9. If it cannot be borne, is there any way to

Ans. Yes, there is hope in Israel concerning this; herein I am in better case than the damned; I have the promise of mercy, and they have not. Oh! what would they give for the possibility of salvation? Isa. i. 16, 17, 18. "Wash ye, make ye clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; ye shall not do evil, learn to do well," &c. "Come now, let us return unto the Lord: and though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be as red as crimson, they shall be like wool." Isa. lv. 7. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the ungodly man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will pardon." Though my disease be dangerous, it is not so dangerous as it doth not scorn a remedy. Oh! there is balm in Gilead, the physician there. There is yet a possibility, not only of recovering primitive glory, but to be set in a better case than ever.

Quest. 10. How may that be?

Ans. By going to the Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. viii. 1. "is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." Rom. viii. 33, 34. "Who shall lay any charge to God's elect? It is God that justifieth, Who condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again."

Quest. 11. But what is it to go to Christ?

Ans. To go to Christ, is to * embrace him in his priestly offices, and to rest § entirely and closely upon him for || present and ** eternal life: being deeply †† sensible of the want of him. John i. 12. "To as many as [received] him, he gave power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believe on his name." John iii. 36. "He that believeth [in him] hath life." 1 Cor. i. 30. "And of him are ye in Christ, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." Acts iv. 12. "Neither is there salvation in any other," &c. Acts xiii. 39. "And by him all things [are justified from all things,] from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Isa. xlv. 22. "Look unto me, and be saved." Acts ii. 37. "Now when they heard this, they were pricked to the heart," &c.

Quest. 12. But will Christ receive me, if I go to him?

Ans. Yes, yes; he is more ready to receive thee, than thou art to come to him; Luke xv. 20. "And he arose, and came to his father: but, when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and was moved with pity, and ran, and fell upon his neck, and kissed him."

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neck, and kissed him. He bespeaks him, much after that manner expressed himself to returning Ephraim: "My bowels are torn for him; I will surely have mercy on him," Jer. xxxi. 20. is not the least parenthesis in all the pages of free-grace, to exhort a soul that is sincerely willing to come to Christ.

Quest. 13. But how may it appear that he is willing to receive me?

Ans. Make trial of him thyself. If thou didst but know his love to poor sinners, you would not question it. Believe what he says in the gospel; there thou shalt find that he is a willing Saviour therein thou hast, first, his most serious invitations, Mat. x. "Come unto me, ye that are weary and heavy laden." Isa. xli. "Ho! every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters." The most serious invitations are, secondly, backed and confirmed with an oath, Ezek. xxxv. 11. "As I live, I desire not the death of a sinner." Thirdly, Amplified with pathetical wishes, sighs and groans, Jer. xix. 42. "Oh! that thou hadst known, even thou, at least, in thy day." Fourthly, Yea, delivered unto them in undissimulated tears, Mat. xxiii. 37, 38. "He wept over it, and said, O Jerusalem! Jerusalem!" Fifthly, Nay, he hath shed not only tears of blood, to convince thee of his willingness. View him in his dying posture upon the cross, stretching out his dying arms to gather thee, hanging down his blessed head to kiss thee; every one of his wounds was a mouth opened to convince thee of the abundant willingness of Christ to receive thee.

Quest. 14. But my sins are dyed in grain: I am a sinner of the blackest hue: will he receive and pardon such an one?

Ans. Yea, soul, if thou be willing to commit thyself to him. i. 18. "Come now, let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them as snow; though they be red like crimson, I will make them as wool."

Quest. 15. This is comfortable news; but may I not delay my coming to him for a while, and yet not hazard my eternal happiness, seeing I resolve to come to him at last?

Ans. No; there must be no delays in this case: Psal. cxix. "I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments."

Quest. 16. Why may I not defer it, at least for a little while?

Ans. For many weighty reasons this work can bear no delay. First, The offers of grace are made to the present time, Heb. i. "Whilst it is said to-day, harden not your hearts." There may be a few more days of God's patience, but that is unknown to thee.

are the more strengthened, and the heart still more hard. There be thousands now in hell, that perished through doubts and consciences often urged and pressed hard upon them, and resolutions they had, as thou hast now; but they were never confirmed by answerable executions, and so they perished. 6. Thy situation now is desperate; for every moment thou art acted upon by clear light and conviction; and that is a dreadful way of dying. There can be no solid reason for one hour's delay; for thou wilt not be happy too soon; and be sure of it, if ever thou come to taste of the sweetness of a Christian life, nothing will more grievously grieve thee than this, that thou enjoyedst it no sooner.

Quest. 17. Oh, but the pleasures of sin engage me so, that shall I break these cords and snares?

Ans. That snare may be broken by considering several things. 1. That to take pleasure in sin, is an argument of a most deplorable and wretched state of soul. What nature doth it argue in a toad, that is sucking in nothing but dirt and filth where-ever it crawls! O what an heart hast thou, that thou nothing to find pleasure in but that which makes Christ sad, and the hearts of saints ache and groan, which is in hell, and let in endless miseries upon the world? 2. That misery it involves thee in is infinitely beyond the delight it gives thee by: it doth but delight the sensual part, and that is a brutish pleasure, but will torment thy immortal soul, for ever. The pleasure will quickly go off, but the sting will remain behind. "I tasted but a little honey on the top of my cup, and I must die," 1 Sam. xiv. 43. 3. Nay, thou shalt have but the Lord proportions wrath according to the pleasures thou have had in sin, Rev. xviii. 7. "How much she hath loved, and how much torment and sorrow give unto her." 4. What wilt thou pay, or at least pawn for this pleasure? Thy soul, thy peace, is laid to stake for it; and, in effect, thus thou sayest, I will deferrest the closing with Christ upon the account of a few pleasures of sin a little longer: Here, devil, take my share of possession and power: if I repent, I will have it again for ever. O dear-bought pleasures!

What is the world? A great exchange of ware,
Wherein all sorts and sexes cheapning are;
The flesh the devil sit and cry—what lack ye?
When most they fawn, they most intend to rack ye;
The wares are cups of joy and beds of pleasure;

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Lastly, It is thy gross mistake to think thou shalt be bereaved all delights and pleasures by coming under the government of Christ: for one of those things in which his kingdom consists, is in the Holy Ghost, Rom. xiv. 17. Indeed it allows no sinful pleasures to the subjects of it, nor do they need it; but from the thou closest in with Christ, all thy pure, real, and eternal pleasures and delights begin to bear date. When the prodigal was returned to his father, then, saith the text, "They began to be merry," Luke xv. 24. See Acts viii. 5, 6. No, soul, thou shalt want no joy, for the scripture saith, "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house, and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures; for with thee is the fountain of life," &c. Psal. xxxvi. 8, 9.

Quest. 18. But how shall I be able to undergo the severities of religion? There are difficult duties to be done, and an heavy cross to be taken up; these be the things that daunt me.

Ans. If pain and suffering daunt thee, how is it thou art more out of love with sin than with religion? For it is most certain that the sufferings for Christ are nothing to hell, the just reward and certain issue of sin; the pains of mortification are nothing to the pains of damnation: there is no comparison betwixt suffering for Christ and suffering from Christ; Matth. v. 29. "If thy right hand or eye offend thee, cut it off, and pluck it out; it is profitable for thee that one member suffer, than that the whole body be cast into hell." Secondly, Thou seest the worst, but not the best of Christ. There be joys and comforts in those difficult duties and sufferings, that thou seest not; Col. i. 24. "Who now rejoice in my sufferings." James i. 2. "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations," &c. Thirdly, Great shall be thy assistance from Christ. Phil. iv. 13. "I can do all things through him that strengthens me." "The Spirit helps our infirmities," takes the other end of the burden, Rom. viii. 26. What meanest thou to stand upon such terms when it is heaven or hell, eternal life or death that lie before thee?

Quest. 19. But to what purpose will my endeavours to come to Christ be, unless I be elected? All will be to no purpose.

Ans. True; If thou be not elected, thou canst not obtain happiness by him: but yet that is no discouragement to strive for in thy unconverted state, thy election or non-election is a secret to thee: the only way to make it sure is by striving and giving diligence in the way of duty, 2 Pet. i. 10. And if you ponder the text well, you will find, that election is not only made sure in the

Answe. First, Certainly you are most absurd in pleading your impotence against your duty; for you do have a power to come to Christ, else how do you quietence with promises and resolves of conversion hereafter? Though it be true, that no saving act can be done without concurrence of special grace; yet this is as true, that thy inability, what is above thy power, doth not excuse thee from doing what thy power to do. Canst thou not forbear, at least, many of sin? And canst thou not perform, at least, the external? Oh! if thou canst not come to Christ, yet, as the blind man, the way of Christ: do what thou canst do, and confess thy impotency, that thou canst do no more. Canst thou lay thy soul aside in secret, and thus bemoan it; my poor soul, wilt thou do? O what will become of thee, thou art chaste, wantless, hopeless, and, which is most sad, senseless and oh! thou canst not bear the infinite wrath of the eternal Almighty power will be set on work to torment such and yet thou takest no course to prevent it! Thou see the diligence of all others, and how the kingdom of heaven is won by them: and art not thou as deeply engaged to thy own happiness as any in the world? Will hell be more to thee than others? O what a composition of stupidity art thou: Thou livest after such a rate, as if there were no hell to torment thee, nor glory in heaven to reward thee, and Christ, heaven and hell, were but dreams and fables, thou wouldst not be less affected with them. Ah, my soul! my soul! O precious soul! Is it easy to perish? Wilt thou die as a fool that men would but do this if they can do no more!

And now, soul, you see what death that is you have merited; and what is the only way that we poor sons of men may escape its sting. You have here seen the vanity of all our vain and pretences against conversion, and the way to Christ is cast up for you. Now sirs, I beg you, in the name of God, you, and as if I made this request upon my bended knees, that you will now, without any more delays, yield yourselves to the Lord. Soul, I beseech thee, haste thee into thy chamber door, and bespeak the Lord after some such manner as thou darrest to launch out into the deeps again.

O dreadful and glorious Majesty! thou hast bowels of mercy as well as beams of glory: I have heard the sounding of thy trumpet for me this day. Lord, I have now heard a representation of mine own heart, and I feel the force of thy love. I have

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Lord, I have now heard of the Prince of life also, in whose bleeding side death hath left and lost its envenomed sting; so that though it may kill, yet it cannot hurt any of his members. To this glorious Redeemer I have now been invited; all my pretences against him have been confuted, and my soul, in his name, assured of welcome if I come unto him, and cast myself upon him. And now, Lord, I come, I come, upon thy call and invitation; I am unfeignedly willing to avouch thee this day to be my God, and to take thee for my portion. Lord Jesus! I come unto thee; thy clay, thy creature, I move towards the Fountain of pity: look hitherto, behold a spectacle of misery. Bowels of mercy, hear! behold my naked soul, without a rag of righteousness to cover it; behold my starving soul, not a morsel of bread for it to eat: ah! it has fed upon wind and vanity hitherto. Behold my wounded soul bleeding at thy foot; every part, heart and heart, will and affections, all wounded by sin. O thou compassionate Samaritan! turn aside, and pour thy sovereign blood into these bleeding wounds, which, like so many opened mouths, plead for pardon. Behold a returning, submitting rebel, willing to lay down the weapons of unrighteousness, and to come upon the knee for a pardon. O Lord, I am weary of the service of sin, I can endure it no longer! Lord Jesus, thou wast anointed to preach glad tidings to the meek, and to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound; come now, and knock off those fetters of unbelief: O set my soul at liberty that it may praise thee! For so many years Satan hath cruelly tyrannized over me. O that this might be the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of the salvation of Israel! God! Lord, thou wast lifted up to draw men unto thee; and indeed thou art a drawing Saviour, a lovely Jesus! I have hitherto slighted thee, but it was because I did not know thee: mine eyes have been held by unbelief, when thou wast opened in the gospel; but now I see thee as the chiefest of ten thousands. Thou art the glory of heaven, the glory of earth, the glory of Sion; and, oh! that thou wouldst be the glory of my soul! I confess I am not worthy that thou shouldst look upon me; I may much rather expect to be trampled under the feet of justice, than to be embraced in thine arms of mercy: and that thou shouldst rather shed my polluted blood, than sprinkle thine own upon me. But, Lord, what profit is there in my blood? Wilt thou pursue a dried leaf? Shall it ever be said that the merciful King of heaven hanged up a poor soul that put the rope about his own neck, and so came self-condemningly to him for mercy! O, my Lord, I am willing to submit to any terms, be they never so hard and unprofitable to the flesh. I am willing to be what thou wilt have me to be.

of thy glory. Let *holiness to the Lord* be now written all, let my tongue henceforth plead for thee, my hands unto thy testimonies, my feet walk in thy ways: O let tions, as willing servants, wait upon thee, and be acti Whatever I am, let me be for thee; whatever I ha thine; whatever I can do, let me do for thee; whatev fer, let me suffer for thee. O that I might say, before my beloved is mine, and I am his! O that what I hav earth might be ratified in heaven! my spirit within me, Lord Jesus, say thou, *Amen*.

THE

SEAMAN'S COMPANION

Wherein the Mysteries of Providence, relating to S opened; their Sins and Dangers discovered; their Du and their several Troubles and Burdens relieved.

In six practicable and suitable SERMONS.

*To all Masters, Mariners, and Seamen; especially su
to the Port of Dartmouth, and the Parts aâjao*

SIRS,

YOUR ready acceptance of my former labours for y couraged this second and last endeavour of mine this you. I have for many years been convinced of the g need you have of the following discourses: But the quickened me to their publication at this time, were esp two:

First, The hand of the Lord hath gone forth with t you; this winter many of your companions are gone bottom. Such a doleful account of shipwrecks from and such sad lamentations as have been heard in almost time town, cannot but deeply affect every heart with compassion, and hath engaged me in this service for that is left.

Secondly, The seasonable and prudent care his Ma this time

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

of your employments, and faithfully discovers the temptations and dangers attending you in them all. Upon which consideration fitly entitled, *The Seaman's Companion*.

As God hath cast my lot among you, so he hath inclined my heart studiously to promote your welfare. I have been, by long observation convinced, that one principal cause of your miscarriages, is the neglect of God in your outsets. Did you pray more, you might expect to prosper better. Indeed, if that Epicurean doctrine were true, God concerns not himself about the affairs of this lower world, leaves all things to be swayed by the power of natural causes, your neglect of prayer might be more excusable: But, whilst success and disappointments depend upon his pleasure, it cannot but be the most direct course you can steer to ruin all, to forget and neglect God in your enterprizes. To cure this evil, and prevent the manifold mischiefs that follow it, the first sermon is designed. And if the Lord shall bless it to your conviction and reformation, I may then comfortably apply the words of Moses to you, Deut. xxxiii. "Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out."

You often hear the terrible voice of God in the storms; and at your wit's end, not knowing what course to take, nor which way to turn for safety and comfort: And yet how soon are all those impressions worn off? and those mercies which (whilst new) were so affecting, after a few days become stale and common. I have, therefore, in the second sermon, laboured not only to direct and support you in those straits, but have also endeavoured to fix the sense of those providences upon your hearts, and instruct you how to make due improvements of them, by answering the several aims and designs of them.

It hath been much upon my heart, to what and how many temptations to sin you are exposed in foreign countries, where lawful remedies are absent, alluring objects present, and temptations exceedingly strengthened upon you, by hopes of secrecy and concealment. And, indeed, for a man whose heart is not thoroughly seasoned with religion, and awed by the fear of God, to converse in such places, and with such company, and not be polluted with their sins, is, upon the one matter, as great a miracle, as for the three children to come out of the fiery furnace without an hair singed, or the smell of fire upon their garments. I have therefore prepared for you the best preservation from these temptations in the third sermon, which the Lord may make an effectual antidote to your souls against the corruptions that abound in the world through lust.

I have frequently observed the mischievous influence that such

and drops many very seasonable and necessary cautions to keep you humble and thankful under prosperity.

And because men will not own God in their success, but to their own net; God often teaches them the evil of it, by disappointments: Yea, disappointments sometimes follow of men, and that in the most just and honest employment. I commend the former sort, and support the latter in such a manner, as I commend the *fifth sermon* to your serious consideration, hoping, if the blessing of God go forth with it, but it may prove a seasonable and useful discourse to you in that condition.

And, lastly, because it is so common for seamen to forget mercies they have received in a voyage, when it is over, and brought them to the havens of desire, and among their mercies have, in the *last sermon*, instructed them in their duty, as to work in such a sense of mercies upon their hearts, as to them to a due and thankful acknowledgment of God in all.

You see, by this brief account, how honest the design I have engaged for you. But I am sensible, that the manuscript is very defective, it being dispatched in haste, and when my hands were filled with other work, and my body clogged with many cares. But, such as it is, I heartily devote it to the special service of your souls, and remain

Yours, in all Christian service,

JOHN FLETCHER

DARTMOUTH, Jan. 21, 1675.



THE

SEAMAN'S FAREWELL.

SERMON I.

Acts xxi. 5, 6. *And we kneeled down on the shore, and when we had taken our leave one of another, we too they returned home again.*

and not the least at Tyre, where he met with certain disciples that said to him, by the Spirit, that he should not go to Jerusalem; though, in that, they followed their own spirit; but he is not to be dissuaded: Like that noble Roman*, and upon a more noble account, 'he judged it necessary to go, but not to live.' The disciples seeing his unalterable resolution, express their affections to him at parting, by bringing him to the ship, and that with their whole families, wives and children, ver. 5. therein giving him the last measure of their dear respects.

In the farewell, their Christian affections are mutually manifested by two sorts of actions,—*viz. Sacred and Civil*—in prayers and consultations.

1. Prayers; the best office one Christian can do to another. Prayer is the best preface, so certainly it is the best close to business or enjoyment: In which prayer we may note the place, posture, and matter or scope.

First, The place; it was upon the *shore*, the parting place near which the ship rode, waiting for Paul: And this was no unusual thing among them in those days. Tertullian† tells us, "they sent their prayers to heaven from every shore;" and elsewhere, he calls them, *orationes littorales*, "shore prayers." So customary it was to holy men, in those days, to be taken into the ship or boat from their knees, not from the tavern or ale-house.

Secondly, The posture; "They kneeled down." As all places and all postures have been used in prayer. Some have used one posture and some another; but this is the common and ordinary posture. Knees when they can (as an ingenious author speaks) then they may be bowed.

Thirdly, The matter and scope of the prayer, which though it is not expressed, yet may with great probability be argued from the place and occasion, to be, as Erasmus speaks, *Pro fausta Navigatione*, for a prosperous voyage, and divine protection. He kneeled, what, and how many hazards of life they are hourly exposed to, the border so near unto death, as mariners and passengers at sea do; therefore would not commit himself to the sea, until first he had solemnly committed himself to God, whose voice the winds and waves obey: Nor was he willing to take his leave of his friends, until he had poured out his heart to God with them, and for them, whom he might never see again in this world, and engaged their prayers also for him.

2. As their affections were mutually manifested by this *sacred act*

used among the Jews, both at their meeting and parting consisted in words and gestures; the usual words "Lord bless you," Ruth ii. 4. "Peace be unto thee with you," &c. The gestures were kissing each other, were kisses which a Cato might give, and a Vestal receive these, *viz.* their prayers for, and salutations of, each manifested their Christian affections mutually, but especially prayers at parting. Hence note,

Doct. *Those that undertake voyages by sea, had need pray earnestly themselves, but also to engage the other Christians for them.*

They that part praying, may hope to meet again re those designs which are not prefaced with prayer, cannot a blessing. There are two sorts of prayer, *stated* and

Stated prayer is our conversing with God, either public or secretly, at the constant seasons allotted for it, in every week and day.

Occasional, is the Christian's address to God at any extraordinary emergencies, and calls of providence; or, undertake any solemn business, (and what more solemn than the chief matter and scope of prayer is to be suited to the present occasion and design in hand; of this sort is that speak. Now in opening the point, I will shew,

(1.) What those special mercies are that seamen should when they are to undertake a voyage.

(2.) What influence prayer hath upon those mercies must be qualified for that end.

(3.) What aid and assistance the prayers of other Christians contribute to the procurement of them.

And then make application of all.

(1.) We will inform the seamen, what those special mercies he should earnestly pray for, when he undertakes a voyage.

And amongst those mercies to be earnestly requested by him, the first and principal is, *the pardon of sin*; and must make a part of every prayer, and at this time to be sued for. Guilt is that Jonah in the ship, for whose shipwrecks, and ruin pursue it. It is said, Psal. cxlv. "the stormy winds fulfil God's word." If the word then be the word of God's threatening against sin, as so it, then the stormy winds and lofty waves, are God's out with commission to arrest sinners upon the sea.

follows upon the scent wherever a man goes. And indeed our sins are called *debts*, Matth. vi. 12. Not that we owe them to God, or ought to sin against him; but *metonymically*, because pecuniary debts oblige him to suffer that hath not wherewith to pay, and expose him to the danger of serjeants and bailiffs wherever he shall be found; so do our sins, in reference to God, who hath reckoned with many thousands of sinners upon the sea, there arrested them by his winds and waves which he sent out after them, and laid their bodies in the bottom of the sea, and their souls in the bottom of hell. Oh! that is a dismal storm, that is sent after a man to drive soul and body to destruction! with what heart or courage can that man go down into the deeps, and expose himself among the raging waves and roaring winds, that knows God hath a controversy with him; and for ought he knows, the next storm may be sent to hurry him to the judgment-seat of the great and terrible God? Certainly, friends, it is your great concern to get a pardon, and be at peace with God; a thing so indispensable, that you cannot have less; and so comprehensive, that you cannot desire more. If you be pardoned, you are safe, you need fear no storms within, whatever you find without: But woe to him that finds at once a raging sea, and a roaring conscience; trouble without, and terror within; ship and hope sinking together. You are privy to all the evils and wickedness of your hearts and lives. You know what treasures of guilt you have been heaping up all your days; and think you when distresses and extremities come upon you, conscience will be as quiet and still as it is now? No, no, guilt will fly in your faces then, and stop your mouths. O therefore humble yourselves at the feet of God for all your iniquities; apply yourselves to the blood of sprinkling; pray and plead with God for remission of sin; without which you are in a woeful case to adventure yourselves at sea to the imminent perils of life.

(2.) Another mercy you are earnestly to pray for is, That the *presence* of God may go with you, I mean not his *general presence* which fills the world; that will be with you, whether you pray for it or no; but his *gracious special presence*, which was that Moses so earnestly sued for in Exod. xxxiii. 15. "If thy presence go with me, carry us not hence." He and the people were now in a waste howling wilderness, but bound for Canaan, that earthly paradise; yet you see he chuses rather to be in a *wilderness* with God than in a Canaan without him; and no wonder, for this *gracious presence* of God, as to *comfort*, is all that a gracious soul hath.

“ shadow of death * i. e. (through the most apparent a
 “ dangers of death), yet will I fear no evil for thou a
 And indeed there is no room for fear; for with whom
 in a gracious and special mauner present, these thr
 mercies are secured to that man.

First, That God's special providence shall watch ov
 dangers, Psal. xci. 1,—4. “ He shall abide under the s
 “ Almighty; he shall cover thee with his feathers, an
 “ wings shalt thou trust.” As the hen gathers her bro
 wings, not only to cherish, but to defend them from a
 God takes his people under his providential wings for t

Secondly, He appoints for them a guard of angels, w
 to watch over, and minister to them in all their str
 read, Psal. xci. 11. “ He shall give his angels charge
 “ keep thee in all thy ways.” Many invisible service
 us. Luther tells us the angels have two offices,—*Sup*
et inferius vigilare;—to sing above, and watch below
 as a life guard to that man with whom the Lord is.

Thirdly, He readily hears their cries in a day of distres
 them to save and deliver them. So ver. 15. “ He sh
 “ me, and I will answer him, I will be with him in tr
 “ deliver him, and honour him.” O what a matchless n
 how many times, when poor seamen have seen deat
 before their eyes, have they cried, *mercy! mercy!* H
 is it for their eyes, on such occasions, to add salt-water
 there was too much before? But now to have God with
 an hour of straits, to hear, support, and deliver you: C
 estimate the worth of such a mercy! Pray therefore
 mercy indispensably necessary for you; and say to hi
 “ Lord, if thy presence may not go with us, carry us

(3.) A third mercy you are specially concerned to be
 that you may be kept from the temptations to sin you v
 when you are abroad in the world. The whole world lies i
 1 John v. 19. Every place, every employment, every c
 its snares and temptations attending it: And you know
 rupt natures, as much disposed to close with temptation
 to catch fire: So that unless the preventing, restraining,
 ing grace of God be with you, they will but touch and ta
 were no devil to tempt you externally; yet such a c
 meeting with a suitable temptation and occasion, is enc
 come you; Jam. i. 14. “ Every man is tempted when

He that brings home a pack of fine clothes, infected with the plague, hath no such great bargain of it, how cheap soever he purchases them. O therefore beg earnestly of God that you may be kept from sin: pray that you be not led into temptation.

(4) Pray for *divine protection* in all the dangers and hazards to which you shall be exposed. You know not how soon your life and estate shall be in jeopardy: This night you may sleep quietly in your cabin, to-morrow you may be tugging at the pump, and the next night take up your lodging upon a cold rock. How smartly doth the apostle James reprehend the security of trading persons; Jam. iv. 13, 14. "Go to now, ye that say, to-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain; whereas you know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appears for a little time, and then vanisheth away." How easily can God dash all your designs, and hopeful projects in one hour! You know you are even as much in the moment as near death as you are near the water, which is but a small move of one or two inches. How poor a defence is the strongest ship against the lofty seas and lurking rocks? How innumerable are the accidents and contingencies in a voyage, which the most skillful navigator cannot foresee or prevent?

They are, as the Psalmist speaks, at their wit's end, Psal. cvii. 28. But O how secure and safe amidst all dangers, is that man whom the Lord takes into his special protection? And he will not shut out those that sincerely commit themselves to him: The winds and seas obey his voice: he can with a word turn the storm into a calm, Psal. cvii. 29. or order means for your preservation, when you seem lost to the eye of sense and reason. I have heard of a young man, though being in a great storm at sea, was observed to be very cheerful, while all the rest were as dead men; and being asked the reason of his cheerfulness in a case of so much danger? He replied, 'Truly, I have no cause to fear, for the pilot of the ship is my father.' It is an unspeakable comfort when a man hath committed himself unto the hands of God, as a Father, and trusted him over all!

(5.) Pray for counsel and direction in all your affairs and undertakings, and lean not to your own understandings. "I know, O Lord," (saith the prophet) that the way of man is not in himself, neither is it in him that walks, to direct his own steps," Jer. x. 23. Undertake nothing without asking God's leave and counsel. How many that have stronger heads than you, have miserably ruined themselves and their designs by trusting to their own prudence? "A man

'dent. The Lord can blast your enterprize, though never so much wisdom and contrivance. You are not to God as the *author* of *success*, but as the *director* and *action*. It is by his conduct and blessing, that all things are done. If your designs succeed not, you are presently ready to turn your back upon fortune, and say, you had bad luck ; when indeed you have been your selves, in the first moulding it, by undertaking it without the counsel of God : " In all thy ways acknowledge him

(6.) Pray for success upon your lawful employment, and own it to be from the Lord. You have an excellent example in Abraham's servant, Gen. xxiv. 12. " O Lord God of my lord, send me good speed this day." He reverently acknowledges the sovereignty of providence, and acknowledges success to be the gift of God, the imperial crown, and the bridle that God hath upon the creature, to dispose of the success of human affairs. In all your business or design in a fair and hopeful way to prosper, have engaged God to be with us, by asking his counsel, and mending the success to his blessing. These are the mercies we are to pray for.

Secondly, Next I will shew you what influence prayer hath upon those mercies you are to pray for ; and it hath much effect. It may be short, it hath a threefold influence into them.

(1.) It is a proper and effectual mean to obtain and procure mercies. God will have every thing fetched out by prayer, Ezekiel 36. 37. " I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, saying, 'What doth the Lord say to them.'" God gives not our mercies for prayers, nor will he take away our mercies without our prayers. This is the stated method in which mercies are conveyed to us ; and therein the wisdom and goodness of God are eminently discovered. His wisdom in making us to see the necessity of every mercy in the way of receiving it, and securing his blessing in the dispensing of every mercy : His *goodness* to us in making every mercy this way to us, and raising its value in our eyes. Prayer coming between our wants and supplies is a singular way to raise the price of mercies with us, and engage us to due use of them. So that is an idle pretence for any to say, God will give us our wants, whether we pray or not ; and if mercies be decreed, we shall have them, though we ask them not : for though God will give us our wants, yet he will have us to know them too, and see the need of mercy. And though prayer be altogether necessary for his *information*, yet it is very necessary to testify our want of mercy. And though it is true, if God have decreed mercy for us,

it is plain, mercies must be expected in the way of prayer, that being God's appointed way, and stated method in the dispensing of them.

(2.) As prayer hath influence into the procuring of our mercies, it hath a singular influence into the sweetening of them: no mercy so sweet as those that are received upon the knee. There is a twofold sweetness men taste in their earthly enjoyments: one is *natural* and that those that never eye God in them, may relish as much as others; the other is *spiritual* and supernatural, resulting from the consideration of the way in which, and the end for which they are given, and I am confident, such is the refreshing sweetness of mercies coming in the way of prayer, that they derive a thousand times more sweetness from the channel through which they come, than they have in their own natures. So that it was rightly observed by him that said, 'A believer tastes more sweetness in the common bread he eats at his own table, than another can do in the consecrated bread he eats at the Lord's table.' And then,

(3.) Prayer hath a sanctifying influence upon all our enjoyments, and therefore no wonder it makes them so sweet: what you obtain this way, you obtain with a blessing, and that is the sweetest and best part of any enjoyment. So you find, 1 Tim. iv. 5. every creature sanctified by the word of God and prayer. One mercy of this kind is better than ten thousand promiscuously dispensed in the way of common providence: by these no man knows love or hatred; but these surely come from God's love to us, and end in the increase of our love to him. So that you see prayer hath a manifold influence upon our mercies: But it is not any kind of prayer that doth thus procure, sweeten, and sanctify our mercies to us: some men's prayers rather obstruct than further their mercies; but if it be the fervent prayer of a righteous man, directed by the rule of the word to the glory of God, we may say of such a prayer as David said of Saul's sword, and Jonathan's bow, it never returns empty *.

Thirdly, I shall shew what aid and assistance the prayers of others may give to the procurement of the mercies we desire; for you see in this instance in the text, it was the united joint-prayers of the disciples with Paul, that on this occasion was judged necessary.

Now considering prayer according to its use and end, as a means of obtaining mercy from the Lord; the more disposed, apt, and vigorous the means are, the more *surely* and *easily* the mercies are obtained which we pray for. There may be much zeal, fervency, and strength in the prayer of a single saint: Jacob alone may wrestle with God, and as a prince prevail; but much more in the joint, united for

God delights in those acts of mercy most, by which man is ed and comforted; and where there is a common sorrow going, like a common adventure in one ship, there prayer, like the return of such a ship, makes many glad. Certainly it is of great advantage for the people of God as many as they can to pray for them. When Daniel was secret from the God of heaven, Dan. ii. 17, 18. he made three friends to improve their acquaintance with God in God for him upon that occasion. "Then Daniel came to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Shadrach his companions, that they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret." Some Christians have more intimacies with God than others, they are special favourites of heaven; and what an advantage is it to be upon the terms they are with God, judge ye. I remember St. Bernard has spoken of the due frames and tempers that Christians should work their hearts into, when they are engaged in this work. He concludes with this request, *Et quum talis fueris, quando tuam etiam tuam heart* (saith he) *is in this temper, then thou shalt be able to pray for others.* Oh! it is a singular mercy to be interested in their prayers, to be in special favour with God! it is true, Jesus Christ is our favourite, for whose sake all prayers are heard: and without his intercession, the intercessions of an Abraham, a Moses, a David, are of no avail, nothing, but in the virtue of his intercession, the intercessions of others may be singularly advantageous to us. Job has many good men, but yet they must go to Job, and get his prayers for them before God would be intreated for them, Job xii. 8.

And, indeed, upon the contrary, it is a sad sign that a man is not to give us that mercy which he takes off our own hearts of others from praying for. When he saith, "I am such a man, or for such a mercy for him, the case is hopeless, the mercy is set, and there is no moving it." But if once a spirit of prayer be poured upon you, and you are too in your behalf, you may look upon the mercy as open door, and count it as good as if it were in your hand. You see what the mercies are you should pray for; and what prayer hath upon them; and what assistance the prayers of Christians may contribute to the obtaining of them; and your hearts may be excited and encouraged, not only to pray for yourselves, but to engage as many as you can to seek the same as you see Paul here did, when he was undertaking

First, Such as do but mock God, and delude themselves by hearless, dead and empty formalities. Some there be that dare not altogether slight and neglect prayers, but *pro forma*, they will do something themselves; and it may be as a compliment, or, at most as a customary thing, will desire the prayers of others: but, alas! there is no heartiness or sincerity in these things; they are not affected with the sense of their own wants, sins, or dangers; they never understood the use, nature, or end of prayer. We blame the blind Papists, and that justly, for their blind devotions, who reckon their prayers by number, and not by weight; and truly, there is but little difference between theirs, and some of our devotions. It is St. Augustine's counsel, "Do you learn to have in your hearts what every one hath in his lips." O that you would once learn to be earnest with God! to pray as men that understand with whom you have to do; and what great things you have to transact with God! ah, my friends, you may believe it, that if ever you had felt the weight of sin upon your consciences, and had had such sick days and nights for it, as some have had, you would not ask a pardon so cold and indifferently as you do. If you did but know the benefit of God's presence with you in troubles, how sweet it is; or could but apprehend how terrible a thing it is to be left of God, as Saul was in the day of distress, you would weep and make supplication for his gracious presence to go forth with you; and would say, with Moses, "If thy presence may not go with me, then carry me not hence." But alas! these things appear not to you in their reality and importance. And hence is all that wretched formality and deadness of spirit.

Secondly, It rebukes much more such as wholly slight and neglect prayer, as a useless and vain thing; who undertake designs without prayer, not at all acknowledging God in any of their ways. And it is justly to be suspected, there are multitudes of such practical atheists among seamen, as well as other orders of men. Poor men! my heart mourneth over you; you are certainly a forlorn set of men, who live without God in the world. It was anciently said, "he that would learn to pray, let him go to sea†:" But now, how long may a man be at sea, before he hear a praying seaman! Let your families from which you part, witness what conscience you have made to seek God, as you have been here directed, before your outset: it is said Deut. xxxiii. 18. to the tribe of seamen, "Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out." But in this case we may invert the words, and say *Mourn, O ye seamen, in your going out*. How deplorable a case is this? Let your cabins witness what conscience you make of the duty

deeps, wonders of *creation*, and wonders of *preservation*; time you yourselves are the greatest wonders that afloat on the sea: men immediately depending upon God for their lives, and estates, every moment, and not once owning him by prayer.

The very * Heathens will rise up in judgment against you. I remember Plato brings in Alcibiades, How he ought to express his resolution and dependence upon God, whom he thus answereth; "Before every undertaking I will say, 'If God will.'" And we know the eastern nations would do nothing of moment, without first acknowledging God. The Greeks *οὐκ ὀύω*, by the leave or blessing of God. The Turks will condemn such as you are, for they pray five times a day, how urgent soever their business be. The superstitious Papists will condemn you, with whom *Mass and meat hinder no man*. Oh! whither will you go, who shall comfort you when trouble comes upon you, at crosses and disappointments in your business; how should it be otherwise, as long as God is neglected, you say not, this is the fruit of *ill luck*, but of your profaneness. The success of all your business depends upon God (atheists dare deny) then certainly the directest and readiest way a man can take to destroy all, is to disengage God by a sacrifice of him. The most compendious way to ruin, is to forget God, and off prayer. "Pour out thy fury (saith the prophet) upon them that know thee not, and upon the families that call not thy name," Jer. x. 25. Will nothing less than extremity cry to God? Wonder not then, if God bring you unto the extremity which your profaneness makes necessary for you.

Thirdly and lastly, How much sadder, and more deplorable the case of those that not only neglect to call upon the Lord in prayer, but do also wound his name through and through with cursed oaths and blasphemies? who instead of going to God, as Paul here did, go on board cursing, swearing, and blaspheming his great and dreadful name; not going from their drunken *ale-benches*, to the ship.

O the admirable patience of God! O the power of his love, that ever that ship should swim one hour above water, with such loads of sin and guilt within it! It is noted in Genesis, of Seth, "That then men began to call upon the name of the Lord." Some translate the word *שָׁמַח* invocation.

there is a vile generation in our days, that instead of calling up the name of the Lord by prayer, do call upon it profanely, rending and tearing that great and terrible name with the language of heathenism. Poor man! with what hope or encouragement can those lips be silent, in the day of thy extremity, cry, *Mercy! mercy!* that have struck through the sacred name of God so many times with blasphemy! O that you would lay it to heart! O that this day God would set your sins in order before you.

Is this a beginning that promises a comfortable issue? Do you thus prepare yourselves to meet death and danger? O my soul, come not thou into their secrets! O let God rather strike me perfectly dead whilst I live, than afflict my soul through my ears with these dreadful dialects of the damned.

Use 2. In the next place, this point is exceeding useful, by way of exhortation, to persuade all men, and particularly seamen, to be men of prayer; to imitate that noble pattern in the text, and no longer to live in the neglect of a duty so necessary, so sweet, and so beneficial to them, as the duty of prayer is. O that you did but know the excellency of this duty! how would you give yourselves up to prayer! As David speaks, Psal. cix. 4. Now to persuade you to be praying men, and no longer to live in the neglect of so excellent a duty, I will offer these motives to your consideration.

Motive 1. God hath stiled himself a God hearing prayer. For your encouragement to this duty, he hath assumed this title to himself, Psal. lxxv. 2. "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come." You cry not as the Heathens do, to stocks and stones, that cannot help or hear them that seek to them, but to the living and true God, by whom never did any upright soul lose a prayer. And to come home to your case more fully, he is a God that hears the prayers of poor distressed men upon the seas, when all hope and human help have utterly failed them. So you read in Psalm cv. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28. "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep: for he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof: they mount up to heaven, they go down again to the depths; their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distress." So that what the Psalmist elsewhere speaks of the mystical depths of trouble, is true here even in a proper literal sense.

stressed creatures, that they have sensibly and thankfully acknowledged him according to his name; "The hope of the earth, and the confidence of them that are afar off." Psal. lxxv. 5. Who is there among you, that has not either for himself been an example, and instance of this truth? I might insert many famous examples to confirm it, but the case is too common to need them, and it would be too great a digression.

Motive 2. *Prayer is certainly the best relief to the distressed.* I may say of it, as David said of the sword of Goliath, for there is none like it. You that are seamen, know the use of the pump is, when the waters leak into your ship, and the scupper-holes are to you, when waves break and drench your necks: why, of the same use is prayer, when sorrow leaks into your hearts, and distresses are ready to overwhelm your souls. It is a vent to that which else would quickly sink you. "I shall live that seek the Lord," Psal. lxxix. 32. Pray to revive your fainting spirits; it will sensibly ease an oppressed soul. No fear of fainting, while a man continues praying. I might have went to call prayers the leeches of his cares and troubles, when troubles come in upon a man every way, and he have no other outlet for them when the ordinary vents of reason, counsel, and resolution are all choaked (as sometimes they are) and no succour or relief coming in from heaven; what a wretched condition is such a poor creature in? O therefore get relief with this excellent duty.

Motive 3. *All secondary means of deliverance and safety necessarily depend upon the will and pleasure of God, and signify nothing without him.* What the Psalmist saith of an horse, I may say of a ship, Psal. xxxiii. 17. That it is a vain thing for a man to boast, what a poor defence is it against those giant-like waves. And that men (especially seamen) may be convinced of their weakness, hath many times caused those stately and strong-built ships to be dashed all to pieces, and preserved those that were in them upon a plank or broken piece of the ship, And will you not yet see that means signify nothing without God, and that your dependence upon him is necessary in every case, and the acknowledgment thereof so too? I am persuaded that there are not be half so many shipwrecks and disappointments as there are, if your carnal confidence in the means were less, and your dependence upon the Lord more. Therefore it is that you so often receive the sentence of death in your hearts, when you are in the midst of the sea.

you pray not, and success may follow those that seek not God for it, but that which you call deliverance is rather a reservation to future misery; and that you call success, is but a snare to your souls. You have the things, but not the comfort and blessing of them. God may give you your desire to your ruin: your lives may be rescued for a time from death, that you may fill up the measure of your iniquities. Your affairs may prosper, and that prosperity may destroy you, Prov. i. 32. At best it is but an effect of common providence; and of such deliverances you can never say as Hezekiah said of his; and every one that receives the like mercy in the way of prayer, may say of his, Isa. xxxviii. 17. "But thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption; for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back." I deny not, but a deliverance by the hand of common providence is a mercy in itself; and it may prove a very great mercy to you in the event, if time thereby added to your life be a space of repentance: else it is but a short reprieve of your damnation, and leave you to perish under greater guilt than was upon you before. But on the contrary, how sweet are those mercies that come in the way of prayer; that discover God's love to you, and inflame yours to him? One such mercy is worth a thousand of the former.

Motive 5. *Consider all you that go out without prayer, how soon you may be out of a capacity of prayer.* Now you will not, and shortly you may not, have one opportunity to pray for evermore: now unbelief shuts your mouths, and shortly death may do it. How soon may you be past your prayers, both your own and others, and be fixed by death in your unalterable condition? O seek the Lord therefore whilst he may be found, call upon him whilst he is yet near. Now is your praying season, hereafter there will be no use of prayer. "For this (saith the Psalmist) shall every one that is godly pray unto thee, in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters, they shall not come nigh unto him." Psal. xxxii. 6. i. e. saith Deodate upon the place, in the time of the general destruction of sinners, as it was in the deluge; then there is no coming nigh to God by prayer, nor canst thou come nigh him in the day of thy particular destruction, by the flood of great waters. O therefore live not a day longer in the profane and sinful neglect of this great duty of prayer!

Object. *Why, but I observe those that pray not, generally escape as well as they that do.*

Answer. This objection was once made by a soldier in the time of fight, when he was pressed by his companion to pray; and God

Ans. Labour therefore to get into a regenerate state, persuaded to rest a day longer in so sad a condition. In mean time you must know, that prayer being a part of ship, all men, even the unregenerate, are obliged to it by the word of God and law of nature; otherwise the neglect of it could not be excused.

Object. But many pray, and receive not: I myself have done so.

Ans. "You ask, and receive not, because you ask not aright." *iv. 3.* If we were disposed to receive as God is to give, we should not be long without the answer of our prayers.

(1.) If your persons were accepted through Christ, your prayers should be accepted too, *Gen. iv. 4.* But you are in a state of spiritual destitute of the Spirit, *John xv. 7.* And so your voice is not the voice of a child, but a stranger.

(2.) If your prayers were regulated by the will of God, you should not miss of the desired success; *1 John v. 14.* "If we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us."

(3.) If your prayers had more faith and fervency, they should be answered; *Jam. i. 6. and v. 16.* Well then, if you are against your duty, but in the fear of God, apply yourself to him, and dare not to go forth in any design, until thou hast commended thyself and thy affairs to God. Go alone, do not retire from the world; and say not you cannot spare time for prayer, better any thing else were neglected than this. Tell him thou art now launching forth into the ocean, and know that this voyage may bring forth. Possibly thou mayest never return to the land of thy nativity any more; but however, beseech him to dispose the event, beseech him with all earnestness, that thou mayest have the pardon of sin sealed to thee before thou depart, beg him to separate guilt from thy person, before thou art separated from thy habitation and relations; lest that stroke that separates thy soul from thy body, should eternally separate thy soul and body from God.

Desire of the Lord that his presence may go with thee, that thou shalt go. Tell him it is the fountain both of thy strength and comfort. Desire him if his presence may not go with thee, to carry thee hence. All the relief thou hast against temptation, is that promise of his, *I will be with him in temptation.* If thou art not in him, those will be tasteless comforts, and succourless, which he is not.

Intreat the Lord with all importunity, to keep thee from temptation, and to keep thee in the midst of temptation.

by which thou mayest be overcome in the absence of lawful remedies, and presence of alluring objects, except his fear quench temptation, and break the snare.

Be earnest also with the Lord for his gracious protection of thee in all thy dangers. Tell him, thou canst not be in safety any where but under the shadow of his wings. Tell him, *at what time thou art afraid, thou wilt trust in him*; and beseech him, that when thy heart shall be overwhelmed with fears and troubles, he will lead thee to the rock that is higher than thee. Beseech him also to give thee counsel in all thy straits and difficulties, that thou mayest not lean to thine own understanding, but that he will make thy way plain before thee.

And if it be his good pleasure, that he would bless thy just and honest enterprizes with success and prosperity; which if he shall do, thank him it is thy desire, and beg the assistance of his grace, that thou mayest improve all thy mercies to his praise. If thus you set forth in the fear of God, you may expect a sweet success, and happy issue.

THE SEAMAN IN A STORM.

SERMON II.

PSAL. cvii. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28.

They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to heaven, they come down again to the depths; their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he brings them out of their distress.

THIS psalm contains an excellent account of the mysterious and admirable effects of providence: and this paragraph contains the only vein or branch of *divine providence* which respects seamen; a class of men more immediately depending upon the favour of providence than any men in the world; though all do necessarily and continually depend upon it.

In these verses we have a description, both (1.) of the persons (2.) of the danger (3.) of the distress (4.) of the deliverance.

are said *to go down to the sea in ships*, not because the sea is lower than the land, but because it is lower than the shore, which is partly raised by providence against its inundations. Another design in going down into the sea, is not pleasure and recreation, but to do business, i. e. to export and import such wares and commodities as are necessary, if not to the being, at least to the subsistence of the several kingdoms and countries of the world. The men here spoken of, who “see (more than any) the deep,” *“Lord, and his wonders in the deep.”* Works and wonders, *ἐν διαθύου*, an usual figure, is as much as his wonderful works of creation, in the strange and monstrous productions of the deep; of preservation, with respect to themselves, in the dangers which they there encounter. Thus the person or subject is introduced.

Secondly, The danger is likewise described in which the men are sometimes involved: and indeed the Psalmist has given a very rhetorical and elegant description of their condition in a stormy sea; and shews us how deplorable their state is at such a time. Where we are to note both the cause and the effects of these tempests.

1. The causes; and they are twofold.

First, The principal cause, the will and pleasure of God, who commandeth and raiseth the stormy winds. This is God's will: none can raise winds but himself, and if devils could do it at any time, yet it is still by his permission; as you see in Job 1. 19. the Lord is said to hold the wind in his fists, Prov. 1. 24. man holds a wild fierce beast in a chain, or by a collar, and when they blow, “He brings them out of his treasures,” Ps. 104. 3. There is indeed a natural cause of winds, of whom philosophers give us this rational account, “That it is a hot and dry exhalation, raised from the earth by the power of the heavenly bodies, and repelled or forced back by the coldness of the middle region, and so blown obliquely or slantingly, and sometimes very violently, into the air.” But though this be the natural cause of the winds, it doth not at all restrain the absolute sovereignty of God. It is he that commands and raiseth them, as the text speaks. It may be said, John iii. 8. “The wind blows where it listeth,” this expression makes it not an arbitrary creature; but the will of God either thus, It blows where it listeth, for any opposition it may make to it, though it cannot blow where it listeth in respect to the laws of nature. Or thus, such is the great variableness and instability of the winds, blowing now this way, now that, that it seems to move with a spontaneity, as a bird doth in the air, and so it is said, Job 1. 19.

2. We have the instrumental, subordinate and next cause of storm; and that is, the 'winds lifting up the waves of the ocean. There is naturally in the sea a continual agitation and rolling of waters hither and thither; it *cannot rest*, as the prophet speaks of, but when a violent wind blows upon it, the ocean is incensed and enraged; and the winds roll moving mountains of water before them. Then, like wild beasts, the waves seem to break loose and rage; only to be *latrantes undas*, as Virgil calls them, *barking waves*, *κυματα αργια*, *raging waves*, as Jude speaks, ver. 13. Yea, *roaring waves*, as our Saviour styles them, Luke xxi. 25. Thus of the cause of the storm principal and subordinate. Next we have,

Secondly, The terrible effects of the tempests, and that both upon their bodies and their minds.

(1.) External upon their bodies; it tosses them up and down in a dreadful manner, which the Psalmist elegantly expresses in the text, "They mount up to heaven, they go down to the depths," a loose hyperbolical expression; very near unto it is that of Virgil:

*Tollimur in cælum, curvato gurgite; et iidem,
Subducta, ad manes imos descendimus, unda!*

Æn.

They seem to mix with the very clouds, and then open deep graves for them in the bottom sands. Yea, it moves them not only perpendicularly, lifting them up, and casting them down, but obliquely and circularly also. "They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man," or, as some translate, *agitantur in gyrum*, they revolve round: they are, indeed, moved according to the unstable motion of the waves, on whose proud backs they are mounted. This is the external effect of the storm upon their bodies.

(2.) The internal effect of it upon their minds, which is far more terrible. For it is said here, *Their soul is melted because of trouble, and they are at their wit's end*. Both which expressions do import a greater commotion and storm in the passions of the mind, than that in the waves of the sea. The stoutest spirit quails and melts when he comes to this; and the wisest artist is at his wit's end. Thus you have the description of the persons, and of their danger, both in the cause and effects upon the body and mind. Next,

(3.) We have their deliverance by the wonderful hand of Divine Providence, in ver. 27. "Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he brings them out of their distress." Their usual course in such extraordinary exigencies, is, *mercy! mercy!* Now they cry and pray that could not pray before. Extremity drives them to the knees, not only with cries, but vows to the Lord, and he delivers

From all this we observe,

Doct. *That the preservations and deliverances of seamen from dreadful storms and tempests at sea, is the wonder of Divine Providence.*

“The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all men: they have pleasure therein;” Psal. cxi. 2. And, among his works, none greater and more admirable than those which we daily behold in their great and marvellous protection of the sea.

Now the glory of Divine Providence towards seamen displays itself in three things especially, *first*, In making the sea navigable for them at any time. *Secondly*, in preserving shipwrecks in the fury and stress of weather. *Thirdly*, in pointing out ways, and strangely providing means of safety, when all seems lost, and broken upon the sea.

1. It is a wonderful providence of God to make the sea navigable for men at any time; that such a fluid body as water cannot support a stone or bullet of an ounce weight, should be the reason of its own saltness, and the innate property of timber to support ships of such vast burden, which are carried upon its place, being mounted on the backs of its proud waves, should but acknowledge a most wise providence, in gratifying the curiosity and desire of man, which fits him for converse and traffic with all nations; with instruments and materials so fit for his use, as timber, iron, hemp, pitch, the loadstone, and whatever is necessary for this purpose? I cannot open the wisdom of God in this respect to better advantage than I find it done by the pen of Dr. More, in his Antidote against Atheism, page 101. ‘*creation (saith he) being of so great consequence to the convenience of human life, and there being both wit and strength in man to attempt the seas, were he but fitted with rigging, and other advantages requisite; when we see the wisdom of a provision made for him to this purpose, in large timber for the building of his ship, a thick sea-water to bear the ship’s weight, the magnet or loadstone for his compass; in the steadiness of the direction of the axis of the earth for his *cynosura*; in the service his natural wit and courage to make use of the sea; in that ingenite desire of knowledge and converse, and in the stirring of his own parts and happiness, stir him up to so bold an attempt: we cannot but conclude from such a train of circumstances, and congruously complying together, that it was really*

preserved at sea from immediate ruin in the dreadful tempests that befall them there; this is a mysterious and admirable work of God, that a poor ship should not be swallowed up by the furious ocean when mountains of water come rolling towards it with an horrible noise, and give it such dreadful stripes: when seas roll over it, so cover it with the waves, that for a time they know not whether they sink or swim; to see it emerge out of such fatal dangers, keep up its head, and mount upon the backs of those lofty seas that threaten immediately to overwhelm it: O how great is the power and care of providence in such a case! especially if you consider these following particulars, among many others, which threaten ruin on every side: and should but one of these many contingencies befall them, in the eye of reason they are lost men.

1. Of how many parts, compared together, doth a ship consist? These parts indeed are fastened together with bolts of iron; being in so many planks, what a wonder is it that none springs, that no bolt gives way, or seams open, whilst every part works with violence, and so great a stress of weather lies upon it. Should such a thing fall out, (as it is a wonder it should not), how soon would the ship swim within as well as without?

2. How often are they put from their course by stress of weather and know not where they are; not being able, for many days, to take any observation? so that they must go whither winds and waves drive them: for there is no dropping anchors in the main, nor reversing the course of the seas, to which they can make no more resistance than a child to a giant. And how is it they are not dashed upon the rocks, or foundered in the sands, seeing the winds shift their course, and not art? But there is a God that steers your course for you when you cannot.

3. How often are you even fallen upon rocks and shores before you see them, and are almost past *hope* before you begin to fly. Sometimes almost imbayed, and as much as ever you can do to avoid either a rock or head-land, which you discerned not until it was almost too late.

I remember Dr. Johnson, in that ingenious and wonderful narrative of his voyage to the Sound, when he had survived two shipwrecks, and was embarked in the third ship, 'We had not (said he) been above two or three hours at sea, but there was a sudden traction among us in the ship, and the mariners crying, *mercy! mercy!* for we had almost fallen foul on a rock, which lay so close lying in the water, that we did not espy it till we were upon

are lost men. And how wonderful is it they do not! ble in a storm, but as the new cords with which they bound Samson, and as easily would they be snapt a thread of tow, were it not for the care of providence. These, and an hundred other accidents which hourly might, and would send you down to the bottom, but it permits it not so to be.

5. And yet more wonderful than all this; how often suffer ships to founder and sink under you, and to pieces against the rocks, and yet preserve you when means of preservation are cut off and gone? Who like works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep?

For, *first*, sometimes a small boat shall save them, ship could not: thus many of them have been wonderfully and thus the aforementioned author relates the manner of preservation. ‘Our ship (saith he) had sprung a leak, and was ready to sink: O how the face of the sea was changed at this affrightment! one was at his prayers, another wringing his hands, a third shedding tears, when we had more salt-water. After this fit they fell to work, and (in such extremes) we were all busy in doing nothing, and knew not what. The master’s mate, whom we sent down to the leak, quickly returned to us with a sad countenance, gnashing of teeth, a quivering tongue, and having spoken, signifying unto us, that the wound was incurable, there was now no room for counsel, neither had we time to consider what was best to be done; but we presently cast off the boat, and shot off eight or ten guns, which seemed to toll of a passing-bell before our death. I leaped into the boat, leaped short, one leg in the boat, *Alterum in Charontis castra*, where we were left in the north seas, which seldom wear a smile, but at this time contending with the wind, swelled into mountains. It blew half a storm, and we were now in despair: what credit could we give to our safety in a small shallop, when so stately a castle of wood, which we believed could not defend itself against the insolency of the waves, were many leagues from any shore, having no compass, nor provisions to sustain us, and the night grew black upon us. Nothing but a miracle could preserve us, being out of all human help.—We fell to prayer, and our extremity brought us:—For in this moment of death, when we were

"in the great deep, and his footsteps are not known," Psal. lxxix. 19.

Secondly, Sometimes they shall be cast upon a rock in the sea, where they shall be preserved until some other way of deliverance come; yea, preserved strangely, God blessing a small matter of provision which they saved to sustain them; though they said it, as the widow of Sarepta to the prophet, 1 Kings xvii. 12. "I have but an handful of meal, and a little oil, and I am gathered in two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die." Or if they could save nothing, yet a few muscles or birds eggs, with God's blessing, have sustained them until the time of mercy come. This hath been the case of many. Think upon this you that abuse the good creatures of God with drunkenness: how sweet would a cup of fresh water be to you who are reduced to such extremity? Oh! if your hearts be not harder than the rocks you lay upon, how would such extraordinary mercies move you into love and thankfulness?

Thirdly, Sometimes they have been wafted to the shore safely upon the wreck *, or by making a raft of the broken pieces of the ship and torn sails, and ropes; and upon this (God knows, a poor security against the boisterous waves) have they ventured themselves. A sinking man (as we say) will catch at a bulrush. Paul, and they that suffered shipwreck with him, were thus saved; "The centurion commanded, that they which could swim, should cast the boards first into the sea, and get to land; and the rest, some upon boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship; and so it came to pass that they escaped all safe to land," Acts xxvii. 43, 44.

Oh, the miraculous works of the Lord! to save by such contemptible and improbable means! Who can but with great joy see and acknowledge the finger of God to be here? "Lo, these are parts of his way; but how little a portion is heard of him?" Job xxvi. 11.

1. *Use of reproof.* If your preservation in storms at sea, be testimony of wonderful works of Divine Providence, then divers of you deserve to be sharply reproofed from this truth. And I beseech you suffer the word of reproof meekly and penitently. I shall speak nothing to reproach you; no, it is not to reproach, but to reform you: and if you hate reproof, and mock at counsel, God may shortly speak in such thundering language to your consciences, as will be terrible to you to bear. I remember, it is said of St. Bernard, That whilst he was seriously reproofing the profaneness of one (and if I misremember not, it was his own brother) who was a soldier, and observing he

you may be taught by captivities and shipwrecks what faithful reproofs and wholesome counsel, seasonably good. You that read these lines, seriously ask your own these following questions.

(1.) Have you not soon forgotten the works and w Lord, which your eyes have seen? It may be, for the have been sensibly affected with your danger, and the in your deliverance, but hath it remained upon your heart these mercies have been written in the dust, which should be engraven, as in the rock, for ever. Thus it was with the people that saw as many wonders wrought for them by the finger of God, as ever did any people in the world: and yet of them, even after the *Red-sea* deliverance, in which “the sea for them, when the waves thereof roared,” I know not with which, for the present, their hearts were greatly affected. It is said, Psalm cvi. 12. “That they believed his works and his praises;” but in the next verse you read, that they easily wiped out the sense of this mercy; for it is said, “They soon forgot his works, and waited not for his deliverance.” I doubt this was not the sin of Israel only, but is the case of you at this day. Well, God did not forget you in the extremity, though you so quickly forgot him. Think of yourselves from this guilt by saying, you do still remember his mercy; you may do so, and yet be said to forget his mercy: for his mercy may be remembered by him that received it two ways, *speculatively* and *affectingly*. A speculative remembrance is to call to mind the story of such a danger and preservation; you may do, and yet God account himself forgotten, and you remember it as still to feel the powerful impressions upon your hearts, softening and melting them into thankful dependence upon the God of your salvations.

(2.) Have you not walked very unanswerably to your yea, and to the solemn engagements you made to God in your distress? I fear some of you have walked after God only by a wonderful immediate hand from the jaws of death, as if you had been *delivered to do all these abominations*. As it is said, “You may be the *last* week or month you were reeling to and fro in a stormy sea, and staggering *like* drunken men; and *this* week you are staggering along the streets really drunken. O horrid! do you thus requite the Lord, who pitied you in your distress, full of compassion, saved you when you cried to him? Is

been better for you that you had gone down to the bottom than rather than to live only to treasure up more wrath against the Lord of wrath, and fill up your measure.

(3.) Are there not a sort of atheistical seamen, who own not providence at all, either in the raising of these horrid tempests, or in the marvellous preservation in them! but look on all as coming in a natural way, and their escape to be only by good fortune and chance? How wonderful a thing is it in the eyes of all considering men, that providence should take any notice of them in a way of favour, that wickedly disown it, and so directly disoblige it? How can you possibly shut your eyes against such clear light, and stop your ears against such loud and plain language, whereby the power and goodness of God proclaims itself to you in these providences! Ah! methinks you should most readily and thankfully subscribe that great truth, Psalm lxxviii. 20. "He that is our God is the God of salvation; and our God the Lord belong the issues from death." But though men see signs and wonders they will not believe; yea, though they themselves become wonders to the world by their miraculous deliverance, yet so brutish and stupid are they, that they will not see the hand that saves them. Take heed what you do: you set yourselves in the direct way to destruction by this, and highly provoke the Lord to abandon and cast you out of the care of his providence: and if you once do so, you are lost men.

(4.) And yet more vile (if more vileness can be in sin) than all this is there not a generation of wretched men among you, that fall into swearing, cursing, and blaspheming God, even when he is uttering his terrible voice in the tempest, and every moment threatening to intomb them in the deep? When you should be upon your knees bewailing your sins, and pleading with God for mercy, (as I doubt not but some of you do) to be yet more and more provoking him, daring him to his face; and yet more incensing his indignation, which is already kindled against you; who, that hears this can chuse but to admire the riches of God's patience and forbearance towards such men. The very heathen mariners in a storm *called every man upon his god* Jonah i. 5. We say, extremity will cause the worst of men to pray, and compose the vainest spirit unto seriousness; but it seems to you it will not. Is this the frame and temper you will meet death in? What! speaking the language of devils and damned spirits before you come among them; hastening on your own ruin as if you were too slack and lingering in its motion? The Lord open the eyes of these miserable creatures, and convince them, that they are not

which God calls you to by his terrible providential storms, and by your wonderful deliverances.

1. And the first lesson you are to learn from hence *the power of God*. O what a manifestation of Divine power you are the men that see more than others the works and his wonders in the deep. It is one of God's ends in these wonders, "To make his mighty power known," Ps. what a terrible voice doth God utter upon the seas when they are black above you, the furious winds and dreadful thunder about you, the seas and waves roaring beneath you! Is not the Lord full of majesty? Doth it not awe your hearts, and make them tremble? In three things his infinite power is discovered.

First, In raising these terrible tempests, and that from so weak a beginning as a thin vapour from the earth is a wonderful work of God, Psal. cxxxv. 7. "He causeth the clouds to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh the rain, he bringeth wind out of his treasures."

Secondly, In limiting and bounding their force and prodigious effects else would follow: The wind is a fierce and voracious creature, and would (if God did not by his providence restrain it) destroy and overturn all, both by sea and land; or if it were stiled *The prince, or power of the air*, were left at liberty to execute his malice by such an instrument, not a ship should be safe on seas, nor a house be safe at land; as is evident enough by the haste he made to overturn the house with an horrible tempest, Job's children, as soon as he had received a permission to do it.

And, *Thirdly*, No less visible is the power of God in appeasing the stormy winds, and remanding them into calm. Psal. cvii. 29. "He maketh the storm a calm." Yea, at the very nick of time, when all is concluded lost. Thus Mark iv. 39. "When the waves beat into the ship," the ship now full, and the disciples cried unto the Lord, "Master, do not that we perish?" He arose and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still; and the wind ceased, and there was a great calm." Just as one would hush a child, *Peace* be the sovereign power of God! how should it be revered and adored by all that behold it, in these marvellous effects.

2. The second lesson you are taught by this doctrine is *the mercy of God*. Mercy is no less discovered than power. The power of God is put forth to give his mercy a fair opportunity.

stances ! I can only hint your duty generally in this case ; you must enlarge upon it, if you have hearts fit for such a blessed work. *Mark particularly the multitudes of mercies that are complicated and involved in one deliverance.* Observe the season when, the manner how, the means by which your salvation was wrought. It is a thousand pities that so much of God's glory and your comfort, as any one even the smallest circumstance may contain, should ever be lost.

3. *Lastly, And above all, See that ye answer God's ends in your deliverance:* If those be lost, God may say concerning you, as David did of Nabal, 1 Sam. xxv. 21. "Surely, in vain have I kept all that this fellow hath in the wilderness ; so that nothing was missed of all that pertained to him ; and he hath requited me evil for good." So here, in vain I kept this fellow upon the sea, when I suffered others to sink ; in vain have I preserved his life, liberty, and estate, so often by an out-stretched arm of power and mercy to him, seeing he requites me evil for good.

O let me intreat you to be careful to comply with the designs and ends of God in these your wonderful preservations ! If you enquire what God's ends or designs in your deliverance are, I answer,

First, It is to lead you to repentance. "The goodness of God" (saith the apostle) leadeth thee to repentance," Rom. ii. 4. Dost thou not know the voice of mercy ? Why, it bespeaks thy return to God. It may be thou hast spent all thy life, to this day, in the service of sin : Thou never redeemedst one of all thy precious hours to consider thine own estate, to bewail thy sin and misery, to seek after an interest in Christ. Why, now here is a providence fallen in thy doth, as it were, take thee by the hand, and lead thee to this great and necessary work. The end of God in raising this storm was to deliver thee from the more dreadful tempest of his wrath, which without repentance, must shortly overtake thy soul in the blackness of darkness for ever. Now God hath awakened thy conscience by this fright, made it charge home thy sins upon thee, terrified thee with dreadful apprehensions of death and hell. O what a fair opportunity and advantage hath he now put into thy hand for repentance, reformation, and gaining an interest in Jesus Christ ! If this season be lost, thy conscience suffered again to fall into any dead sleep, and thy heart again hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, thou mayest never have such an opportunity for salvation opened to thee any more.

Secondly, If this end be answered, then a farther design God hath in thy deliverance, is to engage and encourage thy soul to a dependence upon God in future straits and dangers. This is food

If your first deliverance were a deliverance without when you were without Christ, what encouragement depend upon him, when his end is answered in your conversion; and, being in Christ, are entitled to all the

Thirdly, and lastly, God's end in your marvellous and deliverances is to furnish you for, and to engage of praise. O how should the high praises of God be in your mouths! you have seen his works and wonders in the deliverance; is it which the Psalmist presses upon you as a becoming your mercies, in the words following my text; "O thou Lord, praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonders in the children of men!"

O with what warm and enlarged affections should you express your thankfulness to the God of your salvation! and say as David, "I am I, O Lord God, and what is my father's house? What shouldst thou do such great things for me?" Was such a deliverance worth the working of so many wonders to save it? O how knowest it has been a life spent in vanity. Thy glory hath been precious in mine eyes, but my life hath been precious to thee. Many more useful, and less sinful than myself have perished, and I am saved. O Lord, shew me the designs and gracious purposes of thy deliverances. Surely there is some great thing to be done, else so great a salvation had not been wrought for me. I saw in what a sad case my poor soul was, to be summoned immediately before his judgment-seat: that if I had gone down with my guilt, I had sunk to the bottom of hell: But thou, O Lord, hast delivered it from the pit of corruption, that I may enjoy a season for salvation, and be once more entrusted with thy precious talents of time and means. O that I may not receive the grace of God in this new instrument, as I have received in the former! let me not live as one delivered to commit abominations!

And now after all that is come upon me for my evils, O my God, hast punished me so much less than my iniquities, and hast given me such a deliverance as this, should I break thy commandments? Ezra ix. 13, 14. "O let thy grace produce a new heart and life!"

THE
SEAMAN'S PRESERVATIVE
IN
FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

SERMON III.

PSALM CXXXIX. 9, 10.

If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

IN this psalm the omnipresence and omniscience of God are subjects of the Psalmist's meditation; and these attributes are here promiscuously discoursed, not only because of the near affinity there is betwixt their natures, but because the one is the demonstration of the other: It is evident God knows all things, because he fills all places. Touching the omniscience of God, he discovers the infinite perfection of that attribute by the particular and exact notions he takes of all our ways: ver. 3. "Thou compassest my paths, and art acquainted with all my ways." Of all our words; verse 4. "There is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." Yea, of all our thoughts; and that not only at the instant of their conception, but long before they were conceived: ver. 2. "Thou understandest my thoughts afar off," even from eternity. Thus he displays the omniscience of God: And then to make demonstration of the truth and certainty of this doctrine of God's omniscience, he proves it from his omnipresence: q. d. That which fills all things cannot but know all things. Now God's presence fills heaven, yea, and hell too, verse 8. And all parts of the earth and sea, even the remotest, verse 9, 10. And therefore no creature or action of any creature, can escape his cognizance. It is not here as among men; if a malefactor be condemned by the laws of a kingdom, he may escape by flying into another; but it is far otherwise here; for saith the Psalmist, (personating a guilty fugitive endeavouring to make an escape from the arrest of God's justice) "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right

“ If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the parts of the sea.”* Where two things seem to offer protection.

First, The place; the remotest part of the sea; but are to understand the most obscure nook in the creation removed from an inspection or observation.

And, *Secondly*, his swift and speedy flight after the commission of sin, to this supposed refuge and sanctuary: It is here supposed a sinner should fly as swift as the light of the sun, which moment shines from the east to the west, and so the means I flee with a celerity equal to the sun, or his beams of light breaking forth in the morning, do in an instant enlighten the remotest parts of the hemisphere: Could I as swiftly flee to an obscure, remote, solitary place in all the world. Thus security is supposed.

2. This supposed security and encouragement is utterly vain. “ Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.” † The leading hand of God is not here to be taken as a directing or guiding hand, to shew the fugitive sinners the way of his escape; but contrarily, “ Thy hand shall lead thee, and thy keeper leads his prisoner back to the place of custody where he endeavoured to escape. And the following clause is, “ Thy right hand shall hold,” or detain *me*, viz. in sin. So that the sum of all is this:

Doct. *That the whole world affords no place of security for a sinner to escape the observing eye and reach of God.*

Jonah fled from the Lord to Tarshish; but could he escape? No, the Lord sent a storm after him, which brought him back alive, Jonah i. 3, 4. We read, Isa. xxix. 15. of such a people “ to hide their counsels from the Lord,” i. e. They will study to conceal their wicked designs, to sin with guile and security. But what can possibly be a covering from the Lord, when all things are naked and manifest? Where can a man hide from him whose presence fills heaven and earth? Jer. xlv. 3. “ The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.” And again, Job xxxiv. 21, 22. “ For he seeth upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his going, and he knoweth all his darkness, nor shadow of death where the workers of iniquity hide themselves.” Whoever goes about to conceal

"For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro through the whole earth," 2 Chron. xvi. 9.

Now in the handling of this point I purpose to shew you,

1. That men are often induced to sin upon hopes of secrecy and concealment.

2. That to sin upon these encouragements, strongly argues the natural atheism: They think they are safe if men know it not; they reckon not upon God's discovery of them.

3. That these encouragements to sin are vain things, it being impossible any place can hide a sinner from God; and how it appears that the eye of God is, and must needs be upon us, and our actions wherever we are, and how closely soever we endeavour to hide them. And then apply it.

First, Men are often induced to commit sin upon the hopes of secrecy and concealment. Sin (especially some sorts of sin) carry much shame and *odium* in them, that it restrains men from the open practice of them; but if Satan can persuade them they shall never be divulged to their reproach, they will venture upon them. See that text, "The eye of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, 'no eye shall see me, and disguiseth his face,'" Job xxiv. 15. Reasoning himself secure if he can carry his wickedness under a veil of darkness, not caring what wickedness he doth, so he may do it undiscerned: It is not the acting of sin, but the discovery of it that puts them into terrors. So it is added with respect both to the adulterer and the thief, ver. 17. "The morning is to them as the shadow of death, if one know them; they are in the terrors of the shadow of death," i. e. If a man, especially a man in authority, a magistrate meet them, it is as if the image of death passed before them in a vision. So those idolators, Ezek. viii. 12. "Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the house of his imagery? For they say, the Lord seeth it not. They conclude all is well, if nothing appear. This encouragement of secrecy is the great argument by which Satan prevails with men to commit any sin that hath shame or danger attending it: But his promises of concealment are usually made good, as his promises of great wealth are to witches. This is the encouragement.

Secondly, Next I will make evident to you, that to sin upon this encouragement argues atheism in him that commits it. This is plain for, did men believe the omnipresence and omniscience of God, such an encouragement to sin as secrecy could have no force with them. Thus, when the ancients of Israel practised their idolatry in the dark

or, "his heart been secretly enticed, he should have done that is above." Every one that is enticed to sin upon the management of secrecy, doth so far deny the God that is above, as if a man did really believe there is a God that sees him, "are as flames of fire," Rev. i. 14. "To whom the light are both alike," Psal. cxxxix. 12. it were not so should be so terrified at the discovery of a creature, and wholly unconcerned at the discovery of God: It is not so that the observation of the great God should not so terrify them, as the observation of a little child.

Thus we find the inward thoughts of men's hearts commonly discovered by their bold attempts upon secret sins, I have seen "Wo to them that seek deep to hide their counsel from me, and their works are in the dark; and they say, who shall see us? and who knoweth us?" They think if their works are shadowed by a vail of darkness, they are safe enough; if they can escape the eye of an earthly god (a magistrate) they shall never be troubled by any other bar. We have another sad instance of the same in Psal. lxxiii. 11. "And they say, how doth God know us? and where is his knowledge in the Most High?" If men did but know themselves there is no God, or (which is all one) that they are themselves, one that cannot see in darkness, they could not so rage themselves as they do, to sin upon such a foolish security.

Thirdly, But my proper business in this place, is to show that these encouragements to sin are vain things: That no man can hide himself from the eye of God. This is plain both from scripture and reason.

The scripture speaks full home to this truth. Prov. xiii. 12. "The ways of a man are before the Lord, and he pondereth them." To ponder or weigh our paths is more than simply to observe them. He not only sees the action, but puts it into a scale, and with every circumstance belonging to it, and tries how every ingredient in the action weighs, and what it comes to. He hath not only an *universal inspection* upon every action, but a *critical inspection* into it also. "The Lord is a God that weighs," "and by him actions are weighed," 1 Sam. ii. 3. So Jer. xiii. 1. "Thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in falsehood, saying, I will not be brought to shame: thy adulteries and thy neighings, the lewdness of thy hands, and all thy abominations; q. d. Thou forgettest there is a God in the heavens that beheld thee, and didst verily believe all was secret from man. In this falsehood or cheat put upon thine

23. Thus the scripture speaks roundly and fully to the point in hand.

But because the atheism of the world is so great, and it is a hard thing to convince men of this great truth, so as to overawe them from any secret sin by it; I will, by rational arguments, demonstrate the truth to every man's conscience, and give you plain and full evidence that how secretly soever men carry their sinful designs, yet the Lord must needs be privy to them; and it is impossible they should escape his cognizance.

1. For, *First*, He that formed all cannot but know all: the world and man cannot be supposed to be ignorant of any part of his own work. Now God is the former of all things; every place and every person he hath made: where then shall the workers of iniquity hide themselves? You have the folly of sinners, in thinking to conceal themselves from the eye of God, convinced and reprov'd by this very argument, Isa. xxxix. 15, 16. "Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsels from the Lord, and their works are in the dark: as they say, who seeth us? And who knoweth us? Surely, ye are turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for, shall the work say to him that made it, he made me not? Or, shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, he hath no understanding?" q. d. Think ye by deep-laid designs, by the advantage of darkness, by the moulding and new-moulding your crafty designs in your heads, as the clay is moulded now unto this, then in the shape by the potter's hand, to hide it from me? O brutish creatures, and without understanding! am not I the God that formed you? And can it be supposed I should not know the most secret thoughts, plots, and designs of mine own creatures, who can contrive a design, nor conceive a thought with me? How absurd is this? Find out a place which God made not, or a creature which he formed not; and then your pretences to that creature's concealment from God in such a place, may have some colour: and this argument is again urged to convince the brutish atheist, Psal. xciv. 9, 10. "Understand, ye brutish among the people, and ye fools, when will you be wise? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that chasteneth the heathen, shall not he correct? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know? The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity;" so that it is the vainest of all vanities in the world, to think of hiding your sins from the Lord.

2. He that sustains all cannot but know and discern all. Ye that seek to hide counsel from the Lord, know ye not, "That in

thoughts which you had no power to conceive, but from exercise but common reason in the case, and it will hiss at designs.

3. He that governs all can be ignorant of nothing. perpetual influence of providence, swaying and governing creatures, and all their actions; else the very ligaments would crack, and the world break up and disband. providence extends itself to the least and lowest of creature actions, Luke xii. 6. a sparrow falls not to the ground out it. "The great God hath something to do about minute *and inconsiderable things;" yea, the most and uncertain things, as is the disposal of a lot, Prov. x. indeed this omniscience of God is that which is necessary for universal government. How shall he rule that person, or which he knows not? Indeed earthly governors may do necessary they have a personal immediate cognizance of each person in their dominions: it is enough that they be immediately governed by them; but it is not so with God. necessary his eye should immediately see all the parts of the world. He could not rule the world, if he were not an omniscient God. Psal. lxvi. 7. "He ruleth by his power for ever; his dominion is over the nations; let not the rebellious exalt themselves."

4. He that hath set a spy to observe and note what we doth, cannot but know his actions, how secret soever they be, so it is here; God sends a spy with you, to observe and note all your most secret actions and thoughts, in every place, I mean your consciences, from whose observation none of your ways can be exempt. The sense of this made the heathen say *ansuruste sine teste time*. When thou art attempting a secret, thyself without any other witness; conscience is privy to all your secret designs and thoughts; 1 Kings ii. 44. "Thou knowest the wickedness which thine heart (i. e. thy conscience) hath devised, and if conscience know all, God must needs see and know all. The apostle reasons, from the lesser to the greater, 1 John iii. 20. "our heart condemn us, (which is there put for conscience) but he that is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things." I mean God, a man knows the things of a man, much more he that knows the things of a spirit, and endowed man with it.

5. He that knows things more secret and unsearchable than the most secret actions can be, must needs know them how they be. Now there are many things more close and secret

"try the reins;" i. e. The most obscure, inward and deep secret lodged in the heart; nay, which is more, he not only knows our thoughts when they are formed and conceived in the heart, but long before their conception; Psal. cxxxix. 2. "Thou knowest my thoughts afar off." Divines generally interpret it from eternity, even so long before they were actually thought, he foreknew every thought we should think; and what can be imagined more secret and undiscernible, than a future thought.

Now if this be known to him, how much more are our thoughts formed into projects and designs, and these executed by external actions? O deceive not yourselves with hopes of secrecy! Nothing can be a secret to him that knows the counsels of all hearts.

6. He that providentially brings to light the most secret contrivances of men, and publishes them before all Israel, and before the sun, must needs see them, and know them. How closely had Achish covered his wickedness: He never suspected a discovery, yet God brought it to light. With how much contrivance was the sin of David covered! yet God discovered it: "Thou didst this thing secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun," 2 Sam. xii. 12. Histories abound with examples of God bringing to light murders, so secretly committed, that it was impossible they should ever be revealed in this world, without a miracle of providence; and yet so they have been brought to light. Bessus having committed such a murder, fancied the swallows that were chattering in the chimney had said, Bessus killed a man, and thereupon confessed the fact. How secure were the contrivers of the popish powder-plot, that Catholic villany, in a double sense having sworn all their accomplices to secrecy, and managed the whole design so closely that Guy Faux, upon the discovery of it, said, *The devil must needs be the discoverer of it*. How easy were it to expatiate upon this theme? But I will not be tiresome by instances: all ages are the witnesses of this truth. Who can then deny or question that great or confessed truth, Dan. ii. 28. "There is a God in heaven that reveals secrets:" and if he reveals them, he must needs know them.

7. He that will judge all secrets, cannot but know them. "Nay, God will judge the secrets of men in that great day," Rom. ii. 12. "God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil," Eccl. xii. ult. The Judge of the whole earth will not judge at random; his judgment will be infallible, because his omniscience is so. "His eyes are upon

The uses follow in these inferences.

1. *Inference*, If this be so, then time, place, and opportunity much soever they seem to promise secrecy and concealment, never further a temptation to sin.

Suppose all circumstances concurring, so that in the world you seem secured from the shameful consequences of sin; yet the consideration of this truth should sufficiently deter from a wicked purpose; Prov. v. 20. "And why wilt thou, O woman, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the arms of a stranger? For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings." There be four circumstances that strengthen temptations to sin, and particularly the sin of fornication upon seamen. *First*, The absence of lawful remedies. *Secondly*, The presence of alluring objects. *Thirdly*, The instigation of bad examples. *Fourthly*, And the hopes of concealment, being ignorant of their acquaintance: so that their sins, in probability, shall escape the grace of God. This last circumstance is not the least: it hath it prevailed upon! but I hope you will never yield to temptation, whose heart and strength are broken by this consideration, the eye of God upon you. A chaste woman being once foolishly, told him that solicited her, she could never yield to him until he could find a place where God should not see.

Nay, my friends, it should do more than restrain you from the acts of sin; it should powerfully curb the very thoughts and motions of sin in your hearts. That was the use of this truth, Job xxxi. 1. "I have made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid? Doth he know my secret, or why should I think upon a maid? Doth he know my secret, and count all my steps?"

Suppose you should carry your wickedness so close that the earth should know it; yet the Lord sees it, and will punish it in judgment, and your own conscience is privy to it. I say to me, is it not a great comfort to a malefactor, that he is so closely guarded, that none but the judge, and one authentic (whose testimony is as good as a thousand) beheld it? In the case of all secret sinners. But, to press home this necessary truth more particularly, I beseech you to consider

1. God doth not only behold you, but beholds your temptation and abhorrence in your ways of iniquity: It is a sign to him to the heart, Gen. vi. 5, 6. "And the Lord saw the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

to see your sinful hearts and courses. Nothing can be so contrary to the pure and holy nature of God as this is: this made the prophet admire how his patience could endure such a sight, Heb. i. 3. "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look upon iniquity; wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously?" &c. As if he should say, Lord, how canst thou hold thyself affronted by vile creatures, and hold thy hands from avenging it? O the stupendous patience of God!

2. It doth not only grieve him to the heart, but it puts his patience to the greatest trial and exercise in beholding it: therefore he is said "to endure with much long-suffering," Rom. ix. 22. It doth, it were, create a conflict betwixt his patience and justice: he is provoked by your sin, that he expresses it as a difficulty to bear. Amos ii. 13. "I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves:" burdened till the axle-tree of infinite patience is ready to crack under the weight.

Nay, *Thirdly*, He doth not only see your evils, but he registers and records them, in order to a day of reckoning with you for them together, except ye repent; Deut. xxxii. 34. "Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures?" A metaphor taken from the clerk of the assize, who seals up the bag of indictments against the time of trial. You think if you can blind the eyes of men, all is well, you shall hear no more of it: ah! but it is sealed up among God's treasures; i. e. the things he records and reserves for the day of account.

4. God doth not only see you, but he will also one day make you see yourselves and your ways, and that with horror and consternation. You think you shall taste nothing but the sweet and pleasantness of sin; but how are you deceived? The days are coming when that which is now pleasant, shall be turned into wormwood and gall. You will not see the evil of it; and because you see it not, you think God doth not. "These things (saith God) hast thou done, and I kept silence, and thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself; but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes," Psal. l. 21. God sees them now, and he will make you see them too, by opening your eyes in this world graciously, and in that to come judicially.

5. God doth not only see your ways, but he will make all the world see them too: For, "there is nothing hid that shall not be revealed, nor covered, that shall not be made known," Matth. 26. "There is a day when God will make manifest the hidden things."

can hide you from the eye of God. He sees all your sins; he sees them with abhorrence; the sight of them is the exercise of his patience. His sight of them is not a transient one; he sees and records your evils; they are sealed up as treasures: He sees, and will make you see them too with light: he shall set them in order before you: he sees them, and angels and men see them in the great day. O then, let not these things encourage you to sin!

2. *Inference.* What prodigious sinners must they be, who are covert from their sin in darkness, but with an impudent countenance, glory in their shame; who are not ashamed to sin with a bare face, and a whore's forehead? These are sinners of great magnitude. "They declare their sin as Sodom, and as the cities thereof," Isa. iii. 9. It is as natural to man to endeavour to hide his sin, as Adam, and you see from the text, guilty sinners faint when they are discovered; if it were possible, fly to any obscure corner from the observation of God and men; and it is a mercy God hath planted such a sense of shame in the soul of man, to be a bridle to restrain his lusts. But yet there is a generation of monstrous sinners, who are so far unmannered themselves, "That they are not ashamed when they commit abominations, neither can they be ashamed," Gen. vi. 15. If there be any remains of shame left in them, they exercise it upon a wrong object: they are ashamed of that which ought to be to their glory, and glory in that which is their shame. They are impudent to their sin, and blush not to proclaim that which they study to conceal.

Such a vile temper as this shews a man even ripe for damnation; he hath even filled up his measure, and is come to the very point and top of wickedness. There be some men arrived to a high degree of holiness, that all that converse with them judge them ripe for heaven: they speak the dialect, and have the countenance of heaven upon them. Others are come to such a prodigious degree of impiety, that understanding men cannot but conclude them ripe for hell; they speak the very language, and have the very scent of hell upon them. Such are they that open their sin as Sodom, and glory in their shame.

Thus we see some drunkards will glory in their strength, and down wine and strong drink, and can boast of the number of cups: some adulterers can glory in their acts of wickedness, offering themselves to damn their own souls, but labouring to be thought honest and corrupt as many as they can by their filthy tongues.

3. *Inference.* If the eye of God searches every obscure corner of the world, to behold the evil that is committed there, then certainly the eye of God cannot but look into every secret place in the world to see the good that is done there. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good," Prov. xv. 3. "The Lord is good as well as the evil; yea, he beholds with delight the good done in secret."

As some sinners seek corners to act their wickedness in, and cannot satisfy themselves to commit sin in the light, (for, as our Saviour saith, John iii. 20. "He that doth evil hateth the light;") so, on the contrary, a truly godly man seeks corners to pray in, to meditate in, and to examine his own heart in, and thinks these duties of godliness can never be managed with too great a privacy; not that he is in the least ashamed of his duty; no, that is not the reason, but he is afraid of hypocrisy, when duties lie too open, and exposed to the eyes of men. A sinner takes his full liberty to vent his corruption when he can do it in secret; and a saint takes his full liberty to vent and exercise his graces, when no eye but the eye of God sees him. "Thou, when thou prayest (saith our Saviour) enter into thy closet, and shut thy door, and pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father (which seeth in secret) shall reward thee openly." How much better is it, both as to your present comfort and future account, to get into a corner to pray, than to whore and drink. To pour out your souls to God graciously, than to pour out your lusts against God so wickedly? How contrary are the principles of grace and corruption? The study of sinners is to hide their evils from the eyes of men: the study of a saint is to hide his duties from the eyes of men: The sinner would not have the world suspect what he hath been about; nor would the saint have all the world know what he hath been about. The way of an adulterer is as the "way of an eagle in the air, or as a serpent upon a rock;" i. e. a secret way where they leave no prints or tracts behind them. "So is the way of an adulterous woman; she eateth and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness," Prov. xxx. 19, 20. By wiping the mouth is there meant preventing all suspicion; suffering no signs of the action to remain upon them: So, contrarily, a gracious person that hath been with God in secret prayer, or fasting, when his duty is ended, he labours to avoid all ostentations. And therefore you have the caution from Christ, Matth. vi. 17, 18. "But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head, and wash thy face! that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy father which is in secret."

prudent and humble concealment. * "Religion doth open, as we say:" As sinners have their secret pleasures in waters which are sweet to them; so the saints have their lights in God, their hidden *manna*, which no man knoweth of it. And as the eye of God vindictively beholds so it delightfully beholds the other; and so you find it. "O my dove, (saith Christ to the church) that art in the rocks, in the secret places of the stairs: Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance comely." Let this encourage you to sin, let not others find more pleasure in secret lusts, than you find in God and secret duties.

4. *Inference.* Doth the eye of God see all the evil and sin that is committed in all the secret corners of the world? Vindictive then is the patience of God towards the world! Imagine how much wickedness is secretly practised in a town in one day? Or if all the villanies that are perpetrated in a month in one day were known to us, we should admire that God should not make us like Sodom, for judgment and desolation the next day. What then are the innumerable swarms of sinners as the sands upon the sea-shore, from all the parts and corners of the earth! Alas, there is not the ten thousandth part of the number of wickednesses committed in the world, that ever come to the eye or ear; and if it did, we cannot estimate the evil of sin, and we cannot feel with that resentment the burden of it, as he doth. The long-suffering God forbears it with infinite patience. His power was not more discovered in making the world, than in forbearing to destroy it again for the wickedness that is in it. The world stands for the church's sake that is in it. "Not that the Lord of hosts had left us a small remnant, but that if we had been as Sodom, we had been like unto Gomorrah," Isaiah 1:9. We are also an elect remnant to be called and gathered by the Spirit of God out of it in their several generations: and when that number is accomplished, God will set fire to the four quarters of it, and it shall lie in white ashes; till then the long-suffering of God willeth to be tried.

5. *Inference.* If God sees all the secret wickedness committed in every corner of the world; how clear is it to us that judgment is at hand, and that this judgment will be exact.

That there is a judgment to come, is by this manifest. That there is abundance of sin committed in the world, is manifest. It comes to light here, nor never will in this world. It is

as it were, in their foreheads, every one sees them; but others low after, are not discovered till the day of the revelation of secrets of all hearts, and then that which is now done in closets shall be proclaimed as upon house-tops: Though they were never put to shame for their sins, in the places where they committed them, God will shame them before men and angels. This is the day to judge secrets, 1 Cor. iv. 5.

And, as it is certain there will be such a judgment, so it is certain this judgment will be exact; for the judge of all hath seen all. Whatever he charges any man with, hath been acted before his face. Psal. xc. 8. "Thou settest our secret sins in the light of thy countenance." Here can be no mistake, the omnipotent God will judge for what he hath seen; "For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings, for he will not lay upon man more than right, that he should enter into judgment with God." The meaning is, he cannot mistake in his judgment being omniscient and having seen all the ways of man; so that there can be no plea offered by any man for the reverse of his sentence.

O then let us be exact and careful, as well in our secret as in our public actions; for God shall bring every work in judgment, whether every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil, Eccl. xii. ult.

6. *Inference.* Lastly, if the eye of God be in every place upon all our actions; then let those whose condition of life hath sent them out of the eyes and observations of their parents and masters keep the sense of God's eye upon their hearts, as ever they would escape sin and ruin.

It is no small advantage to young unprincipled persons, to be under the discipline of pious and careful governors; but it often falls out, that they are early transplanted into another soil, sent into foreign countries in order to their education or employment; and often are there corrupted and debauched by the evil examples of the places where they reside; they learn another language, or dress in another trade than what their parents or masters designed them for. But if the sense of this great truth might accompany them wherever they are, O what a sovereign antidote might it prove against the deadly poisons of temptations! This alone would be a sufficient preservative. If our children and servants have but the awful sense of God's eye upon them, we may turn them loose into the wide world without fear.

If Providence shall direct this discourse to your hands, my hear-

First, The infecting, catching nature of sin. No plague is more infectious and insinuating than sin is. Many are the various stratagems, and baits, Satan lays to draw you into sin, Or,

Secondly, The proneness that is in your own nature to the offers and temptations that you are tried with; it is no wonder if you escape, as that one that lives in a pest-house remains healthy; or that dry tinder should not catch, where there are sparks fly about, and light upon it. Or,

Thirdly, The absence of all those means by which you have formerly been preserved from sin. You are now without the counsel of God, the family duties, the admonitions, counsels, exhortations, observations of your parents, masters, and friends: All these have been of great use to keep you from sin, and repress the passions of youth. Or, Lastly,

Fourthly, The manifold furtherance or temptations which youth affords; *Childhood and youth are vanity*. Inconsiderateness, injudiciousness, and the want of experience, do all cast you into a very snare. See how the Holy Ghost hath signified this to persons at your age, in Prov. vii. 7.

All these things do greatly endanger you. And if all these together prevail to the vitiating and corrupting of your heart, what a train of sad consequences will follow upon it!

1. The great God will be dishonoured and reproached by you, that God whose distinguishing mercies are now before you, should be admired by you; that caused you to spring up from the soil, and not from idolaters in a land of darkness.

2. Conscience will be wounded and polluted with ungodly thoughts, though, at present, you feel not the remorse and gnawing of it, now you are preparing for it. The sins of youth are commonly the sorrows of old age, Job xiii. 26.

3. The hearts of your friends, if godly, will be grieved and troubled to find their expectations and hopes disappointed. Those prayers for you, and counsels bestowed on you, will be for nothing. If an unequal match by Esau was such a grief to Isaac and Rebecca, what will profaneness and uncleanness be to your parents? Gen. xxvi. 34.

4. The serviceableness and comfort of your whole life, the probability, be destroyed by the corruption of your youth. Your limbs will be withered, and buds nipt, what fruit can be expected to conclude,

ration of this point you have now been reading. For if God shall that truth in your hearts by faith, then,

First, Instead of running with others into the same excess of riot, you will keep yourselves pure and unspotted in an unclean defiled world. You will answer all temptations to sin, as Joseph did, Gen. xxxix. 9. "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

Secondly, Instead of joining with others in sin, you will mourn for the sins of others. You will say with David, Psal. cxx. 5. "Woe is me, that I sojourn in Meshec, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!" Your soul, like Lot's, will be vexed from day to day with the filthy conversations of the wicked, 2 Pet. i. 17, 18.

Thirdly, Instead of returning to your country with a wounded name and conscience, you will return full of inward comfort and peace, and to the joy of all your friends and relations.

Fourthly, To conclude, You will give fair encouragements to the expectations of all that know you, of becoming useful instruments to the glory of God, and benefit of the world in your generation. Therefore beg of God that this truth may be deeply engraven upon your hearts.



THE

SUCCESSFUL SEAMAN.

SERMON IV.

DEUT. viii. 17, 18.

And thou say in thine heart, My power, and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth; but thou shalt remember the Lord thy God; for he it is that giveth thee power to get wealth.

THIS context contains a necessary and very seasonable caution to the Israelites, who were now passing out of the wilderness straits into the rich and fruitful land of Canaan, which abounded with all earthly blessings and comforts. Now, when the Lord was about to give them possession of this good land, he first gives them some wholesome caveats to prevent the abuse of these mercies. He knew how

“derness, wherein were fiery serpents and scorpions, “where there was no water:” here were their dangers. “Who brought thee forth water out of the rock of Calvary?” here were their supplies in these straits. “That he might prove thee to do thee good,” here was the wise and gracious design of God.

But wherein did God humble them by feeding them? Were they not shrewdly humbled (saith Mr. Gurnal, an ingenious author) to be fed with such a dainty diet? God for its cook, and was called angels food for its diet. Not the meanness of the fare, but the manner of having it. God intended to humble them. The food was excellent, but they had it from hand to mouth; so that God kept the key of the board, they stood to his immediate allowance; this was the way. But now the dispensation of Providence was changed; they were going to a land, “where they should be without scarceness,” verse 9. and have their comforts in a natural, stated, and sensible way; and now would therefore,

He not only reminds them of their formere state, but cautions them about their future estate, “Say not in thine heart, My power, or the might of my hand, hath gotten me this wealth.” In this caution we have these two things especially to be observed.

I. The false cause of their prosperity removed.

II. The true and proper cause thereof asserted.

1. The false cause removed: “Not their power, or the might of their hand.” That is said to be gotten by the labour of their hands, gotten by our wisdom as well as labour: head-work, as well as hand-work in the sense of this text. It cannot be that they were a great people, prudent, industrious, and had an abundance of means among them: but yet, though they had all these means of enriching themselves in that fertile soil, God would not mean, allow them to ascribe their success and wealth to their own causes: for alas! what are all these without his blessing?

2. The true and proper cause asserted: “It is the Lord that hath gotten thee power to get wealth;” i. e. All thy care, labour, strength, signify nothing without him; it is not your own blessing, that makes your designs to prosper: and therefore, when you prosper, still acknowledge him as the Author of all.

Doct. *That the prosperity and success of our affairs*

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“The blessing of the Lord it maketh rich.” But these two are really opposed to each other, but the one subordinated to the other. The diligent hand, with God’s blessing upon it, makes rich; neither of them alone, but both con- *Faith must stifle industry, industry blinds faith.* joined. A diligent hand cannot make rich without God’s blessing; and God’s blessing doth not ordinarily make rich without a diligent hand.

And these two are put together in their proper places, 1 Chron. xxii. 16. “Up and be doing, and the Lord be with you.” It is a vain pretence for any man to say, If the Lord be with me, I may sit still, and do nothing; and a wicked one to say, If I am up and doing, I shall prosper whether God be with me or not. The sluggard would fain prosper without diligence, and the atheist hopes to prosper by his diligence alone: but Christians expect their prosperity from God’s blessing, in the way of honest diligence.

It is a common thing for men to benumb their own arms, and make them as dead and useless by leaning too much upon their own strength, it is in a moral as well as a natural way: all the prudence and power in the world avail nothing without God. So saith the Psalmist, Psal. cxxvii. 2. “It is in vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrow, for so he giveth his beloved sleep.”

A man would think, he that rises betimes fares hard, works hard, sits up late, cannot but be a thriving man; and probably he would be so, if God’s blessing did second his diligence and frugality. But the Psalmist intends it of diligence in a separate sense; a diligent hand working alone, and then it is all in vain, and serves only to confirm the common proverb—*Early up and never the nearer.* Labour without God cannot prosper; and labour against God will only destroy itself, but the labourer too.

Now, that this is really so as the doctrine states it, I shall endeavour to make evident.

1. By a general demonstration of the whole matter.
2. By a particular enumeration of the ordinary causes and means of all success, which are all dependent upon the Lord’s blessing.

First, That success in business is not in the power of our hands, but in the hand of Providence to dispose it as he pleases, and to work as he pleases, appears by this, ‘That Providence sometimes blasts the most prudent and well-laid designs of men; and sometimes the mean time succeeds and prospers more weak and improbable ones.’ What is more common in the observation of all ages than this? One man shall fall as in the fire, for very vanity; run to

with less judgment, and spends fewer thoughts about it, success follows it. It shall be cast in upon some, who as they so, considering the weak management of their business, without any rational encouragement to expect it; and fly from others, who industriously pursue it in the prudent choice and diligent use of proper means of attaining it. And this is not only argued and grounded upon our own experience, but confirmed by the example of men; Eccl. ix. 11. "I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; neither victual to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding; neither favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all." If two men run for a prize, reason gives the prize to the swiftest; if two armies join battle, reason gives the victory to the strongest; if men undertake a design to get wealth, reason gives the success to the wisest; yea, but Providence sometimes disposes it quite contrary to the verdict of reason, and the prize is given to the slowest; the victory to the weakest, the estate to the more shallow capacity. These events seem to fall out rather casually than answer the means employed about them. And who that observes this, but it is the hand of God's providence, and not our design that disposes the issues of these things? For why doth God sometimes go out of the ordinary way, and cross his hands, as old Isaac did, laying the right hand upon the younger, and the left upon the elder? I mean, give success to the weak, and disappointment to the strong; but to convince us of this great truth which I here bring in. And because men are so apt to sacrifice to their own pride, and to disown providence, therefore it sometimes makes the case contrary to what we expect: it denies riches to the industrious, that live hard, and end but to get them, and casts them in upon those that are idle, not at all, and indeed are scarcely competent for business. One of the wisest men of his age, was yet still so poor, that he was said, it brought a slur upon justice herself, as if she were unable to maintain her followers. Socrates, one of the prime Grecians, was so exceeding poor, that Apuleius could not but name him "poverty was become an inmate with philosophy*;" when at that time, the empty, shallow, and foolish, shall come upon the industrious, and overtake it without any pains at all, which others pursue by the most rational course all their life, and all to no purpose. As is noted of pope Clement V. *None more rich, none more foolish.* This is the ground of that proverb, *Fortuna favet fatiis.* Fortune favours fools. Though the author of that proverb, in

business: It being much in the attaining of riches, as the apostle saith it is in the obtaining of righteousness: "The Gentiles, who followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, not by works, but by faith; as Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness," Rom. ix. 30, 31. So it is here, for the vindication of the honour of providence, which it would scarcely own, if it did not thus baffle them sometimes: that those that follow the world cannot obtain it; and they attain it that follow it not; that all men may see their good is not in their own hands, and lest man, who is not only a covetous creature, and would grasp all to himself, but as proud as covetous, should ascribe all to himself. But this will further appear,

Secondly, By a particular enumeration of the ordinary causes and means of all success in business, which are all dependent things upon a higher cause.

Now, if we proceed upon a rational account, we shall find the things required to the success of our affairs: and that I may speak to your capacity, I will instance in that affair of merchandizing which you are employed, as the hands that execute what the heads of your merchants contrive; and will shew you, that neither their wisdom in contriving, nor your skill and industry in managing the designs, can prosper without the leave and blessing of Divine Providence. Let us therefore consider what is necessary to the raising of an estate in that way of employment; and you will find, that by a rational and ordinary way, success cannot be expected, unless,

1. The designs and projects be prudently laid, and moulded with much consideration and foresight. An error here is like an error in the first concoction, which is not to be rectified afterwards. "The wisdom of the prudent (saith Solomon) is to understand his way; that is, to understand, and thoroughly to consider, the particular designs and business in which he is to engage. Rashness and inconsiderateness here hath been the ruin of many thousand enterprises. And if a design be never so well laid, yet,

2. No success in business can be rationally expected, except there be an election of proper instruments to manage it. The best laid design in the world may be spoiled by an ill management. If the person employed be either incapable or unfaithful, what but trouble and disappointment can be expected? "He that sendeth a messenger (saith Solomon) by the hands of a fool, cutteth off the legs, and drinketh damage." It is as if a man should send him on his business that had no legs to go; i. e. one that is incompetent for the

“ (Jeroboam) that he was a mighty man of valour, and
 “ industrious, made him ruler over all the charge of
 “ Joseph,” 1 Kings xi. 28. And this was the man th
 kingdom from his son, even ten tribes from the hous
 And yet,

3. Let designs be projected with the greatest pruden
 mitted to the management of the fittest instrument; a
 as to success, without the concurrence of health, strengt
 winds, security from the hands of enemies, and perils o
 If any of these be wanting, the design miscarries, and all
 fail. How often are hopeful and thriving undertakings f
 the failure of any one of these requisites? “ Go to m
 “ say, to-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city,
 “ there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain; where
 “ not what shall be on the morrow: for what is you
 “ even a vapour that appeareth for a little while, and th
 “ away,” Jam. iv. 13, 14. How soon are the purpo
 hearts broken off, and their thoughts perish in one day?
 to send or go to such a place, and there enrich themse
 turn prosperous; but sometimes death, sometimes cap
 times cross winds, dash all their hopes.

4. Proper seasons must be observed, else all success and
 of increase is lost. “ There is (saith Solomon) a seas
 “ thing, and a time to every purpose under the sun,”
 This being taken, gives facility and speedy dispatch to
 and therefore he gives this reason, why man miscarries s
 and is disappointed in his enterprizes because he knows
 Eccl. ix. 11. ‘ He comes (as one saith) when the bird
 is a wise and weighty proverb with the Greeks, ‘ That
 ‘ time in a short opportunity!’ That is, a man hitting
 a business, may do more in a day, than losing it, he m
 do in a year. This is of a special consideration in all h
 and is the very hinge upon which success turns: So
 before, is to pluck apples before they are ripe; and t
 it, is to seek them when they are fallen and perished.

5. Lastly, in getting wealth the leaks of our estates
 ped; else we do but put it into a bag with holes, as t
 phrase is in Hag. i. 9. If a man lose as much one w
 another, there can be no increase. Hence it is, that m
 low and poor all their days: If one design prospers,
 miscarries: or, if all succeed well abroad, yet there i

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Now let us particularly observe what a dependance there is upon Providence in all these things; and then it will be clear that our success is not in our hand, nor success at our beck, but it is the Lord who gives us power to get wealth. For,

As to the moulding and projecting of a design, we may say, both of the prudent merchant and ingenious seaman, what the prophet doth of the husbandman, Isa. xxviii. 10. "It is his God that instructs him to discretion, and teacheth him." There is, indeed, a spirit in man, "But it is the inspiration of the Almighty that gives him understanding," Job xxxii. 8. The faculty is man's, but the light of wisdom, whether natural or spiritual, is God's: and the natural faculty is of itself no more capable of directing us in our affairs, without his teaching, than the dial is to inform us of hours without the sun's shining upon it. And because men are so dull in apprehending and backward in acknowledging it, but will lean to their own understandings, thence it is that prudent designs are so often blasted, and weaker ones succeeded.

And no less doth Providence manifest itself in directing to, and prospering the means and instruments employed in our business: that of the Lord that they prove ingenious, active and faithful servants to us; that your factors abroad prove not malefactors to you; that every design is not ruined by the negligence, ignorance, or treachery of them that manage it. If God qualify men to be fit instruments to serve you, and then providentially direct you to them, his hand is thankfully to be owned in both. It was no small mercy to Abraham that he had so discreet, pious, and faithful a servant to manage his weightiest affairs so prudently and prosperously for him. Laban, Pharaoh, and Jethro, never so prospered, as when Jacob, Joseph, and Moses, had the charge of their business. Laban ingenuously acknowledged, "That he had learned by experience that the Lord had blessed him for Jacob's sake," Gen. xxx. 27. A heathen you see is more ingenuous in owning the mercy of God to him in this case than many professed Christians are, who sacrifice all to their covetous net, and burn incense to their drag, i. e. idolize the means and instruments of their prosperity, and see nothing of God in it.

And then as to the preservation of those that go down into the sea to do our business in the great waters; who can but acknowledge this to be the peculiar work of God? Doth not daily experience shew how often poor seamen are cut off in the prosecution of our designs, sometimes by sickness, sometimes by storms, and sometimes by enemies, to whom they become a prey? If they escape all these

knowledge; and those that do not acknowledge pro-
disoblige it.

Lastly, Who is it that stops the leaks in your estates, wasting of your substance, and secures to you what you possess not the Lord? How many fair estates moulder away into nothing! Certainly, as there is a secret blessing which lies, so that themselves can scarce give any account how they are provided for, so there is a secret blast and consumption which brings poverty upon them like an armed man. This is the true sense of that scripture, Hag. i. 6. "Ye have sown much, but ye bring in little. Ye eat, but ye have not enough: ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink: ye clothe you, but are not warmed. Ye build, but ye dwell in a house which is a bag of holes. For as the wind bloweth, and knoweth not what it doeth, and as the seed is scattered, and knoweth not whither it is scattered, so shall it be with you, because ye have despised my word, saith the Lord God." "that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag which hath holes, or, as in the Hebrew, a *bag pierced, or bored through*, which in at one end, goes out at another, and so all labour is lost, and stays with them to do them good. So that it is an understanding that *prosperity* and *success* are not to be ascribed to men, but to the blessing of God upon our lawful endeavours.

1. *Inference*. And if so, how are they justly reprobable who depend upon means in the neglect of providence; that thank God, nor acknowledge him in any of their ways? This is a great evil, and highly provoking to the Lord; it is the fruit and effect of the natural Atheism of the hearts of men. How can men of success and prosperity, when second causes lie before them upon them? And, on the contrary, how dejected and hopeless do they seem to lie cross to their hopes? O how few consider and believe that great truth, Eccl. ix. 1. "That the righteous shall be saved, and their works are in the hand of God!" That the hand of God, noteth both their subjection to his power and his directive providence. Whether your works be in your hand, or out of your hand, they always are in God's hand to prosper or frustrate them at his pleasure.

Foolish man decreeth events without the leave of Providence. If he were absolute lord of his own actions, and their success depended upon himself, you may then speak of success, when you have asked God for it. Job xxii. 28. "Acquaint thyself with God, then shalt thou prosper, and thy thing, and it shall be established." But your confidence in your own means, whilst God is neglected, will surely be followed by disappointment or a curse. For what is this but to labour against God, yea, to labour against God? For so do all they that set the glory of God to the creature: that set the instrumental

hand, that hath gotten you this wealth; why do you glory in it, if it were the effect and fruit of your own prudence and industry? How soon do the spirits of men rise with their estates? How haughtily do they look? How proudly do they speak? What a sensible change of temper doth this small change of condition work? it is an exceeding hard thing to keep down the heart when providence exalts a man's estate. *Magnæ felicitatis est, a felicitate non vinci*, says

Austin, It is a great felicity not to be overcome by felicity. That man is surely rich in grace, whose graces suffer no eclipse by his riches. It is as hard to be prosperous and humble, as to be afflicted and cheerful. But to keep down thy heart in times of success and prosperity, I offer thee, reader, a few humbling considerations about this matter.

1. And the first is this: Though providence do succeed and prosper thy earthly designs, yet this is no argument at all of the love of God to thy soul: thou mayest be the object of his hatred and wrath for all this. No man knows either love or hatred by all that is before him, Eccl. ix. 1. How weak an evidence for heaven must that be, which millions now in hell have had in a greater measure than you have? The least drachm of grace is a better pledge of happiness, than the greatest sum of gold and silver that ever lay in any man's treasure. Externals distinguish not internals? you cannot so much as guess what a man's spiritual estate is, by the view of his temporal. Iphigeneia was a very great man, the head of a princely family, but, for that, excluded from the covenant, and all its spiritual blessings, Gen. xvii. 20, 21. He that reads the lxxiii. Psalm, and the xxi. of Job, will plainly see how wretched a case that man is in, who hath no better evidence for the love of God than this amounts to.

2. Be not proud of outward prosperity and success; for providences are very changeable in these things; yea, it daily rings and changes all the world over. Many a greater estate than yours, may be every way as well, yea, far better secured to the eye of reason, but he scattered in a moment. It is the saying of a philosopher, speaking of the estates of merchants and seamen, *Non amo felicitatem e fune pendentem*; I like not that happiness that hangs upon ropes. I need not here cite *histories*, to confirm this truth: there is none of you that can abundantly confirm it to yourselves, if you will but recollect the instances and examples which have fallen within your time and remembrance. It is a poor happiness that may leave a man more miserable to-morrow, than he that never arrived to what you have, can be.

3. Pride not yourselves in your success; for as providences are very changeable, so the change seems very nigh to you, when your heart

cious things; and at that time came the prophet Isaiah a sad message from the Lord, that all these treasures had gloried, must be carried to Babylon, Isa. xxxix. comfortably to enjoy the good of providence, provoke vain ostentations. It is an ingenious note, even of an

*Tu quoque fac timeas, et quæ tibi læta videntur,
Dum loqueris, fieri tristia posse, puta.* Ov

Exercise fear in prosperity, and think with thyself, who is most affected with it, that whilst the boast is in thy mouth may alter, and thy happiness be turned into sorrow. The proud boast was in the mouth of Nebuchadnezzar, the heaven told him, "His kingdom was departed from him," 30, 31. Pride shews, that prosperity, which feeds it, is at a vertical point.

3. *Inference.* If success in business be from the Lord, the true way to prosperity is to commend our affairs to prayer. He takes the true way to thrive, that engages himself upon his endeavours. "Commit thy way unto the Lord, and he shall bring it to pass," Psal. xxxvii. "also in him, and he shall bring it to pass," Psal. xxxvii. a vile thing for any man to grudge that time that is spent as so much time lost in his business. But having pressed this before, I shall add no more here.

4. *Inference.* Doth all success and prosperity depend upon God? Then let it be faithfully employed to God. "If it be of him, and through him," then there is all the blessing in the world it should "be to him," Rom. xi. 36. You do not take of his own, as David speaks; "All this store cometh of the Lord, and is thine own," 1 Chron. xxix. 16. He never increases your estates for the gratifying of your lusts, but to give you an opportunity thereby of honouring him in the use of them. O how God hath prospered your estates abroad, and you return home, how you have an opportunity of honouring God by dedicating your sense of his goodness to you, by relieving the poor with a liberal and cheerful charity; by encouraging the poor, making them partakers of your good things, who labour for your souls, and dispense better things to you than you can return. I would not here be mis-interpreted, as though I pleaded my interest, under a pretence of pleading God's; no! God is well satisfied with a capacity of doing any good, how little he receives; nor can many of you reap the fruit of my labours.

any great matter, 1 Cor. ix. 11. but the discharge of a plain and necessary duty.

5. *Inference.* Let not your hearts be satisfied with all the success and increase of the world, except your souls thrive as well as your bodies, and your eternal concerns prosper as well as your temporal. It was a pious wish of St. John for Gaius his host, "That he might prosper, and be in health, even as his soul prospered," 3 Ep. John, ver. 2. But it were to be wished, that your souls did prosper as your bodies and estates do. It is a poor comfort to have an increasing estate, and a dead and declining soul. When a considerable present was sent to Luther, he earnestly protested, "I should not put him off with these things. O friends! I beseech you take not up in these enjoyments!"

6. *Inference.* Lastly, If God be the author of all your success, how prodigious an evil is it to make your prosperity an instrument of dishonouring him that gave it; to abuse the estates provided for you, to rioting and drunkenness? Do you thus requite the Lord! is this the thanks you give him for all his care over you and kindness to you! you would never be able to bear that from another, which God bears from you. If God do you good, O do not return him evil for it!



THE

DISAPPOINTED SEAMAN.



SERMON V.

LUKE v. 5.

Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing.

THESE words are the reply made by Peter unto Christ, who in the former verse, had commanded him to "launch out into the deep, and let down the nets for a draught." Peter is discouraged as to any farther attempt at that time, having already taken so much pains to so little purpose: "We have (saith he) toiled all the night,

bourers take their rest, in watching, but in toiling. *κοπιῶσάντες* comes from a verb that signifies *wasting, ing, labour*. Here was great diligence, even to the wasting of their spirits: "They toiled, and that all the

2. The unsuccessfulness and fruitlessness of their *caught nothing*. Though their design was honest, and great, yet it succeeded not according to their desire and it proved but lost labour and pains to no purpose. He will be,

Doct. *That God sometimes frustrates and blasts ingent labours of men, in their just and lawful calling.*

What employment more honest, or laborious, than husbandman, who eats his bread in the sweat of his brow? He sows all that spending toil and labour, by an expectation of the season? And yet sometimes it so falls out, that after many labours and hopes, he reaps nothing but shame and disappointment. Joel i. 11. "Be astonished, O ye husbandmen: How the wheat is withered, and the barley is green, because the dressers, for the wheat, and for the barley, because the field is perished."

The employment of the mariner is as lawful as it is what he gets, is gotten with imminent hazard of life as well as watchings and labours; and yet it so falls out, that they labour but for the wind, and spend their strength in vanity: God cuts off their expectations and lives together is a time when they return rich and prosperous, and they either return empty, or return no more. So it was that renowned mart, and famous emporium; the flourish of whose trade you have in Ezek. xxvii. 33, 34. "Went forth out of the seas, thou filledst many people with thy merchandise; thou enrichedst the kings of the earth with the multitude of thy merchandise, and of thy merchandise." Here was their prosperity but will this day always last? Shall the sun of their prosperity set? No; the change was at hand; for in the next verse it alters. "In the day when thou shalt be broken by the depths of the waters, thy merchandise, and all thy treasure, the midst of thee, shall fall."

Now if we search into the grounds and reasons of disappointments by the hand of providence, we shall find them to a threefold cause and reason.

1. The sovereign pleasure of God so disposes it.

2. The good of the people of God requires it.

depress others; to set some above, and others below: all must be rich and great, but some must be poor and low, and to these providences are suited: On some it smiles, on others it frowns. 1 Sam. ii. 7. "The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich; he bringeth low, and lifteth up." And certainly there is much of Divine wisdom shining forth in this ordination and disposition of persons and their conditions. If providence had alike prospered every man's signs, and set them upon a level, there had been no occasion to exercise the rich man's charity, or the poor man's patience. Nay, without frequent disappointments, providence itself would scarcely be owned in successes, nor these successes be half so sweet to them to receive them, as now they are. The very beauty of providence consists much in these various and contrary effects: So that with respect to the infinite Wisdom which governs the world, it is necessary some should be crossed, and others prosper in their designs.

Secondly, And if we consider the gracious ends and designs of God towards his own people, it appears needful that all of them, in some things, and many of them in most things (relating to their outward condition in this world) should be frustrated in their expectations and contrivances. For if all things here should succeed according to their wish, and a constant tide of prosperity should attend them,

1. How soon would sensuality and earthliness invade their hearts and affections? Much prosperity, like the pouring in of much wine, intoxicates, and overcomes our weak heads and hearts *. Earthly as well as heavenly objects, have a transforming efficacy in the heart: there cannot but be much danger in those earthly things that gratify or promise us much delight. Can a Christian keep his heart as long from the smiling, as from the frowning world? We little think how deeply it insinuates into our affections in the day of prosperity; but when adversity comes, then we find it.

2. How soon would it estrange them from their God, and interrupt their communion with him? He is certainly a very mortified and heavenly Christian, whose walk with God suffers no interruption by the multitude of earthly affairs, especially when they are prosperous. When Israel was settled in the midst of the riches and delights of Canaan, then say they, (even to their Benefactor, the Author of all their prosperity) "We are lords, we will come no more to thee." Jer. ii. 31. Or, if it do not wholly interrupt their communion, it secretly destroys and wastes the vigour, life, and sweetness of it. That Divine Wisdom sees it necessary to cross and disappoint them in the world, to prevent the mischievous influences that prosper-

prosperity should follow our affairs and designs here? notwithstanding all the cares, fears, sorrows, crosses, w appointments we meet with from year to year, and from yet we are apt to hug the world in our bosoms. As b we court it, admire it, and zealously prosecute it. W and are loth to leave it, though we have little rest or c What could we do then, if it should answer our exp desires? If we grasp with pleasure a thorn that pierces us; what would we do if it were a rose that had not light and pleasure in it?

Thirdly, And as disappointments fall out as the effects pleasure, and are ordered as preventive means of such mi prosperity would occasion to the people of God; so i righteous retribution and punishment of the many evils t mitted in our trading and dealings with men. It is a l have much business pass through our hands, and no iniqu them and defile them. If God be provoked against u quities, wonder not that things go cross to our desires and may suffer some men to prosper in their wickedness, a miscarry in their just and righteous enterprizes; but c find that crying sins are remarkably punished, sooner c visible judgments. So that if others do not, yet we o observe the relation that such a judgment bears to such

And, from among many, I will here select these fol which have destroyed the estates and hopes of many.

(1.) Irrreligious and atheistical neglect and contempt his worship, especially in those that have been enlig made profession of religion. This was the sin which l blasting judgment upon the estates and labours of the prophet Haggai tells them, chap. i. ver. 2, 4, 6, 9. "They neglected the house of God," i. e. were careless less of his worship, and, in the mean time, were wholly their own houses and interests, as he tells them in ver. what was the issue of this? Why, ruin to all their ear and designs. So he tells them, ver. 6, 9. "Ye have "and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; y "ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but t "warm; and he that earneth wages, doth it to put it int "holes. Ye looked for much, and lo, it came to little "ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why, saith "hosts? Because of mine house that is waste; and y

of God hath used a very lively similitude to represent to us the mischievous effects of this sin upon all human diligence and industry. Jer. xvii. 11. "As the partridge sitteth upon eggs, and hatcheth the eggs, and doth not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool."

Unjust gain, how long soever men sit brooding upon it, shall after all their sedulity and expectation, turn to no other account than a fowl's sitting upon a nest of addle-eggs uses to do: if she sit till she have pined away herself to death, nothing is produced.

You think you consult the interest of your families herein, but the Lord tells you, "That you consult shame to your houses," Hab. 10. This is not the way to *feather*, but to *fire* your nest. A quiet conscience is infinitely better than a full purse; one dish of wholesome, though coarser food, is better than an hundred delicate, but poisoned dishes. If a man have eaten the best food in the world, and afterwards sips but a little poison, he loseth not only the benefit and comfort of that which was good, but his life or health to boot. You may be, you have gotten much honestly; what pity is it all this good should be destroyed for the sake of a little gotten dishonestly! This is the reason why some men cannot prosper.

(3.) Oppression is a blasting sin to some men's estates and employments. It is a crying sin in the ears of the Lord, and ordinarily intitles a visible curse upon men's estates; this, like a moth will suddenly fret and consume the greatest estate. Jam. v. 2, 4. "Your riches are corrupted, and your garments moth-eaten;" i. e. The secret curse of God wastes and destroys what you get. And what was the cause? He tells us, ver. 4. "Behold the hire of the labourers that have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped, are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth."

The oppression of poor labourers doth more mischief to the oppressors, than it doth to them that are oppressed. It is noted by * upon this scripture, that it is twice repeated in this text, "Which have reaped your fields;" and then again, "The cry of them which have reaped:" and the reason is, because it is their life, and so an act of the greatest unmercifulness; and besides, they are disappointed of the solace of their labours. Deut. xxiv. 14, 15. "He hath set his heart upon it;" i. e. he comforts himself in the toils and labours of the day, by reckoning upon his wages at the end of the day.

I wish those that are owners and employers of poor seamen, might seasonably consider this evil: what a woe is denounced upon

not only threatened to be a swift witness against those that hireling in his wages, but hath strictly forbidden the their wages. The Jews were commanded to make pay the sun-set*, Deut. xxiv. 14, 15. Lev. xix. 30. Be just in your dealings and contracts, or never expect the righteous smile upon your undertakings.

(4.) Falsehood and lying is a blasting sin to our empire, a sin which tends to destroy all converse, and disband all order. And though by falsehood men may get some present advantage, yet hear what the Holy Ghost saith of riches gotten this way: "getting of riches by a lying tongue, is a vanity tossed as chaff of them that seek death," Prov. xxi. 6. Some trade for as much as in wares; yea, they trade off their wares with falsehood; this proves a gainful trade (as some men count gain) for a while; but, in reality, it is the most unprofitable trade that a man can drive. For it is but *the tossing of a vanity to and fro*: carrying labour in vain, it profits nothing in the end, and leaves nothing, so it hurts much: they seek profit intentionally, but eventually; i. e. it will bring destruction and ruin, not only to their trades, but our souls. The God of truth will not long prosper a way of lying; one penny gotten by a laborious hand is worth more than great treasures gotten by a lying tongue: take heed ye men of the world, death in seeking an estate this way. It is a sin destructive to trade, for there is no trade where there is no trust, nor no trust where there is no truth; and yet this cursed trade of lying creeps in upon us as if there were no living (as one speaks) without lying. It is better for you to be *losers* than *liars*. He sells a dear price for a deed that sells his conscience with his commodity.

(5.) Perjury, or false swearing, is a blasting sin. The Lord will prosper that lies under the guilt thereof. It is said, Mal. iii. 5. "God will be a swift witness against the false swearer, and he shall not be long before God by one remarkable stroke of judgment, another witness against so great and horrid an evil. Zech. v. 4. the curse, yea, the roll of curses, "shall consume the house of the false swearer, and shall remain in the house, and shall consume it, with the timber thereof, and the stones thereof." This is a sin that hath laid many houses in ruins, great and fair, without inhabitant. The ruins of many once flourishing, and great men are at this day left to be monuments of God's righteous judgments, and dreadful warnings to posterity.

labours of men in their lawful callings? Then this teacheth you patience and submission under your crosses and disappointments; for it is the Lord that orders it to be so. Events are in his hand, and it is a sin of great aggravation to fret and murmur at them when they run out cross to your desires and hopes. "Behold, is it not of the Lord that the people should labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity?" Hab. ii. 13.

To labour in the very fire, notes intense labour, such as exhausts the very spirits of men whilst they are sweltering and toiling at it, and yet all is to no purpose, they labour but for vanity: and where is it that such vigorous endeavours are blasted, and miscarry? Is it not of the Lord? And if it be of the Lord, why do we fret and quarrel at his disposals? Indeed, many dare not openly and directly charge God, but seek to cover their discontent at providence, by a groundless quarrel with the instruments, who, it may be, are chargeable with nothing; but that after they have done all they could, in the usual proper means, they did not also secure the event. It is true, the decree of providence doth not excuse the negligence of instruments; and, in many cases, these may be justly reprov'd, when providence is duly honoured and submitted to: But when men groundlessly quarrel with instruments, because they are crossed in their expectations, the quarrel is commenced against God himself: and our discontents with men are but a covert for our discontents with God.

Now this is a sore evil, a sin of great and dreadful aggravation. 'To be given over (saith a grave * author) to a contradicting spirit, to dispute against any part of the will of God, is one of the greatest plagues that a man can be given up to.' "Who art thou that thou shouldst pliest against God?" Rom. ix. 20. It may be thou hast lost thy estate, thy friends fail, thy hopes are fallen; God hath blown up all the projects that thy heart did fancy to itself. Possibly in one day the designs, labours, and hopes of many years are destroyed: Whether it be so, yet repine not against the Lord. Consider, he is the Sovereign, and only Lord, who may do whatever he pleaseth to do without giving thee any account of his matters. Who can say to him, What dost thou? Beside, if thou be one that God delights in, even these disappointments are to be numbered with thy best mercies. These things are permitted to perish, that thou mayest not perish forever; and it should trouble thee no more than when thy life is preserved by casting out the wares and goods of the ship. It is better that these perish than that thou shouldst perish; but if thou be guilty of that mingled sin (especially such as were before mentioned) with

all your success, and then fret against God, when you see
O how unreasonable is this !

But because disappointments fall out so frequently, and
to bring our hearts to a quiet submission to the will of
them, I will not dismiss this point until I have offered y
per and weighty considerations to work your hearts int
meek submission to the will of God ; and I shall accou
mercy if they may prevail.

Consideration 1. And, in the first place, if thou be on
God, consider, that disappointments in earthly things fi
God's hatred upon thee. He may love thee, and yet cro
ix. 1, 2. " No man knows either love or hatred by all th
" are before him. All things come alike to all ; there
" to the righteous, and to the wicked." Yea, we often
and prosperity following the wicked, whilst the rod of
the tabernacles of the righteous. " These are the ungod
" per in the world, (saith the Psalmist) whilst in the r
" was plagued all the day long, and chastened every me
lxxiii. 12, 14. Well then, if you have no other grou
you cannot infer the want of love, from the want of
man may be prospered in wrath, and crossed in mercy

Consideration 2. And what though your projects, ho
pectations of enlarging your estates fail ; yet you may
pily and comfortably in the condition you are, (if Go
heart suitable to it) as if you had enjoyed all that su
fancied and desired.

It is not the increase of an estate, but the blessing of
competency, that makes our condition comfortable to
estate enlarges, so doth the heart. The prophet Haba
ing of the Chaldean prince, Hab. ii. 6. saith, " He
" home, he enlarges his desire as hell, and is as death
" be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and
" him all people." And this is the nature of every m
enlarge its desire and the greatest enlargements of pro
the heart is projecting for some further comfort and co
new acquisition ; when, indeed a man is as near it in a
tion as in the highest exaltation.

It is storied of Pyrrhus*, king of Epirus, that havin
dominions by the conquest of Macedonia, he thirsted
and demanding the advice of Cineas, his great counsellor
king what he meant to do when he had conquered Italy

said Cineas: When you have Afric, and all in it, what will you then? Why then, said the king, thou and I will be merry, and make good cheer. Cineas replied, Sir, if this be the end you are at, what need you venture your kingdom, person, and honour, to purchase what you have already? Surely Epirus and Macedonia are sufficient to make you and me merry: and had you all the world, you could not be more merry than you may now be.

Reader, I advise thee, under all disappointments of thy expectations, to bless God for any comfortable enjoyment thou hast. God give thee a smaller estate, and a contented heart, it is as well as yea, better than if thou hadst enjoyed thy desire. The bee makes a sweeter meal upon two or three flowers, than the ox that hath many mountains to graze upon.

Consideration 3. And what if by these disappointments, God is carrying on the great design of his eternal love upon thy soul? There may be the design of these providences; and if so, sure there is a cause for thy despondencies. There is a double aim of these providences; sometimes they are sent to awaken and rouse the dull and decayed habits of grace, which under prosperous providences fall asleep by the intermission of acts, and remission of wonted vigour and activity: And should the Lord permit things to run on at this rate, what a deplorable case would this grow to? 'Let a man live (saith * on * but two or three years without affliction, and he is almost good for nothing; he cannot pray, nor meditate, nor keep his heart fixed upon spiritual things: But let God smite him in his health, children, or estate; now he can find his tongue and affections again; now he awakes and falls to his duty in earnest; now God hath twice as much honour from him as he had before. Now, saith God, let amendment pleaseth me; this rod was well bestowed: I have de- appointed him to his great benefit and advantage. And thus God chides himself friends with his people again.'

And sometimes they prove the blessed occasions to work grace. "they be bound in fetters, and holden in cords of affliction, then he sheweth them their works, and their transgression that they have exceeded: He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity," Job xxxvi. 8, 9, 10.

And if this be the fruit of it, you will bless God through eternity for these happy disappointments. Then these things perished, then thy soul might not perish.

Consideration 4. Be patient under disappointments; for if you meekly submit, and quietly wait upon God, he can quickly re- pay

THE DISAPPOINTED SEAMAN.

And when your inordinate hopes are crossed, as it is very probable they will be, how will your sorrows be aggravated in proportion to them? Those things that seemed to promise us most comfort, are things that give us most sorrow. Strong affections make strong afflictions. Our sorrows usually rise from what was our hope, and comforts from that which was the least regarded.

Inference 3. If it be so, then labour to make sure of things eternal lest you be eternally disappointed there also. O what a sad case that man in, whose expectations fail from both worlds! If your hopes from this world fail, yet you may bear it comfortably, if you fail not in your better hopes; but if these fail too, you are of men the most miserable. You know by experience how sad it is to have your hopes cut off in these smaller concerns; to go forth with expectation of a profitable voyage, and to return in a worse case than you went out: it may be you thought to get an estate, but the issue is to lose that little you had. You thought to go to such a place and there meet with a good market, and possibly yourselves may be carried as slaves, to be sold in the same market. These disappointments are very sad and cutting things, but nothing to an eternal disappointment in your great concern.

For a man to hope he is in Christ, and in a pardoned state, and at last find himself deceived, and that all the sins of his nature, heart and practice, lie upon him: to hope for admission into heaven, when he is turned out of this world by death, and find the door shut against him; to cry with those poor disappointed wretches, Mat. xxv. "Lord, Lord, open to us;" and receive such an unexpected return from Christ as they did, "Depart from me, I know you not:" How intolerable is such a defeat of hope as this! O! who can think of it without horror!

The things about which your expectations are frustrated in this world, are small things; you may be happy in the want of them; but the frustration of your hopes from the world to come, is in things of infinite weight. These disappointments are but for a little while; but this will be for ever. O therefore be provoked, even by these things to a diligent and seasonable prevention of a far greater misery.

Since these things cannot be secured, labour to secure those things that may. O that you were but as full of thoughts, cares and fears for heaven as you are for the world! you have spent many thousands of thoughts about these things to no purpose. All your thoughts about them are come to nothing; but had they been spent for your souls to what a comfortable account would they now have turned

Inference 4. Then as you would not have the works of your hands blasted, beware of those sins that provoke upon them. Think not that injustice, oppression, deceit should ever profit you. God hath cursed all the ways of them that cannot prosper in them. Above all, beware of atheism and of God will not own them that disown him, and slight him. Doubt your profanation of the Lord's day, by drunkenness and worldly employments, is not the least cause of the calamities and losses that have befallen you: the first day of the week, the first-fruits of the Jews' *harvests*, should sanctify the

And let none pretend that multiplicity of business will excuse them time and disposition for sabbath-work. If you will attend the Lord's service, he can quickly give you a wisdom to make you keep more resting days from your labours than you are willing to do. The Lord would not excuse the Israelites in their busiest seasons, the times of earing and harvest, or the building of the tabernacle; but all must give way to him. And I am sure the promise of blessing and success is conditional upon conscientious observation of it: Isa. lviii. 13, 14. "away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a Delight, the holy day, Honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own will, nor finding thine own pleasures, nor speaking thine own words." "Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord:" There shall be a recompence to the soul. "And he shall cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth:" There is a reward to the body. God will make it profitable to all things.



THE

SEAMAN'S RETURN.

SERMON VI.

DEUT. xxxiii. 19.

They shall call the people unto the mountain, there shall they offer sacrifices of righteousness: For they shall suck of the breasts of the Lord.

blessing them, so doth Moses from his people; only with this difference, Moses as God's mouth pronounced, but the great God heaven and earth alone could confer the blessing. Moses blessed them authoritatively, but could not bless them potestatively, as Christ did. Now these words contain the blessing of the tribe of Zebulun which was the tribe of seamen. And in them we shall consider these two parts, viz.

1. Their privilege.

2. Their duty.

First, Their privilege, "That they should suck of the abundance of the seas, and of the treasures hid in the sand." To suck abundance of the sea is a* metonymical expression, signifying as much as to be enriched and stored with the wares and merchandise imported by sea to them. Geographers attribute to the sea, arms and bosoms and the scripture breasts. The sea, like an indulgent mother, embraces those that live upon it in her bosom, and with full flow of breasts nourisheth them, and feeds them as a mother doth the infant that sucks and depends for its livelihood upon her breasts.

And these breasts do not only afford those that hang upon them the necessities of life, bread, raiment, &c. but the riches, ornaments, and delights of life also. "The treasures hid in the sand," † as gold, coral, ambergrease, and such like precious and rich treasures which the sea yields. This was the blessing and privilege of the tribe of Zebulun whose cities and villages were commodiously situated upon the sea shore for merchandise and traffic: as you may see Josh. xix. 11.

Secondly, Their duty to which these mercies and privileges obligeth them: "They shall call the people to the mountain, there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness." By the *mountain*, we are here to understand the *temple*, which Moses, by the spirit of prophecy foresaw to be upon mount Sion, and mount Moriah; which two were as the shoulders that supported it, ver. 12. Here was the worship of God; the sacrifices were here offered up to him. And hither Zebulun, in the sense of God's mercies to them, should call the people i. e. say some, their own people, their families and neighbours; or others, the strangers that were among them for traffic; saying, Isa. ii. 3. "Come, let us go up to the house of the Lord, to the mountain of the God of Jacob." And here they shall offer *sacrifices of righteousness*. By which we are to understand the thank-offerings for the mercies they had received of the Lord. The Jews had not only expiatory sacrifices to procure the pardon of sins committed, but eucharistical sacrifices, or thank-offerings, to test

"that the calves of our lips, the sacrifice of praise," and of them, Heb. xiii. 15.

So then the sum of all this is, that when they return or had received the blessings thereof from the hand of God, they should repair to the place of his worship, and there acknowledge and praise the God of their mercies. So that the whole view explained, casts itself into this doctrinal observation.

Doct. *That it is the special duty of seamen, when they return to their habitations in peace, thankfully to acknowledge and bless his name, for all the preservations and mercies they have received from his hand.*

These are mercies indeed which are obtained from God, and returned to him again by praise. When we have received mercies, God expects his praises: After the Psalmist has described the hazards and fears of seamen upon the stormy ocean, and the goodness of God in bringing them to their desired haven, Psalm cxv. presently calls upon them for this duty, ver. 31. "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderous works which he hath done for the children of men!"

O that men would! why, how is it imaginable they would not? He hath the heart of a beast, not of a man, that would not say the heart of a beast? Give me that word again. There is gratitude, even in beasts, to their benefactors. "The ass acknowledgeth his owner, and the ass his master's crib," Isa. i. 3.

Now the method into which I will cast the discourse is this. *First*, To open the nature of the duty, and to shew that it is to praise God for his mercies.

Secondly, To give you the grounds and reasons of the duty. God expects it, and you ought to give it to him. And

Thirdly, To apply it in the several uses it is improved in.

1. The nature of the duty needs opening; for few understand it. Alas! it is another manner of thing than a custom which we are told *God be thanked*. Now, if we search into the nature of the duty, we shall find that whoever undertakes this angelic work

First, Be a heedful observer of the mercies he receives. It is fundamental to the duty. Where no observations of mercies have been made, no praises for them can be returned. God is not honoured by his unobserved mercies. When David had observed the providences of God to the several degrees and orders of his various administrations, and called upon them distinctly

looked at the next cause. Thus it is with many, they think upon their own mercies: others can observe them, but they cannot; they can quickly observe what troubles befall them, but take no notice of their own mercies. Such men can never be thankful.

Secondly, The thankful man must not only *observe* what mercies he hath, and from whom they come; but must particularly consider them in their natures, degrees, seasons, and manner of conveyance; then how much of God's glory, and our comfort lost for want of this. "The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein," Psal. cxi. 2. And indeed, there is no enjoyment in all the world, that yields more pleasure to a gracious soul than the anatomizing of providence doth. How sweet is it to observe the mutual respects, coincidences, and introductive occasions of our mercies; every minute circumstance hath its weight and value here. He hath little pleasure in his meat, that swallows it without chewing.

Thirdly, The thankful person must duly estimate and value his mercies. It is impossible that man can be thankful for mercies he little esteems. Israel could not praise God for that angels' food which he fed them, whilst they despised it in saying, There is nothing but this *manna*.

And surely it shews the great corruption of our nature, that the things which should raise the value of mercies with us, cause us more to slight them: yet thus it falls out. The commonness, or continuance of mercies with us, which should endear them to us, and every day increase our obligation to God, causes them to seem but cheap and small things. And therefore doth God so often threaten them, yea, and remove them, that their worth and excellency may thereby be acknowledged.

Fourthly, The thankful person must faithfully record his mercies, else God cannot have his due praise for them. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits," Psal. ciii. 2. Forgotten mercies bear no fruit: a bad memory in this case, makes a barren heart and life.

I confess the mercies of God are such a multitude, that a memory of brass cannot retain them. "I will come before thee in the multitude of thy mercies," saith David, Psal. v. 7. They are called "showers of blessings, Ezek. xxxiv. 26. And as impossible distinctly to recount all our mercies, as to number the drops of rain that fall in a shower. Nevertheless, it hath been the pious care and endeavour of the people of God, to preserve and perpetuate his

her, Beer-lahai-roi, the well of him that liveth and loveth me, Gen. xvi. 13, 14.

They have stamped the mercies upon the days in which we received them. Thus the Jews called those days in which God gave their deliverance, *Purim*, after the name *Pur*, signifying a man had cast for their lives; Esther ix. 26. Yea, they stamped their mercies upon their children, 1 Sam. i. 20. Their souls have striven to recognize their mercies, that God should lose the praise, nor themselves the comfort of them.

Fifthly, The thankful person must be suitably affected with the mercies he receives. It is not a *speculative*, but an *affectionate* remembrance that becomes us: then God hath his glory, when his mercies melts our hearts into holy joy, love, and gratitude. Thus David sits down before the Lord like a man astonished at his goodness to him; 2 Sam. vii. 20. "And what can David say for thee, O Lord, knowest thy servant." The mercies that God made the saints' hearts leap for joy within them: "Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy works: "will I triumph in the works of thy hands." Mercies, deliverances are not deliverances to us, if we that receive them are not glad of them.

Sixthly, The thankful person must order his conversation according to the engagements that his mercies have put him under. We have said all, it is the life of the thankful, that is the life of thankfulness. Obedience and service are the only returns of gratitude. "He that offereth praise glorifieth God: "him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I shew mercy: "of God," Psal. l. 23. Set down this for an everlasting rule. That God was never praised and honoured by an angel, but God took it ill from Hezekiah, "That he rendered no thanks: "cording to the benefit done unto him," 2 Chron. xx. 12. That is truly thankful will say as David, Ps. cxvi. 12. "I render to the Lord for all his benefits?" We then must be diligent with his mercies when we employ them to right ends: we must thankfully take our own share of comfort from them, receive them with thanksgiving, as from the hand of a father. Matthew tells of a young man, who, lying upon his sick-bed, was brought meat; but as soon as it was brought him, he trembled dreadfully at the sight of it, and so continued till he was taken away; and before his death acknowledged God's justice in his health he ordinarily received his meat without thanksgiving.

Use all God's mercies with thankfulness: God

feeding the hungry, especially such as are godly. This is a due improvement of your estates; thus you may make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness. Ah, how little do we consider what praise, what glory we may occasion this way, from others, the name of God! It is storied of * Dionysius the Syracusan *tyrant* that when he saw what heaps of gold and silver his son hoarded in his closet, he asked him what he meant to let it lie there, and not to make friends with it, to get the kingdom after his death? O son (said he) thou hast not a spirit capable of a kingdom. Thus honour the Lord with your substance; look upon all you have as your Master's talents, for which you must give an account: and to use and employ them for God, that you may give up your account with joy; and then you will shew yourselves thankful indeed. Thus you see what is included in real thankfulness. O, it is another matter than we take it to be.

2. Next I promised to give you the grounds and reasons of this duty; why you are obliged after the reception of mercies to such a thankful return of praises. And, among many, I will only sing out these three, and briefly open them.

First, God requires and expects it. It is so special and peculiar a part of his glory, as he will never part with it. As great landlords oblige their tenants to a homage and service, when they make over their estates to them, and reserve a quit-rent to themselves, which they value at a high rate; so God, when he bestows deliverances and mercies upon us, still reserves an acknowledgment to himself: and as this is dear to him, he will not endure to be defrauded of it; much less that it be given to another. You find this reservation of praise expressly made by him in Psal. l. 15. "Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." When you have the request, the grant, and the reservation in the grant. q. d. When I have granted thee thy desire, see thou do not defraud me of my glory. There be three things in every mercy, the *manner* of it, the *comfort* of it, and the *glory* of it. The two first God makes over freely to us, he gives the mercies themselves, he allows us to suck out all the lawful pleasure and delight that is in them; but the third he reserves to himself, and will never part with it to any other. If an Hezekiah himself render not to God due acknowledgments, well as God loves him, there shall be great wrath upon him and upon Judah for the default, 2 Chron. xxxii. 26.

Secondly, You are under manifold engagements to render it to the Lord.

man a more odious character among men, than to say grateful man.

(2.) The examples of the very heathens will condemn praised their gods, which yet were no gods, when they deliverance, Judges xvi. 24. Shall idols, dung-hill their sacrifices and praises, whilst the true God is for

Nay, (3.) Many of you have formally and expressly souls to it, by solemn vows and promises in the day of and yet will you deal perfidiously with God? Will you vows which your lips have uttered? Certainly you call your souls, from the guilt of perfidiousness against God give him not the glory due to his name.

3. *Lastly*, Your ingratitude is the ready way to deprive mercies you have, and to with-hold from you the mercies have in your future distresses and wants. He that is mercies received, provokes God to remove them. Think with ungrateful Israel, Hosea ii. 5, 8, 9. "She did not" she did not with consideration and thanks duly "that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil. Therefore" "and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my" "season thereof; and will recover my wool and my" they suffered their mercies to lapse into the Lord's handment of their duties. If you are weary of your mercies to be rid of them, you cannot take a more effectual course forget from whom you had them, and with-hold them.

And then, for future mercies and deliverances, you have to expect any more from God, whom you have thus former favours. He that gives no thanks for one mercy ground to expect another. It was a sad word which upon this very provocation, Judg. x. 11, 12, 13. when a befel Israel by the Ammonites, and they cried to the Lord he tells them that he had many times delivered them from mercies: "Yet (saith he) have you forsaken me and serve" "Wherefore I will deliver you no more; go and cry" "which ye have chosen, and let them deliver you in" "your tribulation." Q. d. With what face can you for new mercies and deliverances, when yourselves know former mercies have been abused! Think ye that I am mercies to cast them away upon such unthankful wretches expect no more mercies from me, "I will deliver you no more" of the fathers calls ingratitude. *Ober infernalis in bellis*

Usc 1. It is your unquestionable duty to return praises upon every receipt of mercies? Then, in the first place, bear your shame and just reproof for your manifest unthankfulness. You dare not deny but you have received many signal and eminent mercies from the hands of God. If you should deny that, I need go no farther to prove you prodigiously ungrateful. But it is too manifest to be denied: you have found God a very present help in trouble: his mercy hath often rescued you out of the jaws of death. Some of you have been in dangers in the deeps; in deaths oft: you have been preserved to your wit's end; all visible hope and help failed. You might have said with the Psalmist, Psal. cxiii. 4. "I looked upon my right hand, and there was none; and upon the left, but refuge failed." You have seen your companions intombed before your eyes in the sea and concluded in your own thoughts your turn was next. You have been in danger by barbarous enemies that have chased you upon the sea to make you a prey: yea, it may be you have been a prey to them, and never thought to have seen the land of your native country, your houses, wives, and children, any more. You have languished under dangerous diseases, and that remote from friends and necessary accommodations; you have lost your estates, and been reduced to a low ebb, and never thought to have seen a day of prosperity any more: yet hath the Lord delivered you out of all your troubles. He has provided unexpected means of preservation, when the proud waves were ready to go over your souls. And though others went down before your eyes, you were marked out for deliverance, God spoke to the raging waves, saying, Touch not this man, I will not deliver him up, though I have done so by others. When cruel enemies chased you, he delivered you, causing the darkness of the night to interpose seasonably betwixt you and them; as the dark side of a cloud shadowed Israel from the Egyptians that pursued them, Exodus. xiv. 20. sometimes giving you a favourable gale, which blew men and deliverance to you: sometimes by strengthening you to resist their furious attacks, and delivering you from their rage: or if he delivered you into their hands, yet there he preserved you, enabling you to endure their severities, or causing the enemy to treat you well; and finding out a way which you knew not, to bring you out last out of the house of bondage.

He pitied you under your dangerous diseases; and though necessary accommodations and means might be wanting, he was your physician, and healed you; he recovered you immediately with his means, or blessed weak and small means to your good. When y

And now, reader, suffer me to account and expostulate with thy conscience ; what hath the fruit of all these mercies been ? And how hast thou carried it since those days, towards thy mercies ? Hast thou indeed been melted by the sea-kindness, into love, thankfulness, and new obedience ? Have thy favours engaged thee to more strictness in thy duties, and watchfulness against sin ? Hast thou said, with that good man ix. 13, 14. “ And now my God, seeing thou hast punished me more than mine iniquities deserve, and hast given me such mercies as these, should I again break thy commandments ? Surely thy mercy and goodness shall follow thee all the rest of my life. The Lord then reckons all these mercies well bestowed, and will never repent that he hath done thee good.

But I fear this is not thy case. Sure I am, there are many of you that have quickly forgotten the God that delivered you from the sea, and that have abused him to his face, by ascribing his mercies to chance, and fortune : not once owning him as your deliverer. Some that have made his mercies weapons of sin, to wound themselves, wasting your estates by prodigality, which were given you for your families, and God's poor ; yea, abusing them to idleness and luxury. And is this the thanks you return him ? Do you thank him for all my good works (saith Christ to the Jews) do you thank him for all I say I, for which of all God's kindnesses to you, do you thank him ? and abuse him ? O let shame cover your faces this day ! Fold down this leaf, and get thee to thy knees, and say, I thank thee, O Lord, to whom this reproof is sent. I have abused the God of my mercies. I have turned his grace into wantonness. Smite with me, O Lord, with thy thigh, and say, *What have I done ?* Mourn heartily for thy unkindness to thy best friend, “ The God that hath done me so much kindness thy life long, and deserves other returns from thee than these.”

Use 2. Lastly, It calls upon you all to be thankful for all thy mercies. Chrysostom once wished for a voice like thunder, that he might hear him. O that I could so call you to this duty, that you might effectually hear God's call in this exhortation.

Will you own the hand that delivers you, that feeds, and heals you ? Will you resolve to live the life of praise, and thanksgiving to the Lord according to the benefits you have received ? Will you indeed walk humbly, and thankfully, under all your deliverances, and successes, and glorify God by that wherewith he hath comforted and refreshed you ? If there be any saving knowledge of God in your hearts, and a true sense of his love in your souls, methinks I should

but ill-deserving creatures; not only without our merits, but against our merits. And what though there be a concurrence of your abilities, head-work and hand-work in the procurement of some of your mercies, yet still those mercies are the pure effects of free-grace: all those endeavours of yours had signified nothing to their procurement, without God's blessing; yea, and that wisdom and industry which you have used, were themselves the free gifts of God. You know there are thousands in the world as industrious and wise as you, and such as never provoked God by such sins as you have; who are denied the mercies you enjoy. O how should this endear you to God!

Argument 2. How seasonably your mercies have been bestowed upon you in the very point of extremity and danger! God hath for his purpose suffered it to grow to an extremity, that thereby he might commend his mercy to you with greater advantage. "In the morning of the Lord it hath been seen," Gen. xxii. 14. without this God saw his mercies would have been slighted, and low prized by you. But God hath watched the opportunity of bestowing his goodness upon you, for no other end but to magnify his mercies in your eyes, and make the deeper and more lasting impressions upon your hearts. Shall such mercies, which at first were so amazing and overwhelming to you, at the reception whereof you were like men that dreamed, as the Psalmist speaks, Psalm cxxvi. 1. so soon grow stale and common? God forbid!

Argument 3. How special and distinguishing have some of your mercies been? God hath not dealt with every one as he hath with you. Are not some that went out with you found wanting at your return: They are among the dead, it may be among the damned, and you among the living, yet enjoying the capacity and the means of salvation. God hath prospered your voyage, and returned you with success; you have sucked the abundance of the sea, and the treasures hid in the sand, as the text speaks; but others may say, Naomi, Ruth i. 21. "I went out full, and am come back empty." You went out full of hopes, and am come back with sad disappointment. And is not this a strong tie to thanksgiving?

Argument 4. Did not your mercies find you under great guilt? You know what your own transgressions against the Lord were, and such was the strength of mercy, that it brake through all your great provocations, and made its way to you through a multitude of iniquities. It came triumphing over all your great unworthiness, and is not such mercy worthy to be admired, and recorded for ever?

ginning of mercies, and you shall see yet greater things. God hath more mercies yet behind, and those of a higher and more excellent nature than these temporal mercies are now delivered from the dangers of the sea, and have escaped all perils: O but what is this to deliverance from wrath to which you have been preserved from, or delivered out of Turkish hands? what is that to a deliverance from the curse of the law, from the power of your lusts, and the power of Satan? Happy souls, if your mercies do in any measure prove introductive to the greater.

THE CONCLUSION.

Thus I have, as the Lord hath enabled me, endeavored to present some proper subjects for your meditation in every case that may befall you. I cannot carry these truths one degree farther than the Lord only that can make them effectual to your souls. I make my earnest request to you, masters, that have the oversight of the ship, to give an account for your companies, that you will not only consider these things yourselves, but that you will at fit seasons, especially upon the Lord's day, read and inculcate them upon your servants and company; and that, as those who must give account, will not this be a better expence of that precious and holy time than to spend it in sleeping in your cabins, or drinking in your houses? All that sin of theirs which you may prevent, and so avoid your own sin. And have you not personal sinners ready, but you must draw the guilt of their sins upon you, beseech you, and it is my last request, that you will faithfully that you and your companies may serve the Lord.

A
SAINT INDEED :

OR,
THE GREAT WORK OF A CHRISTIAN,
OPENED AND PRESSED.

From PROV. iv. 23.

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

To my dearly beloved and longed for, the Flock of Jesus Christ
Dartmouth, over whom the Holy Ghost hath made me an Overseer : Sound Judgment, true Zeal, and unstained Purity, and
heartily wished.

My dear Friends,

THERE are three sad sights with which our eyes should continually affect our hearts : The *first*, is to behold in every place many profane and dissolute ones, who bear the very image of Satan : the face of whose conversation plainly discovers what they are, and whither they are going, Philip. iii. 18, 19. These look like themselves, the children of wrath. The *second* is to see so many cursed hypocrites artificially disguising themselves, and with marvellous dexterity acting the parts of saints, so that even a judicious eye may sometimes mistake the *similar workings* of the Spirit on them, for his *saving workings* on others : To hear such a person conferring, praying, bewailing his corruptions, and talking of his experiences would easily persuade a man to believe that he hath the heart, as well as the face of a sincere Christian : For,

Sic oculos, sic ille manus, sic ora ferebat.

So the people of God do speak, so they pray, and even so they open their conditions : These look like saints, but are none. The *third* is to see so many real saints, in whom the spirit of truth is, who yet, through the impetuous workings of their corruptions, and neglecting of the watch over their hearts, do often fall into such scandal

For the *second*, I would both weep and tremble, could they (so abiding) must be damned doubly, Matth. x.

And for the *third* no less than any of the rest, be they themselves may, and shall be saved, yet their everlasting fast the bonds of death upon both the former, M² Sam. xii. 13, 14.

Alas! that ever they should shed the blood of others whom Christ shed his own blood! That ever they should do to others who have found Christ so *kind* to them! I know I cannot do it directly and intentionally, but so it proves occasion eventually. Suffer me here to digress a little, and examine these prejudiced and hardened souls, I will presently return again. O why do you mischieve your own souls by our examples? Because they stumble and break their shins, and break your necks? I desire all such as harden themselves in these things, and take up a good opinion of their own condition, would soberly consider, and answer these things.

Query 1. Doth religion any way countenance or patronise the sinful practices of its professors? Or doth it not rather in the most severely condemn them? It is the glory of the Christian religion that it is pure and undefiled, Jam. i. 27. No doctrine is there that is filthy, Jam. i. 27. Nor doth any make more provision for an honest life, Jam. i. 27. Indeed there is a case wherein we may charge the practices of men upon their principles, but that is when they naturally flow from, and necessarily follow their principles. For example, if I see a Papist sin boldly, I may charge it upon his principles, for they set pardons to sale, and so make way for sin. If I see an Arminian slight the grace of God, and prostitute himself, I may cry shame upon his principles, which doth not allow it: But can I do so where such practices are condemned against by their own avowed principles, who commit themselves to God?

Query 2. Is it not a most irrational thing to let ourselves be scandalised because of the scandalous ways of some, whilst, in the same way, you wholly slight and over-look the holy and heavenly lives of many others? Are all that profess godliness loose and careless of their lives? No, some are an ornament to their profession and glory of Christ: And why must the innocent be counted guilty? Why the eleven for one Judas?

Query 3. If you condemn religion because of the scandal of some that profess it, must you not then cast off all religion from the world, and turn down-right atheists? Surely this is the

move those fatal stumbling-blocks at which the blind world strikes and falls into eternal perdition.

Now there are two ways by which this may be effected: *First*, convincing the consciences of professors of their miscarriages, and the evil aggravations of them. *Secondly*, By medicating the head and cleansing the fountain whence they proceed. In the first of these, a worthy and eminent servant of Christ hath lately laboured, holding a clear gospel-glass before the faces of professors, which truly represents their spots and blemishes: If he that reads it will consider, apply, and practise, it shall doubtless turn to his salvation; but if it turn no good account to him that reads it, I know it shall turn to a testimony for him that wrote it. The *second* is a principal design of this small treatise, the subject whereof is exceedingly weighty, and of daily use to the people of God, though the manner of handling be attended with many defects and weaknesses: every one cannot be excellent, who yet may be useful.

See Gospel glass.

I will exercise your patience no longer than whilst I tell you,

1. Why I publish it to the view of the world.

2. Why I direct it particularly to you.

First, For the publication of it, take this sincere and brief account. That as I was led to this subject by a special providence, so to the publication of it by a kind of necessity. The providence at first leading me to it, was this, a dear and choice friend of my intimate acquaintance being under much inward trouble, upon the account of some special heart-disorder, opened the case to me, and earnestly requested some rules and helps in that particular; whilst I was bending my thoughts to that special case, divers other cases of like importance (some of which were dependent upon that consideration) occurred to my thoughts, and this scripture, which I have insisted upon, presented itself, as a fit foundation for the whole discourse; which being lengthened out to what you see, divers friends requested me to transcribe for their use, divers of the cases here handled, and some others begged me to publish the whole, to which I was in a manner necessitated, to save the pains of subscribing, which to me is a very tedious and tiresome work: and just as I had almost finished the copy, an opportunity (and that somewhat strangely) offered to make it public. So that from first to last, I have been carried beyond my first intentions in this thing.

Objection. If any say, The world is even cloyed with books, and therefore though the discourse be necessary, yet the publication

vour to undermine the power of godliness; and some to nourish the root, and tend to clear and confirm, to proply the great truths of the gospel, that they may be able to live and feed on: Now, though I could wish that thou handled the pen of the scribe, had better employed thy pains, than to obtrude such useless discourses upon the books of the latter rank, I say, that when husbandmen sow too much corn, let Christians complain of too many such.

2. And if you be so highly conceited of your own ability, that such books are needless to you; if you leave them, they will do you no hurt, and other poor hungry souls will eat of them, and bless God for what you despise and leave.

Objection. If it be said that several of the cases here be not your condition, I answer,

Solution 1. That which is not your condition may be another's condition. If you be placed in an easy, full and prosperous condition, and so have no need of the helps here offered to support you under pinching wants, others are forced to live by daily provision: If you be dandled upon the knee of some of your brethren are under its feet: If you have peace and tranquillity of spirit, and so need not the counsels here, ward off those desperate conclusions that poor afflicted souls draw upon themselves at such a time; yet it may be a season to them, and they may say as David to Abigail, "thou of the Lord, and blessed be thy advice."

2. That may be your condition shortly, which is not your condition at present: say not thy mountain stands strong, it shall never be moved: there are changes in the right-hand and left-hand; High; and then those truths which are little more than hedge-fruits, will be as apples of gold in pictures of silver. xxxiii. 10, 11. the prophet there teaches the Jews (when in their own houses) how to defend their religion in Babylon, what they should say to the Chaldeans there, and the reverse is written in Chaldee. So much for the reason of the dedication. Next, for the dedication of it to you, I was induced by the consideration,

1. Of the relation I have to you above all the people. I look upon my gifts as yours, my time as yours, and all that I am entrusted with, as yours: it is not with you as with a widow whose husband is dead, and so is freed from the law of the relation still continues, and so do all the mutual duties.

2. By the consideration of my necessitated obedi-

‘sian, are always open to philosophers, but my very breast is open to thee.’ I cannot say with him, my doors are open for the access of friends, being by a sad providence shut against myself; but this I can say, my very breast is still open to you; you are dear to me as ever.

3. Another inducement (and indeed the main) was the perpetual usefulness and necessity of these truths for you, which you will have continual need of: And I know few of you have such happy memories to retain, and I cannot be always with you to inculcate the things, but *litera scripta manet*. I was willing to leave this with you as a legacy, as a testimony of sincere love for, and care over you; this may counsel and direct you when I cannot: I may be rendered useless to you by a civil or natural death; but this will out-live me, and O that it may serve your souls when I am silent in the dust.

To hasten now to a conclusion, I have only these three requests of you, which I earnestly beseech you not to deny me; yea, I charge you, as ever you hope to appear with comfort before the great Shepherd, do not dare to slight these requests.

1. Above all other studies in the world, study your own hearts; waste not a minute more of your precious time about frivolous and senseless controversies. It is reported even of Bellarmine (how truly I examine not)* *Quod a studiis scholasticæ theologiæ averteretur fere non se habundus, quoniam succo carebant liquidæ pietatis*, i. e. he turned with loathing from the study of school-divinity, because it wanted the sweet juice of piety; I had rather it should be said of you, as one said of † Swinkfeldius, “He wanted a regular head, but not an honest heart,” than that you should have regular heads, and irregular hearts. My dear flock, I have, according to the grace given me, laboured in the course of my ministry among you, to feed you with the heart-strengthening bread of practical doctrine; and I do assure you, it is far better you should have the sweet and saving impressions of gospel-truths feelingly and powerfully conveyed to your hearts, than only to understand them by a bare ratiocination, or dry syllogistical inference. Leave trifling studies to such as have time lying on their hands, and know not how to employ it: remember you are at the door of eternity, and have other work to do; those hours you spend upon hearer-work in your closets, are the golden spots of all your time, and will have the sweetest influence upon your last hour. Never forget these sermons I preached to you upon that subject, from 2 Kings xx. 2, 3. Heart-work is weighty, and difficult work; an error there may cost you your souls: I may say of it as Augustine speaks of the doctrine

2. My next request is, That you will carefully look over your conversations, and be accurate in all your ways, hold forth your life: be sure by the strictness and holiness of your lives, to witness yourselves in the very consciences of your enemies. Remember that your lives must be produced in the great day to judge the living and the dead. vi. 2. O then, what manner of persons ought you to be, that are under so many eyes over you; the omniscient eye of God that searches out all things, and reins, Rev. ii. 23. the vigilant eye of Satan, Job i. 6. the envious eyes of enemies, that curiously observe you, and the quick and observant eye of conscience, which none can escape, Rom. ix. 1.

O then be precise and accurate in all manner of conversation, keep up the power of godliness in your closets and families, for you will not let it fall in your more public employments, and converse in the world: I have often told you, that it is the power of the gospel, that it makes the best parents and children, masters and servants, the best husbands and wives in the world.

My third and last request is, that you may pray for me, as I can say, and I am sure some of you have acknowledged that I have at first among you, as the return and answer of your prayers, I have indeed so it should be, see Luke x. 2. I am persuaded that I have been carried on in my work by your prayers; it is sweet to me to see Eph. vi. 18, 19. And I hope by your prayers to receive farther benefit, even that which is mentioned, Heb. xiii. 1. Philem. ver. 22. And truly it is but equal you should pray for me. I have often prayed for you: let the pulpit, family, and business be a witness for me; and God forbid I should sin against the Lamentation to pray for you.

Yea, friends, your own interest may persuade to pray for me, the mercies you obtain for me, redound to your own advantage. To serve me, it is for your use and service: the more gifts the minister hath, the better for them that shall wait on him. the more God gives in to me, the more I shall be able to serve you. I will detain you no longer, but to entreat you for a small testification of my great love, and have recourse to you, as the exigencies of your condition shall require: read it with care and obediently; judge it not by the dress and style, but by the truth and savour of what you read. It is a good rule of Ben Jonson, *legendis libris, non quæramus scientiam sed saporem*, i. e. in books, regard not so much the science as the savour. I will prove the savour of life unto life to you, and all those in

SAINT INDEED, &c.

PROV. iv. 23.

Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of

THE heart of man is his worst part before it be regenerate, and the best afterwards: it is the seat of principles, and the fountain of actions. The eye of God is, and the eye of the Christian ought to be, principally fixed upon it.

The greatest difficulty in conversion is to win the heart to God, and the greatest difficulty after conversion is to keep the heart to God. Here lies the very pinch and stress of religion; here is the strait which makes the way to life a narrow way, and the gate to heaven a strait gate. Direction and help in this great work are the scope and sum of this text: wherein we have,

1. An exhortation, "Keep thy heart with all diligence."
2. The reason, or motive enforcing it, "For out of it are the issues of life."

In the exhortation I shall consider,

1. The matter of the duty.
2. The manner of performing it.

1. The matter of the duty, *keep thy heart*. Heart is not taken properly for that noble part of the body which philosophers call the *primum vivens, et ultimum moriens*; the first that lives and the last that dies; but by heart, in a metaphor, the scripture sometimes understands some particular noble faculty of thy soul. Rom. i. 21. it is put for the understanding part, their foolish heart, i. e. "their foolish understanding was darkened." And Psalm cxlvi. 11. it is put for the memory, "Thy word have I hid in my heart." and 1 John iii. 10. it is put for the conscience, which hath in it both the light of the understanding and the recognitions of the memory; if our heart condemn us, i. e. if your consciences, whose proper office it is to condemn. But here we are to take it more generally for the whole soul, or inner man; for look what the heart is to the body, that the soul is to the man; and what health is to the heart, that holiness is to the soul: *Quod sanitas in corpore, id sanctitas in corde*. The state of the whole body depends upon the soundness

* Livater, on the place, will have the word taken from garrison, begirt by many enemies without, and in danger trayed by treacherous citizens within, in which danger upon pain of death, are commanded to watch; and whose expression (*keep thine heart*) seems to put it upon us as one who doth not imply a sufficiency or ability in us to do it; who is to stop the sun in its course, or make the rivers run by our own skill and power to rule and order our heart well be our own *saviours*, as our own *keepers*; and yet Solomon properly enough, when he saith *keep thy heart*; because our's though the power be God's. A natural man hath a gracious man hath some, though not sufficient; and the heart hath, depends upon the exciting and assisting strength. *Gratia gratiam postulat*, grace within us is beholden to God for it out us, John xv. 5. "Without me ye can do nothing of the matter of the duty.

2. The manner of performing it is, *with all diligence*. The brew is very emphatical, † *Cum omni custodia*, keep with all keeping, *q. d.* keep, keep; set double guards, your heart is gone else. And this vehemency of expression, with which it is urged, plainly implies how difficult it is to keep your heart, how dangerous to let them go.

3. The reason, or motive quickening to this duty, is great and weighty: "For out of it are the issues of life." It is the source and fountain of all vital actions and operations. *boni et peccandi origo*, saith Jerom; it is the spring both of good and evil, as the spring in a watch that sets all the wheels in motion. The heart is the treasury, the hand is but the shops; what is in these comes from thence; the tongue always begin where the heart ends. The heart commands and the members execute; Luke vi. 45. "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things; but a bad man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth evil things." "for out of the abundance of his heart his mouth speaketh." Then, if the heart err in its work, these must needs be the issues of theirs; for heart-errors are like the errors of the printing, which cannot be rectified afterwards: Or like the misplacing and inverting of the stamps and letters in the press, which must needs cause so many errors in all the copies that are printed. Then, how important a duty is that which is contained in the following proposition?

WHAT IT IS TO KEEP THE HEART.

Doct. *That the keeping and right managing of the heart every condition, is the great business of a Christian's life.*

What the philosopher saith of waters, is as properly applied to hearts; *Suis terminis difficile continentur*, it is hard to keep them within bounds: God hath set bounds and limits to them, yet how frequently do they transgress, not only the bounds of grace and religion, but even of reason and common honesty? *Hic labor, hoc opus est*, this is that which affords the Christian matter of labour, fear and trembling to his dying-day. It is not the cleansing of the hands that makes the Christian, for many a hypocrite can shew as fair a heart as he; but the purifying, watching, and right ordering of the heart, this is the thing that provokes so many sad complaints, and costs many deep groans and brinish tears. It was the pride of Hezekiah's heart that made him lie in the dust mourning before the Lord, Chron. xxxii. 26. It was the fear of hypocrisy invading the heart that made David cry, "Let my heart be found in thy statutes that I be not ashamed," Psalm cxix. 80. It was the sad experience he had of the divisions and distractions of his own heart, in the service of God, that made him pour out that prayer, Psalm lxxxvi. "Unite my heart to fear thy name."

The method in which I shall improve the point, shall be this,

First, I shall enquire what the keeping of the heart supposes and imports.

Secondly, Assign divers reasons, why Christians must make this the great work and business of their lives.

Thirdly, Point at those special seasons which especially call for diligence in keeping the heart.

Fourthly, and *lastly*, Apply the whole in several uses.

1. What the keeping of the heart supposes and imports.

To keep the heart, necessarily supposes a previous work of sanctification, which hath set the heart right, by giving it a new spirit, bent and inclination; for as long as the heart is not *set right* in grace, as to its habitual frame, no duties or means can *keep it right* with God. Self is the poise of the unsanctified heart, which biases and moves it in all its designs and actions; and as long as it is so, it is impossible that any external means should keep it with God.

Man, by creation, was of one constant, uniform frame and tendency of spirit, held one straight and even course; not one thought or faculty revelled or disordered; his mind had a perfect illumination to understand and know the will of God, his will a perfect compliance therewith; his sensitive appetite, and other inferior powers, sto-

disordered, and all his acts irregular: His illuminated will is clouded with ignorance, his complying will full of stubbornness; his subordinate powers, casting off the government of the superior faculties.

But by regeneration this disordered soul is set aright, rectification being the rectifying and due framing, or as phrases it, the renovation of the soul after the image of God, *iv.* 24. in which *self-dependence* is removed by faith; *self-love* of God; *self-will* by subjection and obedience to God; and *self-seeking* by self-denial. The darkened will is again illuminated, *Eph.* i. 18. the refractory will subdued, *Psal.* cx. 3. the rebellious appetite, or concupiscence conquered, *Rom.* v. 7. *per tot.* And thus the soul which universally depraved is again by grace restored and rectified.

This being pre-supposed, it will not be difficult to apply it is to keep the heart, which is nothing else but the *and diligence of such a renewed man, to preserve his soul in the frame to which grace hath reduced it, and daily strive*

For though grace hath, in a great measure, rectified the heart, given it an habitual and heavenly temper: yet sin often composes it again: so that even a gracious heart is like a stringed instrument, which, though be it never so exactly tuned, and brought in tune again; yea, hang it aside but a little while, it needs setting again before you can play another lesson on it. And therefore every duty needs a particular preparation. *Job* xi. 13. "If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards him." Well then, to keep the heart is care to preserve it from sin, which disorders it; and maintain that gracious frame, which fits it for a life of communion with God. And this includes these six acts in it:

1. Frequent observation of the frame of the heart, to examine how the case stands with it, this is one part of the duty. Carnal and formal persons take no heed to this, they are brought to confer with their own hearts; there are some women that have lived forty or fifty years in the world scarce had one hour's discourse with their own hearts all their lives. It is a hard thing to bring a man and himself together upon account; but saints know those soliloquies and self-conferences of excellent use and advantage. The heathen could say, *do et cogitare de se* is a great part of wisdom.

Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, 2 Chron. xx. 26. Thus the people were ordered to spread forth their hands to God in prayer, in a sense of the plague of their own hearts, 1 Kings viii. 38. Upon this account many an upright heart hath been low before God: O what an heart have I? They have in their confessions pointed at the heart, the pained place; Lord, here is my wound, here is the plague-sore. It is with the heart well kept, as it is with the eye, which is a fit emblem of it, if a small dust get in the eye, it will never leave twinkling and watering till it have wept out: So the upright heart cannot be at rest till it have wept out its troubles, and poured out its complaints before the Lord.

3. It includes earnest supplications and instant prayer for heavenly purifying and rectifying grace, when sin hath defiled and disordered it; so Psalm xix. 12. "Cleanse thou me from secret faults;" Psalm lxxxvi. 11. "Unite my heart to fear thy name." Saints have always many such petitions depending before the throne of God for grace; this is the thing which is most pleaded by them with God. When they are praying for outward mercies, haply their spirits may be more remiss, but when it comes to the heart-case, then they attend their spirits to the utmost, fill their mouths with arguments of woe and weep and make supplication: Oh, for a better heart! Oh for a heart to love God more. To hate sin more, to walk more evenly with God. Lord, deny not to me such a heart, whatever thou deny me; give me an heart to fear thee, love and delight in thee, if I beg my blessing in desolate places. It is observed of holy Mr. Bradford, that when he was confessing sin, he would never give over confessing until he had felt some brokenness of heart for that sin; and when praying for any spiritual mercy, would never give over that suit, until he had got some relish of that mercy. That is the third thing included in keeping the heart.

4. It includes the imposing of strong engagements and bonds upon ourselves to walk more accurately with God, and avoid the occasions whereby the heart may be induced to sin: Well-composed, advised, and deliberate vows, are, in some cases, of excellent use to guard the heart against some special sin; so Job xxxi. 1. "I made a covenant with mine eyes;" by this means, holy ones have over-awed their souls, and preserved themselves from defilement by some special heart-corruptions.

5. It includes a constant holy jealousy over our own hearts. quicksighted self-jealousy is an excellent preservative from sin; that will keep his heart must have the eyes of his soul awake

State viri, quæ causa viæ? quivæ estis in armis.

Happy is the man that thus feareth always, Prov. By this fear of the Lord it is that men depart from evil security, and preserve themselves from iniquity; he that keeps his heart, must feed with fear, rejoice with fear, and pass the time of his sojourning here in fear, and all little enough to keep his heart from sin.

6. And, lastly, To add no more, it includes the realizing the presence with us, and setting the Lord always before us. The people of God have found a singular mean to keep their hearts right, and awe them from sin; when the eye of our faith is upon the eye of God's omniscience, we dare not let out our thoughts and affections to vanity: Holy Job durst not suffer his heart to go to an impure, vain thought; and what was it that moved him to great a circumspection? Why, he tells you, Job xxxi. 4. "I did not see my ways, and count all my steps? Walk before the face of God to Abraham) and be thou perfect," Gen. xvii. 1. Parents use to set their children in the congregation before the Lord, knowing that else they will be toying and playing; so the heart of the best man too, were it not for the eye of God. In these and such like particulars, do gracious souls take care they have of their hearts; they are as careful to preserve from breaking loose of their corruptions in times of temptation, as they are to bind fast the guns, that they break not loose in a storm; they are careful to preserve the sweetness and comfort they have in God in any duty, as one that comes out of an hot bath, and sweat, is of taking cold, by going forth into the chill air; and the work, and of all works in religion it is the most diligent, constant, and important work.

1. It is the hardest work; heart-work is hard work in itself. To shuffle over religious duties with a loose and heedless spirit costs no great pains; but to set thyself before the Lord, and to keep loose and vain thoughts to a constant and serious attention to him: this will cost thee something: To attain a facility and fluency of language in prayer, and put thy meaning into apt and expressive expressions, is easy; but to get thy heart broken for sin, and art confessing it; melted with free grace whilst thou art broken for it; to be really ashamed and humbled through the discoveries of God's infinite holiness, and to keep thy heart in this posture, not only in, but after duty, will surely cost thee some groaning and wailing pain of soul: To repress the outward acts of sin,

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as is never done till life be done : this labour and our life end together : It is with a Christian in this business, as it is with seamen : have sprung a leak at sea, if they tug not constantly at the pump, the water increases upon them, and will quickly sink them. It is vain for them to say the work is hard, and we are weary ; there is no time or condition in the life of a Christian, which will suffer an intermission of this work. It is in the keeping watch over our hearts, as it was in the keeping up of Moses' hand, whilst Israel and Amalek were fighting below, Exod. xvii. 12. No sooner do Moses' hands grow heavy and sink down, but Amalek prevails. You know it of David and Peter many a sad day and night for intermitting the watch over their own hearts but a few minutes.

3. It is the most important business of a Christian's life. With this we are but formalists in religion ; all our professions, gifts, and duties signify nothing : " My son, give me thine heart," Prov. x. 36. God is pleased to call that a gift, which is indeed a debt ; he will put this honour upon the creature to receive it from him in the way of a gift ; but if this be not given him, he regards not what else you bring to him : There is so much only of worth and value in what we do, as there is of heart in it. Concerning the heart, God seems to say, as Joseph of Benjamin, " If you bring not Benjamin with you, you shall not see my face." Among the heathens, when the beast was cut up for sacrifice, the first thing the *priest* looked upon was the heart, and if that was unsound and naught, the sacrifice was rejected. God rejects all duties (how glorious soever in other respects) offered him without a heart. He that performs duty without a heart, viz. heedlessly, is no more accepted with God than he that performs it with a double heart, viz. hypocritically, Isa. lxvi. 17. And thus I have briefly opened the nature of the duty, what is signified in this phrase, " Keep thy heart."

2. Next I shall give you some rational account why Christians should make this the great business of their lives to keep their hearts.

The importance and necessity of making this our great and main business, will manifestly appear in that, 1. The honour of God ; 2. The sincerity of our profession ; 3. The beauty of our conversation ; 4. The comfort of our souls ; 5. The improvement of our graces ; and, 6. Our stability in the hour of temptation ; all are wrapt up in, and dependent on our sincerity and care in the management of this work.

1. The glory of God is much concerned therein ; heart-evils are very provoking evils to the Lord. The schools do well observe, that

he sent the dreadfullest judgment that was ever executed on the world began: "And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, and every creeping thing and the fowls of heaven, for it repenteth me that I have made man," ver. 7. We find not their murder, blasphemies, (though they were defiled with these) punished against them; but the evils of their hearts: Yea, God was so provoked by, as to give up his peculiar inheritance into the enemy's hand, was the evil of their hearts, Jer. iv. 4. "Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved; how long shall vain thoughts lodge within thee?" The wickedness and vanity of their thoughts God took special notice of, and because of this the Chaldean must come upon them and burn *his thicket*, ver. 7. *and tear them to pieces*. For the very sin it was that God threw down the fallen angels from heaven, keeps them still in everlasting chains to the judgment day; by which expression is not obscurely intimated some ordinary judgment to which they are reserved, as prisoners in most irons laid upon them, may be supposed to be the great factors: and what was their sin? Why, only spiritual. For they, having no bodily organs, could act nothing against God. Yea, mere heart-evils are so provoking, that he rejects with indignation all the duties that some men perform, him, Isa. lxvi. 3. "He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; that sacrificeth a lamb, is as if he cut off a dog's neck; that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol." In what words could the perverseness of a creature's actions be more fully expressed than against God? Murder and idolatry are not more vile in his account than their sacrifices, though materially such as himself appointed. What made them so? The following words inform us, "they delighteth in their abominations."

To conclude, such is the vileness of mere heart-sins, that sometimes intimate the difficulty of pardon for them. In the case of Simon Magus, Acts viii. 21. his heart was not right, he had vile thoughts of God, and the things of God; the Lord said to him "repent and pray, if perhaps the thoughts of his heart may be forgiven him." O then, never slight heart-evils; for God is highly wronged and provoked; and for this reason Christians make it his work to keep his heart with all diligence. 2. The sincerity of our profession much depends upon the

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count of the great service performed by Jehu against the house of Ahab and Baal, as also of a great temporal reward given him by God for that service, even that his children to the fourth generation should sit upon the throne of Israel. And yet, in these words, Jehu is censured for an hypocrite; though God approved and rewarded the work, yet he abhorred and rejected the person that did it: hypocritical: And wherein lay his hypocrisy? but in this, that he took no heed to walk in the ways of the Lord with his heart, he did all insincerely, and for self-ends; and though the work he did was materially good, yet he, not purging his heart from those unworthy self-designs in doing it, was an hypocrite: And Simon whom we spake before, though he appeared such a person, that the apostle could not regularly refuse him; yet his hypocrisy was quickly discovered: And what discovered it but this, that though he professed and associated himself with the saints, yet he was a stranger to the mortification of heart sins? "Thy heart is not right with God," Acts viii. 21. It is true there is a great difference among Christians themselves, in their diligence and dexterity at heart-work; some are more conversant and successful in it than others are; but he that takes no heed to his heart, that is not careful to order it aright before God, is but a hypocrite, Ezek. xxxiii. 31, 32. "And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and stand before thee (as my people) and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouths they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness." Here were a company of formal hypocrites, as is evident by that expression (*as my people*) like them but not of them. And what made them so? Their outside was fair; here were reverend postures, high professions, much seeming joy and delight in ordinances, "Thou art to them as a lovely song:" yea, but for all that they kept not their hearts to God in those duties, their hearts were commanded by their lusts, they went after their covetousness: had they kept their hearts to God, all had been well; but not regarding which way their hearts went in duty, there lay the score of their hypocrisy.

Objection. If any upright soul should hence infer, that I am a hypocrite too, for many times my heart departs from God in duty, though I do what I can, yet I cannot hold it close with God.

Solution. To this I answer, The very objection carries in it its own solution. Thou sayest, do what I can, yet I cannot keep my heart with God. Soul, if thou dost what thou canst, thou hast the blessing of an upright, though God sees good to exercise thee un-

heart to prevent them, Psal. cxix. 11. "Thy word h
"mine heart, that I might not sin against thee:" part
deavours to engage our hearts to God, Jer. xxx. 21. a
begging preventing grace from God in our onsets upon
cxix. 36, 37. it is a good sign where this care goes befo

And, (2.) It is a sweet sign of uprightness to oppose
first rise, Psal. cxix. 113. "I hate vain thoughts,"
"The spirit lusteth against the flesh."

And, (3.) Thy after-grief discovers thy upright hea
Hezekiah, thou art humbled for the evils of thy heart,
reason, from those disorders, to question the integrity o
suffer sin to lodge quietly in the heart, to let thy hear
and uncontrolledly wander from God, is a sad and dang
tom indeed.

3. The beauty of our conversation arises from the hea
and holy order of our spirits; there is a spiritual lustre
in the conversation of saints: "The righteous is more ex
"his neighbour," they shine as the lights of the world
ever lustre and beauty is in their lives, comes from the c
their spirits; as the candle within puts a lustre upon
in which it shines. It is impossible that a disordered a
heart should ever produce well-ordered conversation; a
the text observes) the issues or streams of life flow out
as their fountain, it must needs follow, that such as the
life will be: hence 1 Pet. ii. 11, 12. "Abstain from fles
"having your conversation honest," * or *beautiful*, as
word imports. So Isa. lv. 7. "Let the wicked forsake
"and the unrighteous man his thoughts." His way note
of his life, his thoughts the frame of his heart; and the
the way and course of his life flows from his thoughts, o
of his heart, both or neither will be forsaken: the heart
of all actions, these actions are virtually and seminally c
our thoughts, these thoughts being once made up into af
quickly made up into suitable actions and practices. I
be wicked, then, as Christ saith, Mat. xv. 19. "Out o
"proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries," &c. Mar
first, wanton, or revengeful thoughts, then unclean or
practices.

And if the heart be holy and spiritual, then, as Da
from sweet experience, Psal. xlv. 1. "My heart is (indit
"matter, I speak of things which (I have made), my

Put but the heart in frame, and the life will quickly discover that it is so. I think it is not very difficult to discern, by the duties and converses of Christians, what frames their spirits are under; take a Christian in a good frame, and how serious, heavenly, and profitable will his converses and duties be! what a lovely companion is he during the continuance of it! It would do any one's heart good to be with him at such a time, Psal. xxxvii. 30, 31. "The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment, the law of his God is in his heart."

When the heart is up with God, and full of God, how dexterously and ingeniously will he wind in spiritual discourse, improve every occasion and advantage to some heavenly purpose? Few would run then at the waste spout.

And what else can be the reason why the discourses and duties of many Christians, are become so frothy and unprofitable, their communion both with God, and one another, becomes as a dry stalk, because their hearts are neglected? Surely this must be the reason of it, and verily it is an evil greatly to be bewailed; for want of true Christian-fellowship, it is become a sapless thing; so the attractive beauty that was wont to shine from the conversations of the saints upon the faces and consciences of the world, (which, if it did but allure, and bring them in love with the ways of God, yet at least left a testimony in their consciences of the excellency of the saints and their ways) this is in a great measure lost, to the unspeakable detriment of religion.

Time was, when Christians did carry it at such a rate, that the world stood at a gaze at them, as the word *ἐκζητοῦσαι*, 1 Pet. iv. imports. Their life and language were of a different strain from others, their tongues discovered them to be Galileans, wherever they came; but now, since vain speculations and fruitless controversies have so much obtained, and heart-work, practical godliness, so much neglected among professors, the case is sadly altered; their discourse is become like other men's: if they come among you now, they may (to allude to that, Acts ii. 6.) "hear every man speak in his own language." And truly I have little hope to see this evil redressed, and the credit of religion again repaired, till Christians return to their old work; till they ply heart-work closer; when the seed of heavenly-mindedness is cast into the spring, the streams will run clearer, and sweeter.

4. The comfort of our souls doth much depend upon the keeping of our hearts; for he that is negligent in attending his own heart

your hearts, yea, strangers to them, and yet no stranger but since both scripture and experience do confute the hope you will never look for comfort in that unscriptural deny not but it is the work and office of the Spirit, to as yet do confidently affirm, that if ever you attain assurance by any ordinary way wherein God dispenses it, you must take pains in your own hearts; you may expect your comforts upon ease. I am mistaken if ever you enjoy them upon any other way. "diligence, prove yourselves;" this is the scripture way. Mr. Roberts, in his Treatise of the covenant, tells of a man who knew a Christian, who in the infancy of his Christianity, constantly panted after the infallible assurance of God's love, though at the same time together he earnestly desired some voice from heaven. At times walking in the solitary fields, earnestly desired some voice from the trees and stones there; this, after many longings, was denied him; but in time a better way was afforded him, an ordinary way of searching the word, and his own heart. Of the like nature the learned Gerson gives us of one that was brought by temptation upon the very borders of desperation; but when sweetly settled, and assured, one asked him how he attained assurance, he answered, *Non ex nova aliqua revelatione, &c.* Not by any extraordinary revelation, but by subjecting his understandings to the scriptures, and comparing his own heart with them. The Spirit witnesses by assuring us by witnessing our adoption; and he witnesseth

(1.) Objectively, i. e. by working those graces in our hearts which are the conditions of the promise, and so the Spirit and we, are all one: the Spirit of God dwelling in us, is a witness of our adoption. Now the Spirit cannot be discerned in his operations; and to discern these, is to discern the heart. How these should be discerned, without serious searching and diligent watching of the heart, I cannot imagine.

(2.) The other way of the Spirit's witnessing is effecting the heart by irradiating the soul with a grace-discovering light, shining upon our own work; and this in order of nature follows the former. The Spirit first infuses the grace, and then opens the eye of the soul. Now since the heart is the subject of that infused grace, the way of the Spirit's witnessing also includes the necessity of searching carefully our own hearts: For,

(1.) A neglected heart is so confused and dark, that the truth which is in it, is not ordinarily discernible: the most able and laborious Christians, that take most pains, and spend

clear, and settled, and then he shall see it sparkling at the bottom. And that the heart may be clear, and settled, how much pains watching, care and diligence, will it cost?

(2.) God doth not usually indulge lazy and negligent souls with the comforts of assurance; he will not so much as seem to patronise sloth and carelessness; he will give it, but it shall be in his own way. His command hath united our care and comfort together; they are mistaken that think the beautiful child of assurance may be born without pangs: ah, how many solitary hours have the people of God spent in heart-examination! how many times have they looked into the word, and then into their hearts? Sometimes they thought they discovered sincerity, and were even ready to draw forth the triumphant conclusion of assurance; then comes a doubt they cannot resolve, and dashes all again; many hopes and fears, doubts and reasonings, they have had in their own breasts, before they arrived at a comfortable settlement.

To conclude, suppose it possible for a careless Christian to attain assurance, yet it is impossible he should long retain it: For, as those whose hearts are filled with the joys of assurance, if extraordinary care be not used, it is a thousand to one if ever they long enjoy it: for a little pride, vanity, carelessness, will dash to pieces all that for which they have been labouring a long time, in making a weary duty. Since, then, the joy of our life, the comfort of our souls, rises and falls with our diligence in this work, keep your hearts with all diligence.

5. The improvement of our graces depends upon the keeping of our hearts; I never knew grace thrive in a negligent and careless soul. The habits and roots of grace are planted in the heart; and the deeper they are radicated there, the more thriving and flourishing grace is. In Eph. iii. 17. we read of "being rooted in grace." Grace in the heart is the root of every gracious word in the mouth, and of every holy work in the hand, Psal. cxvi. 10. 2 Cor. iv. 16. It is true, Christ is the root of a Christian; but Christ is *origo originans*, the originating root; and grace *origo originata*, a root originated, planted, and influenced by Christ; according as this thrives under divine influences, so the acts of grace are more or less fruitful or vigorous. Now in a heart not kept with care and diligence, the fructifying influences are stopt and cut off, multitudes of vices break in upon it, and devour its strength; the heart is, as it were, the pasture, in which multitudes of thoughts are fed every day; a gracious heart diligently kept, feeds many precious thoughts of

“soul is filled as with marrow and fatness whilst I think &c. But in the disregarded heart, swarms of vain thoughts are perpetually working, and jostle out those serious and thoughts of God, by which the soul should be refreshed.

Besides, the careless heart makes nothing out of any ordinance it performs or attends on, and yet these are the means of grace from heaven, from whence grace is watered and made fruitful. The soul may go with an heedless spirit from ordinance to ordinance all his days under the choicest teaching, and yet never be improved by them; for heart-neglect is a leak in the bottom, no ordinance can influence, how rich soever, abide in that soul, Mat. xiii. The careless heart that lies open and common, like the high-way, is full of passengers; when the seed fell on it, the fowls came and ate it up. Alas! it is not enough to hear, unless we take heed to what we hear; a man may pray, and never be the better, unless he hears the word of prayer. In a word, all ordinances, means, and duties are of no use unto the improvement of grace, according to the care and diligence we use in keeping our hearts in them.

6. *Lastly*, The stability of our souls in the hour of temptation will be much according to the care and conscience we use in keeping our hearts; the careless heart is an easy prey to the devil in the hour of temptation, his main batteries are raised against him, the heart; if he wins that, he wins all; for it is the seat of the whole man: and, alas! how easy a conquest is a neglect of the heart. It is no more difficult to surprize it, than for an enemy to take a city whose gates are open and unguarded: it is the duty of the heart that discovers and suppresses the temptation before it gains strength. Divines observe this to be the method in which the affections are ripened and brought to their full strength.

There is, (1.) *Ορεξις*, The irritation of the object, or the desire that hath to work upon, and provoke our corrupt nature; which is done by the real presence of the object, or else by speculation. The object (though absent) is held out by the phantasy in the soul.

(2.) Then follows *Ορμη*, the motion of the sensitive part, which is stirred and provoked by the phantasy, representing the object as good, as having profit or pleasure in it.

(3.) Then there is *Βελησις*, a consultation in the mind, the mind deliberating about the likeliest means of accomplishing the end.

(4.) Next follows *Αιρεσις*, the election, or choice of the best means.

(5.) And lastly *Βελημα*, The desire, or full engagement of the soul.

ASSURANCE DEPENDS UPON KEEPING THE HEART.

it is stopped easily: for it is the motions of a tempted soul to sin in the motion of a stone falling from the brow of a hill; it is easily stopped at first, but when it is set agoing, *Vires acquirit euntes*. And therefore it is the greatest wisdom in the world to observe the first motions of the heart, to check and stop sin there. The motions of sin are weakest at first, a little care and watchfulness may prevent much mischief now, which the careless heart not heeding, is brought within the power of temptation; as the Syrians were brought blindfold into the midst of Samaria, before they knew where they were.

By this time, reader, I hope thou art fully satisfied how consequential and necessary a work the keeping of the heart is, it being a duty that wraps up so many dear interests of the soul in it.

3. Next, according to the method propounded, I proceed to point out those special seasons in the life of a Christian, which require a call for our utmost diligence in keeping the heart: for though (as observed before) the duty binds *ad semper*, and there is no time or condition of life in which we may be excused from this work; yet there are some signal seasons, critical hours, requiring more than common vigilance over the heart.

And the first,

1. *Season.* 'Is the time of prosperity, when providence smiles upon us, and dandles us upon its knee. Now, Christian, keep thy heart with all diligence; for now it will be exceeding apt to grow secure, proud, and earthly, *Rara virtus est humilitas honoris* (saith Bernard) to see a man humble under prosperity, is one of the greatest rarities in the world. Even a good Hezekiah could not hide a vain-glorious temper under his temptation, and hence took caution to Israel, Deut. vi. 10, 11, 12. "And it shall be when the Lord thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he swore to thy fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities which thou buildest not, and houses full of all good things which thou filledst not, &c. Then beware lest thou forget the Lord:" and indeed so it fell out, "for Jeshurun was fat, and kicked," Deut. xxxii. 15.'

Now then, the first case will be this, viz.

Case 1. *How a Christian may keep his heart from pride and carnal security, under the smiles of providence, and constancy of creature-comforts.*

There are seven choice helps to secure the heart from the dangerous snares of prosperity; the first is this,

1. To consider the dangerous ensnaring temptations attending prosperity.

“called.” It might justly make us tremble when it tells us in general, that few shall be saved; much more when it tells us, that of that rank and sort of which we are, but few shall be saved. When Joshua called all the tribes of Israel to lot upon them for the discovery of Achan, Achan feared; when the tribe of Judah was taken, they were increased; but when the family of the Zarhites was taken, they were then to tremble. So when the scripture comes so near to us, that of such a sort of men very few shall escape, it is about; *Miror si potest servari aliquis rectorum*, saith the prophet. I should wonder if any of the *rulers* be saved. O how many have been coached to hell in the chariots of earthly pleasures, and how many have been whipped to heaven by the rod of affliction! O thou daughter of Tyre, come to Christ with a gift! how should the rich intreat his favour!

2. *It may keep us yet more humble and watchful in prosperity, if we consider that among Christians many have been made proud by it.* How good had it been for some of them, if they had known prosperity! When they were in a low condition, in a low spiritual, and heavenly, were they! but when advanced to a more parent alteration hath been upon their spirits? It was so when they were in a low condition in the wilderness; they were *holiness to the Lord*, Jer. ii. 23. but when they came to a more and were fed in a fat pasture, then, “we are lords, we are lords,” “more unto thee,” ver. 31. Outward gains are ordinarily attended with inward losses; as in a low condition their civil duties were wont to have a tang and savour of their duties, so in a low condition their duties commonly have a tang of the world. The poor deed is rich in grace, whose graces are not hindered by outward things; there are but few Jehoshaphats in the world, of whom Jer. ii. Chron xvii. 5, 6. “He had silver and gold in abundance, but his heart was lifted up in the way of God’s commands:” Will not thy heart humble in prosperity, to think how dear many have paid for their riches, that through them they have obtained that which all the world cannot purchase? Then, in the new

3. *Keep down thy vain heart by this consideration, that the more a man is outwardly advanced, the more he is inwardly humbled.* No man a jot the more for these things. God values not outward excellencies, but by inward graces: they are the inward graces of the Spirit, which are of great price in God’s eyes. He despises all worldly glory, and accepts no man’s person. “every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteously,”

HOW TO KEEP THE HEART HUMBLE IN PROSPERITY.

he is in the judgment of God. Doth thy heart yet swell? And neither of the former considerations keep it humble?

4. Then, *fourthly*, Consider, *how bitterly many persons have bewailed their folly when they came to die, that ever they set their hearts on these things, and heartily wished that they had never known them.* What a sad story was that of Pius Quintus, who dying cried despairingly, when I was in a low condition, I had some hopes of elevation; but when I was advanced to be cardinal, I greatly doubted it; but since I came to the Popedom, I have no hope at all. Mr. Sacer also tells us a real, but sad story, of a rich oppressor, who scraped up a great estate for his only son; when he came to die, he called his son to him, and said, son; do you indeed love me? The son answered, that nature, besides his paternal indulgence, obliged him to that. Then said the father, express it by this; hold thy finger to the candle as long as I am saying a *pater noster*: The son attempted, but could not endure it. Upon that the father broke out in these expressions, thou canst not suffer the burning of thy finger for me, but to get this wealth, I have hazarded my soul for time, and must burn body and soul in hell for thy sake: Thy pain will have been but for a moment, but mine will be unquenchable fire.

5. The heart may be kept humble, by considering *of what a clogging nature earthly things are to a soul heartily engaged in the love to heaven*; they shut out much of heaven from us at present, though they may not shut us out of heaven at last. If thou consider thyself under the notion of a stranger in this world, travelling for heaven, and seeking a better country, thou hast then as much reason to be taken, and delighted with these things, as a weary horse laden with a heavy clog-bag: There was a serious truth in that atheistical scoff of Julian when he took away the Christians' estates, he told them it was to make them fitter for the kingdom of heaven.

6. Is thy spirit, for all this, flatulent and lofty? Then urge upon it *the consideration of that awful day of reckoning, wherein, according to our receipts of mercies, shall be our accompts for them*: It methinks this should awe and humble the vainest heart that ever was in the breast of a saint. Know for certain, that the Lord records the mercies that ever he gave thee, from the beginning to the end of thy life. Mic. vi. 5. "Remember, O my people, from Shinar unto Gilgal," &c. yea, they are exactly numbered, and recorded in order to an account; and thy account will be suitable. Luke 14. 48. "To whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required. You are but stewards, and your Lord will come to take an account."

of God. Ah Lord what a sad consideration is this ! *er*
me in the dust ; when I consider,

(1.) That their mercies have greatly humbled them,
God has raised them, the lower they have laid themselves
God. Thus did Jacob, when God had given him much
Gen. xxii. 10. " And Jacob said, I am not worthy of the
" thy mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast said
" thy servant ; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan
" I am become two bands." And thus it was with ho
Sam. vii. 18. When God had confirmed the promise
build him a house, and not reject him as he did Saul,
before the Lord, and saith, " Who am I ? and what is
" house, that thou hast brought me hitherto ?" And so
required, Deut. xxvi. 5. when Israel was to bring to God
fruits of Canaan, they were to say, " A Syrian ready to
" my father," &c. Do others raise God the higher for
them ? And the more God raises me, the more shall I
and exalt myself ? O what a sad thing is this !

(2.) Others have freely ascribed the glory of all their
to God, and magnified not themselves, but him, for their
So David, 2 Sam. vii. 26. " Let thy name be magnified
" house of thy servant be established." He doth not
mercy, and suck out the sweetness of it, looking no farther
own comfort ; no, he cares for no mercy except God be
in it. So Psalm xviii. 2. when God had delivered him
enemies, " The Lord (saith he) is my strength, and my
" become my salvation." They did not put the crown
own heads, as I do.

(3.) The mercies of God have been melting mercies
melting their souls in love to the God of their mercies. So
1 Sam. ii. 1. when she received the mercy of a son, " My
" she) rejoiceth in the Lord ;" not in the mercy, but in
the mercy. And so Mary, Luke i. 46. " My soul doth
" Lord, my spirit rejoiceth in God my Saviour." The
fies to make more room for God ; their hearts were not
but the more enlarged to God.

(4.) The mercies of God have been mighty restraints
others from sin. So Ezra ix. 13. " Seeing thou, our
" given us such a deliverance as this, should we again
" commandments ?" Ingenuous souls have felt the
obligations of love and mercy upon them.

2. *Season*, 'The second special season in the life of a christian
'quiring more than a common diligence to keep his heart, is
'*time of adversity*; When providence frowns upon you, and bl
'your outward comforts, then look to your hearts, keep them v
'all diligence from repining against God, or fainting under
'hand; for troubles though sanctified, are troubles still; e
'sweet-brier, and holy thistles, have their prickles. Jonah w
'good man, and yet how pettish was his heart under affliction?
'was the mirror of patience, yet how was his heart discomposed
'trouble? You will find it as hard to get a composed spirit un
'great afflictions, as it is to fix quick-silver. O the hurries and
'mults which they occasion even in the best hearts! Well, th
'the second case will be this:'

Case 2. *How a Christian under great afflictions may keep
heart from repining, or desponding under the hand of God?* There
there are nine special helps. I shall here offer, to keep thy h
in this condition; and the first shall be this, to work upon y
hearts this great truth,

1. *That by these cross providences, God is faithfully pursu
the great design of electing love upon the souls of his people,
orders all these afflictions as means sanctified to that end.*

Afflictions fall not out by casualty, but by counsel, Job v. 6. E
i. 11. by this counsel of God they are ordained as means of m
spiritual good to saints, Isa. xxvii. 9. "By this shall the iniqu
"of Jacob be purged," &c. Heb. xii. 10. "But he for our pro
&c. Rom. viii. 28. "All things work together for good." T
are God's workmen upon our hearts, to pull down the pride and
nal security of them; and being so, their nature is changed; t
are turned into blessings and benefits, Psalm. cxix. 71. "It is g
"for me that I have been afflicted." And sure, then, thou has
reason to quarrel with, but rather to admire that God should c
cern himself so much in thy good, to use any means for the acc
plishing of it. Philip. iii. 11. "Paul could bless God, if by
"means he might attain the resurrection of the dead. My breth
"(saith James) count it all joy when you fall into divers temptatio
Jam. i. 2, 3. My father is about a design of love upon my s
and do I well to be angry with him? All that he doth is in p
suance of, and in reference to some eternal, glorious ends upon
soul. O it is my ignorance of God's design, that makes me qua
with him! he saith to thee in this case, as to Peter, "What I
"thou knowest not now, but hereafter thou shalt know it."

“the children of men: Nevertheless, my mercy shall
 “away from him.” O my heart! my haughty heart
 well to be discontented, when God hath given thee this
 with all the clusters of comfort growing on it, because he
 wind to blow down a few leaves; Christians have two sorts
 the goods of the throne, and the goods of the footstool
 and immoveables: If God have secured these, never
 be troubled at the loss of those; indeed, if he had cut
 or dis-covenanted my soul, I had reason to be cast down
 he hath not, nor can he do it.

Help 3. It is of marvellous efficacy to keep the heart
 under affliction, *to call to mind, that thine own father*
dering of them: Not a creature moves hand or tongue
 but by his permission. Suppose the cup be a bitter cup
 cup which thy father hath given thee to drink; and can
 spect poison to be in that cup which he delivers thee? I
 put home the case to thine own heart, consult with thine
 canst thou find in thy heart to give thy child that which
 or undo him? No, thou wouldest as soon hurt thyself.
 “thou then being evil knowest how to give good gifts
 “dren,” how much more doth God? Matth. vii. 11.
 consideration of his nature, a God of love, pity, and ten-
 or of his relation to thee as a Father, Husband, Friend,
 curity enough, if he had not spoken a word, to quiet thee
 and yet you have his word too, Jer. xxv. 6. *I will do*
You lie too near his heart to hurt you; nothing grieves
than your groundless and unworthy suspicions of his
would it not grieve a faithful, tender-hearted physician
hath studied the case of his patient, prepared the medicines
receipts to save his life, to hear him cry out, O he
me! he hath poisoned me; because it gripes and pains
operation? O when will you be ingenious!

Help 4. *God respects you as much in a low, as in a*
tion; and therefore it need not so much trouble you to
 nay, to speak home, he manifests, more of his love
 tenderness, in the time of affliction, than prosperity
 did not at first choose you because you were high, so
 forsake you because you are low: Men may look scorn-
 and alter their respects, as your condition is altered.
 providence hath blasted your estates, your summer friends
 strange, as fearing you may be troublesome to them;

not you? Suppose your husband or child had lost all at sea, and should come to you in rags; could you deny the relation, or refuse to entertain him? If you would not, much less would God. Why then are ye so troubled? Though your condition be changed, your Father's love and respects are not changed.

Help 5. *And what if by the loss of outward comforts, God will preserve your souls from the ruining power of temptation? Sure then you have little cause to sink your hearts by such sad thoughts about them.* Are not these earthly enjoyments the things that made men shrink and warp in times of trial? For the love of these many have forsaken Christ in such an hour, Matth. xix. 22. "He went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions." And if this be God's design, what have I done in quarrelling with him about it? We see mariners in a storm can throw over-board rich bales of silk, and precious things to preserve the vessel and their lives with it, and every one saith they act prudently; we know it is usual for soldiers in a city besieged, to batter down, or burn the fairest buildings without the walls, in which the enemy may shelter in the siege; and no man doubts but it is wisely done; Such as have gangrened legs or arms, can willingly stretch them out to be cut off, and not only thank, but pay the chirurgeon for his pains: And must God only be repined at, for casting over what will sink you in a storm? For pulling down that which would advantage your enemy in the siege of temptation? For cutting off what would endanger your everlasting life? O inconsiderate, ungrateful man! are not these things, for which thou grieveest, the very things that have ruined thousands of souls? Well, what Christ doest in this, thou knowest not now, but hereafter thou mayest.

Help 6. It would much stay the heart under adversity, to consider *That God, by such humbling providences, may be accomplishing things for which you have long prayed and waited:* And should you be troubled at that? Say, Christian, hast thou not many prayers depending before God upon such accounts as these: that he would keep thee from sin, discover to thee the emptiness and insufficiency of the creature; that he would kill and mortify thy lusts, that thy heart may never find rest in any enjoyment but Christ? Why not by such humbling and impoverishing strokes, God may be fulfilling thy desire: Wouldst thou be kept from sin? Lo, *he hath hedged thy way with thorns.* Wouldst thou see the creature's vanity? Thy affliction is a fair glass to discover it; for the vanity of the creature is never so effectually and sensibly discovered, as in our own experience of it. Wouldst thou have thy corruptions mortified? This is

ling from under thy head, that soft pillow of creature which thou restedst before? And yet thou fret at this, how dost thou exercise thy Father's patience? If he de thy prayers, thou art ready to say he regards thee not; which really answers the scope and main end of them, way thou expectedst, thou quarrellest with him for t stead of answering, he were crossing all thy hopes and ingenuous? Is it not enough that God is so gracious to desirest, but thou must be so impudent to expect he sh the way which thou prescribest.

Help 7. Again, It may stay thy heart, if thou consider *these troubles, God is about that work, which if thou didst see sign of, thy soul would rejoice.* We, poor creatures, with much ignorance, and are not able to discern how providences work towards God's end; and therefore, like wilderness, are often murmuring, because Providence lead in a howling desart, where we are exposed to straits; then he led them, and is now leading us, *by the right way of habitations.* If you could but see how God, in his counsel, hath exactly laid the whole plot and design of thy salvation to the smallest means and circumstances; this way, and by no other means such a one shall be saved, and by no other; number of afflictions I appoint for this man, at this time and in this order; they shall befall him thus, and thus they shall work. Could you, I say, but discern the admirable harmony and compensations, their mutual relations to each other, together with the general respect and influence they all have unto the last end, the conditions in the world, you would chuse that you are in, and you liberty to make your own choice. Providence is like a piece of arras, made up of a thousand shreds, which singly signify not what to make of, but put together, and stitched up together, represent a beautiful history to the eye. As God works according to the counsel of his own will, so that the counsel he hath ordained this as the best way to bring about the end. Such a one hath a proud heart, so many humbling providences appointed for him: such a one an earthly heart, so many punishing providences for him: Did you but see this, I would move more to support the most dejected heart.

Help 8. Farther, It would much conduce to the settling of your hearts, to consider, *That by fretting and discontenting yourselves more injury than all the afflictions you lie*

Besides, it unfits the soul to pray over its troubles, or take in the sense of that good which God intends by them: Affliction is a sword which being wrapt up in patience and quiet submission, may be easily swallowed; but discontent chews the pill and so embitters the soul. God throws away some comfort which he saw would hurt you, and you will throw away your peace after it; he shoots an arrow which sticks in your clothes, and was never intended to hurt, but only to fright you from sin: and you will thrust it onward to the piercing of your very hearts by despondency and discontent.

Help 9. Lastly, If all this will not do, but thy heart, like Rachel, still refuses to be comforted, or quieted, then consider one thing more which, if seriously pondered, will doubtless do the work; and that is this, *Compare the condition thou art now in, and art so much dissatisfied with, with that condition others are, and thyself deserves to be in:* Others are roaring in flames, howling under the scourge of vengeance, and amongst them I deserve to be. O my soul! is this hell? Is my condition as bad as the damned? O what would the devils now in hell give to change conditions with me! It is a famous instance which *Dr. Taylor gives us of the duke of Conde; ‘I have read (saith he) that when the duke of Conde had entered voluntarily into the incommodities of a religious poverty, he was one day especially and pitied by a lord of Italy, who out of tenderness wished him to be more careful and nutritive of his person. The good duke answered, Sir, be not troubled, and think not that I am ill provided of conveniences, for I send an harbinger before me, who makes ready my lodgings, and takes care that I be royally entertained. The lord asked him who was his harbinger? he answered, Thy knowledge of myself, and the consideration of what I deserve for my sins, which is eternal torments; and when with this knowledge I arrive at my lodging, how unprovided soever I find it, methinks it is ever better than I deserve.’ *Why doth the living man complain?* And thus the heart may be kept from desponding, or repining under adversity.

Season 3. ‘The third season calling for more than ordinary diligence to keep the heart, is the time of Zion’s troubles: When the church, like the ship in which Christ and his disciples were, is compassed, and ready to perish in the waves of persecution; then good souls are ready to sink, and be shipwrecked too, upon the billows of their own fears. I confess most men rather need the spur than the reins in this case, and yet some sit down as over-weighed with the sense of the church’s troubles. The loss of the ark cost old

‘But though God allow, yea, command the most aw-
 ‘hensions of these calamities, and in “such a day to call
 ‘weeping, and girding with sackcloth,” Isa. xxii. 12.
 ‘threaten the insensible, Amos vi. 1. yet it will not
 ‘see you sit like pensive Elijah under the juniper-t
 ‘xix. 4. “Ah Lord God! it is enough, take away
 ‘No, mourners in Zion you may, and ought to be; bu
 ‘tors you must not be; complain to God you may, bu
 ‘of God, though but by an unsuitable carriage, and
 ‘of your actions, you must not.’

Case 3. The third case that comes next to be spok
How public and tender hearts may be relieved and su
they are overweighed with the burdensome sense of Zi
 ‘I grant, it is hard for him that preferreth Zion to hi
 ‘keep his heart that it sink not below the due sense of
 ‘and yet this ought, and may be done by the use o
 ‘establishing directions as these.

Direction 1. *Settle this great truth in your hearts, th*
befals Zion, but by the permission of Zion's God; and
nothing out of which he will not bring much good at last

There is truly a principle of quietness in the permitt
 commanding will of God. See it in David, 2 Sam. x
 “him alone, it may be God hath bidden him:” And in
 xix. 11. “Thou couldst have no power against me, e
 “given thee from above;” it should much calm our s
 is the will of God to suffer it; and had he not suffered
 never have been as it is.

This very consideration quieted Job, Eli, David, an
 that the Lord did it was enough to them, and why sho
 so to us? If the Lord will have Zion plowed as a field, an
 stones lie in the dust; if it be his pleasure that Antichri
 yet longer, and wear out the saints of the Most High;
 will that a day of trouble, and of treading down, and o
 by the Lord God of hosts shall be upon the valley of vis
 wicked shall devour the man that is more righteous th
 are we that we should contest with God? Fit it is that
 resigned up to that will whence we proceeded, and that
 us should dispose of us as he pleaseth: he may do what
 good without our consent: doth poor man stand upon e
 that he should capitulate with his Creator, or that God
 der him an account of any of his matters? It is every

like a sad providence, but yet God sends them thither for their good. Jer. xxiv. 5. Doth God take the Assyrian as a staff in his hand, to beat his people with? Those blows are smart, and make them cry, but the end of his so doing is, "That he may accomplish his will," "work upon mount Zion," Isa. x. 12. If God can bring much good out of the worst and greatest evil of sin, much more out of temporal afflictions; and it is as evident that he will, as that he can do so. It is inconsistent with the wisdom of a common agent to permit a thing, which he might prevent if he pleased, to cross his great design and end: and can it be imagined that the most wise God should do so?

Well then, as Luther told Melancthon, *Desinat Philippus esse rector mundi*; so say I to you; Let infinite wisdom, power, and love alone; for by these all creatures are swayed, and actions guided, in reference to the church; it is none of our work to rule the world, but to submit to him that doth: *Non cæco impetu voluntur rotæ*; the motions of providence are all judicious, the wheels are full of eyes; it is enough that the affairs of Zion are in a good hand.

Direction 2. Ponder this heart-supporting truth, in reference to Zion's trouble: *That how many troubles soever are upon her, yet her King is in her.*

What! hath the Lord forsaken his churches? Hath he sold them into the enemy's hand? doth he not regard what evils befalls them, that our hearts sink at this rate? Is it not too shameful an undervaluing of the great God, and too much magnifying of poor, impatient men, to fear and tremble at creatures, whilst God is in the midst of us? The church's enemies are many and mighty; let that be granted, yet that argument with which Caleb and Joshua strove to raise their own hearts, is of as much force now as it was then: "The Lord is with us, fear them not," Num. xiv. 9. The historian tells us, that when Antigonus over-heard his soldiers reckoning how many their enemies were, and so discouraging one another; he suddenly steps in among them with this question, 'And how many (said he) do you reckon me for?' Discouraged souls, how many do you reckon the Lord for? Is he not an over match for all his enemies? Is not one Almighty more than many mighties? Doth his presence stand for nothing with us? "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Rom. viii. 31. What think you, was the reason that great exploration Gideon made in Judg. vi. 2? He questions, ver. 12, 13. he desires a sign, ver. 17. and after that another, ver. 18. and what was the end of all this, but that he might be sure the Lord

God be not with his people, how is it they are not swallowed up? Do their enemies want malice, power, or opportunity? No, but an invisible hand upon them. Well then, as it is Exodus 17, let his presence give us rest; and though the mountains be moved into the sea, though heaven and earth mingle together, God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved.

Direction 3. *Ponder the great advantages attending affliction, God in an afflicted condition.* If a low and an afflicted condition would be really best for the church, then your dejection is not irrational, but ungrateful; indeed, if you estimate the church by its worldly ease, splendour, and prosperity, times will seem bad for it; but if you reckon its glory to consist in its humility, faith, patience, and heavenly-mindedness, now the world abounds with advantages for these, as an affliction doth. It was not persecutions and prisons, but worldly splendour and greatness, that was the poison of the church: neither was the glory of its professors, but the blood of its martyrs, that preserved the church. The power of godliness did never thrive in prosperity, and never ran lower than in times of greater affliction, when "we are left a poor and an afflicted people, the remnant of the Lord," Zeph. iii. 12. What is it indeed for the saint's advantage to be weaned from the love of ease and delight in ensnaring worldly vanities! To be quickened forward with more haste to heaven, to have cleared of their own hearts, to be taught to pray more fervently and spiritually: to look and long for the rest to come, more than the present. If these be for their advantage, experience teaches us, that affliction is ordinarily blessed with such fruits as these, like the condition.

And is it well done, then, to repine and droop because God consults more the advantage of your souls, than the pleasure of your humours? Because he will bring you a nearer way to heaven, are you willing to go? Is this a due requital of his love, who does so much to concern himself in your welfare? which is more than he will do for thousands in the world, upon whom he will not spend an affliction for their good, Hos. iv. 17. Matthew 26. 45. alas! we judge by sense, and reckon things good or evil by the present, to what we, for the present, can taste and feel in them.

Direction 4. *Take heed that you overlook not the mercies which the people of God enjoy amidst all their afflictions.*

It is a pity that our tears, upon the account of our troubles,

But what say you to pardon of sin? interest in Christ? the covenant of promise? and an eternity of happiness, in the presence of God after a few days are over? O that ever a people entitled to so many mercies as these, should droop under any temporal affliction, or be so much concerned for the frowns of men, and loss of trifles! you have not the smiles of great men, but you have the favour of the great God; you are, it may be, cast back in your estates, but they are by furthered in spirituals. You cannot live so bravely, plentifully, and easily, as before; but still you may live as holy and heavenly as ever. Will you then grieve so much for these circumstantial, as to forget your substantial? Shall light troubles make you forget weighty mercies? Remember the church's true riches are laid out of the reach of all its enemies: they may make you poor, but not miserable. What though God do not distinguish, in his outward dispensations, between his own and others? Yea, what though his judgments single out the best, and spare the worst? What though an Abel be killed for love, and a Cain survive in hatred; a bloody Dionysius die in his battle, and a good Josiah fall in battle? What though the belly of the wicked be filled with hidden treasures, and the teeth of the saints broken with gravel-stones; yet still here is much matter of praise; for electing love has distinguished, though common providence did not; and whilst prosperity and impunity slay the wicked, even slavery and adversity shall benefit and save the righteous.

Direction 5. *Believe, that how low soever the church be plunged under the waters of adversity, it shall assuredly rise again.* Fear not for as sure as Christ arose the third day, notwithstanding the sufferings and watch that were upon him; so sure the church shall arise out of all her troubles, and lift up its victorious head over all its enemies: there is no fear of ruining that people who thrive by their losses, and multiply by being diminished. O be not too quick to bury the church before she is dead! stay till Christ hath tried his skill, before you give it up for lost. The bush may be all in a flame, but shall never be consumed, and that because of the good will of him that dwelleth in it.

Direct. 6. *Record the famous instances of God's care and tenderness over his people in former straits.* Christ hath not suffered it to be devoured yet; for above these 1700 years the Christian church hath lived in affliction, and yet it is not consumed; many a wave of persecution hath gone over it, and yet it is not drowned; many designs to ruin it, and hitherto none have prospered; this is not the first time that Hamans and Ahithophels have plotted its ruin: that

Direction 7. If you can fetch no comfort from any arguments, then, in the last place, *Try whether you can get some comfort out of your very troubles.* Surely this too is a good argument of your integrity; union is the great pathy; if you had not some rich adventure in that ship, you would not tremble as you do, when it is in danger: besides, the Holy Spirit may afford you this argument, that if you be sensible of the church's troubles, Jesus Christ is much more sensible of yours about it, than you can be; and he will have an eye upon them that mourn for it, Isa. lvii. 18.

Season 4. 'The fourth special season of expressing our weakness in keeping our hearts, is the time of danger and distraction; in such times the best hearts are but too easily surprized by slavish fear; it is not easy to secure the heart from distractions in times of common distraction. If Syria be afflicted with Ephraim, how do the hearts of the house of Israel tremble even as the trees of the wood, which are shaken with the wind, Isa. vii. 2. When there are ominous signs in the heaven, and the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring, then the hearts of men fail for fear, and for looking for things which are coming on the earth, Luke xxi. 25, 26. Paul himself may "Sometimes complain of fightings and fears," 2 Cor. vii. 5.

But, my brethren, these things ought not to be so, said the Lord of a more raised spirit: So was David, when his heart was in a good frame, Psal. xxvii. 1. "The Lord is my light, and in whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, in whom shall I be afraid?" Let none but the servants of sin be overcome with fear, let them that have delighted in evil, fear evil; *in metu, quantum nocuit.* O let not that which God hath appointed as a judgment upon the wicked, ever seize upon the righteous. "I will send (saith God) faintness into their eyes, and the land of their enemies, and the sound of a shaking leaf shall they hear," Lev. xxvi. 36. O what poor-spirited men are they that tremble at a shaking leaf! which makes a pleasant, and not a terrible sound, and is in itself a kind of natural music: But to a guilty conscience, the whistling leaves are drums and trumpets. "But God hath given us the spirit of fear, but of love, and of a sound mind," 2 Tim. i. 7. A sound mind as it stands there in opposition to the conscience is an unwounded conscience, not infirmed by guilt: And he that can make a man as bold as a lion. I know it cannot be said of

a degree of cautional, preventive fear as may fit you for trouble and be serviceable to your souls; there is a provident fear that opens our eyes to foresee danger, and quickens to a prudent and lawful use of means to prevent it: Such was Jacob's fear, Gen. xxxii. 7, 10, &c. But it is the fear of diffidence I persuade you to keep your hearts from; that tyrannical passion which invades the heart in times of danger; distracts, weakens, and unfits the heart for duty; drives men upon unlawful means, and brings a snare with it. When then, the fourth case will be this:

Case 4. How a Christian may keep his heart from distraction and tormenting fears, in times of great and threatening danger.

Now there are fourteen excellent rules, or helps, for the keeping the heart from sinful fear, when imminent dangers threaten us. And the first is this,

Rule 1. Look upon all the creatures as in the hand of God, who manages them in all their motions, limiting, restraining, and determining them all at his pleasure.

Get this truth well settled by faith in your hearts; it will manfully guard them against slavish fears. The first chapter of Ezekiel contains an admirable scheme, or draught of providence, where you may see the living creatures who move the wheels, and manage the great affairs and turnings of things here below, coming from Christ, who sits upon the throne, to receive new orders and instructions from him, ver. 24, 25, 26. And in Rev. vi. you read of white, black, and red horses, which are nothing else but the instruments which God employs in executing his judgments in the world, wars, pestilence, and death: But when these horses are prancing and trampling up and down the world, here is that may quiet our hearts, that God hath the reins in his hand. Wicked men are sometimes like mad horses, they would stamp the people of God under their feet, but that the bridle of providence is in their lips, Job 11, 12. A lion at liberty is terrible to meet, but who is afraid of the lion in the keeper's hand?

Rule 2. Remember that this God, in whose hand all the creatures are, is your Father, and is much more tender over you, than you are or can be, over yourselves: "He that toucheth you, toucheth mine apple of mine eye," Zech. ii. 8. Let me ask the most timorous woman, whether there be not a vast difference between the sight of a drawn sword in the hand of a bloody ruffian, and the same sword in the hand of her own tender husband? As great a difference there is in looking upon creatures by an eye of sense, and looking on them

the general of that army were his friend, or father? I have an excellent story of a religious young man, who being with many other passengers in a great storm, and they being with fear, he only was observed to be very cheerful, and been but little concerned in that danger: One of the reasons the reason of his cheerfulness, ‘O, (said he) it is because of the ship is my father.’ Consider Christ, first as the supreme Lord over the providential kingdom, and then as Head, Husband, and Friend, and thou wilt quickly say, “unto thy rest, O my soul.” This truth will make ye bold, and cause you to sing in the midst of dangers. “The Lord is King of all the earth, sing ye praise with him;” “(or, as the Hebrew word is,) Every one that is standing,” viz. of this heart-reviving and establishing the dominion of our Father over all the creatures.

Rule 3. *Urge upon your hearts the express prohibition in this case: and let your hearts stand in awe of the voice of God.*

He hath charged you not to fear, Luke xxi. 9. “Verily I say unto you, who shall hear of wars and commotions, see that ye be not terrified.” Phil. i. 28. “In nothing be terrified by your adversaries: for this shall be to you a sign of salvation, if ye do stand fast in the Lord.” In Matth. x. 26, 28, 31. and within the compass of such a Saviour commands us thrice, *not to fear man*. Doth the thought of proud dust and ashes make thee afraid? Doth the voice of man make thee tremble? and shall not the voice of God: O thou such a fearful and timorous spirit, how is it that thou fearest to obey the flat commands of Jesus Christ? Methinks thou shouldst have as much power to calm, as the voice of a worm to terrify thy heart. Isa. li. 12, 13. “I, even I, will comfort you: Who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall be as the grass, and forgettest the Lord thy Maker?” We are creatures sinfully, till we have forgotten God; did we remember what he is, and what he hath said, we should not be terrified by the voices of men: Bring thy heart, then, to this dilemma in time, if I let into my heart the slavish fear of man, I must be in reverential awe and fear of God; and dare I cast off the fear of the Almighty for the frowns of a man? Shall I lift up my voice against the great God? Shall I run upon a certain sin, to shun a certain danger? O keep thy heart by this consideration!

Rule 4. *Remember how much needless trouble you have brought upon you formerly, and how you have di-*

and all this to no purpose: You might have all this while enjoyed your peace, and possessed your souls in patience. And here I do not but observe a very deep policy of Satan, managing a design against the soul by these vain fears: I call them vain, in regard to the frustration of them by Providence; but certainly they are not in vain, as to the end Satan aims at in raising them; for herein he acts as soldiers use do in the siege of a garrison, who on purpose wear out the besieged by constant watchings, and thereby unfit them to make resistance when they storm it in earnest, do every night give them false alarms, which though they come to nothing, yet doth notably serve this further design of the enemy. O when will you beware of Satan's devices?

Rule 5. Consider solemnly, *That though the things you fear should really fall out, yet there is more evil in your own fear, than in the thing feared;*

And that not only as the least evil of sin is worse than the greatest evil of suffering; but as this sinful fear hath really more torment and trouble in it, than is in that condition you are so much afraid of: fear is both a multiplying and a tormenting passion; it represents troubles much greater than they are, and so tortures and wrecks the soul much worse than when the suffering itself comes. So it was with Israel at the Red-sea, they cried out, and were sore afraid, till they put their foot in the water, and then a passage was opened through the waters, which they thought would have drowned them. Thus it is with us; we look through the glass of carnal fear, upon the waters of trouble, the swellings of Jordan, cry out, O they are unfordable, we must needs perish in them: But when we come into the midst of those floods, indeed we find the promise made good; "God will make a way to escape," 1 Cor. x. 13. Thus it was with blessed Bilney, when he would make a trial, by putting his finger to the candle, and not able to endure that, he cried out, 'What, cannot I bear the burning of a finger? how then shall I be able to bear the burning of my whole body to-morrow?' And yet when that morning came, he could go cheerfully into the flames, with that scripture in his mouth, Isa. xliii. 1, 2; 3. "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee: I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine; when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt."

Rule 6. *Consult the many precious promises which are written for your support and comfort in all dangers.*

These are your refuges to which you may fly and be safe; "Whoso

“be well with them that fear the Lord.” &c. “Could
“lieve the promises, your hearts should be established
xx. 29. Could you but plead them with God, as Jacob
xxxii. 12. “Thou saidst, I will surely do thee good,” &
relieve you in every distress.

Objection. *But that promise was made personally, and
him, so are not these to me.*

Answer. If Jacob's God be your God, you have as
rest in them as he had. The church, a thousand years
transaction betwixt God and Jacob, applied that which
to him, as if it had been spoken to themselves, He
“found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us.”

Rule 7. *Quiet your trembling hearts by recording and
your past experiences of the care and faithfulness of God
distresses.*

These experiences are food for your faith in a wilderness.
Psal. lxxiv. 14. By this David kept his heart in time
1 Sam. xvii. 37. and Paul his, 2 Cor. i. 10. It was sworn
ed by Silentarius, when one told him that his enemies
to take away his life, *Si Deus mei curam non habet, quid
God take no care of me, how have I escaped hitherto?*
plead with God old experiences to procure new ones
pleading with God for new deliverances, as it is in pleading
pardons. Now mark how Moses pleads on that account
Numb. xiv. 19. “Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of
“as thou hast forgiven them from Egypt until now.”
say as men do, Lord, this is the first fault, thou hast not
led before to sign their pardon: But, Lord, because thou
doned them so often, I beseech thee pardon them once
in new straits, Lord, thou hast often heard, helped,
former fears; therefore now help again, for with thee
teous redemption, and thine arm is not shortened.

Rule 8. *Be well satisfied that you are in the way of
and that will beget holy courage in times of danger.*

“Who will harm you, if you be followers of that which
“1 Pet. iii. 13. Or, if any dare attempt it, “you may
“mit yourselves to God in well-doing,” 1 Pet. iv. 19.
consideration that raised Luther's spirit above all fear:
“of God (said he) I ever am, and ever shall be stout;
sume this title, *Cedo nulli*, a good cause will bear up
bravely. Hear the saying of a * heathen, to the shame

‘ speak freely that which his conscience commanded him ; the
 ‘ peror threatening then that he should die, he answered, Did I
 ‘ tell you that I was immortal ? Do you what you will, and I
 ‘ do what I ought ; it is in your power to put me to death unjust
 ‘ and in me to die constantly.’

Righteousness is a breast-plate, the cause of God will pay all your
 expences ; let them tremble whom danger finds out of the way of duty.

Rule 9. *Get your consciences sprinkled with the blood of Christ
 from all guilt, and that will set your hearts above all fear.*

It is guilt upon the conscience that softens and cowardizes
 spirits : “ The righteous are bold as a lion,” Prov. xxviii. 1.
 It was guilt in Cain’s conscience that made him cry, “ Every one that
 “ meets me shall slay me,” Gen. iv. 14. A guilty conscience
 more terrified with conceited dangers, than a pure conscience is with
 real ones. A guilty sinner carries a witness against himself in his
 own bosom. It was guilty Herod cried out, “ John Baptist is risen
 “ from the dead.” Such a conscience is the devil’s anvil, on which
 he fabricates all those swords and spears, with which the guilty
 sinner pierces and wounds himself ; guilt is to danger what fire is to
 gun-powder ; a man need not fear to walk among many barrels of
 powder if he have no fire about him.

Rule 10. *Exercise holy trust in times of great distress.*

Make it your business to trust God with your lives and comforts,
 and then your hearts will be at rest about them. So did David, Ps.
 lvii. 3. “ At what time I am afraid, I will trust in thee ;” quoth
 Lord, if at any time a storm rise, I will make bold to shelter me from
 it under the covert of thy wings. Go to God by acts of faith and
 trust, and never doubt but he will secure you, Isa. lxii. 3. “ Thou
 “ wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee,
 “ cause he trusteth in thee.” God takes it well when thou comest
 to him thus ; “ Father, my life, my liberty, or estate, are hurt
 “ after, and I cannot secure them ; O let me leave them in thy hands.
 “ The poor leaveth himself with thee ;” and doth his God fail him ?
 No, “ thou art the helper of the fatherless,” Psal. x. 14. that
 thou art the helper of the destitute one, that hath none to go to
 God. And that is a sweet scripture, Psal. cxii. 7. “ He shall not
 “ afraid of evil tidings, his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.
 he doth not say, his ear shall be privileged from the report of
 tidings, he may hear as sad tidings as other men, but his heart shall
 be privileged from the terror of those tidings, “ his heart is fixed.”

Rule 11. *Consult the honour of religion more, and your personal*

your fears before them do ! It was a noble saying of Neh vi. 11. " Should such a man as I flee ? And who, be-
" would flee ? " Were it not better you should die, the
world should be prejudiced against Christ by your ex-
alas ! how apt is the world, who judge more by what
your practices, than by what they understand of your
conclude from your timorousness, that how much soever
mend faith, and talk of assurance, yet you dare trust to
no more than they when it comes to the trial. O let not
lay such a stumbling-block before the blind world.

Rule 12. *He that will secure his heart from fear, must*
the eternal interest of his soul in the hands of Jesus Christ.

When this is done, then you may say, *Now world*
You will not be very solicitous about a vile body, when
once assured it shall be well to all eternity with your pre-
" Fear not them (saith Christ) that can kill the body, and
" have no more that they can do." The assured Christian
smile with contempt upon all his enemies, and say, Is it
that you do ? What say you, Christians ? Are you assured
souls are safe, that within a few moments of your dissolution
shall be received by Christ into an everlasting habitation
you be sure of that, never trouble yourselves about the
and means of your dissolution.

Objection. *O, but a violent death is terrible to nature.*

Answer. But what matter is it, when thy soul is
whether it were let out at thy mouth, or at thy throat
thy familiar friends, or barbarous enemies, stand about
body, and close thine eyes ? Alas ! it is not worth the
much to do about ; *Nihil corpus sentit in nervo cum est*
cælo, thy soul shall not be sensible in heaven how thy
on earth ; no, it shall be swallowed up in life.

Rule 13. *Learn to quench all slavish creature-fears,*
essential fear of God.

This is a cure by diversion : It is a rare piece of Chris-
dom to turn those passions of the soul which most
into spiritual channels ; to turn natural anger into spiri-
tual mirth into holy cheerfulness, and natural fear into a
and awe of God. This method of cure Christ prescribes
forementioned place, Mat. x. like to that which is in
13. *fear not their fear* ; but how shall we help it ? We
" tify the Lord of hosts himself, and let him be your fear."

HOW TO KEEP THE HEART FROM FEARS.

Rule 14. Lastly, *Pour out those fears to God in prayer, which the devil and your own unbelief pour in upon you in times of danger.*

Prayer is the best out-let to fear; where is the Christian that does not set his *probatum est* to this direction? I will give you the greatest example in the world to encourage you in the use of it, even the example of Jesus Christ, Mark xiv. 32. When the hour of his danger and death drew nigh, he gets into the garden, separates from the disciples, and there wrestles mightily with God in prayer, even unto an agony: in reference to which the apostle saith, Heb. v. 7. "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong cries and tears, to him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared." He was heard as to strength and support to carry him through it, though not as to deliverance, or exemption from it.

Now, O that these things might abide with you, and be reduced to practice in these evil days, that many trembling souls may be established by them.

Season 5. 'The fifth season to excite this diligence in keeping the heart, is a time of straits and outward pinching wants; although at such times we should complain to God, and not of God, the throne of grace being erected for a time of need, Heb. iv. 16.) when the waters of relief run low, and want begins to pinch how prone are the best hearts to distrust the fountain! when the meal in the barrel, and the oil in the cruse are almost spent, faith and patience are almost spent too. Now it is difficult to lay down the proud and unbelieving heart in an holy quietude and sweet submission at the foot of God: It is an easy thing to talk of trusting God for daily bread, while we have a full barn or purse; but to say as the prophet, Hab. iii. 17. "Though the fig-tree should not blossom, neither fruit be in the vine, &c. yet will I rejoice in the Lord:" surely this is not easy.' The fifth case therefore shall be this:

Case 5. *How a Christian may keep his heart from distrusting God, or repining against him, when outward wants are either felt or feared.*

This case deserves to be seriously pondered, and especially to be studied now, since it seems to be the design of providence to enlighten the people of God of their creature-fulness, and acquaint them with those straits which hitherto they have been altogether strangers to.

Now, to secure the heart from the fore-mentioned dangers attending this condition, these following considerations, through the blessing of the Spirit, may prove effectual. And the first is this:

familiarly acquainted with them. Hear what blessed I not of himself only, but in the name of other saints red exigencies, 1 Cor. iv. 11. "Even to this present hour we hunger and thirst, and are naked and buffeted, and have no dwelling-place." To see such a man as Paul going up the world with a naked back, and empty belly, and not a hat on his head in, one that was so far above thee in grace and that did more service for God in a day, than perhaps thou in all thy days, and yet you repine as if hardly dealt with, have you forgot what necessities and straits even a David hath suffered? great was his straits and necessities? 1 Sam. xxv. 8. "I pray thee (saith he to Nabal) whatsoever cometh to thy servants, and to thy son David." Renowned Mithridates was forced to dig in the town ditch for a maintenance. F. Worth (as I have been credibly informed) was forced to sell his land to lay on to buy bread. But what speak I of these? Behold more than any of them, even the Son of God, "who is the Father of things, and by whom the worlds were made;" yet he would have been glad of any thing, having nothing to lose. xi. 12, 13. "And on the morrow, when they were come to Bethany, he was hungry; and seeing a fig-tree afar off without leaves, he came if haply he might find [any thing] there." Well then, hereby God hath set no mark of hatred against thee, neither can you infer the want of love from the want of a promise. When thy repining heart puts the question, Was thy sorrow like unto mine? Ask these worthies, and they will tell thee though they did not complain and fret as thou dost, yet they were driven to as great straits as thou art.

Well then, hereby God hath set no mark of hatred against thee, neither can you infer the want of love from the want of a promise. When thy repining heart puts the question, Was thy sorrow like unto mine? Ask these worthies, and they will tell thee though they did not complain and fret as thou dost, yet they were driven to as great straits as thou art.

Consid. 2. *If God leave you not in this necessitous condition, out a promise, you have no reason to repine or despond.*

This is a sad condition indeed to which no promise can give relief. Remember Mr. Calvin, upon these words, Isa. ix. 1. "The dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he despised her; for he said, I will not build her up, nor will I repair her wall: for the doubt, in what sense the darkness of the captivity was as great as the lesser incursions made by Tiglath Pileser. When the city was destroyed, and the temple burnt with fire, there was no comparison in the affliction; but yet the darkness was not be such, and the reason (saith he) is this, *Huic certam promissionem esse additam, cum in prioribus nulla esset*; i. e. a certain promise made to this, but none to the other.

It is better to be as low as hell with a promise, than to be as high as heaven without one.

"Lord shall want nothing that is good." Ps. xxxiii. 18, 19. "Thine eye of the Lord is upon the righteous, to keep them alive in thine hand." Ps. lxxxiv. 11. "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Rom. viii. 32. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Isa. xli. 17. "When the poor and the needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them." Here you see, first, their extreme want of water being put even for the necessities of life. (2.) Their certainty of relief, *I the Lord will hear them*; in which it is supposed that they cry unto him in their straits, and he hears their cry.

Having therefore these promises, why should not your distrustful hearts conclude like David's, Psal. xxiii. 1. "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want."

Objection. But these promises imply conditions: if they were solute, they would afford more satisfaction.

Solution. What are those tacit conditions you speak of but these? (1.) That either he will supply or sanctify your wants: (2.) That you shall have so much as God sees fit for you. And doth this trouble you? Would you have the mercy whether sanctified or no? Whether God sees it fit for you or no? Methinks the appetites of saints at earthly things should not be so ravenous, to seize greedily upon their enjoyment, not caring how they have it.

But oh, when wants pinch, and we see not whence supplies should come, then your faith in the promise shakes, and we, like murmuring Israel cry, "He gave bread, can he give water also?" O unbelieving hearts! When did his promise fail? Whoever trusted the Lord and was ashamed? May not God upbraid thee with thine unreasonable infidelity; as Jer. ii. 31. "Have I been a wilderness unto you, &c. Or as Christ said to the disciples, "Since I was with you, lack ye any thing?" Yea, may you not upbraid yourselves, may you not say with good old Polycarp, These many years I have served Christ and found him a good master. Indeed he may deny what your wantonness, but not what your real wants call for. He will not regard the cry of your lusts, nor yet despise the cry of your faith; though he will not indulge and humour your wanton appetites, yet he will not violate his own faithful promises. These promises are your best security for eternal life; and it is strange if they should not satisfy you for daily bread: remember ye the words of the Lord, and solace your hearts with them amidst all your wants. It is said of Epicurus,

nothing: though thou art a little troublesome, I will thee to be evil. If upon such grounds as these they themselves under such grinding and racking pains, and their diseases by them, how much rather should the miseries of God, and the sweet experiences which have gone by step with them, make you to forget all your wants, you in every strait.

Consid. 3. *If it be bad now, it might have been worse. denied thee the comforts of this life? He might have denied thee peace, and pardon also, and then thy case had been woful* know God hath done so to millions in the world: how wretched objects may your eyes behold every day, that without fort in hand, nor yet in hope, are miserable here, and in eternity; that have a bitter cup, and nothing to sweeten it much as an hope that it will be better. But it is not so though you be poor in this world, "yet rich in faith, and in the kingdom which God hath promised," Jam. ii. 5. O let us value our spiritual riches over against temporal poverty. Balance all your troubles with your spiritual privileges. Indeed if God had clothed souls the robes of righteousness to clothe them, the hidden treasures feed them, the heavenly mansions to receive them; if you were left destitute as well as your bodies, you might well be comforted by this consideration hath enough to bring the considering under any outward strait. It was bravely said by Luther when he began to pinch him, 'Let us be contented with our habitation (he,) for do not we feast with angels upon Christ the life of the world.' "And blessed be God (saith Paul) who hath abounded in all manner of spiritual blessings," Eph. i. 3.

Consid. 4. *This affliction, though great, is not such as to ruin you, but God hath far greater, with which he chastises the desires of his soul in this world: and should he remove this affliction from those, you would account your present state a very comfort, and bless God to be as now you are.*

What think ye, sirs? Should God remove your present afflictions, supply all your outward wants, give you the desire of your heart, and all creature comforts, but hide his face from you, shoot his arrows of wrath at your souls, and cause the venom of them to drink up your spirit? Should he leave you but a few days to the buffeting of Satan, to the venomous injections; should he hold your eyes but a few moments, being ing with horrors of conscience, tossing to and fro till the next day: should he lead you through the chambers of

sense and feeling, that he hath worse rods than these for unsubmissive and froward children.

Consid. 5. *If it be bad now, it will be better shortly.*

O keep thy heart by that consideration: the meal in the barrel almost spent; well, be it so, why should that trouble me, if I am almost beyond the need and use of all these things. The traveller has spent almost all his money, but a shilling or two left: well, saith he, though my money be almost spent, yet my journey is almost finished too; I am near home, and then I shall be fully supplied. If there be no candles in the house, yet it is a comfort to think that it is almost day, and then there will be no need of candles. I am afraid, Christian, thou misreckonest thyself when thou thinkest thy provision is almost spent, and you have a great way to travel: many years to live, and nothing to live upon; it may not be half so many years thou supposest; in this be confident, if thy provision be spent, either fresh supplies are coming, though thou seest not from whence, or thou art nearer thy journey's end than thou reckonest thyself to be. Desponding soul, doth it become a man or woman travelling upon a long road to the heavenly city, and almost arrived there, within a few day's journey of his Father's house, where all his wants shall be supplied, to take on thus about a little meat, drink, or clothes which he fears he shall want by the way? It was a noble saying of the first Christian Martyrs, famous in the *Ecclesiastical story*, when turned out naked on a frosty night to be starved to death, with these words they comforted one another, *ὁ χειμὼν ὁ χειμὼν*, &c. The winter indeed is sharp and cold, but heaven is warm and comfortable; here we shiver for cold, but Abraham's bosom will make amends for all.

Objection 1. *But I may die for want.*

Solution (1.) Who ever did so? When were the righteous forsaken? (2.) If so, your journey is ended, and you are fully supplied.

Objec. 2. *But I am not sure of that; were I sure of heaven, were another matter.*

Sol. Are you not sure of that? Then you have other matters to trouble yourselves about than these: methinks these should be the least of all your cares: I do not find that souls perplexed and troubled about the want of Christ, pardon of sin, &c. are usually very anxious, or solicitous about these things. He that seriously puts such questions as these, What shall I do to be saved? How shall I know my sin is pardoned? doth not usually trouble himself with, "What shall I eat, what shall I drink, or wherewithal shall I be clothed?"

Consid. 6. *Doth it become the children of such a Father to distrust*

again? Disingenuous child! reason thus with thyself; if I want of what is good and needful for me, it must either be that my Father knows not my wants, or hath not wherewith to supply them: or else regards not what becomes of me. What shall I charge upon him? Not the first; for, Mark vi. 3. "Father knows what I have need of;" my condition is known to him: nor the second, "For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof," Psal. xxiv. 1. His name is *God all-sufficient*, and he is able to do all things: Not the last, for, "as a father pities his children, so the Lord pities them that fear him," Ps. ciii. 13. "The Lord is exceeding kind and of tender mercy," Jam. v. 11. "He hears the cry of the just when they cry," Job xxxviii. 41. and will he not hear thee? Consider, saith Christ, the fowls of the air," Matth. vi. 26. "Behold the fowls at the door, that are every day fed by hand, but ye cannot buy them for money: neither can ye buy the air that have none to provide for them. Doth he feed the fowls of the air? Doth he feed his enemies, and will he forget his children? He heard of Ishmael in distress, Gen. xvi. 17. O my unbelieving heart, thou yet doubt? Remember Hagar and the child.

Consid. 7. *Your poverty is not your sin, but your affliction; if by sinful means you have not brought it upon yourself, if it be but an affliction, it may be borne the easier for you.*

It is hard indeed to bear an affliction coming upon us without the account and punishment of sin; when men are under trouble and affliction, they use to say, O! if it were but a single affliction, and not brought from the hand of God by way of trial, I could bear it. If it be brought upon myself by sin, it comes as the punishment of sin; the marks of God's displeasure are upon it; it is the cause of many troubles and galls more than the want without.

But it is not so here, and therefore you have no reason to lie down under it.

Objection. *But though there be no sting of guilt, yet there are other stings: As first, the discredit of religion, if I cannot comply with mine engagements in the world, and therefore I am like to suffer.*

Solution. It is well you have an heart to discharge your conscience, yet if God disable you by providence, it is no discredit to your profession, because you do not that which you cannot do, but it is your desire and endeavour to do what you can and what God will, and in this case God's will is, that lenity and forbearance be used towards you, Deut. xxiv. 12, 13.

Object. 2. *But it grieves me to behold the necessities of*

HOW TO KEEP THE HEART FROM WANDERING IN DUTY.

Sol. Every condition in the world hath its clogs and attending temptations; and were you in a prosperous condition, you must there meet with more temptations and fewer advantages than you have: For though I confess poverty hath its temptations as well as prosperity, yet I am confident prosperity hath not these excellent advantages that poverty hath: For here you have an opportunity to discover the sincerity of your love to God, when you can live up to him, and find enough in him, and constantly follow him, even when all external inducements and motives fail. And thus I have shown you how to keep your hearts from the temptations and dangers attending a poor and low condition in the world, when want pinches and the heart begins to sink, then improve and bless God for the helps to keep it.

Season 6. 'The sixth season of expressing this diligence in keeping the heart, is the season of duty; when we draw nigh to God in public, private, or secret duties, then it is time to look to the heart for the vanity of the heart seldom discovers itself more than at such times. How oft doth the poor soul cry out, O Lord! how would I serve thee, but vain thoughts will not let me; I cannot open my heart to thee, to delight my soul in communion with thee, but my corruptions have set upon me; Lord, call off these vain thoughts, and suffer them not to prostitute the soul which is consecrated to thee before thy face.' The sixth case then is this,

Case 6. How the heart may be kept from distractions by vain thoughts, in the time of duty.

There is a twofold distraction or wandering of the heart in duty. (1.) Voluntary and habitual, Psalm lxxviii. 8. "They set not their hearts aright, and their spirit was not steadfast with God." This is the case of formalists, and proceeds from the want of an holy bent and inclination of the heart to God; their hearts are under the power of their lust, and therefore it is no wonder they go after the lust, even when they are about holy things, Ezek. xxxiii. 31. (2.) Involuntary and lamented distractions, Rom. vii. 21—24. "I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me. O wretched man that I am," &c. This proceeds not from the want of a holy bent and aim, but from the weakness and imperfection of grace. And in this case the soul may make the like complaint against its own corruptions that Abijah did against Jeroboam, 2 Chron. xvi. 6, 7. "Yet Jeroboam the son of Nebat is risen up against me, lord, when Rehoboam was young and tender-hearted, and could not withstand him, and there are gathered unto him vain men."

set apart some time for solemn preparation to meet God. You come reeking hot out of the world into God's presence; you will find a tang of it in your duties: It is with the minutes since plunged in the world, now at the feet of God, as with the sea after a storm, which still continues working and disquiet, though the wind be laid, and the storm past; the heart must have sometime to settle. There are few musicians can take down a lute or viol, and play presently upon it; some time to tune it; there are few Christians can prepare as Psal. lvii. 7. "O God, my heart is fixed, it is fixed, when thou goest to God in any duty, take thy heart aside, my soul, I am now addressing myself to the greatest work a creature was employed about: I am going into the awe of God about business of everlasting moment.

Oh my soul, leave trifling now, be composed, watch this is no common-work; it is God-work, soul-work, etc. I am now going forth bearing seed, which will bring forth life or death in the world to come; pause a while upon thy wants, troubles; keep thy thoughts a while on these, then address thyself to duty. David first mused, and then spoke his tongue, Psalm xxxix. 3, 4. So Psal. xlv. 1. "My heart is diting," &c.

Help 2. Having composed the heart by previous meditation, presently set a guard upon thy senses: How often are people in danger of losing the eyes of their mind by those of the flesh; this Job covenanted with his senses, chap. xxxi. 1. for this reason, Psal. cxix. 37. "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken thou me in thy way." This may serve for that mystical Arabian proverb, which advises to 'shut thy eyes, that the house may be light:' it were excellent if you set your outsets upon duty, as an holy man once did, when he came from duty: *Claudimini, oculi mei, claudimini*, &c. "Shut mine eyes, be shut: for it is impossible you should ever see beauty and glory in any creature, as I have now seen in God; had need avoid all occasions of distraction from without, for you will meet enough from within. Intention of spirit upon God, locks up the eye and ear against vanity. When he entered the gates of Syracuse, Archimedes was so intent upon his mathematical scheme, that he took no notice of the soldiers as they entered his very study with drawn swords; a *ferocious* heart be a *vagrant* heart.

shop where thoughts are first forged and framed, and as this is, are they ; if imaginations be not first cast down, it is impossible every thought of the heart should be brought into obedience to Christ, 2 Cor. x. 5. The fancy is naturally the wildest and most untameable power in the soul. Some Christians, especially such as are of hot and dry constitutions, have much to do with it.

And truly, the more spiritual the heart is, the more it is troubled about the vanity and wildness of it. O what a sad thing it is ! that thy nobler soul must lackey up and down after a vain and roving fancy that such a beggar should ride on horse-back, and such a prince run after on foot ; that it should call off the soul from attendance upon God, when it is most sweetly engaged in communion with him, to prosecute such vanities as it will start at such times before it ! beg earnestly of God that the power of sanctification may once come upon thee. Some Christians have attained such a degree of sanctification of the faculties, that they have had much sweetness left upon their hearts in the spiritual workings of it in the night-season : When thy fancy is more mortified, thy thoughts will be more orderly and fixed.

Help 4. *If thou wouldst keep thy heart from those vain excursions realize to thyself by faith, the holy and awful presence of God in his duties.*

If the presence of a grave man will compose us to seriousness, how much more the presence of an holy God ? Thinkest thou thy soul durst be so gay and light, if the sense of a divine presence were upon it ? Remember the place where thou art is the place of his feet, Isa. lx. 13. act faith upon the omniscieny of God. " All the churches shall know that I am he that searcheth the heart, trieth the reins, and I will give to every one of you according to your works," Rev. ii. 23. " All things are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do," Heb. iv. 12. Realize his infinite holiness ; into what a serious composed frame did the sight of God, in his holiness, put the spirit of the prophet ? Isa. vi. 5. Labour also to get upon thy heart conceptions of the greatness of God, such as Abraham had, Gen. xviii. 27. " I that am but dust and ashes have taken upon me to speak to God." And lastly, remember the jealousy of God how tender he is over his worship, Lev. x. 3. " And Moses said unto Aaron, This is that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified."

* A man that is praying (saith Bernard) should behave himself

duty were written out, and interlined with thy petition, thou have the face to present to God? Should thy to utter all the thoughts of thy heart in prayer, would not thee? Why thy thoughts are vocal to God, Psal. cxlvi. 1. thou wert petitioning the king for thy life, would it not to see thee playing with thy bandstrings, or catching that lights upon thy clothes, whilst thou art speaking of such serious matters? O think sadly upon that scripture lxxxvii. 7. "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him?" Why did God ascend in thunderings, and dark clouds upon Sinai? Exod. xix. 16—18. the mountains smoke under him? The people quake round about him, yea, Moses himself not exempted? the people, that great truth, Heb. xii. 28, 29. "Let us adore him, whereby we may serve him acceptably, with reverence and fear, for our God is a consuming fire!" Present God before thee, and thy vain heart will quickly be reduced to a frame.

Help 5. *Maintain a praying frame of heart in the duty.* What is the reason our hearts are so dull, careless, when we come to hear or pray, but because the heart has such long intermissions in our communion with God, whereof the heart is out of a praying frame? If there were but warmth, those holy impressions we carry from God were but preserved to kindle another duty, it would be a precious advantage to keep the heart intent and serious with duty.

To this purpose those intermediate ejaculations between solemn duties, are of most sweet and excellent use; by this is as it were linked to another, and so the soul, as it were itself in a chain of duties. That Christian seldom misses a solemn duty, that shoots up many of these darts in the duty. It is an excellent commendation Christ bestows upon his spouse, Cant. iv. 11. "Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the oil of my comb." Upon which text one gives this sweet note; the oil of my comb drops actually but sometimes, but it always hangs ready to fall; If our ejaculations were more, our duty upon this account would be fewer.

Help 6. *Endeavour to engage and raise thy affection in the duty, if thou wouldst have thy distractions cured.*

A dropping eye, and a melting heart, are seldom troubled

may be filled with those ravishing and matchless delights that are in his presence, your soul would not offer to stir from thence.

It is with the heart in duty as it is with those that dig for gold ore; they try here, and finding none, try there; and so go from place to place, till at last they hit upon the rich vein, and there they sit down. If thy heart could but once hit the rich vein in duty, it would dwell and abide there with delight and constancy. "O how I love thy law, it is my meditation day and night!" Psal. cxix. 97. The soul could dwell day and night upon its knees, when once its delights, loves, and desires are engaged. What is the reason your hearts are so shuffling, especially in secret duties! Why are you ready to be gone, almost as soon as you are come into the presence of God, but because your affections are not engaged?

Help 7. Mourn over the matter to God, and call in assistance from heaven, when vain thoughts assault thy heart in duty.

When the messenger of Satan buffeted Paul by wicked injections, as is supposed, he goes to God, and mourns over it before him, 2 Cor. xii. 8. never slight wandering thoughts in duty as small matters follow every vain thought with a deep sigh, turning thee to God with such words as these: Lord, I came hither to speak with thee, and here a busy devil and a vain heart conspiring together have set upon me. O my God! what an heart have I? Shall I never wait upon thee without distraction! when shall I enjoy an hour of free communion with thee? Help me, my God, this once; do but display thy glory before mine eye, and my heart shall quickly be recovered. Thou knowest I came hither to enjoy thee, and shall I go away without thee? See how the heart of thy poor child works towards thee, it strives to get near thee, but cannot: My heart is aground, "conquer thou north-wind, blow south-wind," O for a fresh gale now from thy Spirit, to set my affections a-float! Couldst thou but thus affectionately bewail thy distractions to God, thou mightest obtain help and deliverance from them: He would say to Satan and thine inordinate lusts, as Ahasuerus said of Haman, What, will he force thee queen before my face? Who are these that set upon my child and my work and presence?

Help 8. Look upon the success and sweetness of thy duties, which very much depending upon the keeping of thy heart close with God, and them.

These two things, the success and sweetness of duty, are as dear to a Christian as his two eyes; and both of these must necessarily be lost, if the heart be lost in duty. Job xxxv. 13. "Surely God has

of all my time: Could I but get up this heart with G now obtain such mercies as would be matter for a so nity.

Help 9. *Look upon it as a great discovery of the sincrisy of your hearts, according as you find them caref in this matter.*

Nothing will startle an upright heart more than this I give way to a customary wandering of heart from G spot of the hypocrite appear upon my soul? They indee on in the round of duty, never regarding the frames of Ezek. xxxiii. 31, 32. but shall I do so? When men presence-chamber, and the king is not there, they bow chair. O never let me be satisfied with empty duties! take my leave of a duty "until mine eyes have seen t " Lord of hosts."

Help 10. Lastly, *It will be of special use to keep thine l in duties, to consider what influence all thy duties have int*

These are your seed-times, and what you sow in y this world, you must look to reap the fruits of it in a Gal. vi. 7, 8. If you sow to the flesh, of that you s ruption; but if to the Spirit, life everlasting. O my so riously, wouldst thou be willing to reap the fruit of vanit to come? Darest thou say, when thy thoughts are rovi of the earth in duty, when thou scarce mindest what t hearest; now, Lord, I am sowing to the Spirit; now I and laying up for eternity; now I am seeking for glory immortality; now I am striving to enter in at the str I am taking the kingdom of heaven by an holy violen consideration as this should make the multitudes of vain press in upon the heart in duty, to fly seven ways be thus I have shewn you how to keep your hearts in the

Season 7. 'The seventh season calling for more than gence to keep the heart, is, when we receive injurie , from men. Such is the depravedness and corruption , collapsed state, that *homo homini lupus*, one man is be 'tyger, to another: They are, as the prophet complain ' "As the fishes of the sea, and as the creeping things 'ruler over them;" and as wicked men are cruel and c 'to another, so they conspire together to abuse and w 'ple of God, as the same prophet complains, ver. 13. 'devoureth the man that is more righteous than he

HOW TO KEEP THE HEART FROM REVENGEFUL MOTIONS.

• tions against your enemies, and to sweeten your embittered spirit.
The seventh case then shall be this,

Case 7. *How a Christian may keep his heart from revengeful motions, under the greatest injuries and abuses from men.*

The gospel, indeed, allows a liberty to vindicate our innocency and assert our rights, but not to vent our corruptions, and invade God's right. When therefore thou findest thy heart begin to be inflamed by revengeful motions, presently apply the following remedies; and the first is this,

Remedy 1. *Urge upon thy heart the severe prohibitions of revenge, the law of God.* Remember that this is forbidden fruit, how pleasant and delicious soever it be to our vitiated appetites. O, saith nature, revenge is sweet: O but, saith God, the effects thereof shall be bitter. He plainly hath God interdicted this flesh-pleasing sin, Prov. xx. "Say not I will recompense evil." Prov. xxiv. 29. "Say not I will do so to him as he hath done to me." Rom. xii. 17. "Recompence to no man evil for evil." And ver. 19. "Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place to wrath." Nay, that is not all; Prov. xxv. 21. "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink." The word *feed him*, as critics observe, signifies to feed cheerfully, and tenderly, as birds do their young ones: This scripture is a great friend to the peace and tranquillity of human society, which can never be preserved if revenge be not deposed. It was wont to be an argument urged by the Christians to prove that religion to be supernatural and pure that forbids revenge, which is sweet to nature; and verily it is a thousand pities such an argument should be lost. Well, then, awe your hearts with the authority of God in these scriptures, and when carnal reason saith, mine enemy deserves to be hated, let conscience reply, but doth God deserve to be disobeyed? Thus and thus hath he done, and so he hath wronged me; but what hath God done that I should wrong him? If he can be so bold to break the peace, shall I be so wicked to break the precept? If he fears not to wrong me, shall not I fear to wrong God? O let the fear of God's threatenings repress such sinful motions.

Remedy 2. *Set before your eyes the most eminent pattern of meekness and forgiveness, that your souls may fall in love with the same.* This is the way to cut off those common pleas of the flesh for revenge: As thus no man would bear such an affront: Yes, such affronts have borne as bad and worse. I shall be reckoned a coward and fool, if I pass by this: No matter, as long as I follow the example of the wisest and holiest of men: never did any suffer more and greater

“ing us an example that we should follow his steps: V
 “was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, b
 “not, but committed himself to him that judgeth right
 be of a meek, forgiving spirit, is Christ-like, God-like;
 “you be the children of your Father which is in hea
 “maketh his sun to rise upon the evil and upon the goo
 “eth rain on the just and unjust,” Matth. v. 45. Ho
 also did the Spirit of Christ rest upon his apostles? Nev
 such men upon earth for true excellency of spirit. No
 abused more, or suffered their abuses better. “Being
 “they) we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; bei
 “we entreat,” 1 Cor. iv. 12, 13. Mr. Calvin, though
 quick spirit, yet had attained such a degree of this Christ
 ness, that when Luther had used some opprobrious lang
 the good man said no more but this, ‘Although he sh
 ‘devil, yet I will acknowledge him to be an eminenc
 ‘Jesus Christ.’

I have often heard it reported of holy Mr. Dod, th
 enraged at his close, convincing doctrine, picked a quar
 smote him on the face, and dashed out two of his teeth
 servant of Christ spit out the teeth and blood into his ha
 See, here, you have knocked out two of my teeth, and
 any just provocation; but on condition I might do your
 would give you leave to dash out all the rest. Here is th
 of a Christian’s spirit, above all the attainments of mor
 Though they were excellent in many other things, ye
 never attain this forgiving spirit. It is the first office of
 Tully, to hurt no body, unless first provoked by an injury
 Lactantius, *O quam simplicem veramque sententiam, da
 ram adjectione, corrumpit!* What a dainty sentence spo
 tor, by adding those two last words! Strive then for th
 of spirit, which is the proper excellency of Christian
 singular thing that others cannot do, and then you wi
 timony in their consciences. When Moses out-did the
 they were forced to confess the finger of God in that bu

Remedy 3. Consider well the quality of the person that
 ed thee: either he is a good man, or a wicked man, th
 thee the injury: If he be a good man, there is light an
 in his conscience, and that will bring him at last to a
 evil he hath done; however, Christ hath forgiven him
 injuries than these, and why shouldst not thou? Will C

HOW TO KEEP THE HEART FROM REVENGEFUL MOTIONS.

Luke xv. 17. Should you go into Bedlam, and there hear one at you, another mock you, and a third threaten you; would you I will be revenged upon them? No, you would rather go away punishing them! Alas, poor creatures! they are out of their wits, know not what they do. Besides,

(2.) There is a day coming, if they repent not, when they have more misery than you can find in your hearts to wish them; you need not study to revenge, God's vengeance sleepeth not, will shortly take place upon them, and is not that enough? Heavily they not an eternity of misery coming? If they repent not, this must be the portion of their cup; and if ever they do repent, they will be ready to make you reparation.

Remedy 4. *Keep down thy heart by this consideration, that by revenge thou canst but satisfy a lust, but by forgiveness thou shalt conquer a lust.*

Suppose by revenge thou shouldst destroy one enemy, I will shew thee how, by forgiving, thou shalt conquer three, thine own lust, the devil's temptation, and thine enemy's heart; and is not this a more glorious conquest? If by revenge thou overcome thine enemy, (as Bernard saith) *Infelix victoria, ubi superans virum succumbis vitio*: Unhappy victory, when, by overcoming another man, thou art overcome by thine own corruption. But this way you may obtain a glorious conquest indeed. What an honourable and glorious victory, did David this way obtain over Saul, 1 Sam. xxiv. 16, "And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words, that Saul lifted up his voice, and wept; and he said to David, thou art more righteous than I."

It must be a very disingenuous nature indeed, upon which meanness and forgiveness will not work; a stony heart, which this will not melt. To this sense is that, Prov. xxv. 21. "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head." Some have it a sin-punishing fire, but others a heart-melting fire. To be sure it will either melt his heart, or aggravate his misery. Augustine thinks that Stephen's prayer for his enemies was the great means of Paul's conversion.

Remedy 5. *Seriously propound this question to thy own heart, have I got any good by the wrongs and injuries received, or have I not? If they have done you no good, turn the revenge upon yourself. O that I should have such a bad heart, that can get no good out of such troubles! O that my spirit should be so weak, that I*

bad name among wicked men. To the same purpose sweetly, *Gratia ago Deo meo quod dignus sum quem mu* I thank my God that I am worthy to be hated of the world; if their hearts were provoked by injuries to magnify God for him for them; if it work contrary with me, I have cause to be filled with self-displeasancy.

If you have got any good by them; if the reproaches you have received, have made you search your heart, and watch your ways the more narrowly; if their wrongs made you see how you have wronged God, then let me say as Paul did himself, Pray forgive them this wrong.

What! can you not find an heart to forgive one that is instrumental of so much good to you! That is strange! they meant it for evil? yet if God hath turned it to good, is there no more reason to rage against the instrument than he that received a wound from his enemy which only brake, and not an imposthume which otherwise had been his death.

Remedy 6. *It is of excellent use to keep the heart from looking up, and eye the first cause by which all our troubles*

This will calm and meeken our spirits quickly: never let your tongue try the patience of a saint, more than David's that railing Shimei; yet the spirit of this good man was not poisoned with revenge, though he goes along cursing, and throwing stones at him, all the way. Yea, though Abishai offered to slay him, if he pleased, the head of that enemy; yet the king said, "have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? So let him curse; for the cause the Lord hath said unto him, curse David: will he say, Wherefore hast thou done so?" It may be, God will use his rod, to lash me, because I, by my sin, made his enemy to revile and pheme him; and shall I be angry with the rod? How were that? This also was it that quieted Job; he did not vow revenge upon the Chaldeans and Sabeans, but upon the Lord as the orderer of those troubles, and is quiet; "The Lord hath taken away, blessed be his name," Job i. 21.

Objection. But you will say, *To turn aside the right way to subvert a man in his cause, the Lord approveth not, I*

Answer. True: but though it fall not under his approving, yet it doth under his permitting will, and there is a great quiet submission in that; nay, he hath not only the power but the ordering of all those troubles. Did we see more of this, we should shew less of a corrupt nature in such trials.

“ slothful servant ! I forgave thee all that debt because thou desiredst me, shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee ? ” None should be so far from having with bowels of pity, forbearance, and mercy, to such as wrong themselves as those should be that have experienced the riches of mercy to themselves : methinks the mercy of God to us should melt our very bowels into mercy over others ; it is impossible we can be cruel to others except we forget how kind Christ hath been to us. Those that have found mercy, should shew mercy : if kindness cannot work, methinks fear should. “ If you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive you your trespasses,” Mat. vi. 15.

Remedy 8. Lastly, *Let the consideration of the day of the Lord which draweth nigh, withhold your hands from anticipating in acts of revenge.*

Why are you so quick ? Is not the Lord at hand, to avenge his abused servants ? “ Be patient therefore, my brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold the husbandman waiteth, &c. ye also patient, for the coming of the Lord draws nigh : Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned. Behold the Judge standeth at the door,” Jam. v. 7, 8, 9. This text affords three arguments against revenge : (1.) The Lord’s near approach. (2.) The example of the husbandman’s patience. The danger we draw upon ourselves by anticipating God’s judgment ; *Vengeance is mine*, saith the Lord ; he will distribute justice more equally, and impartially, than you can : they who believe to have a God to right them, will not so much wrong themselves as to avenge their own wrongs.

Objection 1. *But flesh and blood are not able to bear such abuses.*

Solution. If you resolve to consult flesh and blood in such cases, and do no more but what that will enable you to do ; never pretend to religion : Christians must do singular and supernatural things.

Object. 2. *But if I put up such abuses, I shall be reckoned a fool, and every one will trample upon me.*

Sol. (1.) You may be reckoned so among fools, but God and good men will account it your wisdom, and the excellency of your spirit. (2.) It must be a base spirit indeed that will trample upon a meek and forgiving Christian : and thus learn to keep your hearts from revenge under all provocations.

Season 8. ‘ The next season in which we are in danger of losing our hearts is, when we meet with great crosses and provocations ; the sinful passion is apt to transport the heart. It is the fault of man

‘that he was of a keen and hasty spirit;’ and he that v of the great Cameron, * saith, ‘that his anger was so wards his near and familiar friends, but then he w pose it and acknowledge his weakness.’ Alas! when and trials of our patience come, we know not what spir The eighth case therefore is this,

Case 8. *How the heart may be kept meek and patient crosses and provocations.*

There are three sorts of anger, *natural*, *holy*, and *sinful*. *Natural*, which is nothing else but the motion of the ir tive towards an offensive object; and this in itself is no propassions, rather than passions; the infelicities, rat sins of nature, as Jerom calls them. Reason, saith Pl driver, the soul is the *chariot*, and the two horses that all its motions, are the concupiscible and irascible appe these are rightly managed by reason, they are not only very useful to the soul. God would not have us to b insensate, though he would have us to be meek and Eph. i. 26. he allows the natural motion, but forbids t orbitancy. (2.) Holy anger, which is a pure flame, k heavenly spark of love to God, and in scripture is calle is, as one saith, the dagger which love draws in God’s q was Lot’s against the Sodomites, and that of Mos idolatrous Israelites. When Servetus condemned Zui harshness, his answer was, *In aliis mansuetus ero, in b Christum, non ita*; In other cases I will be mild, but i Christ not so. That which the world calls moderation here, is in God’s account stupidity and cowardliness; ne are that which I am now persuading you to keep your l But, (3.) There is a sinful passion, that is the thing wh you. Now anger becomes sinful when it is either cau 22. or *excessive*; and that either in measure or time, value of the impulsive cause, be it more transient or al is a sin, and it is matter of humiliation before God. N to keep the heart from it under provocations, are thes

Means 1. *Get low and humble thoughts of yoursel you will have meek spirits, and peaceable deportments to*

The humble is ever the patient man; pride is the ro a lofty will be a surly spirit; bladders blown up with lie close together; but prick them, and you may pack a little room: “Only by pride cometh contention,”

know so much of thyself, that it is impossible any should lay thee lower, or have baser thoughts of thee than thou hast of thyself. Some render the original of that text, Hab. ii. 5. thus: "The proud man is as he that transgresseth by wine;" and drunkards, you know, are quarrelsome. O get more humility, and that will bring you more peace.

Means 2. *Be often sweetening your spirits in communion with God, and they will not easily be embittered with wrath towards men.*

A quiet conscience never produced an unquiet conversation: the peace of God doth $\beta\epsilon\alpha\beta\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\iota\upsilon\upsilon$, rule in the heart, as an umpire appeasing strifes; for so much that word, Col. iii. 15. imports. Wrath and strife are hugely opposite to the frame and temper of a spiritual heart, because inconsistent with the delight and contentment of that dove-like spirit which loves a sedate and quiet breast. O! saith the soul that feeds upon the sweet communion of the Spirit, shall the sparks of provocations now catch in my passions, and raise such a smoke in my soul, will offend and drive away the Comforter from me? This is so effectual a remedy against passion, that I durst almost venture, in a Christian of a hasty nature, to make long-suffering a sign of communion with God. Seest thou such a Christian quiet and calm under provocations, it is very like his soul feeds upon such sweetness in God, he is loth to leave; and on the other side, seest thou a Christian turbulent and clamorous, doubtless, all is not well within; his spirit is like a bone out of joint, which cannot move without pain and trouble.

Means 3. *Get due apprehensions of the evil nature and effects of sinful anger: Ira furor brevis; anger is a short madness, (saith one); Ira animæ febris (saith another;) anger is the fever of the soul; it is the interregnum and eclipse of reason, (saith a third).*

The effects of it are also very sad.

(1.) "It grieves the Spirit of God," Eph. iv. 30. banishes him from that breast in which it rages and tumultuates: God is the God of peace; the presence and comforts of God are only enjoyed in calm. It is a golden note one gives upon the forecited text, God doth not usually bless with peace of conscience, such as make no conscience of peace. (2.) It gives advantage to the devil, Eph. iv. 27. Satan is an angry and discontented spirit, and finds no rest but in restless hearts? he lives like the *salamander*, in fires of contention; he bestirs himself when the spirits are in a commotion; sometimes he fills the heart with revengeful thoughts, sometimes he fills the lip and inflames the tongue with indecent language; even a meek Man

(4.) To mention no more, it disparages the Christian re would Plato and Pythagoras shame us, if they were Christ was a lamb for meekness, and doth it become li be like lions? O keep your hearts, or you will at once your own peace, but the credit of religion.

Means 4. *Consider how sweet a thing it is to a Chr quer his corruptions, and carry away the spoils of the*

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty ;
"ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city," Prov. there any content in venting a passion? How much mo ing it? When thou comest in a calm mood, or upon a review thy life, how comfortable then will it be to ref conquests thou hast got by the fear of God, over the ev of thine own heart! It was a memorable saying of Va emperor when he came to die: 'Amongst all my conqu 'there is but one that now comforts me; and being as 'was, he answered, I have overcome my worst enem 'naughty heart.'

Means 5. *Shame yourselves by setting before you patterns that have been most excellent for meekness.*

Above all, compare your spirits with the Spirit of Ch "of me (saith he,) for I am meek and lowly," Mat. x was meek and lowly, but I am proud and passionate; in commendation of Moses, Num. xii. 3. "Now the m "meek above all the men of the earth: and this was "knew God to face." It is said of Calvin and Ursin, t were of cholerick natures, but yet had so learned the Christ as not to utter one word, under the greatest pr beseeeming religion. When I read the pretty storie heathens that never had the advantages that we have, h goreans, whatever feuds had been among them in the da all by sending to each other this message, *The sun is al that of Plato to his scholar, I would beat thee if I wer*

When I read what lenity and tenderness Lycurgus insolent fellow that had struck out one of his eyes, I to see how much Christians are out-shot by heathens; moral arguments and precepts, had thus meekened the conquered their passions. The dim light of nature co neca to say, That anger will hurt a man more than th there is a certain bound in the offence, but I know not anger will carry me. It is a shame that these men wh

way of it, it is true spiritual valour, to run as fast, and as far as we can out of sin's way: If you can but avoid anger in its first rise, there is no great fear of it afterwards; for it is not with this sin as it is with other sins; other sins grow to their full strength by degrees, their first motions are the weakest; but this sin is born in its full strength, it is strongest at first; withstand it then, and it falls before you. Thus learn to keep your hearts when provocations arise.

Season 9. The ninth season of exerting our greatest diligence, 'the critical hour of temptation, wherein Satan lays close siege to the fort-royal of a Christian's heart, and often surprizes it for want of watchfulness: to keep the heart now, is no less a mercy than a duty.' Few Christians are so well skilled in detecting the fallacies, and retorting the arguments by which Satan uses to draw them to sin, as to come off safe in those encounters. "Watch and pray (saith our Lord) lest ye enter into temptation," Mark xiv. 38.' Even an eminent David, and a wise Solomon, have smarted for their carelessness, at such a time as this. The ninth case therefore shall be this.

Case 9. How a Christian, when strongly solicited by the devil to sin, may keep his heart from yielding to the temptation.

Now there are six special arguments by which Satan subtilly insinuates and winds in the temptation; in all which I shall offer thee some help for the keeping of thy heart; and the first is this:

Argument 1. The first argument is drawn from the pleasure of sin. O (saith Satan) here is pleasure to be enjoyed: the temptation comes with a smiling countenance, and charming voice: what, art thou so phlegmatic and dull a soul, as not to feel the powerful charms of pleasure? Who can withhold himself from such delights?

Now thine heart may be kept from the danger of this temptation by retorting this argument of pleasure upon the tempter; which may be done two ways.

1. Thou tellest me, Satan, that sin is pleasant; be it so: But what of the gripes of conscience, and the flames of hell so too? Is it pleasant to feel the wounds and throbs of conscience? If so, why did Peter weep so bitterly? Mat. xxvi. 75. Why did David cry out of broken bones? Psal. li. I hear what thou sayest of the pleasure of sin, and I have read what David hath said of the terrible effects of sin in his Psalm to bring to remembrance, Psal. xxxviii. ver. 2. "Thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore:" ver. 3. "There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones, because of my sin: ver. 4. "Mine iniquities are gone over mine head as an heavy burden:"

Here I see the true face of sin; if I yield to thy temptation, I either feel these pangs of conscience, or the flames of hell.

2. What talkest thou of the pleasure of sin, when, O Lord, I know there is more true pleasure in the mortification of the flesh than in the commission of sin? O how sweet is it to please thy conscience, to preserve inward peace! To be able to say, O Lord, now I see that I truly hate sin. Hath sin any sweetness to thee? This will choak that temptation.

Arg. 2. The second argument is drawn from the secret of sin. O (saith Satan) this sin will never disgrace thee abroad; but thou knowest it.

This argument may be retorted, and the heart securely answered, sayest, none shall know it; but, Satan, canst thou find a secret place of the divine presence for me to sin in? Thus Job secured himself from this temptation, Job xiii. 4. "Doth he not see my secret? will he not count all my steps?" Therefore he makes a covering for his eyes, ver. 1. After the same manner Solomon teacheth to overcome this temptation, Prov. v. 20, 21. "And why my son, be not ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a harlot? For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings." What if I hide it from all the world for the present? I cannot hide it from God; when time is at hand, when all the world shall know it too; God assures me, Luke viii. 17. "That what now is done in secret shall be proclaimed as upon the house top." Besides, is not thy conscience as a thousand witnesses! Do I owe no reverence to God? Could the heathen man say, *Turpe quid ausurus, te fingere?* When thou art tempted to commit sin, fear thyself, and have no other witness: And shall not I be afraid to sin before my own conscience, which always hath a reproof in its mouth, and is ready at hand, to record my most secret actions?

Arg. 3. The third argument by which Satan tempts the heart is taken from the gain and profit arising out of it; why should I be so scrupulous? it is but to stretch the conscience a little, and to make myself uneasy: now is thy opportunity!

The heart may be kept from falling into this danger by retorting the temptation thus: But what a profit will it be to me should I gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Can I give a man in exchange for his soul? Shall I hazard the loss of that good that is in this world? There is an immortal spirit

presses it) with this difference: a master commits two things to his servant—the child, and the child's clothes; will the master then neglect the child, if he plead, I have kept the clothes, but I have neglected the life of the child?

Arg. 4. The fourth argument is drawn from the smallness of the sin; it is but a little one, a small matter, a trifle; who would stand upon such niceties?

This argument may be retorted three ways.

1. But is the majesty of heaven a little one too? If I commit this sin, I must offend and wrong a great God, Isa. xl. 15, 16, 17,—

2. Is there any little hell to torment little sinners in? Are not the least sinners there filled with the fulness of wrath? O there is great wrath treasured up for such as the world counts little sinners.

3. The less the sin, the less the inducement to commit it: Why shall I break with God for a trifle? Destroy my peace, wound my conscience, grieve the spirit, and all this for nothing? O what madness is this!

Arg. 5. A fifth argument is drawn from the grace of God, and his hopes of pardon: Come, God will pass by this as an infirmity, and will not be extreme to mark it;

But stay, my heart;

1. Where do I find a promise of mercy to presumptuous sinners? Indeed for involuntary surprisal, unavoidable and lamented infirmities, there is a pardon of course; but where is the promise to the daring sinner that sins upon presumption of pardon? Pause a while, my soul, upon that scripture, Numb. xv. 27—30. “And if a sinner sin through ignorance, then he shall bring a she-goat of the first year for a sin-offering, &c. But the soul that doth ought presumptuously, the same reproacheth the Lord, and that soul shall be cut off from among his people.”

2. If God be a God of so much mercy, how can I abuse so good a God? shall I take so glorious an attribute as the mercy of God, and abuse it unto sin? Shall I wrong him because he is good? Should not rather the goodness of God lead me to repentance? Rom. ii. 4. “There is mercy with thee that thou mayest be feared,” Ps. cxxx. 4.

Arg. 6. Lastly, Sometimes Satan encourages to sin from the examples of good and holy men; thus and thus they have sinned and been restored, therefore this may consist with grace, and thou be saved nevertheless. The danger of this temptation is avoided, and the heart secured, by retorting the argument these three ways:

“ examples, to the intent that we should not lust after
 “ as they also lusted.”

3. Am I willing to feel what they felt for sin? O, I do
 them in the ways of sin! *quia me vestiga terrent*; Let
 plunge me into the deeps of horror, into which he cast

Thus learn to keep your hearts in the hour of temptation.

Season 10. “ The tenth special season to keep the
 ‘ diligence, is the time of spiritual darkness and doubt
 ‘ with the soul as it was with Paul in his dangerous v
 ‘ sun, nor moon, nor star appears for many days: W
 ‘ of the hidings of God’s face, the prevalency of corrup
 ‘ inevidence of grace, the soul is even ready to give up
 ‘ and comforts for lost; to draw sad and desperate con
 ‘ itself; to call its former comforts vain delusions; it
 ‘ crisy. When the serene and clear heavens are over
 ‘ clouds, yea, filled with thunders and horrible temp
 ‘ poor pensive soul sits down and weeps forth this sad
 ‘ “ My hope is perished from the Lord!” Now to k
 ‘ from sinking in such a day as this, to enable it to ma
 ‘ sincerity, is a matter of great difficulty. The tenth
 ‘ be this:”

Case 10. *How the people of God, in dark and doubt
 may keep their hearts from entertaining such sad con
 their estates, as destroy their peace, and unfit them for*

There are two general heads to which the grounds of
 sincerity may be reduced. (1.) God’s carriage toward
 either in the time of some extraordinary affliction, or
 and sad desertion. Or, (2.) The soul’s carriage toward
 here it usually argues against the truth of its own grace.
 From its relapses into the same sins from which it had
 with shame and sorrow. Or, (2.) From the sensible d
 affections from God. Or, (3.) From the excess of the
 wards creature-comforts and enjoyments. Or, (4.) Fro
 ments in public, and often straitenings in private dut
 From some horrid injections of Satan, with which the
 ly perplexed. Or, lastly, From God’s silence and seer
 its long depending suits and prayers.

These are the common grounds of those sad conclusions
 order to the establishment and support of the heart in
 it will be necessary,

1. That you be acquainted with some general truths

1. *That every working and appearance of hypocrisy doth presently prove the person in whom it is, to be an hypocrite.* We must carefully distinguish between the *presence* and *predominance* of hypocrisy: There are remains of deceitfulness in the best hearts. David and Peter had sad experience of it; yet the standing frame and general bent of the heart being upright, it did not denominate them hypocrites.

2. *That we ought as well to hear what can be said for us as against us:* It is the sin of upright hearts sometimes to use an over-rigorous and merciless severity against themselves: They do not indifferently consider the case of their own souls: It is in this case, as Solon speaks in another, Prov. xii. 7. "There is that maketh him rich, and yet hath nothing; and there is that maketh himself poor, and yet hath great riches." It is the damning sin of the self-flattering hypocrite, to make his condition better than it is: And it is the sin and folly of some upright ones, to make their condition worse than indeed it is. Why should you be such enemies to your own peace? To read over the evidences of God's love to your souls, as a man doth a book which he intends to confute? Why do you study to find evasions, to turn off those comforts which are due to you? It is said of Joseph, that he was minded to put away his espoused Mary, knowing that that holy thing which was conceived in her, was by the Holy Ghost: And this may be your case. And a third truth is this.

3. *That many a saint hath charged and condemned himself for things which God will never charge him with, nor condemn him for.* "Woe is them that say, 'hast thou hardened our hearts from thy fear,'" (saith the church, Isa. lxiii. 17. and yet the verse before manifests, that their hearts were not so hardened: Godly Bradford wrote himself an hypocrite, painted sepulchre; yet doubtless God acquitted him of that charge.

4. *Every thing which is a ground of grief to the people of God is not a sufficient ground of questioning their sincerity.* There are many more things to trouble you, than there are to stumble you. If upon every slip and failing through infirmity, you should question all that ever was wrought upon you, your life must be made up of doubtings and fears: You can never attain a settled peace, a true life of praise and thankfulness, the gospel calls for.

5. *The soul is not at all times fit to pass judgment upon its own condition:* To be sure in the dark day of desertion, when the soul is terrified; and in the stormy day of temptation, when the soul is in a hurry, it is utterly unfit to judge its estate; "Examine your hearts, O ye priests, upon your beds, and be still," Psal. iv. This is rather a season

7. Lastly, *Whatever our sin, or trouble be, it should us to God, than from God.* “Pardon my sin for it is xxv. 11. Suppose it be true, that thou hast so and so, thou art thus long and sadly deserted: Yet it is a fact that therefore thou shouldest be discouraged, as if there were no help for thee in thy God. When you have well digested even establishing truths, if still the doubt remain, then it may be replied to the particular grounds of these doubts.

1. You doubt, and are ready to conclude, the Lord hath no regard or love for your souls, because of some extraordinary affliction which is come upon you: But I would not have thee so conclude, till thou be able satisfactorily to answer these three questions.

Question 1. If great troubles and afflictions be made use of to his hatred, why should not impunity and constant prosperity be the effect of his love? For *contrariorum contraria est ratio* & of contrary things, there is a contrary reason and conclusion. Is this so indeed? or saith not the scripture quite otherwise? i. 32. “The prosperity of fools destroys them.” So Psalm.

Quest. 2. Dare I draw the same conclusion upon a man who hath been as much, yea, more afflicted than myself? If he may so conveniently conclude against thee, then so it doth against every man in that condition; yea, the greater the affliction of any child of God hath been, the more strongly the argument still concludes: As it doth to David, Job, Heman, Paul, and all that have been afflicted as they were.

Quest. 3. Had God exempted you only from those troubles, but all other his people feel, would not that have been a ground of doubting to you than this? Especially since the scripture Heb. xii. 8. “If ye be without chastening, whereof ye are not worthy, ye are bastards, and not sons.”

Oh, how is our Father put to it by froward children. If he afflicts, then one cries, he loves me not: If he exempt from affliction, others question his love upon that ground. Surely ye have more work to do, under the rod, than this.

2. Or do you rashly infer, the Lord hath no love for you, because he hides his face from you; that your condition is miserable, dark and uncomfortable? Before you draw such rash conclusions, see what answer you can give to these four following queries.

Query 1. If any action of God towards his people be taken, whether favourable, as well as a harsh and severe construction, will his people interpret it in the best sense? And is not this

Was it so indeed? Nothing less. Ver. 15. "Can a mother forget," &c.

Query 2. *Do you find the marks of an absolute, total and final desertion upon your own spirits, that you are so apt to conclude yourself to be such?* Do you find your hearts inclined to forsake God? Have you lost your conscientious tenderness in point of sin? If so, such characters appear upon you indeed; but if in this dark hour you are as tender of sin as ever, as much resolved to cleave to God as ever I cannot, I will not forsake God, let him do what he will with me. O no, I cannot. If your hearts work thus, it can be but a partial, limited, and temporary desertion; by this he still keeps his interest in your hearts, a sure sign he will return, and visit you again.

Query 3. *Is sense and feeling a competent judge of God's actions and designs?* Or may a man safely rely upon its testimony, after many discoveries of the infallibility of it? Is this a sound argument? If God had any love for my soul, if it were not quite gone, I should feel it now, as well as in former times; but I cannot feel it, therefore it is quite gone. Do you not know the sun still keeps on his course in the heavens, even in dull and close weather, when you cannot see it? And may it not be so with the love of God? Read Isa. l. 10. May not I as well conclude in winter, when the flowers have hid their beautiful heads under ground, they are quite dead and gone, because I cannot find them in December where I saw them in May?

Query 4. Think you the Lord cares not to break his children's hearts, and his own promise too? Hath he no more regard either? If he return no more, these must be the consequents, Isa. lviii. 16, 17. Heb. xiii. 5.

Well, then, from God's carriage towards you, either in affliction or desertion, no such discouraging, heart-sinking conclusions can be inferred. Next, let us see whether they may not be inferred from our carriage towards God; and here the principal grounds of doubting are such as these;

1. I have fallen again into the same sin from which I have formerly risen with repentance and resolution; therefore my sinning is customary sinning; a spot that is not the spot of God's children. Hence the upright soul trembles; upon this it is ready to affirm, that all its former humiliations for, and oppositions unto sin, were but acts of hypocrisy. But stay, poor trembling heart.

Query 1. *If this be so, how comes it to pass that Christ put such a favourable construction upon the disciples sleeping the third time*

bled; it is not so in customary sinning, the rise where excellently discovers. 1. (Saith he) When a man a good, sinneth grievously, it seems insupportable, yet descend alive into hell. 2. In process of time it seems able, but heavy: and betwixt insupportable and heavy small descent.

3. Next it becomes light, his conscience smites but feels not the stripes of it. 4. Then there is not only bleness of it, but that which was bitter and displeasing come sweet and pleasing, in some degree. 5. Then it custom, and not only pleases, but daily pleases. Last turned into nature; he cannot be pulled away from it and pleads for it: This is customary sinning, this is wicked; but the quite contrary is your condition.

Query 3. *Are you sure, from scripture-grounds, that you may not relapse again and again into the same sin?* for gross sins, they do not use to relapse into them: committed adultery no more: Paul persecuted the church no more: Peter denied Christ no more: But I speak of ordinary sins. Job's friends were good men, yet (saith he) chap. xii. "ten times have ye reproached me." So then, no such follow from this first ground of doubting.

2. *The second ground is the declining and withering of spiritual things?* O! (saith the upright soul) I have been planted a right seed, I should have been as a green olive in the house of my God; but my branches wither, my root is naught. But stay,

Query 1. *May you not be mistaken about the decay and fading of your affections?* What if they are not so dying as at first, may not that be recompensed in the increase and solidity of them now? Phil. i. 9. "I pray God your love may abound more and more in all judgment." It may be though not so fervent; or do not you mistake by looking to what you would be, rather than backward to what you are. It is a good note of Ames, we discern the growth of plants, which we perceive rather *Crevisse* than to have grown, than to grow.

Query 2. *But grant it be so indeed, as you affirm, that you follow, that the root of the matter is not in you?* David is distinguished from his first, 2 Chron. xvii. 3. and last a holy man. The church of Ephesus is charged with many sins, yet she is called a holy church.

feel stronger, and more sensible motions of my heart to earthly comforts, than I do to heavenly objects, therefore my soul is not upright in me. But stay, O soul,

Query 1. *May not a man love God more solidly, and stronger than the creature, and yet his affections to the creature be sometimes moved more violently, and sensibly, than towards God?* As root malice argues a stronger hatred, than a sudden, though more violent passion: So we must measure our love, not by a violent motion of it, now and then, but by the depth of the root, and constancy of its actings. Because David was so passionately moved for Absalom, Joab concludes, that if he had lived, and all the people died, "would have pleased him well," 2 Sam. xix. 7. But that was argued more like a soldier, than a logician.

Query 2. *If you indeed love the creature for itself, if you make it your end, and religion but a means, then the conclusion is rightly drawn upon you.* But if you love the creature in reference to God, and see nothing in it separated from him, though sometimes your affections offend in the excess; this is consistent with sincere love to God. To love the creature inordinately, (i. e.) to put it in God's room, and make it a man's end; this is the love of a carnal heart, to love it immoderately, that is, to let out more affection to it than we ought, is sometimes the sin of the best hearts.

Query 3. *Have not many souls feared, as you do, that when Christ and creatures shall stand as competitors in some eminent trial, they should forsake Christ rather than the creature; and yet when brought to that dilemma, have been able to cast all the world at their heels for Christ?* Many of the martyrs had such fears, and they were justified: the prevalency of love is best seen at parting; there may be more love to Christ in thy soul, than thou art now aware of; and if God bring thee to such a pinch, thou mayest see it.

4. A fourth ground of these sad conclusions, is from hence, that we find our hearts sometimes more straitened in private, than in public duties. 'O! if my soul were sincere, its actings in duty would be uniform. I fear I am but a Pharisee upon this ground. It is sad, indeed, we should at any time find our hearts straitened in private. But,

Query 1. *Do not all thine enlargements in duty, whether public or private, depend upon the Spirit, who is the Lord of influences, and according as he gives out, or holds back those influences, so art thou enlarged, or straitened?* And what if sometimes he pleases to give that in a public, which he withholds in a private duty, as long

about public, and *careless* about private duties, that was the sign: but when you have conscientiously performed, and with God in them, it will not follow that you are insincere, that communion is sometimes interrupted. Besides,

Query 3. *May there not be something, at sometimes which is wanting in a private duty, to raise and admit of affections?* God may sometimes make use of the melting of them with whom thou hearest, or prayest, as petty to move thy affections; this advantage is wanting in private before from hence (the case so standing) no such inference.

5. Another ground is from those horrid injections of which the soul is greatly perplexed; by these I may see my heart I have: Can grace be where those are?

Yes, grace may be where such thoughts are, though they are lodged, and consented to. Dost thou cry out of burden? Enter thy protest in heaven against them, stir up holy and reverend thoughts of God; then it is *voluntary prostitution*.

6. The last ground of these sad conclusions, is the silence, and seeming denial of our long depending suits, O if God had any regard to my soul, he would have heard before now! But I have no answer from him, therefore in him. But stay, doubting soul,

Query 1. *Have not many saints stumbled upon this ground?* Psal. xxxi. 22. "I said in my haste, I am cut off from thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplication." So the church, Lam. iii. 44. "Thou coverest thy face from a cloud, that our prayers should not pass through." "Then said I, I am cast out of thy sight." And many are mistaken in this matter, as well as they?

Query 2. *Though God's abhorring, and final rejection be an argument of his abhorring the person that prays, may we conclude so from a mere suspension of the answer?* We bear long with his own elect, that cry unto him day and night. xviii. 7.

Query 3. *Can you deny but that there are some signs in your souls, even whilst God suspends his answer, that your prayers are not rejected by him?* As, (1.) Though no answer yet you are still resolved to wait: You dare not say as the wretch did, 2 Kings vi. 33. "This evil is of the Lord, I will wait for him any longer?" (2.) You can clear and

"prayer:" And how doth this work? You may see, ver. 40. I
 "us search and try our ways." Well, then, neither from hence nor
 you conclude that God hath no love for your souls.

And thus I have shewn you how to keep your hearts, in a da
 and doubting season, from those desperate conclusions of unbeli
 God forbid any false heart should encourage itself from
 these things; it is our unhappiness that when we give *Cautio*
 saints and sinners their proper portions, that each of them
 are so prone to take up the other's part.

Season 11. The eleventh special season calling for this diligen
 'to keep your hearts, is, when sufferings for religion come to
 'height, then look to your hearts, Matth. xxiv. 8, 9, 10. "All the
 'are the beginning of sorrows, and they shall deliver you up to
 'afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nation
 'for my name's sake; and then shall many be offended." Wh
 'sufferings for religion grow hot, then blessed is he that is not o
 'fended in Christ, troubles are then at an height. (1) When a man
 'nearest friends and relations forsake and leave him, Mic. vii. 5,
 '2 Tim. iv. 16. When a man is engaged alone. (2.) When it com
 'to resisting to blood, Heb. xii. 4. (3.) When temptations are pr
 'sented to us in our sufferings, Heb. xi. 37. (4.) When emine
 'persons for profession turn aside, and desert the cause, of Chris
 '2 Tim. ii. 19. (5.) When God hides his face in a suffering hou
 'Jer. xvii. 17. (6.) When Satan falls upon us with strong tempt
 'tions, to question the grounds of our sufferings, or the soul's int
 'rest in Christ: Now it is hard to keep the heart from turning ba
 'and the steps from declining God's ways." The eleventh questio
 'then, shall be this:

Case 11. *How the heart may be kept from relapsing under t*
greatest sufferings for religion? If the bitterness of sufferings
 any time cause thy soul to distaste the way of God, and take u
 thoughts of forsaking it; stay thine heart under that temptation, l
 propounding these eight questions solemnly to it.

Question 1. *What reproach and dishonour shall I pour upo*
Christ, and religion, by deserting him at such a time as this? Th
 will proclaim to all the world, that how much soever I have boaste
 of the promises, yet, when it comes to the trial, I dare hazard n
 thing upon the credit of them: And how will this open the mout
 of Christ's enemies to blaspheme? O better had I never been bor
 than that worthy name should be blasphemed through me! Shall
 furnish the triumphs of the uncircumcised? Shall I make mirth

shall comfort me when conscience wounds me? What comfort in life, liberty, or friends, when peace is taken away from man? When Constantius threatened to cut off Samosata's hand, if he would not subscribe somewhat that was against conscience, he held up both his hands to the messenger that was bringing, he shall cut off both, rather than I will do it: Fare thee joy, and comfort, from that day forward. "Had Zimri slew his master?" said Jezebel. So say I here, had I. Had Spira peace? And shall you have peace, if you take these steps? O consider what you do!

Quest. 3. *Is not the public interest of Christ and religion more than any private interest of my own?* It is a fact that of Terentius, captain to Adrian the emperor, he presented a petition to Adrian, that the Christians might have a temple built to worship God apart from the Arians: The emperor refused the petition, and threw it away, bidding him to ask something else, and it should be granted. But he modestly gathered up his petition again, and told him, 'If he could not be helped in this cause, he would never ask any thing for himself.' Yea, though an heathen could say, *Ne immortalitatem quærem publicam*; he would not accept even of immortality for the common-wealth. O if we had more public, we should have such cowardly spirits!

Quest. 4. *Did Jesus Christ serve me so, when, for my sake, he posed himself to far greater sufferings than can be, by which his sufferings were great indeed, he suffered from all hands and sides, in every member, not only in his body, but in his soul, his sufferings of his soul were the very soul of his sufferings, his bloody sweat in the garden; witness that heart-melting rending out-cry upon the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And yet he flinched not, "he endured the reproach of pissing the shame." Alas! what are my sufferings compared to Christ's? He hath drank up all that vinegar and gall that make my sufferings bitter. When one of the martyrs was asked how so merry at his death? O, said he, it is because the soul is so heavy at his death. Did Christ bear such a burden for me, broken patience, and constancy; and shall I shrink before trifling, mentary, and light afflictions, for him?*

Quest. 5. *Is not eternal life worth the suffering of a moment?* If I suffer with him, I shall reign with him. O how will I give up life and limb for a fading crown, swim through seas of blood

the forerunner, who is already entered, standing, as it were, upon walls of heaven, with the crown in his hand, saying, "He that cometh shall inherit all things." Come on, then, my soul, come there is eternal life laid up for them that, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, honour, and immortality, Rom. ii. 7.

Quest. 6. *Can I so easily cast off the society and company of saints, and give the right-hand of fellowship to the wicked?* How can I part with such lovely companions as these have been? How often have I been benefited by their counsels? Ezra x. 3. how often refreshed, warmed, and quickened by their company? Eccl. iv. 11. how often have I fasted and prayed with them? What sweet counsel have I taken with them, and gone to the house of God for their company? And shall I now shake hands with them, and say, Farewell all ye saints for ever; I shall never be among you more: Come ye drunkards, swearers, blasphemers, persecutors, you shall be my everlasting companions? O rather let my body and soul be rent asunder than that ever I should say thus to the excellent of the earth, whom is all my delight.

Quest. 7. *Have I seriously considered the terrible scripture-curses against backsliders?* O my heart! darest thou turn thy back upon the very point of such threatenings as these? Jer. xvii. 5. "Thus saith the Lord, cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm; and whose heart departeth from the Lord, for he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh," i. e. The curse of God shall wither him root and branch. And Heb. x. 26, 27. "If we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." And again, v. 38. "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." As if he should say, 'Take him, world, take him, devil, for your own, I have no delight in him.' O who dare draw back when God has hedged up the way with such terrible threats as these!

Quest. 8. *Can I look Christ in the face at the day of judgment? I desert him now?*

"He that is ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels." Mark viii. 38. Yet a little while, and you shall see the sign of the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory; the last trump shall sound, the dead, both small and great

Wouldst thou desert Christ now, to protract a poor, on earth? If the word of God be true, if the saying be sealed and faithful, this shall be the portion of the apostle: an easy thing to stop the mouth of conscience now, easy to stop the mouth of the Judge then? Thus keep that it depart not from the living God.

Season 12. The twelfth season of looking diligently and keeping them with greatest care, is the time of sickness. 'a child of God draws nigh to eternity, when there are sands more in the upper part of his glass to run down; he busily bestirs himself; of him it may be said, as of the prophet, *nunquam nisi moriens producit in longum*; he goes on at his full length till dying: And now his great design, not to win the soul from God, is to discourage, and make him to go to God, though the gracious soul, with Jacob, may rouse up itself upon a dying bed, and rejoice that the presence of the Lamb is now almost come; though it should be to a dying Austin, *vivere renuo ut Christo vivam*; I desire to live with Christ. Or as dying Milius, when one asked him if he were willing to die? O said he, *illus est nolle mori, quod est vivere*; let him be unwilling to die who is unwilling to live with Christ. But O! what shrinking from death? What departing, may sometimes (indeed too frequently) be observed in the people of God? How loth are some of them to take the cold hand? If such a liberty were indulged to us, resolved till we dissolve ourselves; when should we say, "I desire to be dissolved?" Well then, the last case

Case 12. How the people of God, in times of sickness, may keep their hearts loose from all earthly engagements, and pass into a willingness to die.

And there are seven arguments, which I shall use to stir up the people of God at such a time as this, to make them obey the messengers of death, and die as well as well as the saints. And the first is this:

Argument 1. First, *The harmlessness of death to the pious.* Though it keep its dart, it hath lost its sting: A saint is not afraid of it, (that, Isa. xi. 8.) "May play upon the hole of the asp, and put his hand into the cockatrice's den." Death is the cockatrice's den; the grave is his hole or den; a saint need not fear to go boldly into it: It hath left and lost its sting in the side of the serpent, 1 Cor. xv. 55. "O death! where is thy sting?" We are not afraid of death, O saint, that this is the first argument.

startle and shrink back from it; but when God hath put away thy sins from thee, "as far as the east is from the west," Psal. ciii. 12. as long as there is no other evil left in death for thee to encounter with but bodily pain; as long as the scriptures represent it to thee under such harmless and easy notions, as the putting off thy clothes, 2 Cor. v. 2. "And lying down to sleep upon thy bed," Isa. lvii. 2. What shouldst thou be afraid? There is as much difference betwixt death to the people of God, and others, as betwixt the unicorn's horn, which it is upon the head of that fierce beast, and when it is in the apothecary's shops, where it is made salubrious and medicinal.

Arg. 2. Thy heart may be kept from shrinking back at such time as this, by considering the necessity of death, in order to full fruition of God.

Whether thou art willing to die or no, I assure thee there is no other way to obtain the full satisfaction of thy soul, and complete happiness; till the hand of death do thee the kind office to draw aside the curtain of the flesh, thy soul cannot see God: This animal stands betwixt him and thee, 2 Cor. v. 6. "Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord." Thy body must be refined and cast into a new mould, else that new wine of heavenly glory would break it. Paul, in his highest rapture, 2 Cor. xii. when he heard things unutterable, was then but as a stander-by or looker-on, not admitted into the company as one of them; but as angels are in our assemblies, so was Paul in that glorious assembly above, and no otherwise; and yet even for this he must, as it were, be taken out of the body, unclothed for a little time, to have a glimpse of that glory, and then put on his clothes again. O then! who would not be willing to die for a full sight and enjoyment of God? Methinks thy soul should look and sigh, like a prisoner, through the grates of this mortality: "O that I had wings like a dove, then would I fly away, and be at rest:" Most men need patience to die, but a saint that understands what death admits him to, should rather need patience to live; methinks he should often look out, and listen at the death-bed for his Lord's coming; and when he receives the news of his approaching change, should say, "The voice of my beloved! he hold, he cometh leaping over the mountains, skipping upon the hills," Cant. ii. 8.

Arg. 3. Another argument persuading to this willingness, is the immediate succession of a more excellent and glorious life.

It is but a wink, and you shall see God: Your happiness shall be deferred till the resurrection; but as soon as the body is dead,

sleep till the resurrection, as others have groundlessly feared. It has been a madness for Paul to desire a dissolution for the sake of Christ: For if this were so, he enjoyed more of Christ, if his soul dwelt in its fleshly tabernacle, than he should out-

There are but two ways of the soul's living, known to us, viz. the life of *faith*, and the life of *vision*, 1 Cor. v. 5.

It divideth all time, both present and future, betwixt them.

12. If when faith fails, sight should not immediately succeed, what would become of the unbodied soul? But blessed be God, the heart-establishing truth is evidently revealed in scripture.

43. You have Christ's promise, John xiv. 3. "I will receive you to myself." O what a change will a few moments make

upon your condition? Rouse up, dying saint; when thou art put out a little further; when it shall stand like Abraham at the altar,

the angels of God shall soon be with it: the souls of the saints, if it were,

put out to the angels to nurse, and when the angels carry them home again to their Father's house:

were caused to fly swiftly to bring a saint the answer of the angel, Dan. ix. 22. how much more will the angels come post haste to receive and transfer the praying soul itself?

Arg. 4. Farther, *It may much conduce to thy willingness to die, to consider, that by death, God oftentimes hides his people out of the view of all temptations and troubles upon earth,* Rev. xiv. 13.

"from henceforth, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." This is God's usual way, when some extraordinary calamities befall

upon the world, to set his people out of harm's way before the calamity.

lvii. 1. "Merciful men are taken away from the evil to come." Mic. vii. 2. when such an evil time comes as is there foretold,

"That they all lie in wait for blood, and every man hunteth after his brother with a net:" God, by an act of favour, houses his people out of the

hand. Dost thou know what evil may be in the earth, if thou art so loth to leave? Thy God removes thee for thy good sake;

thou art disbanded by death, and called off the stage; the poor saints must stand to it, and endure a great fight of

It is observed that Methuselah died the very year before the deluge;

Augustine, a little before the sacking of Hippo; Pareus, before the taking of Heidelburgh: Luther observes, that all the prophets died before the destruction of Jerusalem: and Luther lived long before the wars broke out in Germany. It may be that thy tender heart cannot endure to see the misery, or bear up against the temptations that are coming, and therefore will now gather

HOW TO ENCOURAGE THE HEART AGAINST DEATH.

1. For your communion with God : the time of perfecting thee now come : thy soul shall shortly stand before the face of God, have the immediate emanations and beamings forth of his glory in it : here thy soul is remote from God, the beams of his glory strike it but obliquely and feebly, but shortly it will be under the line, there the sun shall stand still, as it did in Gibeon ; there shall be no cloudings, nor declinings of it. O how should this fill thy soul with desires of being unclothed !

2. As for the enjoyment of saints, here indeed we have fellowship with them of the lower form ; but that fellowship is so dissweetened by remaining corruptions, that there is no satisfaction in it ; as the greatest plague that can befall an hypocrite to live in a church, so it is the greatest vexation to the spirit of a saint, to live in a corrupt and disordered church ; but when death hath admitted you into that glorious assembly of the spirits of just men made perfect, you shall have the desire of your hearts ; here you cannot fully converse with another ; yea, you cannot fully close with your own souls. What discords, jarrings, censurings are here ? What perfect, blessed harmony there ! In heaven each saint loves another as himself, and all are altogether lovely. O my soul, haste thee away from the low plains, from the mountains of Bether, from divided saints, to the mountains of myrrh, and hills of frankincense : thou art now gone unto thine own people, as the apostle's phrase imports, Cor. v.

Arg. 6. If this will not do, *Consider what heavy burdens death will ease thy shoulders of.*

In this tabernacle we groan, being burdened, (1.) With bodily infirmities and tempers ; how true do we find that of Theophrastus. The soul pays a dear rent for the tenement it now lives in ? But glorified bodies are unclogged with no indispositions ; death is the best physician ; it cures thee of all diseases at once. (2.) With the indwelling of sin ; this makes us groan from the very bowels, Rom. vii. 24. " But that which is dead, is free from sin," Rom. vi. 7. Hath justification destroyed its *damning power*, and sanctification its *reigning power* ? glorification destroys its very being and existence. (3.) We groan under temptations here, but as soon as we are out of the body, we are out of the reach of temptation : when once thou art got into heaven, thou mayest say, Now Satan, I am there where thou canst not come ; for as the damned in hell are *malo obformati*, so fixed in sin and misery, that their condition cannot be altered ; so glorified saints are *bono confirmati*, so fixed in holiness and glory, that they cannot be shaken. (4.) Here we groan under various troubles, and afflictions.

Objection 1. O I have many relations in the world, I know will become of them when I am gone.

Solution. If thou art troubled about their bodies, and condition, why should not that word satisfy thee, Jer. xlix. "thy fatherless children to me, I will keep them alive, "widows trust in me." Luther, in his last will and testament this expression, 'Lord, thou hast given me wife and children, "nothing to leave them, but I commit them unto thee. "of the fatherless, and judge of widows, *Nutri, serva, do* "keep, and teach them.' Or, art thou troubled for that? Thou canst not convert them, if thou shouldst live, and make thy prayers and counsels to live, and take place when thou art dead.

Objection 2. I would fain live to do God more service in

Solution. Well, but if he have no more service for thee, why shouldst thou not say with David, "If he have no desire for me any farther, here am I, let him do what seemeth him good." In this world thou hast no more to do, but he is calling thee to higher service and employment in heaven; and what thou canst do for him here, he can do that by other hands.

Objection 3. I am not yet fully ready, I am not as completely adorned for the bridegroom.

Solution. Thy justification is complete already, though thy sanctification be not so; and the way to make it so, is to die; for when it is so, it will have its defects, and wants.

Objection 4. O but I want assurance; if I had that, I should be content presently.

Solution. Yea, there it sticks, indeed; but then consider that hearty willingness to leave all the world to be freed from sin, with God, is the next way to that desired assurance; no man was ever willing to die upon this ground.

And thus I have finished those cases which so nearly concern the people of God, in the several conditions of their life, and how to keep their hearts in all. I shall next apply the

I. Use, of Information.

YOU have heard, that the keeping of the heart is the chief duty of a Christian, in which the very soul and life of religion consist, and without which all other duties are of no value with God.

WHY SAINTS WALK SO UNCOMFORTABLY.

are wrought by men, which yet are utterly rejected by God, shall never stand upon record, in order to an eternal acceptance, because they took no heed to keep their hearts with God in their duties: this is that fatal rock, upon which thousands of vain professors have split themselves eternally: they are curious about the externals of religion, but regardless of their hearts. O how many hours have some professors spent in hearing, praying, reading, and fasting! and yet, as to the main end of religion, as good they sat still, and done nothing; for all this signifies nothing, the great work, I mean heart work, being all the while neglected. Tell thou vain professor, when didst thou shed a tear for the dead hardness, unbelief, or earthliness of thy heart? Thinkest thou an easy religion can save thee? If so, we may invert Christ's words and say, "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to life, and many there be that go in thereat." Hear me, thou deluding hypocrite, thou that hast put off God with heartless duties, thou that hast acted in religion, as if thou hadst been blessing angels, that couldst not search and discover thy heart; thou that hast offered to God but the skin of the sacrifice, not the marrow, fasten inwards of it: how wilt thou abide the coming of the Lord? How wilt thou hold up thy head before him, when he shall say, O thou dissembling, false-hearted man! how couldst thou profess religion? With what face couldst thou so often tell me that thou lovedst God, when thou knew all the while, in thine own conscience, that thy heart was not with me? O tremble to think what a fearful judgment it is to be given over to a heedless, and careless heart; and thou that have religious duties, instead of a rattle, to quiet and still the conscience!

2. Hence also infer for the *humiliation*, even of upright hearts. *That unless the people of God spend more time and pains about their hearts, than generally and ordinarily they do, they are never likely to do God much service, or be owners of much comfort in this world.*

I may say of that Christian that is remiss and careless in keeping his heart, as Jacob said of Reuben, "Thou shalt not excel." It grieves me to see how many Christians there are that go up and down dejected, and complaining, that live at a poor low rate, both of duty and vice and comfort; and how can they expect it should be otherwise as long as they live at such a careless rate? O how little of time is spent in the closet in searching, humbling, and quickening their hearts?

You say your hearts are dead, and do you wonder they are so?

channel; I fear most of us may take up the Church's Cant. i. 6. "They have made me the keeper of the vine; mine own vineyard have I not kept." Two things have taken the time and strength of the professors of this generation, diverted them from heart-work: (1.) Fruitless controversy by Satan, I doubt not, to this very purpose, to take us off from practical godliness, to make us puzzle our heads when we are searching our hearts. O how little have we minded that gentle, Heb. xiii. 9. "It is a good thing that the heart be kept with grace, and not with meats;" i. e. with disputes and controversies about meats, "which have not profited them that are occupied therein."

O how much better is it to see men *live exactly*, than to see them *dispute subtly*! These unfruitful questions, how have they taken the churches, wasted time and spirits, and called Christians off from their main business, from looking to their own vineyard? Have you, ye, sirs? Had it not been better if the questions agitated by the people of God of late days had been such as these? How may a man discern the special, from the common operations of God? How may a backsliding Christian recover his first love? How may a man be preserved from unseasonable thoughts in duty? How may sin be discovered, and mortified, &c. would not this be more to the credit of religion and comfort of your souls? Time to repent and be ashamed of this folly! When I read of Suarez, a Papist, said, who wrote many tomes of disputes, he prized the time he set apart for the searching and examining of his heart, in reference to God, above all the time that he spent in other studies: I am ashamed to find the professors of this generation insensible of their folly. Shall the conscience of a Saint be troubled with a relenting pang for strength and time so ill employed, as yours? This is it your ministers long since warned you of; your spiritual nurses were afraid of the rickets, when they saw you only to grow, and our hearts to wither. O when will God turn our swords into plow-shares! I mean, our disputes and controversies, and neglect of practical godliness. (2.) Another cause of neglecting practical godliness hath been earthly incumbrances; the heads and hearts have been filled with such a croud and noise of worldly business, that they have sadly and sensibly declined and withered in zeal, love, and delight in God; in their heavenly, serious, and profitable way of conversing with men.

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“ it is sad to think how many precious opportunities I have lost
 “ how many sweet motions and admonitions of the Spirit I have
 “ sed over unfruitfully, and made the Lord to speak in vain : in
 “ secret illapses of his Spirit, the Lord hath called upon me, but
 “ worldly thoughts did still lodge within me, and there was no place
 “ within my heart for such calls of God.” Surely there is a way
 enjoying God, even in our worldly employments; God would not
 have put us upon them to our loss; “ Enoch walked with God,
 “ begat sons and daughters,” Gen. v. 19. He walked with God,
 did not retire and separate himself from the things of this life :
 the angels that are employed by Christ in the things of this world
 (for the spirit of the living creatures is in the wheels) they are finite
 creatures, and cannot be in a twofold *ubi* at one time; yet they see
 nothing of the beatifical vision all the time of their administration;
 for Mat. xviii. 10. “ Their angels (even whilst they are employed
 “ for them) behold the face of their Father which is in heaven.”
 We need not lose our visions by our employments, if the fault is
 not our own. Alas! that ever Christians, who stand at the door of
 eternity, and have more work upon their hands than this poor
 moment of interposing time is sufficient for, should yet be filling
 their heads and hearts with trifles.

3. Hence I infer for the *awakening* of all, *That if the keeping
 the heart be the great work of a Christian, then there are but
 real Christians in the world.*

Indeed if every one that hath learned the dialect of Christianity
 and can talk like a saint: if every one that hath gifts and parts
 by the common assisting presence of the Spirit can preach, pray,
 discourse like a Christian; in a word, if such as associate themselves
 with the people of God, and delight in ordinances, may pass
 for Christians, the number then is great.

But, alas! to what a small number will they shrink, if you judge
 them by this rule! how few are there that make conscience of keep-
 ing their hearts, watching their thoughts, judging their ends,
 O there be but few closet men among professors! It is far easier
 for men to be reconciled to any duties in religion than to these: the
 profane part of the world will not so much as touch with the outward
 of religious duties, much less with this; and for the hypocrite, though
 he be polite and curious about those externals, yet you can never
 persuade him to this inward work, this difficult work, to which there
 is no inducement by human applause; this work, that would quickly
 discover what the hypocrite cares not to know; so that by a general

*interests be wrapt up in it, then let me call upon the p
every where to fall close to this work.*

O study your hearts, watch your hearts, keep your hearts with fruitless controversies, and all idle questions; away with names and vain shews; away with unprofitable discourses, censures of others; turn in upon yourselves; get into your hearts, and now resolve to dwell there. You have been straying in your work too long; you have kept others vineyards too long; you have trifled about the borders of religion too long; this world has kept you from your great work too long; will you now resolve to do better to your hearts? Will you haste and come out of your house of business, and clamours of the world, and retire you into your hearts than you have done? O that this day you would resolve to do so.

Reader, methinks I should prevail with thee: All that I desire is but this, that thou wouldst step aside a little oftener from the world, God, and thine own heart; that thou wouldst not suffer the world to divert thee; that thou wouldst keep a more true and exact count of thy thoughts and affections; that thou wouldst be more obedient to the demand of this thy own heart, at least every evening, O that thou wouldst where hast thou been to-day? Whither hast thou made thy journey to-day? If all that hath been said by way of inducement be true, I have yet more motives to offer you. And the first is

1 Motive. *The studying, observing, and diligent keeping of your own hearts, will marvellously help your understanding of the mysteries of religion.*

An honest well-experienced heart, is a singular help to the understanding of the scriptures: such a heart will serve you instead of a commentary; such a heart will give you a greater part of the scriptures: By this means you shall far more understand the things of God, than the learned rabbies and doctors (if graceless and unexperienced) ever did; you shall have a more clear, but a more sweet perception and judgment of the scriptures. A man may discourse orthodoxly and profoundly of the effects of faith, the troubles and comforts of conscience, the necessity of communion with God, that never felt the efficacy of these things upon his own spirit: but O how dry are these notions, compared with his upon whose heart they have been acted? When such a man reads David's Psalms, or the apostle's epistles, there he finds his own objections made and answered; he saith he, these holy men speak my very heart: Their troubles mine, their troubles mine, and their experiences mine. Chrysostom, speaking to his people of Antioch about the

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For what think you is the reason that so many professors in England have departed from the faith, giving heed to fables; that many thousands have been led away by the error of the wicked; Jesuits and Quakers, who have sown corrupt doctrine, have had such plentiful harvests among us, but because they have met with company of empty notional professors, that never knew what belonged to practical godliness, and the study of their own hearts.

If professors did but give diligence to study, search and watch their own hearts, they would have that *ἰδιον σεβεισμον*, that steadfastness in their own, that Peter speaks of, 1 Pet. iii. 17. and this would bind last and settle them, Heb. xiii. 9. Suppose a subtle Papist should talk to such of the dignity and merit of good works; could he ever work the persuasion of it into that heart that is conscious to itself so much darkness, deadness, distraction and unbelief, attending to best duties? It is a good rule, *Non est disputandum de gustu*: There is no disputing against taste. What a man hath felt and tasted, cannot beat him off from that by argument.

3 Motive. *Your care and diligence in keeping your hearts will prove one of the best evidences of your sincerity.*

I know no external act of religion that differences the sound from the unsound professor: It is wonderful to consider how far hypocrites go in all external duties; how plausibly they can order the outward man, hiding all their indecencies from the observation of the world.

But then, they take no heed to their hearts; they are not in secret what they appear to be in public: And before this trial no hypocrite can stand. It is confessed they may in a fit, under a pang upon death-bed, cry out of the wickedness of their hearts; but alas! there is no heed to be taken to these extorted complaints. In our law, credit is to be given to the testimony of one upon the rack, because it may be supposed that the extremity of the torture may make him say any thing to be eased. But if self-jealousy, care, and watchfulness be the daily workings and frames of thy heart, it strongly argues the sincerity of it: For what but the sense of a divine eye; what but the real hatred of sin as sin, could put thee upon those secret duties which lie out of the observation of all creatures?

If then it be a desirable thing in thine eyes to have a fair testimony of thine integrity, and to know of a truth, that thou fearest God, then study thine heart, watch thy heart, keep thy heart.

4 Motive. *How fruitful, sweet, and comfortable would all ordinances and duties be to us, if our hearts were better kept?*

O what precious communion might you have with God every time

him in that duty: They strive hard to get up their hearts, now trying this argument upon them, and then that, to affect them, and sometimes go away as bad as they came. The duty is almost ended before their hearts begin to swell with warmth, quickening, or power from it: But all this while the prepared heart is at its work; this is he that ordinarily has the sight of Christ in a sermon, the first seal from Christ in the first kiss from Christ in secret prayer. I tell you, but what I have felt, that prayers and sermons would do in other manner of things than they do, did you but bring your hearts unto them; you would not go away dejected. O this hath been a lost duty to me! if you had not lost it had not been so. If then the comfort of ordinances be to your hearts, keep your hearts.

5 Motive. *Acquaintance with your own hearts would contain of matter to you in prayer.*

A man that is diligent in heart-work, and knows the state of his own soul, will have a fountain-fulness of matter to supply in all his addresses to God; his tongue shall not fail, nor pause for want of matter; Psal. xlv. 1. "My heart is in the Lord, O my heart:." Or, as Montanus renders the original, "boiling up good matter, like a living spring, that is still fresh water; and then my tongue is as the pen of a man." Others must pump their memories, rack their inventions, and are often at a loss, when they have done all: but if thou hast faithfully studied thine own heart, it will be with thee (as in another case) like bottles full of new wine that want no stoppers: they are ready to burst: As holy matter flows plentifully, sweetly and sweetly from such a heart. When a heart is full, a Christian is mourning before God over some special heart-wrestling with God for the supply of some special inward need: he speaks not as other men do that have learned to pray by rote: his confessions and petitions are squeezed out; his drops are pure honey from the comb: It is a happiness then to be such a Christian. I remember Bernard, having given the way to prepare the heart for prayer, concludes them thus, *Et cum veneris in orationem, memento mei*; and (saith he) When thy heart is in this state, remember me.

6 Motive. *By this the decayed power of religion will be revived again among professors, which is the most desirable state.*

O that I might live to see that day, when professors shall be in a vain show, when they shall be in a vain show,

those that come nigh them, so that men shall say, God is in the men of a truth.

Well, such a time may again be expected, according to that promise, Isa. lx. 21. "The people shall be all righteous." But till pursue closer to this great work of keeping our hearts, I am out of hopes to see those blessed days; I cannot expect better times till God gives better hearts. Doth it not grieve you to see what a scorn religion is made in the world? what objects of contempt and scorn the professors of it are made in the world?

Professors, would you recover your credit? Would you again obtain an honourable testimony in the consciences of your very enemies? Then keep your hearts, watch your hearts: it is the looseness, frothiness, and earthliness of your hearts that have made your life so; and these have brought you under the contempt of the world; you first lost your sights of God, and communion with him, then your heavenly and serious deportment among men, and by that your interest in their consciences: O then, for the credit of religion, for the honour of your profession keep your hearts!

7 Motive. *By diligence in keeping your hearts, we should prevent, and remove the fatal scandals and stumbling-blocks out of the way of the world.*

"Woe to the world (saith Christ) because of offences!" Mat. xviii. 7. Doth not shame cover your faces? Do not your hearts bleed within you, to hear of the scandalous miscarriages of many professors? Could you not, like Shem and Japhet, go backward with a garment to cover the shame of many professors? How is that which thy name blasphemed! Jam. ii. 7. 2 Sam. xii. 13, 14. the hearts of the righteous saddened, Psal. xxv. 3. Ezek. xxxvi. 20. by this the world is fearfully prejudiced against Christ and religion, the bond of death made fast upon their souls; those that have a general leaning to the ways of God, startled and quite driven back, and thus soul-blood is shed: woe to the world!

Yea, how are the consciences of fallen professors plunged, and overwhelmed in the deeps of trouble? God inwardly excommunicating their souls from all comfortable fellowship with himself, and joys of his salvation: infinite are the mischiefs that come by scandalous lives of professors.

And what is the true cause and reason of all this, but the neglecting of their hearts? Were our hearts better kept, all this would be prevented. Had David kept his heart, he had not broken his bond: a negligent and careless heart must of necessity produce a disorder.

religion sweet ; if ever you hope to recover the credit of the world, keep your hearts ; either keep your hearts, or lose your credit ; keep your hearts, or lose your comforts ; keep your hearts, lest ye shed soul-blood. What words can express the greatness of the merits, the wonderful consequences of this work ! Even a necessity, a solemnity, a beauty upon it.

8 Motive. *An heart well kept will fit you for any service he casts you into, or any service he hath to use you in.*

He that hath learnt how to keep his heart lowly, is fit for any service : and he that knows how to use and apply it to his duties, promises and supports, is fit to pass through any adversity. He that deny the pride and selfishness of his heart is fit to be employed in any service for God. Such a man was Paul, he did not look to his time in preaching to others, in keeping others vineyard ; he looked to himself, kept his own vineyard ; 1 Cor. ix. 15. " when I have preached to others, I myself should be rewarded." And what an eminent instrument was he for God ? He put his hand to any work ; he could dexterously manage both adversity and prosperous condition : " I know how to abound, and how to suffer want. Let the people deify him, it moves him not ; let indignation. Let them stone him, he can bear it ; If they blaspheme him, he himself from these (saith he, 2 Tim. ii. 21.) he shall be preserved unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, prepared unto every good work."

First the heart must be purged, and then it is prepared for the service of God. When the heart of Isaiah was purified by the touching of his lips with a coal from the altar, Isa. vi. 7. then he was fit for God's work : " He said, ' Here am I, send me,' ver. 8. A man that hath not learned to keep his heart lowly, will not be fit upon any service for God, and if it be attended with adversity, it shall swell up and over-top his spirit ; if with suffering, it shall animate and sink him.

Jesus Christ had an instrumental fitness for his Father's work, and all the servants that ever God employed : he was zealous of his work for God ; so zealous, that sometimes he forgot his rest, yea, that his friends thought he had been besides himself. He so carried on his public work, as not to forget his communion with God : and therefore you read, Mat. ix. 18. when he had been labouring all day, yet, after that he was retired to the mountain apart to pray, and was there alone. O let the vineyarders look to their own vineyard : We shall need

“Men would say, we will go with you; for we have heard that C
“is among you.” It is the fellowship your souls have with
Father, and with the Son, that draws out the desires of others a
fellowship with you, 1 John i. 3. I tell you, if saints would be p
suaded to take more pains, and spend more time about their hea
there would quickly be such a divine lustre upon the face of th
conversations, that men would account it no small privilege to
with or near them.

It is the pride, passion, and earthliness of our hearts that h
spoiled Christian fellowship. Whence is it, that when Christ
meet, they are often jarring and contending? but only from th
unmortified passions: whence are their uncharitable censures of th
brethren: but only from self-ignorance: Why are they so rigid
unmerciful towards those that are fallen? but because they consi
not themselves as the apostle speaks, Gal. vi. 1. Why is their
course so frothy and unprofitable when they meet? is not this fr
the earthliness and vanity of their hearts?

My brethren, these be the things that have spoiled Christian
lowship, and made it become a dry and sapless thing; so that m
Christians are even weary of it, and are ready to say with the prop
Jer. ix. 2. “O that I had a cottage in the wilderness, &c. tha
“might leave my people, and go from them!” And with Da
Psal. cxx. 6. “My soul hath long dwelt with them that hate pea
This hath made them long for the grave that they might go fr
them that are not their own people, to them that are their own p
ple, as the original of that text imports, 2 Cor. v. 8.

But now if professors would study their own hearts more, wa
and keep them better, all this would be prevented; and the bea
and glory of communion again restored: they would divide no m
contend no more, censure rashly no more; when their hearts are
tune, their tongues will not jar; how charitable, pitiful, and ten
will they be of one another, when every one is daily humbled un
the evils of his own heart. Lord, hasten those much-desired da
and bless these counsels in order to them!

10 Motive. Lastly, *By this the comforts of the Spirit, and preci
influence of all ordinances would be fixed, and much longer preser
in your souls than now they are.*

Ah! what would I give, that my soul might be preserved in t
frame I sometimes find it in after an ordinance? *Aliquando intronit
me, Domine, in affectum multum inusitatum, introrsus ad qu
nescio dulcedinem* &c. Sometimes O Lord (saith one of

would you be? what lives would you live? and how if things remain no longer with us? Doubtless it is because our hearts to take cold again; we should be as careful of nance or duty to prevent this, as one that comes out of the sun or great sweat, is of going out into the chill air. We are hot and cold fits by turns: and what is the reason but our care and carelessness in keeping the heart?

It is a thousand pities, that the ordinances of God, for quickening and comforting effects, should be like those ordinances the apostle speaks of, that perish in the use. Let me say to you, as Job xv. 11. "Do the consolations seem small to you?" Look over these ten special benefits, set them in a just balance: are they small matters? Is it a small thing to have thy weak understanding assisted? Thy endangering cleared, thy sincerity cleared, thy communion with God restored, thy sails filled in prayer? Is it a small thing to have the power of godliness again recovered, all fatal scandals removed, instrumental fitness to serve Christ obtained, the communion restored to its primitive glory, and the influences of ordinances in the souls of saints? If these be no common blessings and benefits, then, surely, it is a great duty to keep the heart with diligence.

The III. Use, for Direction.

The next use shall be for direction to some special means of keeping of the heart. And here, besides what hath been said in the explication of the duty *at the beginning of this* which I refer the reader, and all those directions throughout the whole, appropriated to particular cases and seasons; I shall add several other general means of excellent use to this, the first is this:

1 Mean. *Would you thus keep your hearts as hath been said? Then furnish your hearts richly with the word of God, for the best preservation against sin.*

Keep the word, and the word will keep you: as the hearing of the word regenerated your hearts, so the keeping of the word within you will preserve your hearts: Col. iii. 16. "Let the word of Christ dwell richly in you:" let it dwell, not tarry for a night, and let it dwell richly or plentifully; in all that is in its commands, promises, threats; in all that is in its understanding, memories, consciences, affections, and preserve your hearts; Psalm cxix. 11. "Thy word

the straying heart again; Mat. xxvi. 57. "Then Peter remembered the word of Jesus, and wept bitterly." We never lose our hearts, till they have first lost the efficacious and powerful impression of the word.

2 Mean. *Call your hearts frequently to an account, if ever you mean to keep them with God.*

Those that put a stock into the hands of unfaithful or suspicious servants, will be sure to make short reckonings with them; "Thy heart is deceitful, above all things, and desperately wicked," Jer. xvii. 9. O it is as necessary as sweet, that we and our reins, that we and our secret thoughts, should confer together every night. Psalm xvi. 7. We should call our hearts to account every evening and say, O my heart! Where hast thou been to-day? Where have thy thoughts been wandering to-day? What an account canst thou give of them? O naughty heart! vain heart! couldst thou not abide by the fountain of delights? Is there better entertainment with any creature than with God? The oftener the heart meets with rebukes and checks for wandering, the less it will wander: If every vain thought were retracted with a sigh, every excursion of the heart from God with a severe check, it would not dare so boldly and frequently to digress and step aside: those actions which are committed with reluctancy, are not committed with frequency.

3 Mean. *He that will keep his heart, must take heed of plunging himself into such a multiplicity of earthly business, as he cannot manage without neglecting his main business.*

It cannot be imagined he should keep his heart with God that hath lost himself in a wood of earthly business: Take heed you do not pinch your souls, by gratifying the immoderate desires of your flesh. I wish many Christians could truly say what an *heathen once did! 'I do not give, but only lend myself to business.' I have said Germanicus reigned in the hearts of the Romans; Tiberius only in their provinces. Though the world be in your hands, let not you justle Christ out of your hearts.

Take heed, Christian, lest thy shop steal away thy heart from thy closet; God never intended earthly employments for a stop, but rather for a step to heavenly ones. O let not Aristippus the heathen arise in judgment against thee, who said, 'He would rather neglect his means, than his mind; his farm, than his soul.' If thy ship be overladen, thou must cast some overboard: More business than thou canst well manage, is like more meat than thou canst well digest, which will quickly make a sickly soul.

a vain thought be long neglected; the serpent of heart-ap- killed in the egg of a small remission of care. Oh! if m- cayed Christians had looked to their hearts in time, th- come to that sad pass they now are in? We may say of ne- as the apostle doth of vain babblings; that they increase more ungodliness. *Nemo repente fit turpissimus*; little ed, will quickly become great and masterless: The gr- dile once lay in an egg; the greatest oak was once bu- The firing of a small train of powder may blow up all- to a greater quantity. Men little think what a proud, v- or worldly thought may grow to: Behold how great little fire kindles!

5 Mean. *Take heed of losing the liveliness and sweet communion with God, lest thereby your hearts be loosed*

The heart is an hungry and restless thing; it will hav- to feed upon; if it enjoy nothing from God, it will hu- thing among the creatures, and there it often loses itse- its end. There is nothing more engages the heart to- and evenness in walking with God, than the sweetn- tastes therein: As the Gauls, when once they tasted th- of Italy, could never be satisfied till they conquered- where it grew.

It is true, conscience of duty may keep the heart fro- it; but when there is no higher motive, it drives on d- filled with distractions; that which we delight in, we are of, as is evident in the motions of the heart to earthly t- the wheels being oiled with delight, run nimbly, and- need of triggling; the motions of the heart upwards free, if its delight in heavenly things were as great.

6 Mean. *Habituate thy heart to spiritual meditation, wouldst have it free from those burdensome diversions.*

By this mean you will get a facility and dexterity in- It is pity those smaller portions of our time betwixt s- should lie upon our hands, and be rendered useless to us- save, and be good husbands upon your thoughts. To- a neat author * speaks; 'These parentheses, which hap- 'between the more solemn passages (whether business or- 'of human life, are wont to be lost by most men for w- 'value for them, and even by good men, for want of- 'serve them; for though they do not properly despis- 'they neglect, or lose them, for want of knowing ho- 'them, or what to do with them. But although crain-

CHOICE MEANS TO KEEP THE HEART.

‘ represented (as in looking-glasses) and discern celestial objects
 ‘ with the telescopes) and with the sun beams kindle disposed ma-
 ‘ rials (as with burning glasses :) So when these little fragments,
 ‘ parcels of time, which if not carefully looked to, would be
 ‘ sipated and lost, come to be managed by a skilful contemplator,
 ‘ to be improved by the celestial fire of devotion, they may be
 ‘ ordered as to afford us both looking-glasses to dress our souls
 ‘ and prospectives to discover heavenly wonders and incentives to
 ‘ flame our hearts with zeal ;’ Thus far he.

Something of that nature I have under hand, for a public be-
 fit, if God give life to finish, and opportunity to produce it : C-
 tainly this is a great advantage for the keeping of the heart with G-

IV. Use of Consolation.

I shall now close the whole with a word or two of consolation
 all diligent and serious Christians, that faithfully and closely
 heart-work ; that are groaning and weeping in secret over the ha-
 ness, pride, earthliness, and vanity of their hearts ; that are fear-
 and trembling over the experienced deceitfulness and falseness of the
 whilst other vain professors eyes are abroad, their time and stren-
 eaten up by fruitless disputes and earthly employments, or, at b-
 by a cold and formal performance of some heartless and empty dut-
 Poor Christian ! I have three things to offer thee, in order to
 support and comfort ; and, doubtless, either of them alone, m-
 ed with faith, is sufficient to comfort thee over all the trouble th-
 hast with thine own heart.

1. Comfort. *This argues thy heart to be upright and honest
 whatever thy gifts and abilities are.*

It is uprightness of heart will comfort thee upon a death-bed
 Kings xx. 2, 3. “ Then he turned his face to the wall, and pray-
 “ to the Lord, saying, remember now, O Lord, how I have walk-
 “ before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart,” &c.

I am really of his mind, who said, *si mihi daretur optio, eligeretur
 Christiani rustici sordidissimum & maxime agreste opus præ om-
 bus victoriis & triumphis Alexandri aut Cæsaris ;* might I have
 wish, I would prefer the most despicable and sordid work of a rus-
 Christian, before all the victories and triumphs of Alexander
 Cæsar ; yea, let me add, before all the elaborated duties and ex-
 lent gifts of vain professors ; before the tongues of men and ang-
 It will signify more to my comfort, to spend one solitary hour
 mourning before the Lord over heart-corruption, than many ho-
 in a seeming zealous, but really dead performance of common du-

then for the want of those things that a man may have naturally damned; but rather bless God for that which his favourites and darlings of heaven have. Many a one is that had a better head than mine; and many a one now that complained of as bad a heart as thine.

2 Comfort. *Know further for thy comfort, that God leave thee under so many heart-troubles and burdens if not thy real benefit thereby.*

Thou art often crying out, Lord! why is it thus? mourning all the day, having sorrow in my heart? Thou I been exercised with hardness of heart, and to this day I retained a broken heart. Many years have I been praying against vain thoughts, yet am still infested and perished by them. O when shall I get a better heart! I have been tried and brought forth but wind; I have obtained no deliverance, neither have the corruptions of my heart fallen. I have laboured with my heart many times to prayers, sermons and sacraments, expecting a cure from them, and still my sore runneth, and is not healed.

Pensive soul! Let this comfort thee; thy God designs to fit thee, even by these occasions of thy sad complaints. For he would let thee see what thy heart by nature is and what it is able to do in take notice how much thou art beholden to free grace. He keeps thee under these exercises of spirit, that thou mayest lie flat on thy face upon the ground, admiring that ever the Lord of glory should take so vile a creature into his bosom. Thy base heart, which is fit for nothing else, yet serves to commend and set off the riches of free grace. (2.) This serves to beat thee off from resting, yea, or but glancing upon thine own righteousness and excellency. The corruption of thy heart, working in all thy thoughts, makes thee sensible to feel that the bed is too short, and the room too narrow. Were it not for those reflections that come upon thy duties, upon the dulness and distractions of thine heart, how apt wouldst thou be to fall in love with, and admire thy own performances and enlargements? For if notwithstanding thou hast much to do with the pride of thy heart, how much more such humbling and self-abasing considerations were wanted. Lastly, this tends to make thee the more compassionate towards others: Perhaps thou wouldst have little pity on the troubles and soul-troubles of others, if thou hadst less of thine own.

3 Comfort. *To conclude; God will shortly put a blessed end to these troubles, cares and watchings.*

ly out of thy thoughts, and they be everlastingly, ravishingly, a delightfully entertained and exercised upon that supreme goodness and infinite excellency of God, from whom they shall never start any more like a broken bow. And as for thy pride, passion, earthliness, and all other the matters of thy complaint and trouble, it shall be said of them, as of the Egyptians to Israel, "Stand still, and see the salvation of God." These corruptions thou seest to day, henceforth thou shalt see them no more for ever! when thou shalt lay down thy weapons of prayers, tears, and groans, and put on thy armour of light, not to fight, but triumph in.

Lord! when shall this blessed day come? How long! how long, holy and true? My soul waiteth for thee! Come, my Beloved! and be thou like a roe, or a young hart upon the mountains of Bethanien.
Amen.

THE

TOUCHSTONE OF SINCERITY:

OR,

THE SIGNS OF GRACE, AND SYMPTOMS OF HYPOCRISY.

Opened in a practical Treatise upon Revelation iii. 17, 18.

The Epistle to the Reader.

Reader,

AMONG the difficulties and severities of true religion, the faithful searching, and diligent keeping of our hearts are found in the first and highest rank of difficulties: These two take up the main work of a Christian betwixt them, *Hic labor, hoc opus est.* I have hoped that these *essays* for the *searching of the heart*, might more sooner have followed my former for *keeping the heart*.* But providence hath reserved it for the fittest season.

It comes to thy hand, Reader, in a day of straits and fears, a dark and gloomy season: when the nations about us are made drunk

ing from that scripture, Rev. xiii. 3. "The de (viz. That given the beast by the reformation) *was* concluded, that popery will once more over-run the tions: And one of great renown in all the churches o telling this furious, but short storm, comforts the p with this, That it is like to fall heaviest upon the wors *outward court*, namely the formal professors of the tin

O how much is every man now concerned to ha and condition well cleared, and to give all diligence calling and election sure!

It should both amaze and grieve a pious mind, to ingenious persons can sit with unwearied patience and p ing their brains upon some dry *school problem*, or some *metaphysical point*; whilst no reasons or persuasions can prevail spend one serious hour in the search and study of their

It was the saying of the great Cicero, *Libenter omnib concesserim, ut mihi liceat, vi nulla interpellante, isto m vere*: I would give all the wealth in the world that I mig in my studies, and have nothing to hinder me. What had that been, if heaven, and the clearing of a title to the subject-matter of those studies! *Crede mihi, extingu mathematicarum artium studio*, saith another; i. e. Believe a sweet death to die in the study of the *mathematical* should be apt to believe it too, did I not know that etern immediately follows death; and that they who stand a eternity have higher matters to mind than *mathematical* discern the harmonies and proportions in nature is pleas discern the harmony and proportion of the *signs* of gra in the word, with the works of grace wrought in our s more pleasant and necessary employment: and, to be c in such a work as this, were a lovely death indeed: "Bl "servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find s

My friends, a day of trouble is near, a dying hour us; and when our eye-strings and heart-strings are brea we are taking the last grasp of Christ, and the promis then know to what purpose those hours spent in such were. Search yourselves, yea, search yourselves before bring forth, as that text may be read, Zeph. ii. 1, 2. "thy chamber and shut thy door;" "sit close to this "thou art here directed to: and however times shall gove "it be fair or foul weather abroad, thou shalt never rep

frolics, never once grudging them in their short and dear-bought pleasures. Assurance, That sin is pardoned, and Christ is ours with the unspeakable joys that are inseparably connected therewith is that "white stone, and new name, which none knows but he that receives it;" for no words can possibly signify to another what that soul tastes and feels in such an hour as that is.

And be not discouraged at the difficulty of obtaining it: The *white stone* is no *philosopher's stone*, which no man could ever have had in his own hand; for many a Christian hath really found it in waiting upon the Lord by prayer, and diligently searching scriptures and his own heart.

Reader, the time will come when they that scoff at the seriousness of the saints, and break many a pleasant jest upon the most solemn and awful things in religion, will tremble when they shall hear the midnight cry, "Behold the bridegroom cometh!" and see the lamps of all vain and formal professors expire, and none admitted into the marriage but such whose lamps are furnished with oil; such whose professions and duties are enlivened and maintained by vital springs and principles of real grace within them.

It is a very remarkable story that Melchior Adams records in the life of Gobelinus; that a little before his time there was a play put forth at Isenach in Germany, of the *wise and foolish virgins*, where the Virgin Mary was one of the five saints that represented the *wise virgins*, was brought in with the rest, telling the *foolish virgins* that they cried to her for oil, that it was too late: and then others representing the *foolish virgins*, fell a weeping, and making most bitter lamentations.

Hereat prince Frederic (who was one of the spectators) greatly amazed, cried out, *Quid est fides nostra Christiana, si neque Maria neque alia Sancta exorari potest!* &c. What is our faith worth, and to what purpose are all our good works, if neither Mary nor any other saint can help us! And such was his consternation, that it threw him into a sore and violent disease which ended in an apoplexy, whereof he died about four days after.

If the representation of these things in a play ended the life of so great a man so tragically; O think with thyself, Reader, what will be the effects of the Lord's real appearance in the clouds of heaven, and the mourning and wailing of the tribes of the earth in that day! Think I say, and think again and again, what the dismal effects of such a sight and sound will be upon all that neglect serious preparation themselves, and scoff at them that do prepare to meet the Lord.

so busy and the *canon* of scripture not completed) which calls the gift of *discerning spirits*; 1 Cor. xii. 10. A of opinion, that by virtue of this gift, Peter discerned the treachery of Ananias and Sapphira, but whatever that gift has utterly ceased now; no man can pretend to it: But the aids and assistances of the Spirit are with us still, and oracles are among us still; to them we may freely go for the removal of all doubts and decision of perplexed cases. And we may discern our own spirits, though we want the extraordinary gift of discerning other men's spirits.

I have little to say of this *Treatise* in thy hands, more than that it is well aimed and designed, however it be managed; it tries words, as the mouth tasteth meat; these things are according to the palates it meets with.

It is not the pleasing, but profiting of men, that I have laboured for. I know nothing in it that is like to wound the right, or slightly heal the hypocrite, by crying peace, where there is no peace. Scripture light hath been my Candle; with that thread in my hand I have followed the search through the labyrinths of the heart. Some assistance I had also from experience; for scripture and experience are relatives, and the tie betwixt them so discernible, as nothing can be more so. What we feel in our hearts, we might find in the scriptures before ever we felt it.

That the blessing of God may go forth with it, and to thy soul, reader, is the heart's desire and prayer of,

Thine and the Church's

Servant in CHRIST

JOHN

THE
TOUCHSTONE OF SINCERITY :

OR,

THE SIGNS OF GRACE, AND SYMPTOMS OF HYPOCRISY

Opened in a Treatise upon Revelation iii. 17, 18.

Because thou sayest I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing ; and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked : I counsel thee to buy of me GOLD TRIED in the FIRE, that thou mayest be rich, &c.

CHAP. I.

Wherein the text is opened, and the doctrines are propounded

ALTHOUGH the Revelation be a *compendium* of intricate visions and obscure prophecies, containing almost as many mysteries of words * ; yet that cloud overshadows the prophetic part of which begins where this chapter (with the doctrinal part) ends : here the waters are found no deeper than in other places of the scripture ; but if we go a little farther, they become an overflowing flood. Hitherto we touch ground, but a step further delivers us into deeps, which are above the heads of the tallest Christians. Here the spirit speaks *doctrinally*, and perspicuously ; but in the following chapters *mystically*, and in great obscurity.

Seven epistles are found in this doctrinal part, immediately dictated from heaven, and sent by John to the *seven churches of Asia* to instruct, correct, encourage, and confirm them, as their several cases required.

My text falls in the last *epistle*, sent to the church of Laodicea, the worst and most degenerate of all the rest. The best had their defects and infirmities, but this laboured under the most dangerous disease of all. The fairest face of the seven had some *spots*, but a dangerous disease seems to have invaded the very heart of this.

Not that all were equally guilty, but the greatest part (from which the whole is denominated) were *lukewarm* professors ; who had

of them, and loathed their indifferency; "I wish (saith
 "thou wert either cold or hot." An expression of the
 with that in 1 Kings xviii. 21. "How long halt you
 "opinions?" and is manifestly translated from the quality
 which is either *cold* or *hot*; or *lukewarm*, a middle temper
 both, and more nauseous to the stomach than either of
 'Cold is the complexion and natural temper of those that
 'alienated and estranged from Christ and religion: *H*
 'cious temper of those that know and love Jesus Christ
 'ling degree! *lukewarm*, or *tepid*, is the temper of those
 'too much religion to be esteemed carnal, and too little
 'spiritual;' a generation that is too *politic* to venture
 yet so *foolish* as to lose all; they are loth to forsake
 and more loth to follow it too *closely*: the form of religion
 fect as an *honour*, the power of it they judge a *burden*.

This is that temper which the Lord hates, and this was
 of Laodicea, which Christ, the great and only *heart-and-*
soul-physician, discovers in ver. 17. and prescribes a cure in
 ver. 18. So that the words resolve themselves into two

First, A faithful discovery } of the disease of Laodicea
 Secondly, A proper remedy }

1. *First*, Their disease is faithfully discovered to them
 its symptoms, cause, and aggravations.

First, Its *symptoms*, an unconcerned, indifferent, resolution
 rit in matters of religion, neither hot nor cold; the trifling
formal-professors, who never engaged themselves to
 heartily in the ways of God, but can take or leave as time
 and worldly interest comes to be concerned.

Secondly, Its cause and root, which is the defect and want of
 truth, and power of inward grace, noted in these expressions
 "art wretched, and miserable, poor, blind, and naked"
 art destitute of a real principle, a solid work of grace. These
 thets do all point at one and the same thing; namely, the
 and rottenness of their foundation. The two first, *ο ταπεινός*
ελεεινός, *wretched* and *miserable*, are more general, concluding
 a sad condition, a very sinful and lamentable estate; the
πτωχός, *τυφλός*, *και γυμνός*, viz. *poor*, *blind*, and *naked*, are
 ticular, pointing at those grand defects and flaws in the
 which made their condition so wretched and miserable.

First, *Poor*, that is, † void of righteousness and true
 fore God: These are the true riches of Christians: an

Secondly, *Blind*; * i. e. without spiritual illumination, and neither knowing their disease, nor their remedy; the evil of sin, and the necessity of Christ.

Thirdly, *Naked*; † without Christ and his righteousness. Sin is the soul's shame and nakedness; Christ's pure and perfect righteousness is its covering or garment; this they wanted, how rich soever their bodies were adorned. These were Laodiceans; i. e. a just and righteous people (according to the notation of that word) whose garments with which they covered themselves, were made of the home-spun thread of their own righteousness.

Thirdly, The disease of Laodicea is here opened to them in aggravations; "Thou saidst I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; but knowest not," &c.

To be really graceless and Christless, is a miserable condition; but to be so, and yet confidently persuaded of the contrary, is more miserable: to have the very symptoms of death upon us, and yet to tell those that pity us we are as well as they, is lamentable indeed.

O the efficacy of a spiritual delusion! this was their *disease*, *gracelessness*; and the *aggravation of it*, was their *senselessness*.

Secondly, We have a proper remedy prescribed, ver. 18. "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich," &c. In which we have to consider, *First*, what is prescribed for the cure. *Secondly*, Where it is to be had. *Thirdly*, How to be obtained.

First, What are the remedies prescribed; and they are three, *gold*, *white raiment*, and *eye-salve*. First, *gold*, the cure of poverty; yea, *gold tried in the fire*; i. e. grace that hath been variously proved already; and the more it is proved, the more its truth will be conspicuous. The next is *white raiment*, the remedy against nakedness. And, lastly, *eye-salve*, the effectual cure of blindness. Under all these choice metaphors, more choice and excellent things are shadowed even spiritual graces, real holiness, more precious than gold. Christ's imputed righteousness, the richest garment in all the wardrobe of heaven; and spiritual illumination, the most excellent *collyrium* or *eye-salve* that ever was, or can be applied to the mental eye or understanding of man in this world.

Secondly, Where these precious remedies may be had; and you find Christ hath the || *monopoly* of them all; *Buy of me*, saith Christ in the text; he is the *repository* of all graces. Angels, ministers, ordinances cannot furnish you with them without Christ.

Thirdly, How they may be obtained from him; *Buy of me*. C

this place Estius, and others, build their doctrine of manna to build a superstructure of hay and stubble upon a foundation of gold. The exigence of the very text itself destroys the notion for what have they that are poor, wretched, miserable, and naked things, to give as a price, or by way of merit for those treasures of grace? *Buying* therefore in this place cannot intend no more than the acquisition, compassing, or obtaining of things from Jesus Christ, in the use of such means and ways as he hath appointed; and in the use of them we merit grace by the *patient* merits of his *physician* by coming to him, and obeying his prescriptions in the use of such medicaments as he gives him: And that place Isa. lv. 1. (from which this doctrine is to be borrowed) fully clears it; "He that hath no money, let him come and buy wine and milk without money, and without price." From all which, these three observations fairly follow to us.

Doct. 1. *That many professors of religion are unduly and dangerously mistaken in their profession.*

Doct. 2. *That true grace is exceeding precious, and more precious than riches the soul that possesseth it.*

Doct. 3. *That only he is to be accounted true grace who can endure all those trials appointed, or permitted for the obtaining of it.*

The first doctrine naturally arises out of the scope of the text which is to awaken and convince unsound professors.

The second, from the use the Holy Ghost makes of the choicest things in nature, to shadow forth the inestimable preciousness of grace.

And the third, from that particular and most significant image of gold tried in the fire; by which I here understand a work of grace, evidencing itself to be so in all the proofs that are made of it; for whatsoever is probational of grace, its soundness and sincerity to the test, is that to it which is gold: In this sense it is used in scripture, Psal. lxxv. "he hath tried us as silver is tried:" And Zech. xiii. 9. "the third part through the fire, and will refine the silver, and the third part will be refined, and try them as gold is tried." So that which examines and tries grace whether it be sound or unsound, that is the fire Christ here speaks of; and such grace as can endure trials, is the gold here intended.

CHAP. II.

Wherein the first Doctrine is opened and proved briefly, as a preliminary Discourse to the principal Subject herein designed.

DOCT. I.

That many professors of religion are under very great and dangerous mistakes in their professions.

SECT. I.

ALL flattery is dangerous; self-flattery is more dangerous; self-flattery in the business of salvation, is the most dangerous of

To pretend to the good we know we have not, is gross hypocrisy to persuade ourselves of the good we have not, though we think we have it, is formal hypocrisy; and this was the case of those self-deceivers in the text.

My design in this discourse is not to shake the well-built hope of any man, or beget groundless jealousies, but to discover the real dangerous flaws in the foundation of many men's hopes for heaven. Every thing is as its foundation is, and *debile fundamentum facit opus*; that failing, all fails.

There is a twofold self-suspicion or fear in God's own people. The one is a fear of *caution*, awakening the soul to the use of all preventive means for avoiding danger; this is *laudable*: The other is a groundless suspicion of reigning hypocrisy, tending only to despondency: this is *culpable*. By the former the soul is guarded against *danger*; by the latter it is betrayed into needless trouble, and delivered from *peace*.

Good men have sometimes more fear than they ought, and wicked men have less than they ought: The former do sometimes shut their eyes against the fair evidences of their own graces; the latter shut their eyes against the sad evidences of their sin and misery. There is an evil in both, but not equally dangerous; for he that shuts his eyes against his own graces and privileges, loseth but his peace and comfort for a time; but he that shuts his eyes against the evidences of his sin and misery, loseth his precious soul to all eternity. Of the latter sort of self-deceivers the world is full, and these are the men I am concerned with in this point.

Oh! that some men had less trouble! and oh! that some had more! If the *foolish virgins* had been less confident, they had certainly been more safe. Many of the *wise virgins* are now in the same state.

point. It is said, Prov. xxx. 12. "There is a generation "in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their eyes. Through what false spectacles do the men of that generation look upon their own souls; the men of that generation are deceived. This generation: Never was any age over-run with a generation so vain, self-cozening, formal professors, as this generation.

Three things I shall here endeavour to do:

1. To give evidence beyond contradiction to this sad state of things among professors are found many self-deceivers.

(2.) To assign the true causes and reasons why it is so.

(3.) Improve it in those practical inferences the point of view.

SECT. II.

THAT there are multitudes of such self-deceivers and professors, will appear,

1. *First*, By this, that there are every where to be found more professors than converts; unregenerate professors, who are not saved, but the effect of education. Christianity, by the favour of God's providence, was the first comer, it first bespoke them for converts. They are Christians of an human creation, rather born than made. Believers. Now all these are self-deceived, and hasting to destruction under the efficacy of a strong delusion; "for if a man is deceived, "to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself." So saith the apostle, Gal. vi. 3. Surely our birth-privilege, with which we are born, is nothing, yea, worse than nothing, as to our salvation account: That which stands for a great sum in our estimation, is nothing, it is but a *cypher* you see in God's. "Except a man be born again (saith the lips of truth) he cannot see the kingdom of God." John iii. 3.

Poor self-deceivers, ponder those words of Christ. You have hitherto thought your civil education, your dead and dead works enough to denominate you Christians before God; but you must learn what the scripture meaneth; and be assured you must have another manner of conversion, or else it is impossible to escape eternal damnation.

2. *Secondly*, It is too manifest by this, that many professors acquainted with the externals of religion; and all their works are no more but a compliance of the outward man with the will of God: This is the superficial religion which deceives multitudes into eternal misery. True religion seats itself in the inward man, and acts effectually upon the vital powers, the heart, and purging its designs and delights from

that which only lives in the souls of good men? Thus was Jehu deceived; he did many acts of external obedience to God's command, "but Jehu took no heed to walk in the ways of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart," 2 Kings x. 31. And this was his overthrow.

This also was the ruin of those formalists, Ezek. xxxiii. 31. The Lord came and sat before the Lord as his people: The word was to them as a lovely song; mightily charmed with the modulation of the prophet's voice, and his lively gestures; but all the while their hearts went after their covetousness. And what abundance of such pharisaical, superficial religion is every where to be found?

3. *Thirdly*, It appears by this, that every trial made by suffering upon professors blows away multitudes, like dry leaves in autumn by a stormy wind; many fall from their own steadfastness in shallow times; prosperity multiplies vain professors, and adversity purges the church of them; "Then shall many be offended," Matth. xxiv.

This the scripture every where marks as a symptom of hypocrisy. Psal. lxxvii. 8. "A generation that set not their hearts aright, whose spirit was not steadfast with God." 1 John ii. 19. "They went out, that they might be made manifest, that they were not of us." Matth. xiii. 21. "For when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." Should one have told them in the days of their first profession, all their zeal and labour in religion would have ended in this, like they would have replied as Hazael to the man of God, 2 Kings viii. 13. "But what is thy servant a dog, that he should do such a great thing?" *Quantum mutatus ab illo?*

O how unlike is their dark and dirty evening to their glorious hopeful morning! These professors have more of the moon than the sun, little light, less heat, but many changes: They deceive many, yea, they deceive themselves, but cannot deceive God. During the calm what a flourish do they make? And with what gallantry do they sail? By and by you may hear *horrendas tempestates*, soon after you may see *flenda naufragia*, dreadful shipwrecks after a furious storm; and no wonder, for they wanted that *ῥόλον ἐπερὶ πλοῦν*, that ballast and establishment in them. 1 Pet. iii. 4. They sought for themselves that would have kept them tight and stable.

4. *Fourthly*, It is too apparent by this, that many professors secretly indulge and shelter beloved lusts under the wings of their profession. This, like a worm at the root, will wither and kill them at last, how fragrant soever they may seem to be for a season. Gideon had seventy sons, and one bastard; but that one bastard

for his integrity, surely such professors will never clear themselves of hypocrisy. "I was also upright before him, and kept my tongue from vanity," saith he, Psalm xviii. 23. This is the right hand which every sincere Christian must pluck out, and cut off, Matth. v. 29, 30.

Which is a metaphor from surgeons, whose manner it is, when the whole is in danger by any part, to cut it off, *ne periculum trahatur*; lest all perish.

Their suppressing some lust raiseth their confidence; the suppressing of one raiseth the foundation of their hopes; and they deceive themselves.

5. *Fifthly*, This also manifests the self-deceits of many professors, that the secret duties of religion, or at least the secret duties of the soul with God in them, is a secret hid from the knowledge and experience of many professors.

To attend the ordinances of God in the seasons of prayer; to know; to pray in their families at the stated hours; to know; but to retire from all the world into their closet; to pour out their hearts before the Lord, they know not.

To feel somewhat within, paining them like an empty stomach, until they have eaten that hidden manna, that bread of life. I mean refreshed their souls with real communion with Christ; there; this is a mystery locked up from the acquaintance of many that call themselves Christians; and yet this is made a distinguishing note of a sincere Christian by Christ himself, in Matt. xxv. 12.

O reader! if thy heart were right with God, and thou didst not cheat thyself with a vain profession, thou wouldst have fellowship with God, which thou wouldst be loth thy dearest friends should be privy to: *Non est religio secreta*; religion doth not lay all open to the eyes of men. Secret duties maintain our credit, but secret duties maintain our conscience. 'Twas the saying of an heathen about his secret correspondence with his friends, what need the world be acquainted with it? "I am theatre enough to each other." There are inclosures in religion which none but renewed souls do feelingly understand.

6 *Lastly*, How many more profess religion in these times than ever made religion their business! Philosophy tells us that *το εργον* and a *το παρεργον*, a main business; and a by-business; the same is found in religion also.

There are "that give themselves to the Lord," 2 Cor. vi. 18. whose conversation, or trade, is in heaven, Phil. iii. 18. whose scope of whose life is Christ, Heb. xiii. 7, 8. who give

CAUSES OF SELF-DECEIT.

they have nothing else to do; and when their outward man is engaged in the duties of it, yet their heart is not in it; they hear when they pray, *ὁὐ ψυχή ἐξω*, as Chrysostom speaks, but their souls, thoughts and minds are abroad. It is not their business to have fellowship with God in duties, to get their lusts mortified, their hearts tried, their souls conformed to the image of God in holiness.

They pray as if they prayed not, and hear as if they heard not; and if they feel no power in ordinances, no quickening in duties, there is no disappointment at all to them; for these were not their designs, in drawing nigh to God in these appointments.

And thus you see what numbers of professors deceive themselves.

SECT. III.

AND if we seriously enquire into the grounds and causes of self-deceit among professors, we shall find these four things conspiring to delude and cheat them in the great concern of their salvation.

1. *First*, The natural deceitfulness of the heart, than which nothing is more treacherous, and false, Jer. xvii. 9. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;"* *מכלי הלב* : *Supplantativum cor, præ omnibus*; the heart is the greatest supplanter, the most crafty and subtle cheat of all, that deceives as Jacob did his brother (to whose name this text alludes.) It defrauds us of our heavenly heritage, as Jacob supplanted him in his earthly one, while we are gone a hunting after earthly trifles. And wherein its deceitfulness principally appears, you may see by the solemn caveat of the apostle, James i. 22. wherein he warns us to beware, that in hearing the word we deceive not ourselves by false reasonings; for so *παραλογιζόμενοι εαυτάς* imports, and may be strictly rendered, false reasoning themselves, namely, by making false syllogisms; whereby they misconclude about their spiritual and eternal estate and condition, and befool themselves.

The time will come when a man's own heart will be found to be the chief hand in his ruin; and what Apollodorus did but fancy, his heart said to him, some men's hearts will tell them in earnest, when they come to the place of misery and torment; *ἐγώ σοι τούτων αἰτία* I have been the cause of all these, I have betrayed thee into all these temptations: it was my laziness, my credulity, my averseness to the work of strict godliness, mortification and self-denial which have fore-undone thee; when thou satest under the convincing truths of the gospel, it was I that whispered those atheistical surmises into thine

ed, it was I that whispered what the tongue of another
out, *Tunc credam, cum illuc venero*: I will believe it
thither.

Surely this is a great truth which was observed by
men, "He that trusteth in his own heart, is a fool,"
26. And thousands of such fools are to be found among

2. *Secondly*, Satan is a chief conspirator in this treachery
we are not ignorant (saith the apostle) *of his devices*; *vanity*
phistry and slights, 2 Cor. ii. 11. his *μεθοδίας*, trains
of temptation, which are thoroughly studied and artific
ed and ordered; even such systems as *tutors* and *professors*
and *sciences* have, and read over to their *auditors*; as
ciously observes, to be the import of that text, Eph. vi.
it to be wondered at, considering his vast knowledge,
and long experience in this art of cheating, together with
corruption and proneness of the hearts of men to close
vices, and believe his impostures, that so vast a number
taken "captive by him at his will," 2 Tim. ii. 26.

It is the god of this world that blinds the minds of those
believe not, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. "The god of this world," (so
Mimesis) who leads a world of poor deluded wretches to
having first *blinded their minds*, that is, deluded, and with
art practised upon their understanding, that *το ηγεμονικον*,
directive faculty, which is to the soul what eyes are to

I remember Basil brings in Satan thus insulting Christians
them! I have them! for all thy blood and miracles,
and beseechings, thy knockings and strivings, I have
of them at the very gates of heaven: for all their illumina
tasting of the powers of the world to come, I have shipwrecked
in the very mouth of the haven.

3. *Thirdly*, The common works found in unregenerate
ceive many, who cannot distinguish them from the work of
the Spirit in God's elect; see that startling scripture
where you find, among the common operations of the
apostates, that illumination which gives perspicuity to the
discerning spiritual truths, and that frequently with more
and depth of judgment than some gracious souls attain to
it is the matter out of which many rare and excellent gifts
ed in admirable variety, which are singularly useful to others
are exercised in expounding the scriptures, defending the
Christ by solid arguments, preaching, praying, &c., and
subject of them renowned and honoured in the church

seem to abound not only in knowledge, but in sense also; i. e. some kind of *experience* of what they know: for experience is bringing of things to the test of spiritual sense. They do taste experience the good that comes by the promises of the word, and discoveries of heaven and glory, though they feel not experimentally the transforming efficacy of these things upon their own souls.

Now, that illumination furnishing them with excellent gifts (as before was noted), enabling them to assent to gospel-truths, which scripture calls faith, Acts viii. 12. and working in them conviction of sin, 1 Sam. xv. 24. reformation of life, 2 Pet. ii. 20. and touching their affections also with transient joy in the discovery of those truths.

And this taste, which comes so near to the experience, which a sanctified soul enjoys, seems to put their condition beyond all controversy, and lay a foundation for their ill-built confidence: nothing more apt to beget and nourish such a confidence than the melting and workings of our affections about spiritual things; for as a * great divine hath well observed, such a man seems to have all that is required of a Christian, and to have attained the very end of all knowledge, which is operation and influence upon the affections. When they shall find heat in their affections, as well as light in their minds, how apt are they to say (as these self-deceivers in the text did) that they "are rich, and have need of nothing." Now of all the false senses of grace by which men cozen themselves, none are so dangerous and destructive to souls as those that come nearest true ones: never did Satan more effectually and securely manage his cheats than when he is transformed into an angel of light.

Among this sort of self-deceivers, how many gifted men, and among that sort, some employed in the office of the ministry will be found, whose daily employment being about spiritual things, studying, preaching, praying, &c. do conclude themselves sanctified persons, because they are conversant about sacred employments, and the subject must be, because the object is sacred. O! that some would seriously ponder these two scriptures, Matth. vii. 22. "Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful things?" And 1 Cor. ix. 27.—"I have made myself as with others, that by any means, when I have preached unto others, I myself should be a cast-away."

4. *Lastly*, To add no more, this strengthens self-deceit exceedingly in many, viz. Their observations of, and comparing themselves with others. Thus the Pharisees (those gross self-deceivers) "traced out the line of the wall, and increased the measure of the line, and

Regnat luscus inter cæcos ; he that hath but one eye is the blind.

Thus the false apostles cheated and befooled themselves. x. 12. "But they measuring themselves by themselves, paring themselves among themselves, are not wise." made one man a measure or standard to another man, is the common beam or scale to try all men.

These men are as sharp-sighted to note other men's own excellencies ; to eye the miscarriages of others with their own performances with admiration.

They bless themselves when they behold the profane "pieties, Luke xviii. 11. "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Pharisee ; q. d. O what a saint am I in comparison of these miserable sinners." The Pharisee's religion you see runs all upon *nots* ; a negation is enough to him : and the measure he takes of it is by comparing himself with others more externally vile than himself. He may say with praise and humility, "I am not as some other men are," though he knows nothing by himself, yet is he not satisfied," 1 Cor. iv. 4. He neither rakes together the crimes of the vilest, nor the infirmities of the holiest, to justify himself as these self-deceivers do. And these are the occasions of that general deception, under which so many of the professing world bow down and perish.

SECT. IV.

3. **I**N the last place I shall improve this point variously to the importance and usefulness of it, with as much closeness of application as I can. And,

Use 1. Shall be for caution to professors. Before I use you should make of it, I must tell you what use you should make of it.

First, Do not make this use of it ; to conclude from what has been said, that all professors are but a pack of hypocrites ; that there is no truth nor integrity in any man : this is both presumption and arrogance to ascend the throne of God ; and unparalleled insolence, to judge the hearts of all men.

Some men are as apt to conclude others to be hypocrites, by measuring their hearts by their own, as others are to conclude themselves saints, by comparing their own excellencies with the corruptions of others ; but, blessed be God ! there is some grain of truth in all this ; and some true diamonds among the count-

That assurance is one of the great difficulties in religion, is a great truth; but that it is therefore unattainable in this world, is very false. Popish doctrine indeed makes it impossible; but that doctrine is practicably confuted in the comfortable experience of many souls: all are commanded to strive for it, 2 Pet. i. 10. "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure:" and some have the happiness to obtain it, 2 Tim. i. 12. "For I know whom I have believed: and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

Let the similar works upon hypocrites resemble as much as they will the saving works of the Spirit upon believers; yet God does always, and the saints do sometimes plainly discern the difference.

Thirdly, Do not make this use of it, to conceal or hide the truth, or graces of God, or to refuse to profess, or confess them before men, because many professors deceive themselves and others also, by vain profession: Because another professeth what he hath not, must you therefore hide or deny what you have? It is true, the possession of grace and truth in your own souls, is that which saves you; but the profession or confession of it, is that which honours God and edifies; yea, sometimes is the instrument to save others; it is your comfort that you feel it, it is others comfort to know that you do so. Ostentation is your sin, but a serious and humble profession is your duty, Rom. x. 9.

SECT. V.

Use 2. **H**AVING shewed you in the former section what use you ought not to make of this doctrine, I will next shew you what you ought to make of it; and surely you cannot improve this point to a better purpose than from it to take warning, and look to yourselves, that you be not of that number who deceive themselves in their profession. If this be so, suffer me closely to press that great apostolical caution, 1 Cor. x. 12. "Let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall." O professors! look carefully to your foundation; be not high-minded, but fear. You have, it may be, done and suffered many things in and for religion; you have excellent gifts and sweet comforts: a warm zeal for God, and high confidence in your integrity: All this may be right, (for ought I, or, it may be you know:) but yet it is possible it may be false also: You have sometimes judged yourselves, and pronounced yourselves upright; but remember your final sentence is not yet pronounced by your Judge. And what if God should say, I have not known thee, thou

Thy heart may be false, and thou not know it; ye false, and thou strongly confident of its integrity.

The saints may approve thee, and God condemn thee.

1. "Thou hast a name that thou livest, but thou art dead; thou may say, there is a true Nathaniel; and God may say, a self-cozening Pharisee.

Reader, thou hast heard of Judas and Demas; of Sapphira; of Hymeneus and Philetus; once renowned professors, and thou hast heard what they proved at last.

Take heed their case be not thine own; do they not with one mouth cry to thee, O professor! if thou wistest where we are, do not cozen thyself as we did; if thou hadst a better place and lot, be sure thou get a sincere heart: the more self-suspicious, we had been more safe.

I would not scare you with needless jealousies, but prevent fatal mistakes. Do not you find your hearts troubled with many things? Do not you shuffle over secret duties? Do you censure the same evils in others, which you scarce reprehend in yourselves? Are there not many by-ends in duties? Do you are far less affected with a great deal of service done to God by others, than with a little by yourselves?

Is it not hard to look upon other men's excellencies with envy, or upon your own without pride?

And are you not troubled with a busy devil, as well as with a busy heart? Hath not he that circuits the whole world, obtruded himself upon you? Hath he not studied your constitution sins, and found out which most easily besets you? Hath he less malice against you than others? Surely you are in the very thicket of snares, and thousands of snares are round about you. O how difficult is it to be righteous! How hard to be upright! How few professors in this world win heaven at last!

O therefore search your hearts, professors, and let them be brought down to your very reins; "Let him that thinks he is standing, heed lest he fall."

Away with rash uncharitable censures of others, and with severity in censuring yourselves. Away with dry and barren controversies, and spend your thoughts upon this great question, I sound, or am I rotten at heart? Am I a new creature, or a creature still in a new creature's dress and habit? Begone, lest you be not deceived in that great point (your integrity) you may be mistaken in. Pray that you be not given up to a heedless careless and vain spirit, and then have religion.

after the dust of the earth, and saying, Who will shew us any good? be thou panting after the assurance of the love of God, and crying, Who will shew me how to make my calling and election sure?

O deceive not yourselves with names and notions? Think not, because you are for a stricter way of worship, or because you associate with, and are accordingly denominated, one of the more reformed professors, that therefore you are safe enough: Alas! how small interest have titles, modes, and denominations in religion? Suppose a curious artist take a lump of lead and refine it, and cast it into a mould, whence it comes forth shining, and bearing some noble figure, suppose of an eagle; yet it is but a leaden eagle. Suppose the figure of a man, and that in the most exact lineaments and proportions; still it is but a leaden man: Nay, let it bear the figure of an angel, it is but a leaden angel: For the base and ignoble matter is the same as it was, though the figure be not. Even so, take an unregenerate carnal man, let his life be reformed, and his tongue refined, and call him a zealous Conformist, or a strict Non-conformist; call him Presbyterian, an Independent, or what you will; he is all the while but a carnal Conformist, or Non-conformist; an unregenerate Presbyterian, a carnal Independent; for the nature is still the same, though the stamp and figure his profession gives him be not the same.

O my friends! believe it, fine names and brave words are of little value with God: God will no more spare you for these, than Samson did Agag for his delicate ornaments, and spruce appearance: Either make sure the root of the matter, or the leaves of a vain profession will not long cover you.

To be deceived by another is bad enough; but to deceive ourselves is a thousand times worse.

To deceive ourselves in truths of the superstructure, is bad; and they that do so shall suffer loss, 1 Cor. iii. 12. But to deceive ourselves in the foundation, is a desperate deceit, and shipwrecks all our hopes and happiness at once.

If any one lose his money by a cheat, it troubles him; but to lose his soul by a cheat, will confound him. If a man lose an eye, an ear, a hand, a foot, yet *omnia Deus dedit duplicia*, as Chrysostom speaks; God hath given these members double, so that there be another left; *animam vero unam*: But the soul is one, and cannot be one; and if that be damned, you have not another to be saved.

O therefore be restless till it be, and till you know it be, our eternal danger!

with tears, and would part with all the pleasant things the world to enjoy it.

This is that mercy that gives souls the highest pleasure is acquainted with, or the state of this mortality can bear. A well-assured soul but consider what it is assured of, Christ's purchases of his blood. O what is this! "I am my beloved's," "my beloved is mine," Cant. ii. 16. What a vital, overpowering efficacy is in that voice of faith! let it but look back years, and compare what it was with what it is now; it is now made nigh, Eph. ii. 12, 13. It was not before now beloved, Rom. ix. 25, 26. It had not obtained mercy, hath obtained mercy, 1 Pet. ii. 10. Or let the assured go forward, and compare what it now is, and hath, with what shall be made, and put in possession of: "Beloved, (saith the Father) now are we the sons of God; but it doth not yet appear what we shall be: But we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is," 1 John iii. 2.

I say, let the assured soul but steep its thoughts, by dwelling in these subjects, and it will be impossible to keep him from agreeable transports of joy and delight.

O what a life have you in comparison of other men's! two hells, one present, another coming; you have two in hand, the other in hope. Some of your own brethren that have been, it may be, many years panting after it, and still denied it; but God hath indulged so peculiar a favour. Bless ye the Lord, and make his praise glorious.

CHAP. III.

Containing the use and improvement of

DOCT. II.

That true grace is exceeding precious, and greatly to be valued of the soul that hath it: It is Christ's gold.

SECT. I.

THE Lord Jesus here chuseth the most pure, precious, durable, and valuable thing, in all the treasures an

precious than all the gold of Ophir: "It cannot be gotten for gold," neither shall silver be weighed for a price thereof," Job xxviii. Surely gold and silver, sapphires, diamonds, and rubies, are worth the mentioning, when saving grace is once mentioned. I consider it,

1. *First*, In its cause and fountain from whence it flows, and you shall find it to be the fruit of the Spirit, Gal. v. 22. who, upon this account, is called *the Spirit of Grace*, Heb. x. 29. It derives its origin from the Most High; it is spirit born of Spirit, John iii. All the rules of morality, all human diligence and industry can never produce one gracious habit or act alone; 2 Cor. iii. 5. "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves," &c.

Nay, we speak not becoming the incomparable worth of grace when we say, it is the fruit and birth of the Spirit; for so are common gifts also. There are several emanations from this sun, diverse streams from this fountain; but of all his operations and productions, this of saving grace is the most noble and excellent. Gifts are from the Spirit as well as grace, but grace is more excellent than the best gifts, 1 Cor. xii. 31. "Covet earnestly the best gifts, and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way." Hence you read Phil. i. 10. "Of things that are excellent," or as the original *τα διαφεροντα*, might be rendered, things that differ, namely, in respect of excellency, not as good and evil, but as less good and more good differ. Gifts have their value and preciousness, but the best gifts differ as much from grace, as brass from gold, though both generated by the influence of the same sun. Gifts (as one saith) are dead graces, but graces are living gifts; it is the most excellent production of the highest and most excellent cause.

2. *Secondly*, Consider it in its nature, and you will find it divine. 2 Pet. i. 4. "Partakers of the Divine nature," viz. in our sanctification; not that it gives us the properties of the Divine nature, they are incommunicable; but the similitude and resemblance of it is stamped upon our souls in the work of grace.

"The new man is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him," Col. iii. 10. The schoolmen, and some of the fathers, place this image or resemblance of God, in the natural faculties of the soul, viz. the understanding, memory, and will: which is but an umbrage of a trinity in unity; but it rather consists in the renovation of the faculties by grace; for in this we bear the Divine image upon our souls, and that image or resemblance of God's holiness is the beauty and honour of our souls.

fountain of honour and glory; and this makes the right excellent than his neighbour; let his neighbour be though the blood of nobles run in his veins, the right excellent than he, except saving grace be also diffused.

3. *Thirdly*, Consider it in its recipient subject, and its value still to increase; for the precious oil of saving-grace poured into any other than an elect vessel.

Hence faith, one branch of sanctification is, with respect to its subject, stiled *The faith of God's elect*, Tit. i. 1. Where true grace in his soul, may (during the evidence thereof) strongly conclude his election, looking backward, and looking forward, Rom. viii. 30. It marks and seals to whom it is, for glory, "God hath set apart him that is himself," Psal. iv. 3.

4. *Fourthly*, View the precious worth of grace in its effects and influences upon the soul in which it inheres.

(1.) It adorns with incomparable ornaments, which are of great price in the sight of God, 1 Pet. iii. 4. Yea, it reflects the glory of glory in the soul where its seat is, that Christ himself is also the admirer of it; Cant. iv. 9. "Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse! thou hast ravished my heart with thine eyes, with one of the chains of thy neck!" and when he comes with its excelling beauty, he saith, "Turn away from me, for they have overcome me," Cant. vi. 5.

(2.) It elevates and ennobles a man's spirit beyond all principles in man; it sets the heart and affections upon heavenly things, and them up with the glory of the invisible world, Phil. iii. 20. "our conversation is in heaven, from whence we look for the life to come." Whilst others are trading for corn and wine, and oxen, for feathers and trifles, the gracious soul is conversing with God for pardon and peace, for righteousness and life, for glory and immortality: "Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ," John i. 3.

(3.) It doth not only raise the spirit by conversing with things above, but transforms the soul, by that converse and fellowship with the heavenly objects it converses with: "It changes us into the same image," 2 Cor. iii. 18. So that though the flesh of man still remains the *who he was*, yet not the *what he was* before; the very temper of his Spirit is altered.

(4.) It doth not only transform the soul in which it inheres, but serves the subject in which it is: it is a singular preserving principle, so that though sin be in them still, and though in a

THE INVALUABLE WORTH OF SAVING GRACE.

other principles within a man. "It is a good thing that the he
"be established with grace," Heb. xiii. 9. This is that which
apostle calls our own stedfastness, or that ballast we have within o
selves; which keeps us right and stable. O the excellency of gra

(6.) To conclude; it is the root of all that precious fruit wh
we bring forth to God in this world: it is the root of every graci
word in our lips, and of every gracious work in our hands; be
matter of our gracious thoughts never so excellent, the matter of
heavenly discourses and prayers never so sweet, still grace is the r
of the matter, Job xix. 28. O then, what a precious thing is gra

5. *Fifthly*, View it in its properties, and you will soon discover
transcendent excellencies: the richest epithets are no hyperbo
here; we seek not beyond the value of it, when we call it supernatu
grace, for so it is: it comes down from above, from the Father
lights, Jam. i. 7. Nature can never be improved to that heig
how much soever its admirers boast of it; nor do we strain too h
when we call it immortal grace; for so hath God made it. Thi
that water which springs up in the sanctified soul unto eternal l
John iv. 14. It will not die when thou diest, but ascend with
soul from which it is inseparable, and be received up with it i
glory, Rom. viii. 10. You may outlive your friends; you may o
live your gifts; but you cannot outlive your graces.

Shall I say it is the most sweet and comfortable thing that e
the soul was acquainted with in this world, next Jesus Christ,
author and fountain of it. Sure, if so I speak, I have as many v
nesses to attest it, as there be gracious souls in the world: not
is more comfortable than grace, except Christ; and yet with
grace no soul can feel the comforts of Christ in the troubles of l
or in the straits of death. This is a spring of comfort!

6. *Sixthly*, Consider it in its design and scope; and you will s
discern more and more of its precious excellency: for what is the a
and end of God in the infusions and improvements of grace, but
attemper and mould our spirits by it into a meetness and fitness
the enjoyment of himself in the world to come? Col. i. 12. "Giv
"thanks to the Father, who has made us meet to be partak
"of the inheritance of the saints in light." Compare this w
2 Cor. v. 5. "Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same th
"is God."

O blessed design! how precious must that work be, which
wrought for so high and glorious a purpose as this is? No w
more excellent, no end more noble.

base and worthless metal with golden mattocks. The blood was shed to procure it, Heb. xiii. 12.

The Spirit of God is sent forth to form and create in our own workmanship, Eph. ii. 10. his fruit, Gal. v. 22.

The ordinances and officers of the gospel were at first and ever since continued in the church, for this work, xvii. 17. and Eph. iv. 12. It is the fruit of Christ's blood; it hath cost the sweat and blood of the dispensers of the gospel.

Nay, all the works of providence look this way, and all things, Rom. viii. 28. What is the errand of all God's mercies to make us partakers of his holiness? Heb. xii. 10.

8. *Eighthly*, The high value that the most high God sets on grace, shews it to be an excellent thing indeed: "It is precious in his sight," 1 Pet. iii. 4. no service finds acceptance with him but what is performed by grace: None but sanctified vessels for the master's use, "The end of the commandment is love of a pure heart," 1 Tim. i. 5.

The weakest performances of grace find acceptance with God though clogged with many sinful weaknesses and infirmities, xi. 31, 32. If God so prize it, well may we: He that is the jewel best understands the value of it.

9. *Ninthly*, The hypocritical pretences made to it all the world over, shew what a most precious and desirable thing it is. If there were not some singular glory in it, why doth every man strive to be reputed gracious? Nay, the devil himself baits his hooks of temptation with a show of grace; for he knows no native beauty of its own to entice, and therefore he uses the paint and pretence of holiness to cover it: but oh! what will the hypocrite be posed with at last? And how can he stand when God shall demand,

If grace were evil, why didst thou affect the name and favour of it? And if it were good, why didst thou satisfy thyself with an empty name and shadow of it only?

10. *Tenthly*, To conclude: the incomparable esteem and value men have for it, shews it to be a thing of inestimable price.

Grace is the sum of all their prayers, the scope of all their labours, the matter of their chief joy, the reward of their labours and sufferings; their chief joys and sorrows, hopes and fears of the world, are taken up about it. By all which it appears that it is above rubies; and all the gold and silver in the world is as dross in comparison with it.

PRACTICAL INFERENCES FROM THE PRECIOUSNESS OF GRACE.

owner of much of this gold, and not be lifted up with it. To lay down thy heart, and preserve thine eyes from being dazzled by these thy gracious excellencies, it will be needful for thee, Christian, sometimes to consider,

That although grace be one of the most excellent things that God created, yet it is *but a creature*, a dependent thing, 1 v. 17.

Yea, it is not only a creature, but a very imperfect creature y thy soul, labouring under many weaknesses, Phil. iii. 12. and sometimes ready to die, Rev. iii. 2.

Though it can do many things for you, yet it cannot justify before God: You cannot make a garment of it to cover your guilt, nor plead the dignity of it at God's bar for your discharge: not your inherent, but Christ's imputed righteousness must do for you, though in other respects it be very necessary.

Now, remember how excellent soever it be, it is not the natural growth and product of your hearts; all the grace you have is foreign to your natures; and what you have is received, 1 Cor. iv. 7.

And lastly, remember he that is most proud and conceited of his own graces will be found to be the owner of least grace, and the most cause to question whether he hath any or none. It is the natural use of grace to humble, abase, and empty the soul; and it is the strength of our corruptions which thus puffs us up with vain conceits.

Infer. 2. Is saving grace more excellent than gold? *What can then have the poorest Christians to be well satisfied with their portion?* To others God hath given Ishmael's portion, the fatness of the earth; to you, Isaac's, the graces of the covenant: Their portion is paid in brass, yours in gold. Many of you are poor in the world, but "rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which God hath promised," Jam. ii. 5. What is the dust of the earth to the fruits of the Spirit? You are troubled that you have no more of the world: It matters not if you had more gold, you would have less grace. You consider how many are poor and wretched in both worlds, moneyless and Christless too: You do not consider you are near come to that state in which all your wants will be fully supplied; where you shall need the treasures of the earth, and have your desires satisfied by the treasures of grace and glory.

Infer. 3. Is saving grace gold? yea, infinitely more precious than gold? *Then surely declining Christians are great losers, and ought to be great mourners.* The remission of the least degree of grace is more to be lamented than the loss of the greatest sum of

Well therefore may declining Christians challenge the name of mourners among all the mourners in this world.

Infer. 4. Is grace so invaluablely precious? *How precious be the ordinances of God be to our souls, by which grace is communicated, and afterwards improved in our souls!* “thy mouth is better unto me, than thousands of gold.” Psal. cxix. 72. and good reason, whilst it imparts and improves to which gold and silver are but dross and dung.

None but these that value not grace will ever slight or despise and injure the instruments thereof. It is a graceless world when these precious things fall under common slights.

Infer. 5. If grace be so precious, how watchful should persons be in the days of temptation! The design of temptation is to rob you of your treasure: When cut-purses get into the way, use to say, Friends, look to your purses. How many Christians have we read and heard of, that have rather chosen death than their lives than with their graces, who have “resisted the devil, and have not yielded.” Heb. xii. 4.

O Christians! you live in a cheating age; many seem to have lost all, and many real Christians have lost much; so they are like to see but little comfort in this world; when they go mourning to the grave with that lamentation, Job i. 21. “O that it were with me as in times past!”

Inf. 6. To conclude: Is there such precious worth in grace? *Then bless God for, and diligently use all means to improve it in your souls.* It is gold for preciousness, usefulness, and must not be laid up in a napkin: That was condemned by the very scope of that parable, Mat. xxv.

All Christians indeed have not the same advantages and opportunities; but all must improve it according to the advantage in order to an account. Reserved Christians, who live apart from the society and communion of others, and disperse their streams abroad to the benefit of others, nor improve themselves for their own benefit, are wanting both to their own comfort. See you a man rich in grace, O trade with him, and improve yourselves by him; and the rather, because you know not how soon death may snatch him from you, and with him your stock of grace is gone from you too, except what you may have whilst you conversed with him: But alas! instead of holy soul-improving communion, some are sullenly reserved.

PROSPERITY A FURNACE TO TRY OUR GRACES.

are too seldom in our closets, too little upon our knees; and when we are there, we gain but little; we come not off such gaining duty as we might. O Christians! think when you are hearing praying, I am now trading with heaven for that which is infinitely better than gold. God is rich to all that call upon him: What treasure may I get this hour, if the fault be not in mine own heart. And thus of the second observation.

CHAP. IV.

Wherein the third doctrine, being the main subject of this treatise, is opened, and the method of the whole discourse stated.

DOCT. III.

That only is to be accounted true grace, which is able to endure those trials appointed or permitted for the discovery of it.

SECT. I.

THE most wise God hath seen it fit to set all his people in a furnace of trial in this world. First, he tries, and then he crowns them. James i. 12. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, *πειρασμος*" "i. e. [probation or trial;] for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life," &c.

No man can say what he is; whether his graces be true or false, till they be tried and examined by those things which are to them as fire is to gold. These self-deceivers in the text, thought they were rich in grace; yea, they thought they had been rich in grace; but it proved no better than dross: And therefore Christ here counsels them to buy of him gold tried in the fire; i. e. true grace indeed, which appears to be so upon the various proofs and examinations of its sincerity, which are to be made in this world, as well as in the general solemn trial it must come to in the world to come.

The scripture speaks of a twofold trial, viz.

A trial of men's { Opinions,
and
Graces.

1. *First*, The opinions and judgments of men are tried as by fire, in which sense we are to understand that place, 1 Cor. iii. 12, "Now if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver,"

endure the fire.* Such a person hereby brings himself and though the apostle will not deny the possibility, yet he difficulty of his salvation; "He shall be saved, yet so as i. e. as a man is saved by leaping out of his house at mid it is all on fire about his ears; for so that phrase imports 11. and Jude 23. Glad to escape naked, and with the goods; blessing God he hath his life for a prey: As shall such have to their erroneous notions and unscriptural at last.

2. *Secondly*, The graces of men are brought to the test their opinions. Trial will be made of their hearts, as well as heads; and upon this trial the everlasting safety and happiness of a person depends. If a man's opinions be some of them foolish and stubble, yet so long as he holds the head, and is right in his opinion, he may be saved; but if a man's supposed graces be all the world cannot save him: There is no way of escape, he will finally deceive himself herein. And of this trial of graces the apostle speaks: Sincere grace is gold tried by fire.

There is a twofold trial of grace; active and passive.

First, An active trial of it, in which we try it ourselves.

5. "Examine yourselves; prove yourselves;" i. e. men try their hearts, duties and graces, by the rule of the word: so as to give answer to that rule: Bring your hearts and the word to a solemn self-examination; confer with your reins, and compare with your own hearts.

Secondly, A passive trial of it: whether we try it or not, if we try it, he will bring our gold to the touchstone, and will say, "Thou, O Lord, knowest me; thou hast seen me, and thou hast a heart towards thee," saith the prophet, Jer. xii. 3.

Sometimes he tries the strength and ability of his servants, and thus he tried Abraham, Heb. xi. 17. And sometimes he tries the soundness and sincerity of our graces; so the Lord tried the Ephesians, and found dross, Rev. ii. 2. And so Job was tried to see if he was true gold, Job xxiii. 10. These trials are not made by our own information; for he knows what is in man; his eye sees the heart and reins; but for our information; which is the way of Deut. viii. 2. "Thou shalt remember all the way which thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to prove thee, and to know what was in thy heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no: to make thee know it, by giving thee such experiments and trials in those wilderness straits and difficulties.

PROSPERITY A FURNACE TO TRY OUR GRACES.

made by God upon us, are designed to put us upon the trial of ourselves: When God tries, we should try too.

Now the method into which I shall cast this discourse, shall be shew you,

1. *First*, What those things are which try the sincerity of graces, as fire tries gold.

2. *Secondly*, For what ends doth God put the graces of his people upon such trials in this world.

3. *Thirdly*, That such grace only is sincere as can endure the trials.

4. *Fourthly*, and *lastly*, To apply the whole in the main uses of

SECT. II.

1. *First*, **W**HAT those things are which try the sincerity of graces, as fire tries gold.

Before I enter into particulars, it will be needful to acquaint you that the subject before me is full of difficulties. There is need one speaks, of much cautious respect to the various sizes and degrees of growth among Christians, and the vicissitudes of their inward cases; else we may darken and perplex the way, instead of clearing it.

The portraiture of a Christian is such as none can draw to model, but with respect to the infancy of some, as well as the age and strength of others.

Great heed ought also to be had in the application of marks and signs; we should first try them; before we try ourselves or others by them. Marks and signs are by some distinguished into exclusive, and positive: Exclusive marks serve to shut out bold pretenders, by shewing them how far they come short of a saving work of grace; and they are commonly taken from some necessary commandment or duty, as hearing, praying, &c. He that hath not these things, cannot have any work of grace in him; and yet if he do them, he cannot from thence conclude his estate to be gracious: He that so concludes, he deceives himself.

Inclusive marks rather discover the degrees than the truth of grace, and are rather intended for comfort than for conviction: If we try them in ourselves, we do not only find sincerity, but eminence of grace; They being taken from some raised degree and eminent degree of grace in confirmed and grown Christians.

Between the two former there is a middle sort of marks, which are called positive marks, and they are such as are always, and only found

sure their sincerity by. Alas! these no more fit their Saul's armour did David's body.

These things being premised, and a due care carried us through this discourse, I shall next come to the part shew you what those things are which discover the state of our souls. And though it be true, that there is no cure are in, no providence that befalls us, but it takes some makes some discovery of our hearts; yet, to limit this discourse fall into particulars as soon as we can, I shall shew what made of our graces in this world, by our prosperity, and sity; by our corruptions, and our duties, and, lastly, by ings upon the score and account of religion.

SECT. I.

FIRST, prosperity, success, and the increase of ourments, are to grace what fire is to gold. Riches and he trial what we are; and by these things many a false heart detected, as well as the sincerity and eminency of others covered. We may fancy the fire of prosperity to be rather fort than trial? to refresh us rather than to prove us; find prosperity to be a great discovery, and that scarce proves the truth and strength of men's graces and corruptions than that doth: *Rara virtus est humilitas honorata*, saith find humility with honour, is to find a Phœnix. Let an son be lifted up to honour, and how steady and well come he was before, it is a thousand to one but his eyes will his head run round when he is upon the lofty pinnacle of honour*; Prov. xxvii. 21. "As the fining-pot for silver furnace for gold, so is a man to his praise:" Put the bottom the fining-pot of praise, and it is a great wonder if a great do not appear, Isa. xxxix. 2. the vain-glory of good He like froth or scum upon the pot, when heated by prosperity such a fining-pot to Herod, as discovered him to be dross xii. 23. How did that poor woman swell under that trial in of his being a god, and was justly destroyed by worms, because gat himself to be one? We think little what a strange exalted state will make upon our spirits. When the pride abate the vain confidence of Hazael, who would not believe he would be turned into such a savage beast as the prophet told; he only tells him, "The Lord hath shewed me" "shalt be king over Syria." 2 Kin. xiii. 18. The more

PROSPERITY A GREAT TRIAL.

How humble was Israel in the wilderness, tame and tractable as a lean pasture; but bring them once unto Canaan, and the world strangely altered; then "we are lords, (say they) we will come more unto thee," Jer. ii. 2, 7, 31. Prosperity is a crisis both of grace and corruption. Thence is that caution to Israel, Deut. x. 12. "When thou hast eaten, and art full, then beware lest thou forget the Lord thy God." Then beware, that is the critical time; surely that man must be acknowledged rich, very rich in grace, whose grace suffers no diminution or eclipse by his riches; and that man deserves double honour, whose pride the honour of this world cannot provoke and inflame.

It was a sad truth from the lips of a pious divine in Germany upon his death-bed; being somewhat disconsolate by reflecting upon the barrenness of his life, some friends took thence an occasion to commend him, and mind him of his painful ministry and fruitful labours among them; but he cried out, *Auferte ignem, adhuc enim pauper habeo*; Withdraw the fire, for I have chaff in me; meaning, that he felt his ambition like chaff catching fire from the sparks of the praises. Like unto which was the saying of another, *He that praiseth me, wounds me*.

But to descend into the particular discoveries that prosperity and honour made of the want of grace in some, and of the weakness of grace in others; I will shew you what symptoms of hypocrisy appear upon some men under the trial of prosperity, and what signs of grace appear in others under the same trial.

SECT. IV.

PROSPERITY discovers many sad symptoms of a naughty heart, and, among others, these are ordinarily most conspicuous.

1. *First*, It casts the hearts of some men into a deep oblivion of God, and makes them lay aside all care of duty; *Raro fumant facies altaris aræ*; the altars of rich men seldom smoke, Deut. xxxii. 14, 15. Jeshurun sucked honey out of the rock, eat the fat of lambs and kidneys of wheat: But what was the effect of this; he kicked and forsook God who made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation. Instead of lifting up their hearts in an humble thankful acknowledgment of God's bounty, they lifted up the heel in wanton abuse of his mercy: In the fattest earth we find the most slippery footing.

He that is truly gracious may, in prosperity, remit some degree

him ; but alas ! it will not suffer him to pray, to meditate time and thoughts about his eternal concerns ; he is in the lap of prosperity, and forgets that there is a God, or a soul to be saved. O this is a dangerous symptom of a graceless heart !

2. *Secondly*, Prosperity meeting with a graceless heart, wholly sensual, and entirely swallows up its thoughts and affections. Earthly things transform and mould their hearts into their similitude and nature ; the whole strength of their souls is in those enjoyments. So those graceless, yet prosperous people are described, Job xxi. 11, 12, 13. " They take the timbrel and rejoice at the sound of the organ : they spend their days in the organ ;" *They take the timbrel*, not the Bible. " They rejoice at the sound of the organ ;" not a word of their rejoicing in God.

" They bring forth their little ones in the dance : " That is all the care they are taught : " They spend their days in wealth : " their precious stock and talent is wholly laid out upon temporal things : Either the pleasure of it powerfully charms them, or of it wholly engross their minds, that there is no time for God. *They live in pleasure upon earth*, as it is, Jam. 4. 3. the fish lives in the water, its proper element : Take away these things, and put him upon spiritual, serious, heavenly enjoyments, and he is *Piscis in arido* ; like a fish upon the land.

Now, though prosperity may too much influence and transform the minds of good men, and estrange them too much from heavenly things, yet thus to engross their hearts, and convert them into a carnal similitude and nature, so that these things should be the sole objects of their hearts, the very proper element in which they live, is impossible.

An hypocrite indeed may be brought to this, because he is Janus like, he have two faces, yet he really hath but one heart, and that is wholly carnal and earthly : So that it is easy for him to let the water to run into one channel, to gather all into one object, in which his heart shall pour out all its strength to the service of.

But a Christian indeed hath a double principle that works in him, though he have a law of sin that moves him one way, yet he hath also the law of grace, which thwarts and crosses that law of corruption : So that as grace cannot do what it would, because of corruption, so neither can sin do what it would, because of grace.

The heart of a Christian, in the midst of ensnaring, sensual pleasures, finds indeed a corrupt principle in it, which would

ed about that interest of religion, and senseless of the calamities God's people. Thus the prophet convinces the Jews of their hypocrisy, Amos vi. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. "They were at ease in Zion, and trusted in the mountain of Samaria." And so, having a shade of religion, and a fulness of all earthly things, they fell to feasting and sporting: "They drank wine in bowls, and anointed themselves with the chief ointments, but were not grieved for the affliction of Joseph." They condoled not, *Gnal sheber*, over the breaking or tearing to pieces of Joseph: If they were out of danger once, the church shift for itself, they are secure in a warm nest: Let the birds of prey catch and devour that flock with which they sometimes associated, they are not touched with it. Moses could not do so, though in the greatest security and confluence of the honours and pleasures of Egypt, Acts vii. 23. Nehemiah could not do so, though the servant and favourite of a mighty monarch, and wanted nothing to make him outwardly happy; yet the pleasures of a king's court could not cheer his heart, or scatter the clouds of sorrow from his countenance, whilst his brethren were in affliction, and the city his God lay waste, Nehemiah ii. 1, 2, 3. Nor indeed can a gracious heart be unconcerned and senseless; for that union that all the saints have with Christ their head, and with one another, fellow-members in Christ, will beget sympathy among them in their sufferings, 1 Cor. xii. 26.

SECT. V.

BUT as the fire of prosperity discovers this and much more darkness in a graceless heart, so it discovers the sincerity and grace of God's people: I say not that it discovers nothing but grace in them; that it did not! alas! many of them have had a great deal of darkness and corruption discovered by it, as was noted before: But yet in this trial, the graciousness and uprightness of their hearts will appear, these, and such like workings of it.

1. *First*, Under prosperity, success, and honour, the upright heart will labour to suppress pride, and keep itself lowly and humble; and still the more grace there is, the more humility there will be. God lift him up, he will lay himself low, and exalt his God high. So did Jacob when God had raised and enlarged him; Gen. xxxii. "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant, for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become a great multitude."

tude of mercies about him, and among them all, not greater than himself.

I dare not say every Christian under prosperity can manifest like humility; but I am sure what pride and may rise in a gracious heart tried by prosperity, there is him which will give check to it: He dare not suffer such pride to lodge quietly in his heart: for, alas! he sees that in that in his God, that will abase him: Grace will make him back to his original condition, and say, with David, “O Lord God? and what is my father’s house, that brought me hitherto?” 2 Sam. vii. 18.

It will make him look in, and see the baseness of himself and the corruptions that are there, and admire at the God with so vile a creature. O, thinks he, if others did what I know of myself, they would abhor me more than esteem and value me.

2. *Secondly*, Prosperity usually draws forth the saint to God of their mercies: that which heats a wicked man’s heart, a gracious man’s heart with love and delight in God.

These were the words of that lovely song which David sang that day that the Lord delivered him out of the hands of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul; and he said, “I will love thee, O my strength,” Psal. xviii. title and ver. 1. compared. outward things are not the main grounds and motives of love to God; no; they love him when he takes away, as well as when he gives: but they are sanctified instruments to inflame the love to God: they boil up a wicked man’s lusts, but they melt a gracious man’s soul. O in what a pang of love did David go into the presence of God under the sense of his mercies! his melting heart when he thus poured out his whole soul in a stream of love to God, 2 Sam. vii. 19, 20. “Is this the manner of mine love to thee, O God? And what can David say more unto thee?” And that turns up the very bottom of his heart.

3. *Thirdly*, Prosperity and comfortable Providences draw out cautions against sin, when they meet with a saint. This is the natural inference of a gracious soul from their mercies. This hath pleased me, then hath he obliged me to take more care to please him. O let me not grieve him, that hath comforted me! So “After such a deliverance as this, should we again break his commandments! What! break his commandments who hath delivered us from our hands! God forbid!

not how to sin, because grace hath abounded, any more than it da
sin, that grace may abound.

4. *Fourthly*, A truly gracious soul will not be satisfied with all t
prosperity and comforts in the world for his portion: *Not thine, Lo
but thee*, is the voice of grace. When providence had been mo
than ordinarily bountiful in outward things to Luther, he began
be afraid of its meaning, and earnestly protested, God should not p
him off so. "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul," Lam. iii. 9
and the soul can best tell what it hath made its choice, and where
it hath bestowed its chief delights and expectations.

An unsound heart will accept these for its portion: if the world
sure to him, and his designs fail not there, he can be content to lea
God, and soul, and heaven, and hell at hazard; but so cannot t
upright. These things in subordination; but neither these, nor a
thing under the sun, in comparison with, or opposition to God.



CHAP. V.

*Shewing what probation adversity makes of the sincerity or u
soundness of our hearts.*

SECT. I.

THAT adversity is a furnace to try of what metal our hearts a
none can doubt, that hath either studied the scriptures, or observ
his own heart under afflictions.

When the dross and rust of hypocrisy and corruption had alm
eaten out the heart of religion among the Jews, then saith God, "
will melt them, and try them; for what shall I do for the daugh
"of my people?" Jer. ix. 7. Here affliction is the furnace, and t
people are the metal cast into it, and the end of it is trial. *I a
melt them, and try them*; what other course shall I take with the
If I let them alone, their lusts, like the rust and canker in meta
will eat them out. Prosperity multiplies professors, and advers
brings them to the test; then hirelings quickly become changlin
The gilded potsherd glisters till it come to scouring. The de
thought Job had been such a one, and moves that he may be tri
this way; being confident he would be found but dross in the tri
Job i. 11. But though the furnace of affliction discovered so
dross in him (as it will in the best of men) yet he came forth
gold

batio innocentiae nostrae, est iniquitas vestra; Your wic trial of our innocency. Constantius, the father of Con an exploratory decree, that all who would not renounce faith, should lose their places of honour and profit. T separated the dross from the gold, which was his desig renounced Christianity, and thereupon were renounced those that held their integrity, were received into favo

In time of prosperity, hypocrisy lies covered in the h in the green bushes; but when the winter of adversi them bare, every body may see them without searchin

But to fall into close particulars; it will be necessa what effects of adversity are common to both the so unsound; and then what are proper to either in this adversity.

SECT. II.

IT will be expedient to the design I manage in this shew in the first place what are the common effects of both the godly and ungodly; for in some things they c as it is with the one, so also with the other: As,

1. *First*, Both the godly and ungodly may fear adver comes: to be sure a wicked man cannot, and it is eviden men do not come up to the height of that rule, James “count it all joy when they fall into diverse temptatio by adversity.

It is said, Isa. xxxiii. 14. “The sinners in Zion “trembling surprizeth the hypocrite;” namely under t sion of approaching calamities: and it is true also, the s may be afraid: “My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; an of thy judgments,” said holy David, Psal. cxix. 120. an “The thing which I greatly feared (saith that upright “upon me.” There is a vast difference betwixt a saint’s with afflictions, and his parting with them; he entertain times with trembling; he parts with them rejoicing, smi and blessing them in the name of the Lord. So that b right, and the false heart, are not discriminated; even ture declines suffering and troubles.

2. *Secondly*, Both the godly and ungodly may entert with regret and unwillingness when they come. A troubles are wormwood and gall, Lam. iii. 19. And down pleasantly with flesh and blood Heb. xii. 11.

God's vindictive wrath is not in it,) yet even they shrink from it, and loth they are to taste it.

3. *Thirdly*, Both the one and the other may be impatient and froward in adversity; it is the very nature of flesh and blood to be so. "The wicked are like the troubled sea, which cannot rest, whose waters cast forth mire and dirt," Isa. lvii. 20. It is an allusion to the unstable and stormy ocean: you know there is naturally an agitation and working in the sea, whether it be incensed by the wind or no; but if a violent wind blow upon the unquiet ocean, O what a raging and foaming is there! what abundance of trash and filth doth it at such times cast out!

Now, though grace make a great difference betwixt one and another, yet, I dare not say, but even a gracious heart may be very unquiet and tumultuous in the day of affliction. Sanctified souls have their passions and lusts which are too little mortified; even as sweet-brambles and holy-thistles have their prickles, as well as the worthless brambles. Jonah was a good man, yet his soul was sadly distempered by adverse providences; Jonah iv. 9. "Yea, (saith he, and that to his God) I do well to be angry, even unto death."

4. *Fourthly*, But the one and the other may be weary of the rod, and think the day of adversity a tedious day, wishing it were once over and an end. Babylon shall be weary of the evil that God will bring upon it, Jer. li. ult. And O that none of Zion's children were weary of adversity too! How sad a moan doth Job make of his long-continued affliction, Job xvi. 6, 7. "Though I speak, my grief is not assuaged; and though I forbear, what am I eased? But now he hath made me weary."

And if you look into Psalm vi. 3, 6. you may see another strong Christian even tired in the way of affliction: "My soul (saith David) in that place) is sore vexed, but thou, O Lord, how long? I am weary with my groaning."

5. *Fifthly*, Both the one and the other may be driven to their knees by adversity. "Lord, in trouble have they visited thee; they have poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them," Ps. lxxvi. 16. Not that a godly person will pray no longer than the rod is at his back; O no; he cannot live long without prayer, how few can soever he hath to that duty by the rod; but when the rod is at his back, he will be more frequently and more fervently upon his knees; indeed many gracious hearts are like children's tops, which will go no longer than they are whipt; they cannot find their knees and their tongues till God find a rod to excite them. A danger

some things the holy upright soul acts too like the unsound in other things how much the hypocrite may act like a saint. He may be externally humbled, so was Ahab; he may pray unto God, Mal. ii. 13. yea, and request others to pray for him, so Acts viii. 24.

SECT. III.

BUT though the sound and unsound heart differ in their external carriages under the rod, yet there are effects of affliction which are proper to either, and will discriminate them. We shall now end let us first see what effects adversity is usually followed in sound and unsound and carnal hearts: and we shall find among other five symptoms of a naughty heart appearing under cross and afflictions.

1. *First*, A graceless heart is not quickly and easily brought to the hand of God in those troubles that befall it, and to be content with it; Isa. xxvi. 11. "Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they shall not see:" when it has smitten, or is lifted up to smite, they do not see their eyes; it is the malice of this man, or the negligence of another, the unfaithfulness of another, that hath brought all this upon me. Thus the creature is the horizon that terminates their view, and beyond that they usually see nothing. Sometimes the hand of God is so immediately manifested, and convincing, in afflictions, that they cannot avoid the sight of it; and yet they may, in their way, pour out a prayer before him; but only impute all to second causes, and overlook the first cause of their troubles.

2. *Secondly*, Nor is it usual with these men under trouble to retire into their closets, and search their hearts there, to find out the particular cause and provocation of their affliction: "Not so," says he, "him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done?" What cursed thing is there with me, that hath thus provoked the anger of God against me! God visits their iniquities with affliction, but they visit not their own hearts by self-examinations. He shews them their iniquities in a clear glass, but none saith, *What have I done?* This *What have I done?* is the voice of one that recollects himself of his former action; or the voice of a man astonished at the discovery of the true make of his sins; but no such voice as this is ordinarily heard in carnal men.

3. *Thirdly*, An unsound professor, if left to his choice,

I do not say that an upright man cannot commit a moral evil, escape a penal evil. O that daily observation did not too plentifully furnish us with sad instances of that kind ! But upright ones do dare not, upon a serious deliberate discussion and debate, choose rather than affliction ; what they may do upon surprisals and in violence of temptation, is of another nature.

But a false and unsound heart discovers itself in the choice it makes upon deliberation, and that frequently when sin and trouble come in competition. Put the case, saith Augustine, a ruffian should with one hand set the cup of drunkenness to thy mouth, and with the other a dagger to thy breast, and say, drink or die ; thou shouldest rather choose to die sober, than to live a drunkard : And many Christians have resisted unto blood, striving against sin, and, with renowned Martyrs, chosen affliction, the worst of afflictions, yea, death itself in the most formidable appearance, rather than sin ; and it is the habitual temper and resolution of every gracious heart so to do, though those holy resolutions are sometimes over-borne by violence of temptation.

But the hypocrite dreads less the defilement of his soul, than the loss of his estate, liberty, or life. If you ask upon what ground the apostle suppose, 1 Cor. xiii. 3. a man may give his body to be burnt, and not have charity ; that the *salamander* of hypocrisy may live in the flame of martyrdom ? The answer is at hand ; They that choose death in the sense of this text, do not choose it to escape sin, but to feed and indulge it. Those strange adventures (if any such be) are rather to maintain their own honour, and enrol their names among worthy and famous persons to posterity ; or out of blind zeal to their espoused errors and mistakes, than in a due regard to the glory of God, and the preservation of integrity. ‘ I fear to speak it, but it must be spoken, (saith * Hieron), That even martyrdom itself, when suffered for admiration and applause, produces nothing, but that blood is shed in vain.’

4. *Fourthly*, It is the property of an unregenerate soul, under adversity, to turn from creature to creature for support and comfort, and not from every creature to God alone. So long as their feet touch ground, I mean, feel any creature-relief or comfort under them, they can subsist and live in afflictions ; but when they lose ground, when all creature-refuge fails, then their hearts fail too.

Thus Zedekiah, and the self-deceiving Jews, when they saw their own strength failed them, and there was little hope left that they should deliver themselves from the Chaldeans, what do they in that strait ? Do they, with upright Jehoshaphat say, “ Our eyes are upon thee.” No, their eyes were upon Egypt for succour, not upon

gone, Jer. xxxvii. 9. See the like in Ahaz, in a sore distress, he courts the king of Assyria for help, 2 Chro 23. That project failing, why then he will try what Damascus can do for him; any way rather than th
Flectere si nequeam superos, Acheronta movebo.

So it is with many others: if one child die, what do to God, and comfort themselves in this, the Lord liveth child die. If an estate be lost, and a family sinking, David comfort themselves in the everlasting covenant, sure? No; but if one relation die, there is another alive be lost, yet not all; something is left still, and the case

As long as ever such men have any visible encourage will hang upon it; and not make up all in Christ, and themselves in the Lord. To tell them of rejoicing i when the fig-tree blossoms not, is what they cannot un

5. *Fifthly*, To conclude; an unsound heart never co furnace of affliction purged, mortified, and more spirit than when he was cast into it; his scum and dross is no rated from him; nay, the more they are afflicted, the are. “Why should ye be smitten any more? ye wil “and more,” Isa. i. 5. And, to keep to our metaphor vi. 29. God had put that incorrigible people into th affliction, and kept them long in that fire; and what v Why, saith the prophet, “The bellows are burnt, th “sumed of the fire, the founder melteth in vain, &c. rep “shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected

If the fire of affliction be continually blown till the ve burnt, that is, the tongue, or rather the lungs of the p have some resemblance; though these be even spent and threatening, and denouncing woe upon woe, and ju judgment; and God fulfils his word upon them; yet as before; the dross remains: though Jerusalem be and the inhabitants the flesh boiling in it, as is noted (my discourse) in Ezek. xxiv. 6, 13. *the scum remains re* cannot be separated by the fire; and the reason is plain affliction in itself purges sin, but as it is sanctified, and virtue of God’s blessing, and in pursuance of the prom

O think on this you that have had thousands of affl kind and another, and none of them all have done yo have not mortified, humbled, or benefited you at all: see what the effects of adversity are, when it meets wi heart

ADVERSITY A FURNACE TO TRY OUR GRACES.

think it needful to acquaint thee, that the fruits of afflictions mostly after-fruits, and not so discernible by the Christian him under the rod, as after he hath been exercised by it, Heb. xii. and calmly reflects upon what is past; nor doth every Christian attain the same measure and degree; some rejoice, others commonly submit; but I think these seven effects are ordinarily found in upright hearts that pass under the rod.

1. *First*, The sincere and upright soul betakes itself to God in affliction; Job i. 20. When God was smiting, Job was praying; when God afflicted, Job worshipped: So David, Psalm cxvi. 3, 4. "found sorrow and trouble, then called I upon the name of the Lord." And when the messenger of Satan buffeted Paul. "for this cause (saith he) I besought the Lord thrice," 2 Cor xii. 8. Alas! whither should a child go in distress, but to its father?

2. *Secondly*, He sees and owns the hand of God in his affliction, how much or little soever of the instruments of trouble appear. *Lord hath taken away*, saith Job, Job i. 21. *God had bidden*, saith David, 2 Sam. xvi. 10. If the blow come from the hand of a wicked man, yet he sees that wicked hand in God's righteous hand, Psalm xvii. 14. And this apprehension is fundamental to all communion men have with God in their afflictions, and to all peaceableness and gracious submission of their spirits under the rod. He that sees nothing of God in his troubles, hath nothing of God in his soul.

3. *Thirdly*, He can justify God in all the afflictions and troubles that come upon him, be they never so severe. "Thou art just in all that is brought upon us," saith Nehemiah, Neh. ix. 33. "Thou hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve," saith Ezra, Ezra ix. 13. "It is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed," saith the church, Lam. iii. 22. Are we in Babylon? It is a mercy we are not in hell. If God condemn him, yet he will justify God; If God cast him into a sea of trouble, yet he will acknowledge, in all that sea of trouble, there is not one drop of injustice. If I have not deserved such usage from the hands of men, yet I have deserved worse than this at the hands of God.

4. *Fourthly*, Afflictions use to melt and humble gracious hearts: there is an habitual tenderness planted in their spirits, and a just occasion quickly draws it forth: And so usual a thing it is for gracious hearts to be humbled under the afflictions of God, that affliction upon that score called humiliation: The effect put for the cause shew where one is, the other will be, 2 Cor. xii. 21. *My God*

Job xxxiv. 32. "That which I see not, teach thou me." "done iniquity, I will do no more." So Lam. iii. 39, "search and try our ways, and turn again to the afflicting, God searches them, and under affliction they selves: Willing they are to hear the voice of the rod any discovery it makes in their hearts.

6. *Sixthly*, The upright heart chooseth to lie under ther than to be delivered from it by sin. I say, this is the resolution of every upright heart, however it may be so borne by the violence of temptation, Heb. xi. 35. *A deliverance*, viz. upon sinful terms and conditions.

They are sensible how the flesh smarts under the rather it should smart, than conscience should smart. Affliction, saith an upright soul, grieves me, but sin will affliction wounds my flesh, but sin will wound my soul. I long for, but I will not pay so dear for it, how I desire it: *Nolo tanti emere pœnitentiam*: Outward but inward peace is sweeter.

7. *Seventhly*, He prizeth the spiritual good gotten above deliverance from it, and can bless God from his mercies, how dear soever his flesh hath paid for them, 67, and 71. "It is good for me that I have been afflicted is the value the people of God have for spiritual grace cannot think them dear, whatever their flesh hath paid. The mortification of one lust, one discovery of sincerity, festation of God to their souls, doth much more than for all that they have endured under the rod.

Is patience improved, self-acquaintance increased, the creature more effectually taught, longings after heaven blessed afflictions, that are attended with such blessed fruit. the saying of a holy man, under a sore trouble for the reason, when in that dark day God had graciously manifested to his soul; 'O, (saith he) I would be contented, if it were to lay an only son in the grave every day I have to the world, for one such discovery of the love of God as

CHAP. VI.

Shewing indwelling sin to be to grace, what fire is to gold, how the soundness and unsoundness of our hearts are

than our behaviour towards that corruption which dwells in us: thorn is next neighbour to the rose: Sin and grace dwell not in the same soul, but in the same faculties. The collier and the blacksmith dwell in one room; what one cleanses the other blacks. Of all evils God permits in this world, none is more grievous to his people than this: They sometimes wonder why the Lord will suffer sin to be so; why, surely, among other wise and holy ends of this permission, these are some.

They are left to try you, and to humble you: There is no intrinsic goodness in sin; but, however, in this it occasions good: that by our carriage towards it, we discern our sincerity. The touch-stone is a worthless stone in itself, but it serves to try the gold. 1 John iii. 9, 10. "Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God: In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil:" q. d. In respect of their carriage towards sin, the one and the other is plainly manifested: This is that which separates the dross from the gold, and shews you what the true nature of men's persons, and tempers of their hearts are. By not sinning we are not to understand a total freedom from it in this world: it implied any such perfection of the people of God in this world that is the Popish and Pelagian sense: Nor yet must we take the Arminian sense, who, to avoid the argument of the orthodox will understand it of the sin against the Holy Ghost. What a strange thing would it be, to make that a characteristical note of distinction betwixt the godly and ungodly, which so very few, even the most ungodly, are ever guilty of?

But the manner of our behaviour towards sin, and our carriage towards it before, or under, or after the commission of it, in the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil.

Now, there are five things relating to sin, that discriminate and mark the state of the persons: The difference is discernable.

- | | | |
|--------|---|-------------------------|
| In our | { | 1. Abstinence from sin. |
| | | 2. Hatred of sin. |
| | | 3. Trouble about sin. |
| | | 4. Subjection to sin. |
| | | 5. Opposition to sin. |

SECT. II.

(1.) **T**HE grounds and motives of our abstinence do very clearly manifest the state of our souls; what they are in the regeneration.

as the fever and palsy, are contrary to each other. So aility and covetousness, hypocrisy and profaneness. They contend each other, not for mutual destruction, as sin and grace, but for superiority, each contending for the throne, and sometimes by turns. It is with such persons as with that possessor of xvii. 15. whom the spirit cast sometimes into the fire, sometimes into the water: Or if one subdue the other, yet the heart is still subject to the vassalage of that lust that is uppermost in the soul.

2. *Secondly*, An unrenewed soul may be kept from the commission of some sin, not because there is a principle of grace in the heart, but because of some providential restraint without him, or without it. For it often falls out, that when men have conceived a wicked design, ready to execute it, providence claps on the fetters of restraint, which hinders them from so doing.

This was the case with Abimelech, Gen. xx. 6. and 11. *I withheld thee*: And though persons so restrained, may be sensible of the good of such providences, yet others have; for by it a wicked design is chief is prevented in the world, which otherwise would have been accomplished, and to this act of providence we owe our lives, liberties, and comforts in this world.

3. *Thirdly*, An unsound heart may not commit some sin, because he truly hates them, but because his constitution is not to them: These men are rather beholden to a good body, than to a gracious temper of soul. Some men are like drunkards if they would, others cannot be covetous and greedy, and are made *e meliori luto*, of a more refined metal than others. A chaste and liberal, just and sober nature, is but nature, and the best nature, in all its endowments, is but nature at the best.

4. *Fourthly*, A graceless heart may be restrained from sin, by the force of education and principles of morality that were in the heart. Thus Jehoash was restrained from sin, 2 Kings xii. 2. "Jehoash did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, all the days wherein Jehoiadah the priest instructed him." A parent or master will do a great deal more with some children, than the fear of God. The influences of strict education, restrain the excrescencies of budding vice. The way we are taught when young, we keep when old: This is the influence of man's education, not the influence of the regenerating Spirit upon men.

5. *Fifthly*, A graceless heart may be kept from some sin, by the fear of the events, both in this world and that to come. A wicked design, followed with infamy and reproach among men, may on some occasions be forbidden; not because God hath forbidden it, but because

that sin is prevented any way; but to be kept on this ground sin, doth not argue the estate of the person to be good: And you see some of the grounds on which carnal men are restrained and in this “the children of the devil are manifest.”

SECT. III.

BUT there are grounds of abstinence from sin, by which “children of God are also manifested;” and such are these that follow.

1. *First*, A sincere heart dares not sin because of the eye and ear of God, which is upon him: So you find it in Job xxxi. 1, and he durst not allow his thoughts to sin, because he lived under the awe of God’s eye. Nehemiah durst not do as former governors had done, though an opportunity presented to enrich himself, *because of the fear of his God*, Neh. v. 15. The soul that lives under the influence of this eye, will be conscientious where no discovery can be made by other creatures, as if all the world were looking on, Levit. xix. 14. “Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling-block before the blind; but shalt fear thy God, I am the Lord.”

What if a man do curse the deaf, the deaf cannot hear him; what if he do put a stumbling-block before the blind, the blind cannot see him: True, but God sees him, God hears him; it is enough to a man that hath the fear of the Lord upon his heart.

2. *Secondly*, As the fear of God, so the love of God, is a principle of restraint from sin to the soul that is upright. This kept Joseph from sin, Gen. xxxix. 9. “How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” *How can I?* He speaks as a man that feels himself bound up from sin by the goodness and love of God that had been manifested to him, q. d. Hath he delivered me from the pit into which my envious brethren cast me? Hath he, by a miraculous way, advanced me to all this honour and power in Egypt? And now, after all his kindness and love to me, shall I sin against him? O how can I do this against so good, so gracious a God! So Psal. xcvi. 10. “Ye that love the Lord, hate evil.” Love God, cry out in the hour of temptation, Is this thy kindness to thy friend? Dost thou thus requite the Lord for all his kindnesses?

3. *Thirdly*, As the love of God, so the intrinsical evil and unfitness that is in sin keeps back the gracious soul from it, Rom. xii. 9. “Abhor that which is evil,” *ἀποσυγχατες το πονηρον*, hate it as hell itself. Or, as the French translation hath it, be in horror. As the apprehensions of hell, so the apprehensions of sin impress horror upon the mind that is sanctified: Nothing more loathsome to an holy

Beloved, This is a very remarkable thing in the experience of renewed men, That, upon the renovation of men's principles, delights, and their aversions and loathings are laid quite opposite to what they were before. In their carnal state, company and sinful exercises were their delight. To be separated from these, and tied to prayer, meditation, heavenly discourses, company; O what a bondage would that have been! Now, separated from such carnal society, and restrained from such duties of glorying in the society of the godly, become a much sorer bondage.

5. *Fifthly, Experience of the bitterness of sin* is a restraining heart. They that have had so many sick days and nights for sin as they have had, are loth to taste that weight of gall again, which their soul hath still in remembrance; 2. "In that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness hath accompanied that sorrow? He would not grapple with those inward troubles again, but would not have the cheerful light of God's countenance eclipsed by all, and much more than all, the pleasures that are in sin."

6. *Sixthly, The consideration of the sufferings of Christ* powerfully with-holds a gracious soul from the commotion of sin. Rom. vi. 6. "Our old man is crucified with him, that sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not live therein." Were there a knife or sword in the house that had been thrust into the heart of your father, would you ever endure the use of it? Sin was the sword that pierced Christ, and so the death of Christ becomes the death of sin in his people. Thus the children of the devil and the children of the devil are manifest, in the present reasons of their abstinence from sin.

SECT. IV.

(2.) **SECONDLY,** They are also manifested by the hatred of sin. This puts a clear distinction betwixt them; for no regenerate heart can hate sin as sin; he may indeed,

1. *First, Hate sin in another, but not in himself:* The Pharisee hates another; *Calco superbiam Platonis*, said Diogenes, he trampled Plato's fine clothes under foot; I spurned Plato. *Sed majori superbia*, as Plato smartly replied, Thou art angry upon my pride, but it is with greater pride. "Why (said the hypocrite) beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? How quick in espying, and rash in censuring the small sins of others."

HATRED OF SIN A TRIAL OF GRACE.

beam, i. e. great horrid flagitious evil, in himself; but too near him to be discerned or bewailed: This is a sad symptom a naughty heart.

2. *Secondly*, He may hate it in its effects and consequents; in its own nature; as the thief hates the gallows, not the wickedness that he hath done. It is not sin itself, but sin in its connexion with hell, that is frightful to him.

The unsound professor could wish that there were no such threatening in the Bible against sin. When sin tempts him, I would, he, but I fear the consequence. O sin, could I separate thee from hell, nothing should separate thee and me.

3. *Thirdly*, He may hate it in a mood or pang, but not with rooted habitual hatred. It is plain from 2 Pet. ii. 22. That sins sometimes lie upon the conscience of an unregenerate man, as a scab lies upon a sick stomach; and so he may discharge himself of it by confession, restitution, &c. but a little time reconciles the quarrel twixt him and his lust again: If they fall out, they will fall in again. "The dog returned to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

But an upright soul hates sin in another manner; and in this hatred of sin the children of God are manifest.

1. *First*. The opposition of sin to God, is the very ground of formal reason upon which a gracious soul opposes and hates it. To be opposite to the holy nature and law of God, it cannot be odious in his eyes: This cut David's heart, Psal. li. 4. "Against thee, thee only have I sinned," q. d. I have wronged thee greatly, I have wronged myself and family greatly; but the wrong I have done to others is not worth naming, in comparison of the wrong I have done to thee.

2. *Secondly*, The upright soul hates sin in himself more than he hates it in any other; as a man hates a serpent in the hedge, but more in his own bosom: Rom. vii. 23. "But I see another law in my members;" and ver. 21. "I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me:" q. d. I do not know how others find it, but I am sure I find sin in my very bosom, in my very bowels, it is present with me. O wretched man that I am! A gracious soul can mourn to see it in others, but to find it in himself pierceth him to the very heart.

3. *Thirdly*, The gracious soul hates not only this or that particular sin, but the whole kind, every thing that is sinful. True hatred is

πρὸς τὴν γενν., * of the whole nature or kind: Psal. cxix. 104.

And, before this trial, a false heart cannot stand ; for he indulges some lust : There is an iniquity which he cannot be separated from.

4. *Fourthly*, The sincere soul hates sin with an irreconcilable hatred. There was a time when sin and his soul fell out ; and never will be a time of reconciliation betwixt them again.

That breach, which effectual conviction once made, cannot be made up any more : “ They will return no more to folly,” xxxv. 8. And indeed it seems to them that have suffered for sin, that have endured so many fears and sorrows, that it is the greatest folly in the world to return to sin again : No, thank God, the mercy of their escape from sin to their dying day, does not make them look back upon their former state but with shame and grief.

Ask a convert, Would you be back again where once you were ? Would you be among your old companions again ? Would you be fulfilling the lusts of the flesh again ? And he will tell you that he will not run the hazard to abide one day or one night in that state again, to gain all the kingdoms of the world the next moment.

5. *Fifthly*, The sincere soul hates sin with a superlative hatred ; he hates it more than any other evil in the world besides ; for all evils are not pleasant in themselves, but yet he must endure them for sin, then sufferings he chuses ; Heb. xi. 25. “ Chusing affliction rather than sin ;” “ suffer affliction than enjoy the pleasures of sin ;” the sufferings rather than the best of sin.

6. *Sixthly*, To conclude ; so deep is the hatred that sinners bear to sin, that nothing pleases them more than the thought of full deliverance from it doth : Rom. vii. 34. “ I thank God always for Jesus Christ our Lord.” What doth he so heartily thank God for ? O for a prospect of his final deliverance from sin, never to be tempted, led, defiled, or troubled with it any more : And this is one reason why Christ’s victory over it, and lying in the grave for us. That victory, that grave, is not pleasant in itself ; but to think of a parting from sin, that is sweet and pleasant indeed.

SECT. V.

(3.) **T**HIRDLY, The children of God and the children of the devil ; pure gold and vile dross are manifest as in hatred in their troubles and sorrows about sin.

All trouble for sin argues not sincerity ; some have re-

TROUBLES FOR SIN ARE TRIALS OF GRACE.

ward sins are sins *majoris infamiae*, of greater scandal; but heart are oftentimes *majoris reatus*, sins of greater guilt. To be troubled for grosser sins, and have no trouble for ordinary sins daily incurred is an ill sign of a bad heart.

2. *Secondly*, A graceless heart may be much troubled at the discovery of sin, when it is not troubled for the guilt of sin; Jer. ii. 26. "the thief is ashamed when he is found, so is the house of Israel, they are ashamed." Hence it is that they stick not to commit ten sins against God, to hide one sin from the eyes of men. It is a mercy that it is the matter of men's shame, and that all are not arrived to the height of impudence to declare their sin as Sodom, and glory in shame: But to be ashamed only because men see it, and not Ezra, to say, "O my God, I am ashamed, and blush to look upon thee," Ezra ix. 6. ashamed that thou seest it, is but hypocrisy.

3. *Thirdly*, A graceless heart may be troubled for the rod that draws after it, but not for sin itself, as it provokes God to his rods.

But the troubles of upright ones for sin are of another kind of nature.

1. *First*, They are troubled that God is wronged, and his Spirit troubled by their sins: So the penitent prodigal, "I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight," Luke xv. 21. Against heaven, that is, against him whose throne is in heaven, a great, glorious infinite Majesty! a poor worm of the earth hath lifted up his voice against the God of heaven.

2. *Secondly*, They are troubled for the defilement of their souls by sin: Hence they are compared in Proverbs xxv. 26. to a troubled fountain. You know it is the property of a living spring when any filth falls into it, or that which lies in the bottom of the channel, is raised and defiles its streams, never to leave working till it hath purged itself of it, and recovered its purity again.

So it is with a righteous man, he loves purity in the presence of God. Psal. cxix. 140. and he loves it no less in the principle and practice; he thinks it is hell enough to lie under the pollution of sin, and should never come under damnation for it.

3. *Thirdly*, They are troubled for the estrangements of God, the hidings of his face from them because of their sin. It would be close to an ingenuous spirit to see a dear and faithful friend who he hath grieved, to look strange and shy upon him at the next meeting, as if he did not know him: much more doth it go to the heart of a gracious man to see the face of God turned from him, and

do. They are strong to bear other troubles, but sin under this: Psalm xxxviii. 4. Other sorrows may for be violent, and make more noise, but this sorrow soaks the soul.

5. *Fifthly*, Their troubles for sin are more private troubles than others are, "their sore runs in the night." Psal. lxxvii. 2. Not but that they may, and do open themselves to men (and it is a mercy when they meet with a judicious and experienced Christian to unbosom themselves unto) is done, it is God and thy soul alone that must whisper comfort. *Illa vera dolet, qui sine teste dolet*: This is a sincere sin indeed, which is expressed secretly to God in the closet.

6. *Sixthly*, Their troubles are incurable by creature-comforts; is not the removing some outward pressures and inconveniences can remove their burden; nothing but pardon, peace, and reconciliation, can quiet the gracious heart.

7. *Seventhly*, Their troubles for sin are ordinate and in their own place; they dare not stamp the dignity of Christ's blood with their worthless tears and groans for sin: * *Lava lachrymarum*. Lord, wash my sinful tears in the blood of Christ, was the desire of a true penitent. And thus our trouble for sin sheweth our hearts are.

SECT. VI.

(4.) **F**OURTHLY, The behaviour and carriage of the regenerate in respect to subjection to the commands of sin, shews what their condition is. This will separate dross from gold. Ungenerate men are the servants of sin, they subject themselves to the commands. This the scripture sometimes calls a "conquering of the lusts of the flesh," Eph. ii. 3. Sometimes the "submitting of themselves to sin," 1 Kings xxi. 20. Now, as a judicious observer, though the children of God complain with Paul, 14, 15. that they are "sold under sin," yet there is a vast difference betwixt these two: The saints are sold to it by Adam, but by their own continued consent. But to shew you the difference in this matter, I conceive it necessary to shew wherein the reigning of sin doth not consist, and then wherein it doth; that they may plainly discern who are in subjection to the reigning power of sin, and who are not. Now there be divers things which are common both to the regenerate and unregenerate; and we cannot say that the dominion of sin lies in any or in all of them, viz. abstractly

SIGNS OF SIN IN DOMINION.

tion thus breaks forth into gross and scandalous sins in both, fore it must needs reign in the one as well as in the other; a righteous man may "fall before the wicked," as it is, Prov. xxv. 26. He may fall into the dirt of grosser iniquities, and furnish them with matter of reproach. So did David, Peter, Abraham, and many more of the Lord's upright-hearted ones, whose souls nevertheless sin did not reign over by a voluntary subjection to its commands, nor must it embolden any to sin with more liberty.

2. *Secondly*, Though an upright soul fall once and again into sin, though he reiterate the same act of sin which he hath repented of before; yet it cannot merely from thence be concluded, that the sin reigns over him as it doth over a wicked man that makes it his daily trade. I confess every reiteration of sin puts a further aggravation upon it: And it is sad we should repent and sin, and sin and repent; but yet you read, Prov. xxiv. 16. "A just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again:" Job's friends were good men, yet they tell them, "These ten times have ye reproached me," Job i. 6. This indeed shews a heart that greatly needs purging; for it is as if it relapses into spiritual as it is with relapses into natural diseases. A relapse or recidivation of the disease shews that the morbid influence was not duly purged; but though it shews the foulness, it does not always prove the falseness of the heart.

3. *Thirdly*, Though the one may be impatient of the reproof of his sin, as well as the other; yet that alone will not conclude him to be in full dominion over the one as it is over the other.

It is pity any good man should storm at a just rebuke of sin, when such a precious oil as is proper to heal, should be conceited to be poured upon his head; but yet flesh will be tender and touchy, even in good men. Asa was a good man, and yet he was wroth with the prophet who reproved him, as you find, 2 Chron. xvi. 10. yet I doubt not but their consciences smite them for it, when pride suffers not another to do it; a reproof may be well-timed and ill managed by another, and so may provoke, but they will hear the voice of conscience in another manner.

4. *Fourthly*, Though in both some one particular sin may have more power than another, yet neither doth this alone conclude him to be in dominion, therefore that sin must reign in one, as it doth in another. In the beloved lust of every wicked man is king over his soul; but in a godly man's constitution, calling, &c. may incline him more to one sin than another; and yet neither that nor any other may be said to be in dominion: for though David speaks of his iniquity, yet

needs be sins in dominion in the one, as they are in the other. David's sin was too much light abused, and violence offered in David's sin, as he confesses, Psal. li. 6. and the sad story itself shews; and yet, in the main, David was an upright man so that this consideration of the fact shrewdly wounded his interest stands upon record for a caution to all others.

SECT. VII.

WE have seen what doth not infer the dominion of sin from the former particulars, being simply considered; I shall next shew what doth, and how the sincere and false hearts are distinguished in this trial. And,

1. *First*, Assent and consent upon deliberation notes the dominion of sin under the dominion of sin: when the mind approves sin, and gives its plenary consent to it, this sets up sin in its throne, and brings the soul into subjection to it; for the dominion of sin consists in its authority over us, and our voluntary subjection to it. This is the character of a wicked graceless person, Psal. vii. 15. "He deviseth mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself upon high, that is not good; he abhorreth not evil."

The best men may fall into sin through mistake, or passion, or into sin through the violence of temptation; but to devise mischief, and set himself in an evil way, this notes full assent of the mind, and then, *not to abhor evil*, notes full consent of the will; and being given to sin, not only antecedently to the acting of sin, but consequently to it, to like it afterwards as well as before, to bring the soul fully under the power of sin? What can it give but dominion?

This (as * one saith) in direct opposition to the apostle's teaching, 1. is to present their bodies a dead sacrifice, unholy, and unacceptable to God; acceptable to the devil, which is their unreasonable service. All men by nature are given to sin, but these men give themselves to it.

2. *Secondly*, The customary practice of sin subjects the soul to the dominion of sin; and so "he that is born of God doth not sin," 1 John iii. 9. Fall into sin, yea, the same sin he falls into that often; but then it is not without reluctance, repentance, and protest entered by the soul in heaven against it; so that sin is not a quiet possession of his soul; he is not the servant of sin, but he willingly walk after its commandments; but so that he is not its servant: it is their daily practice, Jer. ix. 3. "They pro-

Look, as our delight in God is the measure of our holiness, so delight in sin is the measure of our sinfulness. Delight in sin is the uppermost round of the ladder, and much higher the soul of a sinner cannot go, till it be turned off into hell; "It is a sport to a fool to do mischief," Prov. x. 23. Never merrier than when he hath the devil for his playfellow, saith * one upon that place.

4. *Fourthly*, Impatience of Christ's yoke and government, and the soul to be the subject of sin. This is clear from the apostle's reasoning in Rom. vi. 17, 18. "But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart the doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." Where you plainly, that no man can have his manumission or freedom from sin that comes not into Christ's service, and yields himself up to obedience.

So then, to fret at Christ's laws, that tie us up from our lusts, be weary of all spiritual employments as a burden intolerable, and to be in our element and centre till we are off from God, and plunging in the world and our lusts; this is a sad note of a soul in subjection to sin.

Object. *But may not an upright soul find some weariness in spiritual things?*

Sol. Doubtless he may, for he hath flesh as well as spirit; though the spirit be willing, the flesh is weak: he is sanctified by part, and his delight in the law of God is but according to, or *the inner man*, Rom. vii. 22. But he sees another law in his members, i. e. contrary inclinations. However, if he be weary sometimes in the duties of godliness, to be sure he is more weary of them, and is not centered and at rest till he be with his God; but the carnal heart is where it would be, when it is in the service of sin; and as a fish upon dry land, when engaged in spiritual duties, especially such as are secret, and have no external allurements or reputation to engage him to them.

But what surprisals or captivities to sin soever may befall a right soul, yet it appears by these eight following particulars, that he is not the servant of sin, nor in full subjection to it. For,

1. *First*, Though he may be drawn to sin, yet he cannot remain upon his sin without shame and sorrow; which plainly shews that it be an involuntary surprize. So Peter wept bitterly, Mat. xxvi. And David mourned for his sin heartily. Others can fetch pleasures out of their old sins, by reflecting on them: and some

a deliberate and full consent of his will; their delight in the will of God, Rom. vii. 22. "They do that which they would not." 16. i. e. there are inward dislikes from the new nature. In that case of David, which seems to have so much of counsel and liberation in it, yet it was but in a single act; it was not in the course of his life; he was upright in all things, i. e. in the government and tenor of his life, 1 Kings xv. 5.

3. *Thirdly*, Though an upright soul may fall into sin, yet is restless and unquiet in that condition, like a bone out of its place that speaks him to be none of sin's servants; as on the other hand, a man be engaged in the external duties of religion, and yet is restless and unquiet there, his heart is not in it, he is not at home, he be again in his earthly business; this man cannot be Christ's servant: a gracious heart is much after that rate, not in the work of sin, that a carnal heart is employed in the work of religion. That is a good rule, *Ea tantum dicuntur inest, sunt per modum quietis*: That is a man's true temper, when he is at rest. Poor David fell into sin, but he had no rest in his heart because of it, Psal. li. 10, 11, 12. If his heart be off from his duty for a little while, yet he recollects himself, and says, Psal. cxvi. 7. "Return to thy rest, O my soul."

4. *Fourthly*, Though a sincere Christian fall into sin, yet he proceeds not from evil to evil as the ungodly man, Gen. ix. 3. but makes his fall into one sin a caution to prevent another. Peter by his fall got establishment for the time to come, that God will speak peace to them, they are careful to return to duty, Psal. lxxxv. 8. "In that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, ye have been carefulness it wrought? Yea, what fear?" 2 Cor. vii. 11. not so with the servants of sin, one sin leaves them much more exposed to another sin.

5. *Fifthly*, A sincere Christian may be drawn to sin, yet he would be glad with all his heart to be rid of sin: it would cost him more than thousands of gold and silver, that he might grow free from sin, and so he would defend God no more; and that shews sin is not in dominion over him that is under the dominion of sin, is loth to leave his liberty, his servants are not willing to part with it, they hold it fast, they will not let it go, as that text expresseth it, Jer. viii. 5. But the complaint of the upright is expressed by the apostle according to the true sense of their hearts, in Rom. vii. 24. "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

6. *Sixthly*, It appears they yield not themselves willingly to sin.

EVIDENCES OF THE NON-DOMINION OF SIN.

a blessed thing in the eyes of a sincere man to be kept from sin reckons it a great deliverance, a very happy escape, if he be from sin.

7. *Seventhly*, This shews that some who may be drawn to con sin, yet are none of the servants of sin, that they do heartily beg assistance of grace to keep them from sin: "Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins, (saith the Psalmist, Psalm xix. 13) "them not have dominion over me;" q. d. Lord, I find propens to sin in my nature, yea, and strong ones too; if thou leave myself, I am carried into sin as easily as a feather down the tor "O Lord, keep back thy servant." And there is no petition upright ones pour out their hearts to God in, either more frequ or more ardently than in this, to be kept back from sin.

8. *Eighthly, and Lastly*, This shews the soul not to be under dominion of sin, that it doth not only cry to God to be kept from sin, but uses the means of prevention himself; he resists as well as prays against it; Psal. xviii. 23. "I was also upright before him, and kept myself from mine iniquity:" So Job xxxi. 1. "I have made a covenant with mine eyes;" and yet more fully Isa. xxxiii. 15. "He shaketh his hands from holding bribes, stoppeth his ears from hearing blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil." See with what care the portals are shut at which useth to enter. All these things are very relieving considerations for poor souls questioning their integrity under the frequent surpris sin. And the next trial no less.

SECT. VIII.

(5.) **FIFTHLY**, Our opposition to, and conflicts with sin discover what we are, gold or dross.

There are conflicts with sin in both the regenerate, and in the regenerate; but there is a vast difference betwixt them, as will appear in the following account.

1. *First*, There is an universal, and there is a particular opposition to sin: the former is found in regenerate, the latter in unregenerate souls: a gracious heart hates every false way, Psal. cxix. 104. must needs do so, because he hates and opposes sin as sin; so he can have no *peccatum in deliciis*, no excepted or reserved sin, but fights against the whole body, and every limb and member of the body of sin.

But it is not so with the hypocrite or carnal professor; he cannot overcome some reserved sin, that he cannot part with.

antipathy betwixt it and the new nature in him, as is clear v. 17. "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other. Therefore understand corrupt nature; by spirit, not only the spirit of God, or principle of regeneration in man, but the lusting of these two against each other, understand the endeavours of each other's destruction and ruin; and that all this is the contrariety of all these two natures.

These are contrary one to the other; there is a twofold opposition betwixt them, one formal, their very natures are opposite; the other effective, their workings and designs are opposite, as it is in fire and water.

But the opposition found in unrenewed souls against light that is in their minds and consciences, which scarcely suffices them. Such was that in Darius, Dan. vi. 14. "I was displeased with myself, and set his heart on Daniel; and laboured till the going down of the sun to see him; and here the contest was betwixt sense of honour upon one side, and conviction of conscience on the other side.

Sometimes a generous and noble disposition opposes some actions: *Major sum, et ad majora natus; quam ut corporis mancipium.* I am greater, and born to greater things, I should be a slave to my body, said a brave heathen.

3. *Thirdly*, There is a permanent, and there is a transient opposition to sin; the former is the case of God's people, the latter of temporary and unsound professors.

The saint when he draws the sword in this warfare, he throws away the scabbard; no end of this combat with sin; their life and their troubles are finished together.

7. "I have fought the good fight, and have finished my race."

But in other men it is but a transient quarrel; out of season to-day, and in another; and the reason is plain by what we have said before: it is not the opposition of two natures; it is like the opposition of the wind and tide, these may be contrary and make no way to-day, but the wind may come about, and go as the tide to-morrow; but in a Christian it is the opposition of the new nature and the old nature, one must give way to the other, there is no reconciliation; but the other "like the dog, returns to his vomit," 2 Pet. ii. 22.

4. *Fourthly*, There is an opposition to the root of sin, and to the fruits of sin. A gracious soul opposeth root sin, but the carnal soul opposeth only the fruits of sin.

OPPOSITION TO SIN, A TRIAL TO SINCERITY.

abscondere, quam abscondere vitia : To hide, rather than to kill lusts.

5. *Fifthly*, There is an opposition to sin in the strength of God, and an opposition to sin in our own strength ; the former is proper to real Christians, the latter is found frequently with unsanctified persons ; when a Christian goes forth against any sin, it is in the strength of God : so you read their rule directs them, Eph. vi. 10. " Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might : take up unto you the whole armour of God : " And suitably, you shall find frequently upon their knees begging strength from heaven against their lusts ; 2 Cor. xii. 8. " For this cause I besought the Lord thrice," saith Paul, i. e. often and earnestly, that the temptation might depart from him.

But others go forth against sin only in the strength of their resolutions ; so did Pendleton in our story ; these resolutions and vows, which they have put themselves under, are as frequently frustrated as made.

6. *Sixthly*, There is a successful opposition to sin, and an opposition that comes to nothing : The former is that of true Christians, the latter is found among unregenerate men.

The work of mortification in the saints is progressive and increasing : Hence Rom. vi. 6. " Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed." Sin dies in believers as crucified persons use to die, viz. a slow, lingering, gradual sure death ; its vigour and life expires by degrees, or as a consumptive person dies ; for to that also he alludes here : There is a disease which is called *consumptio totius*, a consumption of the whole : those that die of that disease, languish more and more, till at last they drop *sensim sine sensu*, by imperceptible degrees and steps into the grave.

But in the unregenerate, whatever conflicts they have with sin, no corruption falls before it : It may be said of them, as the church in another case complains of herself, Isa. xxvi. 18. " We have laboured in vain, we have brought forth wind. We have wrought any deliverance in the earth, neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen." So it fares with these professors ; they hear, they vow, they resolve, but when all is done, they are as strong and vigorous as ever : No degree of mortification appears after all.

And thus much of the trial of our sincerity by our carriage towards sin.

CHAP. VII.

Shewing what proof or trial is made of the soundness, or unsoundness of our graces by the duties of religion which we perform.

SECT. I.

WE now come (according to the method proposed) to the trial of the truth or falseness of grace, by the duties we daily perform in religion. And certainly they also have the use and efficacy for the discovery, 1 John ii. 4, 5. "He that saith I know him, but keepeth not his commandments [is a liar] and the truth is not in him: But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: And hereby know we that we are in him."

This is a practical lie, of which the apostle speaks here. Men deceive others for a while, and themselves for ever. It is often spoken, but done, when a man's course of life contradicts his profession. The life of an hypocrite is but one longer or shorter than he saith or professeth he knows God, but takes no care at all for him in the duties he commands; he either neglects them, or does not perform them, it is not as God requires: "If they draw near with their lips, yet their heart is far from him," Is. li. 10. "Thou art near in their mouth, but far from their reins," Is. li. 13.

There are some that feel the influence and power of the Holy Spirit in union with the Lord in duties, going down into their very hearts; but there are others whose lips and tongues only are touched with the word.

This is an age of light and much profession: Men keep up a reputation in the sober and professing world, but when they are let down, and totally neglect the duties of religion: but such men would be but just to themselves, their very performance of duty would tell them what their hearts are.

SECT. II.

FOR there are, among others, these following particular signs which shew a very clearly difference the sound from the unsound profession.

1. *First*, The designs and true levels and aims of men in religion: their duty will tell them what they are.

An hypocrite aims low; Hos. vii. 14. "They have said unto me with their heart when they howled upon their backs,"

RELIGIOUS DUTIES ARE HEART-DISCOVERIES.

But an upright heart hath very high and pure aims in duty ; “ desire of their soul is to God.” Isa. xxvi. 8. “ Their soul fasteneth hard after God,” Psal. lxxiii. 8. “ One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I will seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to see the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple,” Psal. xxvii. 4. These are the true ends that play at the sun, and will not stoop to low and earthly objects. Alas ! If the enjoyment of God be missed in a duty, it is no greatest enlargement of gifts will satisfy ; he comes back like a man that hath taken a long journey to meet his friend upon important business, and lost his labour ; his friend was not there.

2. *Secondly*, The engagements of men’s hearts to God in duty will tell them what they are ; the hypocrite takes little heed to his heart, Isa. xxix. 13. They are not afflicted really for the hardness and deadness, unbelief and wanderings of their hearts in duty, as upright ones are : nor do they engage their hearts, and labour to get up with God in duty, as his people do. “ I have entreated thy face with my whole heart,” saith David, Psal. cxix. 58. They are not pleased in duty until they feel their hearts stand to God like a bow in its full bent. I say, it is not always so with them ; what would they give that it might be so ? But, surely, if their hearts in duty be empty of God, they are filled with trouble and sorrow.

3. *Thirdly*, The conscience that men make of secret, as well as public duties, will tell them what their hearts and graces are ; whether true or false. A vain professor is curious in the former, but either negligent, or, at best, formal in the latter ; for he finds no inducements of honour, applause, or ostentation of gifts, external, moving him to them ; nor hath he any experience of the sweet and benefit of such duties internally to allure and engage him to them.

The hypocrite therefore is not for the closet, but the synagogue, Matth. vi. 5, 6. Not but that education, example, or the influence of conscience, may sometimes drive him thither ; but it is not his daily delight to be there ; his meat and drink to retire from the tumult of the world to enjoy God in secret. It is the observance of their duties is the great inducement to these men to perform them, and, *verily*, saith our Lord, ver. 2. “ they have their reward now, they have it away, or they have carried off all the benefit and advantage that ever they shall have by religion. Much may it do them with their applause and honour, let them have as much of that airy reward, for it is all that ever they shall have.”

some communion in the morning, he sensibly finds it in the unprofitableness of his heart and life all the day after.

4. *Fourthly*, The spirituality of our duties tries the sincerity of our graces: An unregenerate heart is carnal, whilst engaged in duties that are spiritual. Some men deceive themselves in this; they think they are spiritual men, because their employments and callings are spiritual things, Hosea ix. 7. This indeed gives them the appearance of piety, but not the frame of spiritual men; and others justify themselves spiritual persons, because they frequently perform spiritual duties upon spiritual duties: But, alas, the heart and state may be carnal notwithstanding all this. O, my friends, it is not enough that the object of your duties be spiritual, that they respect an holy God, but that the matter be spiritual, that you be conversant about spiritual things; but the frame of your heart must be spiritual; an heavenly frame of soul is necessary, and what are the most heavenly duties if the heart be not spiritual?

The end and design you aim at must be spiritual, the glory of God, and a growing conformity to him in holiness; and all your duties as the sand on the sea-shore, and they all will not be of any one evidence of your sincerity. "God is my witness with my spirit," saith the apostle, Rom. i. 9. He seemed to God in this matter. I serve God in my spirit, and that I do so; I dare appeal to him that it is so; he knows my heart is with him, or would be with him in my duties: my faith do either sensibly grasp, or are stretched out to God in my duties. O how little favour do gracious hearts find in their most excellent duties, if God and their souls do not see them in them!

Certainly, reader, there is a time when God comes near in duty, when he deals familiarly with men, and sensibly communicates his graces to souls with unusual powers and delights. The near approach of God to their souls are felt by them, (for souls have the sense as well as bodies) and now are their minds abstracted and refined from all that is material and earthly, and swallow up all spiritual excellencies and glories.

These are the real prelibations, or foretastes of glory which no man can by words, make another to understand, as he himself cannot feel them.

These seasons, I confess, do but rarely occur to the best of us, nor continue long when they do: * Alas! this is too strong for such weak bottles as we are. 'Hold, Lord, (a

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describe. These seasons are the golden spots of our lives, when we are admitted to these near and ineffable views and tastes of God. Possibly some poor Christians can say but little to these things; sorrows are exercised in duties more than their joys; they are endeavouring to mount, but the stone hangs at the heel; they cannot rise to that height that others do, who are got up by their labouring faith into the upper region, and there display their wings, and sing in the sun-beams: But though they cannot reach this height, yet have they no satisfaction in duties wherein there is no intercourse betwixt God and their souls.

That which contents another, will not content a Christian. If the King be absent, men will bow to the empty chair: but if God be absent, an empty duty gives no satisfaction to a gracious spirit. The poorest Christian is found panting after God by sincere desire, and labouring to get up that dead and vain heart to God in duty, (tho' alas! it is many times but the rolling of the returning stone against the hill) yet he never expects advantage by that duty where the Spirit of God is not; nor doth he expect the Spirit of God to be where his own spirit is not.

5. *Fifthly*, Assiduity and constancy in the duties of religion is a notable discovery of the soundness or rottenness of men's hearts. The hypocrite may shew some zeal and forwardness in duties at first time, but he will jade and give out at length; Job xxvii. 10. "Will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God?" No, he will not. If his motions in religion were natural, they would be constant; but they are artificial, and he is moved by external inducements, and so must needs be off and on; he grows himself weary of praying, and hears himself weary of hearing; his heart is not delighted in his duties, and therefore his duties needs grow stale and dry to him after a while. There be three seasons in which the zeal of an hypocrite may be inflamed in duties.

First, When some imminent danger threatens him; some rod of God is shaken over him; "When he slew them, then sought him, and returned and enquired early after God," Psalm lxxviii. 34. O the goodly words they give, the fair promises they make! and yet all the while "they do but flatter him with their lips, and lie unto him with their tongues," ver. 36, 37. Let but that danger pass over, and the heavens clear up again, he will restrain prayer, and return to his old course again.

Secondly, When the times countenance and favour religion; the wind is in his back, O what zeal will he have for God! So if

“Come, see my zeal;” for what? For a base self-interest in God. How fervently will some men pray, preach, and whilst they sensibly feel the incomes and profits of their religion for their flesh; whilst they are admired and applauded!

These external incentives will put an hypocrite into a religious zeal; but then, as it is with a man, whose colours are raised by the heat of the fire, and not by the healthfulness of a good constitution, it soon fades and fails again.

But, blessed be God, it is not so with all: The man who is upright with his God, will “keep judgment, and do right at all times,” Psal. cvi. 3. Whether dangers threaten, whether the times favour religion or no; whether his earthly interests be promoted by it or no, he will be holy still, he will not neglect his duties when they are stript naked of those external advantages, as the addition of these things to religion did not at first engage him, so the subtraction of them cannot disengage him.

If his duty become his reproach, yet Moses will not forsake it, Exod. xi. 26. If he lose his company, and be left alone, yet Peter will not flinch from his duty, 2 Tim. iv. 16. If hazard surround him on every side, yet Daniel will not quit it, Dan. vi. 10. for they who do these things at first, and counted the cost; they still find themselves rich enough to pay the cost of all that they can lose, or suffer for its sake; yea, and that with an hundred-fold reward now in hand. They never had any other design in engaging in religion, but to help them to heaven; and if they recover heaven at last, the way to it prove better or worse, they have their design accomplished, and therefore they will be stedfast, “always abounding in the Lord,” as knowing their labour is not in vain in the Lord, 1 Cor. xv. ult.

6. *Sixthly*, The humility and self-denial of our hearts will try what they are for their integrity and sincerity to God. Doth a man boast in his own excellencies in prayer, as the Pharisee did, Luke xviii. 10, 11. “God, I thank thee, I am not as other men are,” Which he speaks not in an humble acknowledgment of his dependence on God which differences man from man, but in a proud ostentation of his own excellencies. Doth a man make his duties his idols, and trust to them in a vain confidence of their worth and dignity, as the Pharisee did, Luke xviii. 9. Surely, “his heart, which is thus lifted up will be proud, not upright, Hab. ii. 4. But if the heart be upright, its duties will express its humility, as in all other things, so especially in its duties wherein it approaches the great and holy God.

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and their religious performances: Thus that poor penitent, vii. 38. stood behind Christ weeping: "Yet the dogs eat the crumbs," saith another, Mark vii. 28. "I am more brutish than any," saith a third, Prov. xxx. 7. "I abhor myself in dust and ashes," saith a fourth, Job xlii. 6. and as little esteem they have for their performances, Isa. lxiv. 6. "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." I deny not but there is pride and vanity in the most right ones; but what place soever it finds in their converses with men, it finds little room in their converses with God, or if it find it, they loath it, and themselves for it.

Thirdly, But especially their humility in duty is discovered in nouncing all their duties in point of dependence, and relying upon Christ for righteousness and acceptance: They have some regard to duties in point of obedience, but none at all in point of reliance.

7. *Seventhly*, The communion and intercourse which is betwixt God and men in duties, notably discovers what their personal graces are. And it must needs do so, because what communion ever the hypocrite hath with duties, or with saints in duties, sure he hath none with God.

None can come nigh to God in duty, but those that are nigh by reconciliation: All special communion with Christ is found in real union with Christ; but "the wicked are estranged from his womb," Psalm lviii. 3.

But now there is real communion betwixt God and his people in duties. Truly our fellowship, κοινωνία, our communion is with the Father and Son, 1 John i. 3. God pours forth of his Spirit into them, and they pour forth their hearts to God. It is sensibly manifested to them when the Lord comes nigh to their souls in duty, as sensible they are of his retreats and withdrawments from their presence. Cant. iii. 1, 4. They find their hearts, like the heliotrope, open and shut according to the accesses and recesses of the divine presence. They that never felt any thing of this nature, may call it a fiction; but the Lord's people are abundantly satisfied of the reality thereof.

Their very countenance is altered by it, 1 Sam. i. 18. the sad and cloudy countenance of Hannah cleared up, there was fair weather on her face, as soon as she knew she had audience and acceptance from her God. I know all communion with God doth not consist in pleasures and comforts; there is a real communion with God in the mortifying and humbling influences of his Spirit upon men, as in the quickening and refreshing influences thereof. I know also there is a

differences the sound and the unsound heart. All the world will never make an hypocrite more holy, humble than he is: but will, as the watering of a dry stick, so than make it flourishing and fruitful. What was Judas for all those heavenly sermons, prayers, and discourses which he heard? And what will thy soul be the better by thy duties thou performest weekly and daily, if thy heart be not improved? It is plain, from Job xv. 4. there must be an implantation of Christ, before there can be an improvement in fruitfulness. And it is as plain, from 1 John ii. 14. that the virtues and graces must remain; the efficacy and power that we receive under them, must abide and remain in the heart afterwards, and cannot grow, and be made fruitful by them.

But the false professor is neither rooted in Christ by faith, nor doth, or can retain the virtue of ordinances without it; but, like one that views his face in a glass, quickly forgets his manner of man he was: his head indeed may grow, his heart may increase, but he hath a dead and withered heart.

But as the saints have real communion with God in duties, they do make improvements answerable thereunto: There is certainly a ripening of their graces that way; a changing and transformation from glory to glory; a springing up to the maturity of the man in Christ. "They that are planted in the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God," Ps. 14. There is pure and sincere milk in the breasts of orderly believers; the believer sucks the very breasts of Christ in his duties, and thereby, 1 Pet. ii. 2. they do grow more and more judiciously, experienced, humble, mortified, and heavenly, by conversing with the Lord so frequently in his appointments.

There is, I confess, a more discernible growth and increase in some Christians, than in others: The faith of some grows more quickly, 2 Thess. i. 3. others more slowly, Heb. v. 12. but there are improvements of grace in all upright ones: habits are more rooted, and fruits of obedience more increased.

Object. If any upright soul be stumbled at this, as not to discern the increase of his graces, after all his duties.

Sol. Let such consider the growth of grace is discernible as the growth of plants is, which we perceive rather *crevisse*, or to have grown, than to grow: Compare time past with time present, and you may see it; but usually our eager desires to grow make us overlook what we have as nothing.

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grace: He may enable them to preach judiciously, not experimentally; to pray orderly and neatly, not feelingly, believably, broken-heartedly; "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God," Rom. viii. 14. He never so assists but where he hath first sanctified. Carnal men furnish the matter of their duties out of the strength of their parts: a strong memory, a good invention are the fountains which they draw.

But it is otherwise with souls truly gracious; they have ordinarily a threefold assistance from the Spirit in reference to their duties.

First, Before duties, exciting them to it, making them feel the need of it, like the call of an empty stomach; Psalm xxv. "Thou saidst, Seek my face; my heart answered, Thy face, Lord, will I seek."

Secondly, In their duties, furnishing both matter and assistance as in that text lately cited, Rom. viii. 26. guiding them not what to ask, but how to ask.

Thirdly, After their duties, helping them not only to suppress the pride and vanity of their spirits, but also to wait on God for the accomplishment of their desires.

Now, though all these things, wherein the sincerity of our hearts is tried in duties, be found in great variety (as to degrees) among saints, yet they are mysteries unknown by experience to other

CHAP. VIII.

Opening the trials of sincerity and hypocrisy, by sufferings in the account of religion.

SECT. I.

WE are now arrived at the last trial of grace propounded, by sufferings for religion.

Thousands of hypocrites embark themselves in the profession of religion in a calm; but if the wind riseth, and the sea rageth, they see religion will not transport them safely to the cape of earthly hopes and expectations, they desire to be landed again soon as may be; for they never intended to ride out a storm. Christ: So you find, Matth. xiii. 20, 21. "He endureth for a while, but when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, he is offended."

3. *Thirdly*, What advantages sincere grace hath to severe and sharp trial.

SECT. II.

1. **N**OW the fire of persecution, or sufferings for religion, may be judged intense, and high enough to separate gold and dross. *First*, When religion exposes us to imminent hazard of our best and dearest interests in this world: Such are our estates, and lives: Then it is a fierce and fiery trial indeed. Sometimes it exposes the liberties of its professors, Rev. ii. 10. "the devil shall cast some of you into prison." Sometimes it takes away our goods: Heb. x. 34. ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods: sometimes their lives, Heb. xi. 37. "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were slain with the sword." Whilst the prospect of higher than some small inconveniencies of life, reputation, or of honour will hold a false heart; but when it comes to the trial, it will be found able to endure it, but those that expect to save their souls by religion but their souls, and account themselves in gain by religion they can but save them with the loss of all that is dear in this world.

Here the false heart boggles; here it usually jades and faints.

Secondly, The fiery trial is then high, when there are no visible hopes of deliverance, or outward encouragement that the scene will alter. When "we see not our signs," nor any prophet, nor any that can tell us how long," as it was with the church was, Psal. lxxiv. 9. Then their hands hang down, and their hearts faint: Nor is it to be wondered at, when such a trial of troubles prove so sore a temptation even to the upright, to lay forth their hands to iniquity; as it is Psal. cxxv. 3. If such a temptation shake such men as build on the rock, it must quit them, those whose foundation is but sand.

Thirdly, When a false professor is engaged alone in religion, and is singled out from the herd, as a deer to be run down by hunters, is a thousand to one but he quits religion to save himself. The company will encourage a faint-hearted traveller to jog on his way; but if he be forsaken by all, as Paul was, no man will encourage him; if left alone, as Elijah was, what can encourage him out?

Indeed, if they had the same visible supports those who were persecuted had, that the Lord was with them, that would keep them

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when we must hate father and mother, wife and children, or claim to Christ and heaven ! This is hard work indeed.

How hard did that truly noble and renowned Galeacius Carra lus find this ! O what a conflict found he in his bowels ! Now C and our dearest interest come to meet like two men upon a na bridge ; if one go forward, the other must go back, and no predominate interest can no longer be concealed.

Fifthly, When powerful temptations are mixed with cruel s ings ; when we are strongly tempted, as well as cruelly persec This blows up the fire to a vehement height. This was the tr those precious primitive believers, Heb. xi. 35, 37. "They "stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted." Here life, liberty, and preferment set upon one hand, and death in most formidable shape upon the other. This cannot but be a trial to any, but especially when a cruel death and tender te meet, then the trial goes high indeed.

SECT. III.

2. **AND** that such sufferings as these will discover the fals and rottenness of men's hearts cannot be doubted : If you con that this is the fire designed by God, for this very use and pur to separate the gold from the dross : so you will find it, 1 Pet. i "Beloved think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which "try you," i. e. the very design and aim of providence in permi and ordering them, is to try you. The design of Satan is to de you ; but God's design is to try you. Upon this account yo the hour of persecution (in a suitable notion) called "the ho "temptation or probation," Rev. iii. 10. for then professors are s to the very bran ; searched to the very bottom principles. " "is the day that burns as an oven, in which all the proud, an "that do wickedly, shall be as stubble," Mal. iv. 1. For,

1. *First*, In that day the predominant interest must appear, and discovered : It can be concealed no longer ; "No man can serve "masters," saith Christ, Luke xvi. 13. A man may serve masters, if they all command the same things, or things subord to each other ; but he cannot serve two masters, if their comm clash and interfere with each other : And such are the comman Christ and the flesh in a suffering hour. Christ saith, "Be "faithful to the death ;" the flesh saith, *Spare thyself*, and s the comforts of life. Christ saith, "He that loveth father or mo "wife, or children, lands or inheritance more than me, is not w

you know not which of the two is his master ; stay but their path parts, and then you shall quickly see who is his is it in this case.

2. *Secondly*, In that day sensible supports fail, and all a comes in by the pure and immediate actings of faith ; a not for those reliefs, his heart would soon faint and die a discouragements, 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18. “ We faint not whi
“ not at the things which are seen, for they are temporal
“ things which are not seen, for they are eternal,” q. d.
not our eye intently fixed upon the invisible and eterna
the coming world, we shall feel ourselves fainting and c
under the many troubles and afflictions of this world. “ I
“ (saith holy David) if I had not believed.” How then
shall the hypocrite live at such a time, who hath no faith
him ? No relief but what comes in through the senses ?

3. *Thirdly*, In that day all mere notions and specula
religion vanish ; and nothing relieves and satisfies the su
but what it really believes, and what it hath satisfying pr
perience of in himself. There are a great many pretty a
notions which our minds are entertained with ; some deliq
of peace, which can do us no service at all in the day of tr
for your speculative, unpractical knowledge of the greater
religion, as little service is to be expected from them : Exc
better evidence and security about them, we shall be loth
all upon the credit of them.

That is a very considerable passage to that purpose in
“ Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, (knowing in
“ that ye have in heaven a better and more enduring
This *knowing in yourselves* is by inward and sensible
taste and feeling, which is abundantly satisfying to the
stands opposed to all that traditional knowledge we re
others ; which, as it leaves the mind fluctuating, so the
dead and comfortless.

4. *Fourthly*, In that day the root and foundation of a
and hope is tried, and then they that have built upon th
needs fail ; for every thing is as its foundation ; princip
what a root is to a tree, or a foundation to a house ; a fla
defect there most assuredly ruins all. This we find to
scope of those two famous parables, Luke xiv. 25. and
21. Lesser troubles shake but the branches, but these
root ; if nothing be found there but self-ends ; the force o

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now the hypocrite, like Orpah, will forsake religion; but sincerity will make the soul cleave to it, as Ruth did to Naomi.

SECT. IV.

3. **W**HAT advantages sincerity gives the soul for its establishment and perseverance in suffering times, I shall briefly account in the following particulars.

1. *First*, Sincere godliness dethrones that idol, the love of the world, in all true Christians; and this is it that makes men shrink and flinch from Christ in a day of suffering. I do not deny but that believers themselves love the world too much; but they love it not as their chief good: it is not their portion or happiness; if any man love the world, "the love of the Father is not in him," 1 John 2. 15. How much soever a sincere Christian loves the world, yet it is in subordination to the love of God, John xxi. 15. Sincerity consist with no other love of the world; it will not suffer such a cucumber plant to grow under its shadow.

Now, what is it, but this inordinate, supreme love of the creature that makes men forsake Christ in time of temptation? This was the ruin of that young man, Mat. xix. 22. "He went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions." This was the overthrow of Demas, 2 Tim. iv. 10. "He hath forsaken me, (saith the apostle) because he loved this present world." The love of this world, like sap in green wood, will not suffer you to burn for Christ; get but the heart purified to the creature by a discovery of better things in heaven, and it will establish and fix your spirits, that it shall not be in the power of creatures to shake you off from Christ your foundation.

2. *Secondly*, Sincerity knits the soul to Christ, and union with him secures us in the greatest trials; *Minimus quatenus unimur*. The hypocrite having no union with Christ, can have no communion with him, nor communications of grace from him; and so that little of his own being quickly spent (I mean natural courage and resolution) and no incomes from Christ, he must needs give up in a short time. But it is with a believer in a day of trouble, as it is with a garrison besieged by land, but free and open to the sea, whence supplies are daily sent in to relieve it: See 2 Cor. i. 5. "According to the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ; fresh aids and daily supplies proportionable to our expences and decays of strength: So Col. i. 11. "Strengthened with all might in the inner-man, according to his glorious power, and all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness." And this is

heels, despise the riches, pleasures, and honours of Egypt; eye was fixed upon him that is invisible, and had respect to the recompence of reward, Heb. xi. 24, 25, 26. And it was as of the forty martyrs to Valence the emperor, tempting them to the preferments and honours of the world, 'Why offer you trifles to us, when you know how the whole world is moved by us?' And for temptations on the left hand, how little can move that soul, who realizes the glory of the approaching heaven, sees the afflictions and sufferings of this world preparing him, hastening him to the enjoyment of it: temptations meet him as cold entertainment from such souls.

4. *Fourthly*, Sincerity drives but one design, and that is to love and enjoy God: and what can more establish and fix the heart in the hour of temptation than this? The reason why the heart is so unstable in all his ways, is given us by the apostle James, that he was a double-minded man, διψυχος αἷς, a man of two souls in one; as a profane wretch once boasted, that he had one soul for his body, and another for any thing. But all the designs of a gracious heart are united in one; and so the entire stream of his affections runs in one channel.

It is base by-ends and self-interests, that, like a great main, cut out of the bank of a river, draw away the stream out of its channel, and make its waters fail. But if the heart be united to God, as the expression is, Psalm lxxxvi. 11. then we may say of a Christian as was said of a young Roman, *Quicquid vult, id facit*. What he doth is done with all his might. And this was the meaning of that saying, *Liberet me Deus ab homine unius tantum*. A man of one only design, puts to all his strength to carry out that design; he can stand before him.

5. *Fifthly*, Sincerity brings a man's will into subjection to the will of God; and this being done, the greatest danger and difficulty is over with such a man. This is that holy oil which makes the wheels of the soul run nimbly, even in difficult paths of obedience, *dat uncta rota*. Let but a man be once brought to that, "of the Lord be done," as it is Acts xxi. 13. to see the height of cheerful obedience in the holy, just, and good will of God, then all the difficulty is over; he can suffer quietly what he cannot avoid unjustly.

6. *Sixthly*, Sincerity takes its measures of present things by the rules of faith and eternity; it goes not by the same reason and account that others do, who judge of things by sense, and take their view only of things as they have to the present world, 2 Cor. iv. 18. "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen."

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ing himself for them : A steady eye upon the other world makes more than conquerors over the troubles of this world.

7. *Seventhly*, To conclude ; sincerity alone hath all the heavenly aids and assistances to stability, and perseverance in suffering time ; upright ones (and such only) have Christ's intercession in heaven for them, Rom. viii. 34. The Spirit's consolation in all their troubles, 1 Pet. iv. 14. The Spirit of glory and of God resteth on them : the beneficial ministry of angels, who are sent forth upon their account, Heb. i. 14. *A stock of prayers*, going up from them all the world over, Eph. vi. 18. Multitudes of precious promises in the scriptures ; every line, word, and syllable of which the faithfulness of God stands engaged : so that it is impossible such gold can perish in the fire.

And thus of the several ways by which grace is here tried.



CHAP. IX.

Opening the designs and ends of God, in bringing the professor of religion into such various trials of their graces in this world.

SECT. I.

THESE are some of the ways and methods in which God brings his gold to the touchstone, and to the fire, even in this world, before the awful and solemn trial they must come to in the final judgment ; and if we desire to be satisfied what the design or end of God is in making such probations of his people is,

We must conclude, in the general, he certainly designs his glory, and his people's advantage and profit in them. If he suffers them to be tried by reproaches, *happy are they, the Spirit of God of glory resteth on them* ; there is their profit ; and though his name is evil spoken of, yet in the meekness of their spirits *he is glorified*, 1 Pet. iv. 14. " If the scourge slay suddenly, he laugheth at the trial of the innocent," Job ix. 23. Not at their afflictions, but at the effects and blessed issues and results of them : Not that it gives them pain, but that it gives them glory. Upon this account the apostle bids us count it all joy when we fall into diverse temptations or trials : and still the more trials the more joy ; for thereby God will produce such effects as are more precious than gold that perishes, 1 Pet. i. 7. O who can value the comfort that is tasted by the soul upon the trial and discovery of its sincerity, when after severe temptations and trials, God bestows his grace to maintain and

prophet did, Jer. xii. 3. "But thou, O Lord, knowest
"hast seen me, and tried mine heart towards thee."

I say, who can duly value such an advantage: will
change such a comfort for all the gold and silver in the world?
many trials soever God brings his people under, to be
his own glory nor their interest shall suffer any damage.

SECT. II.

BUT more particularly, let us bring our thoughts closer
together before us, and we shall find many great advantages
rising out of these trials of sincerity: For,

1. *First*, Hereby hypocrisy is unmasked and discovered
and is plucked off from the false professor, and his true
nature and complexion shewn to the world; and in this there is
a deal of good.

Object. Good you will say, where lies it? *All the world
chief and sad effects of it; many are stumbled, many
by it:* "Woe to the world because of offences!" *Matth.*

Sol. True, some are prejudiced and hardened by it, so
they have good thoughts of the ways and people of God more
sad indeed; however, therein God accomplishes his word
and executeth his decree; and though these perish, yet,

First, Others are warned, awakened, and set a searching
upon their own hearts more narrowly than ever, and this is good, *1.*

12. Now these were our examples; "wherefore let
"thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

Secondly, Hereby sin is ashamed; and it is good when
exposed men to so much shame, shall be itself exposed.
This is the just reward of sin, Jer. xiii. 25, 26. "Thou
"the portion of thy measures from me, saith the Lord;
"thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in falsehood, the
"discover thy skirts upon thy face, that thy shame may
be known."

The turning up the skirt is a modest expression of exposure
to the greatest shame in the day of trial: God by
hypocrisy, shames the hypocrite; and surely, many such
are made of men at this day: We may see sin, that lurked
in the heart before, now laid open before all Israel, and before
the world.

Thirdly, Hereby the poor self-cozening hypocrite hath
no opportunity and advantage that ever was before him in
to recover himself out of the snare of the devil. Now all
his craft is gone: now that which like a shield was advanced
before him is now turned to a target.

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Secondly, By these trials integrity is cleared up, and the doubts and fears of many upright and holy ones allayed and quieted, solved and satisfied.

O what would many a poor Christian give for satisfaction in this great point of sincerity ! How many tears have been shed to God in secret upon that account ? How many hours have been spent in examination of his own heart about it, and still jealousies and fears upon his heart ? He doubts what he may prove at last. Well, God, let his sincerity then come to the test, kindle the fire, and burn in my gold. Trials are the high way to assurance ; let my child know that he loves me more than these, that his heart is upright with God. I will try him by prosperity and by adversity, by persecutions and temptations, and he shall see his heart is better than he suspected to be. This shall be the day of resolution to his fears and doubts.

The apostle speaking of heresies, 1 Cor. xi. 7, 9. puts a necessity upon them : *There must be heresies*, saith he, *that they which are true may be made manifest*. The same necessity there is (and for the same end) of all other trials of grace, that the lovely, beautiful, sweet face of sincerity may be opened sometimes to the world, to comfort them, and to the soul in whom it is, to satisfy it that it is not personate a Christian, but lives the very life of a Christian, and hath the very spirit and principles of a Christian in it.

3. *Thirdly*, By these trials, pride and self-confidence are destroyed and mortified in the saints, as much as by any thing in the world. We never see what poor, weak creatures we are, until we come to trial. It is said, Deut. viii. 2. "God led Israel through the desert, to prove them, and to humble them." When we are proved, we are humbled. Those that over-reckon their graces before trial, see they must come to another account, and take new measures of themselves after they have been upon trial.

Ah ! little did I think, saith one, that I had so much love for the world, and so little for God, until afflictions tried it. I could not have believed that ever the creature had got so deep into my heart, until providence either threatened or made a separation, and then I found it. I thought I had been rich in faith, until such a day befel me, or such a want began to pinch hard ; and then I saw how unable I was to trust God for protection, or provision. 'O it is a good thing that our hearts be kept humble and lowly, how rich are we ever they be in grace.

4. *Fourthly*, By trials grace is kept in exercise, and the grace of the soul preserved from security and spiritual slothfulness. Trials are

“hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled
 “and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel; neither
 “gone into captivity; therefore his taste remained in
 “scent is not changed,” Jer. xlviii. 11.

Much after that rate it would be with our hearts, did not we frequently try and exercise them. Let the best man be without trial or other but a few months, and you may find the weakness of his prayers and conferences quickly. O what a tang of formality may be found in them! And is it for the honour of God, and the good of his people, that it should be so? No, the Lord knows better, but how shall their spirits be reduced to their former zeal and temper again? Why, saith the Lord, they must into the furnace. “I will melt them and try them; for how shall I do for thee and thy people,” Jer. ix. 7. I love them too well to let them want of a rod. Alas! if I should suffer things to go on thus, what will become of them in a little time? What delight will be in their duties, when the faith, fervour, humility, and holiness of their spirits are wanting in them? I will therefore refine them as silver is refined, and try them as gold is tried, and then shall I say, “upon my name, and I will hear them, and I will say, It is my people,” and they shall say, The Lord is my God.” Zech. xiii. 9. The Lord chides himself friend again with his people.

Thus he recovers them to their true temper, and their trials do preserve their spirits; and when the Lord sees the good effects of his trial upon them, it greatly pleaseth him. O God, I like it; this providence hath done them good; the trial well bestowed; the letting loose of this temptation, or trial upon them, hath made them find their knees again; and the voice of my child again.

Beloved, this is a blessed fruit and effect of our freedom, and how ungrateful soever they are to flesh and blood, to ease, and is loth to be disturbed, yet it is necessary to the preservation of our spirits.

5. *Fifthly*, By the trial of our graces Satan is defeated, and the accusations of the saints found to be mere slanders. It is a common thing with the devil and wicked men, to accuse the saints of hypocrisy, and to tell the world they are not true; that the women they are taken to be; and that if their inside were brought out by some thorough trial, or deep search, it would appear that religion did not indeed live in their souls, as they pretend, but that they only act a part, and personate heavenly and mortally

but if thou stop the current of his prosperity, thou shalt see quickly he will stop the course of his duty; A few lashes from hand will make him curse thee to thy face. But O what shame and disappointment was it to that envious spirit? What a vindication of Job's integrity, when under the greatest trials of his faith and patience, he still held fast his integrity, and shewed himself as a pattern of patience under the cross, as he had been of piety in the days of his greatest prosperity! Satan gets nothing by bringing the saints upon the stage, to be made a spectacle to angels and men as it is, 1 Cor. iv. 9.

6. *Sixthly*, and *lastly*, The frequent trials of grace exhibit a living and lasting testimony against the atheism of the world. These trials are beyond all words or arguments that religion is no fancy, but the greatest reality in the world: Men would make religion but a form, and the zeal of its professors, but the intemperate heat of some brains, over-heated with a fond notion.

They that never felt the real influences of religion upon their souls, will not believe that others do feel them. Serious piety is often come the ludicrous subject with which the wanton wits of this age and this a-tical world sport themselves. But behold the wisdom and goodness of God exhibiting to the world the undeniable testimonies of the reality of religion, as often as the sincere professors thereof are brought to the test by afflictions from the hand of God, or persecution from the hands of men: Lo! *here is the faith and patience of the saints*; here is their courage, meekness, and self-denial, shining as gold in the fire; they have the real proofs of it before their eyes; in the face of casting them into hell, and convincing them by eternal fire, God is pleased to cast his own people into the fire of affliction, that the scoffers who scoff at them may be convinced at an easier and cheaper rate. It is no new thing to see the enemies of religion brought over to embrace it, by the constancy and faithfulness of the saints in their trials and sufferings for it. God grant that the atheism of this present generation do not occasion a more fiery trial to the people of God in it, than they have yet suffered!



CHAP. X.

Shewing that that grace only is to be reckoned sincere and genuine which can endure those trials which God appoints, or permits for the discovery of it.

our sincerity impossible to be had in this life, because as we live here, we are in a state of trial; and how many trials have been made upon us already, yet still there are more to come. We know not what we shall prove in future trials, though we have kept us upright in former trials: No, this is none of my business, nor doth such a conclusion necessarily follow this assurance. A Christian that hath rightly closed with Christ at first, and been faithful in the duties of active and passive obedience hitherto, may be assured upon good grounds, of a victory before he comes to the end of his remaining trials. So was the apostle, Rom. viii. 37. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? Nay, in all these we are more than conquerors through him that hath loved us." Here is an assured triumph over all our combat. So Job xxiii. 10. "But he knoweth the way that I shall take, when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." We are to go to God for the sincerity of his heart so far as he had hitherto shown the way of religion, and thence concludes, that whatever should bring him to in time to come, he should come forth victorious. i. e. he should not lose one grain by the fire. And this is the mark of a gracious soul is built not only upon experience gained in trials, but upon faith in the power, promises, and faithfulness of God, which are engaged for him in the covenant of grace, to keep him from the greatest dangers that befall him in this world.

He believes the power of God is able to make him stand firm, though he hath no power nor might in himself to overcome the temptation, 1 Pet. i. 5. "You are kept, *φρουρεῖσθε* (kept as in a garrison) by the power of God through faith unto salvation." When God hath once taken possession of the soul by his spirit, he fortifies it with his power, as in a garrison: that using the means, it be not betrayed no more into the enemy's hand, so as finally to be lost.

He builds this confidence also upon the promises of God concerning his security in future dangers: And how are all the promises in the Bible bespangled with such promises, as the firmament is with the sun and glorious stars? Such are these of the first magnitude, Jer. 31. 9. "Christ shall confirm you to the end, that you may bring forth fruit in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, he will keep you, and you are called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ." And no less satisfying and sweet is that, Jer. xxxii. 40. "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not be angry with them, nor will I be away from them to do them good; but I will put my faithfulness in the midst of them, that they shall not depart from me." And

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lot in this promise; but it secures the whole flock of Christ, and small, against all danger.

He also builds his assurance upon the faithfulness of God, who stands engaged to make good every line, word, and syllable of his promises to his people, so we find in 1 Cor. x. 13. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with every temptation make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." And, 2 Thes. iii. 3. "But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from evil."

Add to this the constant prevalent intercession of Christ in heaven for his people, in all their trials: and thus you will see a sincere Christian need not to deny himself the joy and comfort of his assurance, upon the account and supposition of his future trials.

SECT. II.

Caution 2. **N**OR do we here suppose, in this assertion, that inherent grace in the saints hath a sufficiency of ability in itself to endure the greatest and severest trials that can befall it in this world. We are certain that it shall be carried safely through all, but not in its own strength and ability.

This is a true observation of the learned Gerson, *Perfectionis relictæ, sunt pondera ad ruinam*: The most perfect creature by itself, will fall into ruin. This was exemplified in the angels who fell; and in Adam, though in a perfect state. Divine preservation is the prop which supports the best creatures from ruin. Grace is but a creature, and therefore a dependent being: It is but a stream depending upon the supply of the fountain: If the fountain be dry, what becomes of the stream? That is a true and judicious observation of the learned Dr. Ames, *Perseverantia fidelium immutabilis eorum conditio secundum integram ejus rationem pervenit a principio intrinseco solo, nec a solo extrinseco; sed partim ab intrinseco, ex natura vitæ spiritualis a Christo fluentem partim ab extrinseco, ex custodia, protectione et directione Dei* Amesii Coronis, Art. 5. The perseverance of believers, or the immutability of their condition, if we view the whole ground and reason of it, is not wholly from within, or wholly from without itself. It is partly from the nature of the spiritual life which flows from God into them, and partly from the keeping, protection, and direction of God: That protection is always afforded to this life of grace; and this life of grace always needs that protection. The best of men

this is that which I aim at, that such seeming grace as yet brought to the trial, nor will be able to bear the trial, shall bring it thereto, must not pass for current (as too f doth) among us: Such grace will neither comfort us now us hereafter: For,

SECT. III.

1. **F**IRST, great numbers of persons in the professing deceived and destroyed by trusting to seeming and unt this was the miserable condition of those Laodicean profess text; they reckoned themselves rich, but were really poor not gold that glitters; their gold (as they accounted it) tried in the fire. If a man's whole estate lay in some precious suppose a rich diamond, how is he concerned to have it tried, to see whether it will bear a smart stroke with a hammer fly like a Bristol diamond under it? All that you are without the truth and sincerity of your grace; and till that be known know not whether you be worth any thing or nothing.

Reader, There are two sad sights in the world which deeply affect every upright heart: one is to see so many of rational and ingenuous men in the Romish church, by faith in their guides, venturing their souls upon their leaders never searching the scriptures with their own eyes, but who to the infallibility of a pope or a council; when, in the end they would fear to take their word for a sum of money some further security. It is amazing to behold the soul-easy credulity of those men; but this is a stroke of mad ritual infatuation, judicially inflicted upon them, that the which is written might be fulfilled in them, "God shall strong delusions, that they should believe a lie," 2 The

And yet more amazing is that stroke of God upon many vain and formal professors even in the reformed Protestant where no man is restrained from searching the scriptures where men are so frequently and earnestly pressed, from sabbath, to examine themselves, and prove their own words so many are content to leave all at hazard, and without ado, or farther search in the matter, credit the report of deceitful hearts, and take all for granted, without due examination of the matter.

Surely, no one thing sends down more souls daily to the professing world than this doth. The five foolish virgins the unprincipled professors in the reformed churches) and

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“the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life which God hath promised to them that love him:” We must be first tried, and then crowned. “No man strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he shall lawfully,” 2 Tim. ii. 5. He manifestly alludes to the Roman games, to which there were judges appointed to see that no play were offered contrary to the law for wrestling; and when it was found the crown was denied them. Not to him that sets forth in the morning with resolution and gallantry, but to him that holds out till the evening of his life, is the promise made; Matth. x. “He that endureth to the end shall be saved.” So Rom. “To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour, and immortality, eternal life.” And once more Heb. iii. 14. “We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end.” So that if we should endure some few slighter troubles, and faint at last, given when a closer trial befalls you, all your labours and sufferings are in vain. Sincerity and final perseverance are the conditions of special promises.

3. *Thirdly*, Every man’s graces and duties must be tried and weighed by God in the great day; and if they cannot endure the lesser trials to which God exposes them now, how will they endure that severe and exact trial to which he will bring them then? No man can search his own heart with that exactness in this world; God will search it in the world to come.

I may say in this case to you as the Lord spake to Jeremiah, xii. 5. “If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they have wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?” This was spoken to encourage the prophet to constancy in his work: and if the Lord had said, O Jeremy, do the strivings of the men of thy thoth, thine own town, dishearten thee? Pluck up thy spirits, faint not; there are harder trials than these that thou must undergo at Jerusalem; these are no more to what is coming, than the running with footmen is to the contending with horses, or the passing a small rivulet to the swellings of Jordan.

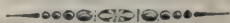
To allude to this; if our graces and duties cannot bear these lesser trials; if a little lift of prosperity, or lighter stroke of adversity, cover so much falseness, rottenness, pride, and selfishness in the heart; if we cannot resist the motions of corruptions, but yield ourselves

12. who will try every man's work as by fire, 1 Cor. iii. the secrets of all hearts, Rom. ii. 16. *weigh every man to and drachms*? Surely we can take little comfort in that unable to bear the severe trials of that day, that it cannot fore the slighter trials of this day.

4. *Fourthly*, True grace is willing to be tried, and nothing desirable to an upright soul, than to know his own condition; therefore we shun the trial, and are loth to search ourselves searched by the Lord, our condition is suspicious, and we have little comfort in it. It was David's earnest desire, Psal. c. that God would thoroughly search his heart and reins, that there were any way of wickedness in him. False grace, God's eye, it cares not to be examined; but this is the sincere ones: "Every one that doth evil hateth the light, his deeds should be reproved; but he that doth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are approved in God," John iii. 20, 21.

The reason is plain why hypocrisy cannot endure to be tried, it is a touchstone and test; for hypocrites, having a secret conscience of their own guilt and unsoundness, know, that by this means their confidence would quickly be confuted, and all their reputation blasted. But oh! if men dare not stand before the word now opened and applied by ministers, how will they stand when it shall be opened and applied in another manner by Jesus Christ.

O professor, if thy condition be good, thy heart right, thy desire to know the very worst of thyself; and when thou art under the deepest search, thou canst, thou wilt still fear thou hast not been severe enough, and impartial enough to thyself; nor will it give thee more content than when thou feelest the worst of thy soul and spirit, thy joints and marrow; nothing so comforts thee under, or after an affliction, as the discovery it makes of my heart; thou wilt seem to feel with what affection the word came from the prophet's lips, Jer. xii. 2. "But thou, O Lord, thou hast tried me, thou hast seen me, and tried my heart towards thee, what a refreshing sweetness will stream through thy heart, the powers of thy soul, when thou canst make the like application with like sincerity! And certainly, without such a disposition of spirit towards the trial of our graces, we can have little comfort in the truth of them.



and to how little purpose do men endeavour to conceal and hide. We say, Murder will out; and we may as confidently affirm, Hypocrisy will out. When Rebecca had laid the plot to disguise her Jacob, and by personating his brother, to get the blessing, Jacob th objects against it, "My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing," Gen. xxvii. 12. as if he should say, but what if my father detect the cheat, how then shall I look him in the face? How shall I escape a curse? After the same manner every upright soul scares itself from the way of hypocrisy. If I dissemble, and pretend to be what I am not, my Father will find me out. And there is no darkness nor shadow of death that can conceal the hypocrite, but out will come at last, let him use all the art he can to hide it. Oftentimes God discovers him by the trials he appoints in this world; and men in that day shall "return and discern betwixt the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not," Mal. iii. 18. But if he make an honest shift to get by a private way to hell, carrying this comfort with him to the last step, that no body knows or thinks he is gone thither, yet there will be a day when God will strip him naked before a great assembly of angels and men, and all shall point at them, and say, *Lo! this is the man that made not God his hope.*

This is he that wore a garment of profession to deceive, but God hath now stript him out of it, and all men see what he is: *For* "There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, and hid things shall not be known," Matth. x. 26. And the apostle assures us 1 Tim. v. 24, 25. "That they that are otherwise, cannot be hid. If men's works be not good, it is impossible they should be long: A gilded piece of brass may pass from hand to hand a little while, but the touchstone will discover the base metal: If that will not, the fire will.

O sinners! away with your hypocrisy, be honest, sincere, plain and hearty in religion: If not, confusion of face shall be your recompence from the Lord; that is what you shall get by it.

Infer. 2. Secondly, Are there such trials appointed and permitted by the Lord for the discovery of his people's sincerity in this world? Then let none of God's people expect a quiet station in this world. Certainly you shall meet with no rest here, you must out of one into another: and it is a merciful condescension of the Lord to poor creatures, thus to concern himself for their safety and benefit. "What is man that thou shouldst magnify him? and that thou

and so curiously into the fining-pot, to see that none of his metal, upon which he sets his heart, be lost.

Think it not then debasing to you to be so often exposed. If God did not value you highly, he would not try you so fully: What would become of you if your condition here were more settled and quiet than now it is? I believe you are strong enough in your hearts after all the fires into which God has tried you: Surely there is filth enough in the best of God's people. All this, it may be a great deal more trouble than they have to bear with. We fancy it a brave life to live at ease; and if we have longer respites and intervals of trial than usual, we are impatient. We shall never be moved, as David did, Psalm xxx. 6. We shall not die in our nest, as it is Job xxix. 18. Our hard and dangerous days are over; but woe to us if God should give us the desires of our hearts in this. See what the temper of those men's spirits is who meet with no changes, Psal. lv. 19. "Because they have no change, therefore they fear not God." O it is better to be pressed in brine, than to rot in honey!

Infer. 3. Thirdly, Let none boast in a carnal confidence of their strength and stability. You are in a state of trial, He hath kept you upright in all your trials; bless God, but you are but feathers in the wind of temptation, If God let you go, you will fall yourselves. Peter told Christ, (and doubtless he spoke no more than he honestly meant) "Though all men forsake thee, yet will I not leave thee." And you know what he did when the hour of his trial came, Matt. xxvi. 35. Angels left to themselves have fallen: It is better to be a humble worm than a proud angel.

Ah! how many Pendletons will this professing age shew! God bring us to the fiery trial? "Let him that thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall." You have not yet resisted temptation, striving against sin. None stand upon firmer ground than you, who see nothing in themselves to stand upon; he that leans upon his own arm usually benumbs it, and makes it useless.

Infer. 4. Fourthly, Doth God kindle so many fires in the world, to set his furnaces in Jerusalem, to discover and separate the chaff from the gold? How contrary are those men to God that allow and prize the dross of hypocrisy which God hates, and stick to it, when the holy God is a patronizer and countenancer of it in the lives of men?

It is amazing to read what popish pens have impudently said about this matter: * Sylvester puts the question, Whether it be a sin to make a false shew of sanctity? And answers it thus

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entitles it, *De sancta ejus hypocrisi*: i. e. Of the holy hypocrisy of that saint; reckoning it among his commendations, that he had art of dissembling. And yet, one peg higher, a religious person (saith * another) that feigns himself to have more holiness than hath, that others may be edified, sins not, but rather merits.

Blush, O heavens! that ever such factors for hell should come and vend such ware as this in the public market, and invite the world to hypocrisy, as that which makes for the glory of God, the edification of men, and a work meritorious in the hypocrite himself. This is the doctrine of devils indeed!

Infer. 5. Fifthly, If it be so that all grace must come to the trial, and be tried as gold in the fire, even in this world; how are all Christians concerned to lay a solid foundation at first, and thoroughly deliberate the terms upon which they close with Christ, and engage in the profession of his name? "Which of you, (saith Christ) intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost?" Luke xiv. 28. If some men had sat down at first, and pondered the conditions and terms of Christ, they had not sat down now disgraced, and tired in the way. The apostle Paul went to work at another rate; he accounted all but dung and dross for Christ, Phil. iii. 8. and was of the same mind when the actual trial came; for he tells us, "He counted not his life dear unto him," Acts xx. 38. And the apostle Peter admonishes believers "not to think it strange" "concerning the fiery trial which was to try them," 1 Pet. iv. 12. q. d. Let none of these things be surprisals to you; you are told fore-hand what ye must trust to; every Christian must be a martyr, at least in the disposition and resolution of his heart.

O that men would balance the advantages and disadvantages of religion, and thoroughly ponder the matter in their deepest thoughts. To the test you must come; the rain will fall, and the storm will come upon your buildings; look carefully therefore to the foundation.

Infer. 6. Sixthly, and lastly, Learn from this point the unavoidableness of scandals and offences in the way of religion; for if there be a necessity of trial, there is also a necessity of scandal. "It must needs be that offences come," Luke xvii. 1. Why must it needs be? The reason is evident; all must come to the trial, and all are able to bear it. Our Lord tells us, Matth. xxiv. 8, 9, 10. of a time of great straits and perplexity coming: "And then (saith he) shall many be offended." The day of trial is the day of scandal. In these offences some are put to search themselves, and some to censuring all others; but the holy God brings about his ends in these things, and in them that are saved, and in them that are perished.

search your hearts, commune with your reins, nothing more to you in all the world than this doth. O that you would search your closets, and oftener upon your knees ! O that you would enter into the Bible, then into your hearts, and then to God, saith David, " Search me, O God, and know my heart : prove me, and try my reins, and see if there be any way of iniquity in me : for ever did religion thrive in the world since men's heads have been over-heated with notions and controversies, and their hearts sensibly cooled in their closet-work. I have elsewhere * mentioned this duty upon the professors of this generation, and shall refer the reader for the present, to see the necessity and importance of this work.

Here I shall only urge the duty of self-trial by some motives and awakening considerations.

Motive 1. And the first shall be the exceeding difficulty of the work : difficulty in some cases may be a discouragement ; but the matter is of absolute necessity, as it is here, nothing more to diligence ; " Strive (saith our Lord) to enter in at a narrow gate, for many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able to. xiii. 24. A double difficulty is found attending this work of self-trial : Difficulty in bringing the heart to it ; and difficulty in the successful management of it. Who finds it not hard to bring his heart to such work as this ? Nature declines it, flesh does not relish it not : It is one of the great severities in religion, and is no easy thing to bring a man and his own heart together.

It is in this case as in the study of Geography ; we are more desirous to know, and delighted when we discover the rarities of remote countries, and strange things in the remote parts of the world than those of our own native country. I fear there be many professors of religion that can spend day after day in hearing, and disputing fruitless controversies, that never spend one day in applying what influence all those sermons they have heard have upon their hearts, or in rightly stating and determining that ground of controversy, in whose right and possession their souls are, and when they shall go as soon as death hath divided them from their bodies ; yea, I doubt, many sinful hours are spent in prying into the failings of others, and not one hour fully employed in judging their own hearts before the Lord. Men had rather be about any work than this ; there is more pleasure in it to the flesh.

And yet how difficult soever it be to bring our hearts to self-trial, it is certainly much more difficult to manage it successfully.

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about it; and yet still are in the dark, and their minds greatly perplexed, and filled with fear about it! What would they not suffer? What pleasant enjoyment would they not gladly part with, to arrive at the desire of their souls, full assurance of their sincerity? It was the saying of a pious woman, I have born, said she, seven children, and they have cost me as much as ever children cost a mother, yet would I be content to endure all that sorrow over again, to be assured of the love of God to my soul.

Motive 2. Secondly, And as the work is full of difficulty, so the discovery of your sincerity will be full of sweetness and joy unspeakable: It will never repent you that you have prayed and mourned that you have trembled and feared, that you have searched and tried: Nay, it will never repent you, that God hath tried you by thousands of sharp afflictions and deep sufferings, if, after all, your sincerity may be fully cleared up to the satisfaction of your souls; for the same day your sincerity shall be cleared, your title to Christ shall be made as clear to your souls as your sincerity is; you may then go to the promises boldly, and take your own Christ into the arms of your faith, and say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his!" Yea, you may be confident, it shall be well with you in the judgment of the great day, for "God will not cast away the upright man," Job 20. If the word clear you now, it cannot condemn you then.

O what an ease it is to the soul, when the fears and doubts that hang about it are gone! When a man sees what he is, and what he hath in Christ and the promises, and what he hath to do; even to spend the time betwixt this and heaven, in admiring the grace of God that hath delivered him from the ruining mistakes and misadventures by which so great a part of the professing world are lost all eternity.

Motive 3. Thirdly, The deep concernment of your souls in the matter to be tried, should awaken you to the utmost diligence about it. The trials of men for their life, at human bars, is but a trifle to them. It is our eternal happiness that stands or falls with your sincerity.

It is said in the trial of opinions, that if a man superstructure his house upon a stubble upon the foundation, he shall suffer loss; yet he himself shall be saved, 1 Cor. iii. 12. But if hypocrisy be in the foundation, there is no such relief, there is no possibility of salvation in that case.

Ah, reader, thou must be cast for ever according to the integrity or hypocrisy of thy heart with God. Summon in them all the powers of thy soul: bring thy thoughts as close as it is possible to bring them to this matter: If there be any subject of consideration able to drive

consecrate them unto this solemn, awful, and most important

Motive 4. Fourthly, How evidential will it be of you when you are willing to come to the trial of your own

Suppose your doubts and fears should in some degree reach you; yet in this you may take some comfort, that if hypocrisy has taken your heart, it is not there by consent: You are not loth to come to trial, because, like Rachel you sit upon your idols. Truly it is a good sign thy heart is right when it is filled with fear lest it should be false. You know all the disciples said "is it I?" before Judas, who was the traitor, spake a word "of all (saith the text) Judas said, Is it I?" Our willingness to be tried is a good sign that the desire of our soul is to be right.

Motive 5. Fifthly, Conclude it to be your great advantage if you are thoroughly tried, whatever you be found to be in the trial. If you be found sincere, you are richly rewarded for all your labour: Never did that man repent of digging and toiling, who after all, hit upon the rich vein that he digged for: What is silver of gold to a vein of sincerity!

If upon search you find the contrary, a false, hypocritical heart, yet in that very sad discovery you meet with the great advantage that ever you had in your lives for salvation. This is your great advantage: For now your vain confidence is turned, and your ungrounded hopes destroyed; you lie under the stroke of a deep and effectual conviction of your sin and misery. This is the introductive mercy to all other mercies to your souls. Truly till you come to that, to give up your false hopes, and your vain pretensions, there is no hope of you. Christ told the Pharisees, Matth. xxi. 31. Publicans and harlots enter into the kingdom of heaven before you: Publicans were the worst sort of men, and harlots the worst sort of women, and yet they stood in a fairer chance of heaven than the hypocritical Pharisees, because conviction of sin gave them access to their consciences: They had not those defences of duty and strictness to ward off the word that the Pharisees had.

I may say of your vain and groundless hopes, as Christ said to the officers that came to seize him in the garden, *seek me, let these go their way.* So it is here, if you expect salvation by him, let your vain confidences go their way. Let your masks and vizards, if ever you expect to see Christ, and your happiness to have all these things stript off, and your sin and poverty discovered, that you may be rich, as the text

Motive 6. Sixthly. Consider how near the day of death

prayer, to the great weakening of his body; and being asked in relation why he did so, and prayed to favour himself, he returned this answer, *O I must die, I must die*; plainly intimating, that so great is the concernment of dying in a clear assured condition, that it is richly worth the expence of all our time and strength to secure

You know also that *after death the judgment*, Heb. ix. 27. we are hastening to the judgment of the great and terrible God. Death will put you into his balance to be weighed exactly; and what gives the soul a louder call to search itself with all diligence, while it stands at the door of eternity, and its turn is not yet come to appear before that awful tribunal: O that these considerations might be placed upon our hearts!

CHAP. XII.

Containing divers helps for the clearing of sincerity and discovery of hypocrisy.

SECT. I.

YOU see of what importance the duty of self-examination is, how many things put a necessity and a solemnity upon that work. Now, in the close of all, I would offer you some helps for the management thereof, that is as far as I can carry it: the Lord persuade your hearts to the diligent and faithful application and use of them. The general rules to clear sincerity are these that follow.

Rule 1. *We may not presently conclude we are in the state of sincerity, because we find some workings of it, and tendencies to it in our spirits*: The best gold hath some dross and alloy in it. Hypocrisy is a weed naturally springing in all ground, the best heart is not perfectly clear or free of it: It may be we are stumbled when we feel some workings or grudgings of this disease in ourselves, and looking into such scriptures as these, John i. 47. "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile:" and Psal. xxxii. "Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity," and in whose spirit there is no guile."

This I say may stumble some upright soul, not understanding what an allayed and qualified sense those scriptures are to be understood: For by a *spirit without guile*, is not understood a person absolutely free from all deceitfulness and falseness of heart; this was

Rule 2. Every true ground of humiliation for sin is a true ground for doubting and questioning our estate and

There be many more things to humble us upon than our infirmity, than there are to stumble us upon the account of our integrity: It is the sin and affliction of some good souls in this condition in question upon every slip and failing in the command of obedience. This is the way to debar ourselves from the peace and comfort of the Christian life: We find that Joseph was minded to put away Mary his espoused wife, not knowing that the holy thing which was conceived in her was by the Holy Ghost. The sin of hypocrites to take brass for gold, and the folly of them to call their gold brass: Be as severe to yourselves as you are to others: Remembered always you be just: "There is that maketh himself rich, and yet hath nothing; and there is that maketh himself poor, and yet hath great riches," Prov. xiii. 7. Hiram called the cities of the Amorites him, Cabul, Dirty, for they pleased him not, 1 Kings x. 10. It is but an ill requital, an ungrateful return to God for the mercies he bestows, to undervalue them in our hearts, and be ready upon temptation to put them away as worth nothing.

Rule 3. A stronger propension in our nature, and more readiness in our practice to one sin than another, do not prove our hypocrisy, and the unsoundness of our hearts in religion. True, every hypocrite hath some way of wickedness: Some are given to in diliciis, iniquity that he delights in, and rolls as a stone under his tongue; some lust that he is not willing to part with, and will endure that the knife of mortification should touch it; and some undoubtedly argues the insincerity and rottenness of his heart. It is true also that the nature and constitution of the most saints inclines him rather to one sin than to another, though he is not conscious to himself in none; yea, though he set himself more watchful against that sin than another, yet he may still have more temptation, more temptation and defilement from it than any other.

As every man hath his proper gift, one after this manner and another after that, as the apostle speaks, 1 Cor. vii. 7. so every man hath his proper sin also, one after this manner and another. For it is with original sin as it is with the juice or sap of a tree, which though it be the common matter of all kinds of fruit, yet is specified according to the different sorts of plants and trees, which it nourishes; in one it becomes an apple, in another a pear. Just so it is in original corruption, which is turned into temptation or sin, according to this or that constitution of the mind; it finds us out in one it is turned into such a sin, and in another into such another.

RULES TO BE OBSERVED IN THE TRIALS OF GRACE.

than another, doth not conclude the heart to be unsound and false to God, provided we do not inwardly dislike and disapprove any doctrine of religion, or except against it in our agreement with Christ, but that we are affected merely from the present weakness and distemper we labour under.

There are some duties in religion, as suffering for Christ, bearing sharp reproofs for sin, that even an upright heart under a present distemper, may find a great deal of backwardness and lothness to perform; yet still he consents to the law, that it is good, is troubled that he cannot comply more cheerfully with his duty, and desires to be more complete in all the will of God: Perfection is his aim, and imperfections are his sorrows.

Some Christians have much ado to bring their hearts to fixed and solemn meditation; their hearts fly off from it, but this is their burden, that it should be so with them. True, it is a very dangerous sign of hypocrisy, when a man's zeal runs out in one channel of obedience only, and he hath not respect to all God's commandments; as physicians observe, the sweating of one part of the body, when all the rest is cold, is symptomatical, and argues an ill habit: But whilst the soul heartily approves all the will of God, and sincerely desires to come up to it, and mourns for its backwardness and deadness to that duty, and this is not fixed, but occasional, under some present indisposition out of which the soul riseth by the same degree of sanctification riseth in him, and the Lord comes in with renewed strength upon him; this, I say, may consist, and is very ordinarily found to be the case of upright-hearted ones.

Rule 5. *The glances of the eye at self-ends in duties, whilst they are not the weight that moves the wheels, the principal end and design we drive at, and whilst those glances are corrected and mourned for, do not conclude the heart to be unsound and hypocritical in religion.* For even among the most deeply sanctified, few can keep their hearts so steady and fixed with pure and unmixed respects to the glory of God, but that there will be (alas! too frequently) some by-ends insinuating and creeping into the heart.

These like the fowls, seize upon the sacrifice, let the soul do what pains it can to drive them away: It is well that our High-priest bears the iniquities of our holy things for us. Peter had too much regard to the pleasing of men, and did not walk with that uprightness towards the Gentile Christians and the believing Jews, in the matter of liberty as became him, Gal. ii. 13, 14. for which, as Paul saith, he ought to be blamed, and he did blame him: But yet suffering as that in the end of his duty did not condemn him. In

what we fear ourselves to be. God will not condemn even a hypocrite that suspects, yea, or charges himself with it. Holy David thought his heart was not right with God, and made a great slip of his in the matter of Uriah; and therefore he was obliged to renew a right spirit in him, Psal. li. 10, 11, 12. his heart was indeed wounded, and he thought destroyed by that fall.

Holy Mr. Bradford so vehemently doubted the sincerity of his heart, that he subscribed some of his letters, as Mr. Fox to him, *Bradford the hypocrite; a very painted sepulchre*: And by so saying, he utterly misjudged the state and temper of his

SECT. II.

WELL then, let not the upright be unjust to themselves, in censuring their own hearts; they are bad enough, but do not make them worse than they are, but thankfully own and acknowledge the least degrees of grace and integrity in them; and our uprightness might be sooner discovered to us, if, in the posture of spirit, we would sit down and attend the true state of our own hearts to such questions as these are.

Quest. 1. Do I make the approbation of God, or the commendation of men, the very end and main design of my religious performance, according to 1 Thess. ii. 4. Col. iii. 23. will the acceptance of my duties with men satisfy me, whether God accept my person or not?

Quest. 2. Is it the reproach and shame that attends sin, and the danger and misery that will follow it hereafter, that keeps me from the commission of it? Or is it the fear of God, and the hatred I bear to it as it is sin? according to Psal. cxix. 113.

Quest. 3. Can I truly and heartily rejoice to see God's glory promoted in the world, and his glory promoted by other hands, and have no share in the credit and honour of it, as Paul did?

Quest. 4. Is there no duty in religion so full of difficulties and denial, but I desire to comply with it? And is all the holiness and will of God acceptable to my soul, though I cannot rise up with readiness to the performance of all duties; according to Psal. cxix. 6.

Quest. 5. Am I sincerely resolved to follow Christ and his commandments all seasons, however the aspects of the times be upon religion? I carry myself so warily and covertly as to shun all hazard in religion: having a secret reserve in my heart to launch out

RULES TO BE OBSERVED IN THE TRIALS OF GRACE.

A few such questions solemnly propounded to our own hearts in a calm and serious hour, would sound them, and discover more of their sincerity towards the Lord.

SECT. III.

AND as upright hearts are too apt to apply to themselves the threats and miseries of hypocrites, so hypocrites, on the contrary, are as apt to catch hold of the promises and privileges pertaining to believers.

To detect therefore the soul-damning mistakes of such deceitful souls, O that these following rules might be studied, and faithfully applied to their conviction and recovery.

Rule 1. *It is not enough to clear a man from hypocrisy, that he is not himself to be an hypocrite.* All hypocrites are not designing hypocrites; they deceive themselves as well as others: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, &c. Matt. vii. 22. Hell will be a mere surprisal to multitudes of professors: a man may live and die in a blind, ungrounded confidence of his safe condition, and not fear his ruin till he begin to feel it."

Rule 2. *Zeal and forwardness in the cause of God, and for the reformation of his worship, will not clear a man from the danger of hypocrisy.* Jehu was a zealous reformer, and yet but a painted sepulchre. In the year 1549, reformation grew so much in reputation, even among the nobles and gentry in Germany, that many of them caused to be written five letters, *V. D. M. I. Æ.* being the initial letters of these words, *Verbum Domini manet in æternum: i. e. The word of the Lord abideth for ever*, to be wrought, or embroidered, or set in gold, some upon their cloaks, and others upon the sleeves of their garments; to shew to all the world, saith my * author, that forsaking all popish traditions, they would now cleave to the pure doctrine and discipline of the eternal Word.

And no doubt they would have been as good as their word, if the word was embroidered on their cloaks, had been engraven on their hearts; but, *Come, see my zeal*, mars all.

Rule 3. *It is no sufficient evidence of a man's own integrity, that he hates hypocrisy in another:* for, as one proud man may hate another, and he that is covetous himself, will be apt to censure another for being so; lusts may be contrary to one another, as well as duties; of them contrary to grace; so may an hypocrite loath that in another, which yet he alloweth in himself: Nay, it is the policy of hypocrites to declaim against the hypocrisy of others, thereby to hide their own. Hypocrites are none of the most modest censurers of others.

it; and yet all this while his heart may not be carried th hungry and thirsty desires after God: it is not the ma duty that distinguishes the sound and unsound professors motives, designs, and ends of the soul in them.

Rule 5. *The vogue and opinions you have got among C of your sincerity, will not be sufficient to clear you from t of hypocrisy.* Christ tells the angel of Sardis, Rev. iii. 1 "hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." The fall of I and Philetus could never have shaken the faith of the s did, had they not had great credit in the church, and be renown for piety among them.

Rule 6. *Your respects and love to them that are the si upright servants of God, will not clear you from the dange hypocrites yourselves;* for the bare loving of a Christi characteristical and evidential of a man's own Christiani he love him, *qua talis*, as he is a Christian, or as he belongs and so his sincerity becomes the attractive of thy affection are a thousand by-considerations and respects that may man's love to the saints, besides their integrity.

SECT. IV.

WELL, then, if thou wouldst indeed see the unsoundr own heart, propound such heart-sounding questions as the self.

Quest. 1. Do I engage my heart to approach unto G course of my duties? Or do I go in the round of duties, takin to my heart in them? If so, compare this symptom of thy with that in 2 Kings x. 3. and that in Ezek. xxx. 31, 32.

Quest. 2. Am I not swayed and moved by self-interest a respects in the ways of religion, the accommodation of som interest, or getting a name and reputation of godliness? I apparently do the same symptoms of hypocrisy appear upon which did upon Judas, John xii. 6. and on Jehu, 2 Kings i

Quest. 3. Have I not some secret reserves in my heart, standing that face and appearance of zeal which I put on? if there be any sin that I cannot part with, any suffering f which I resolve against in my heart; I am none of his disc heart is not right with God, the searcher of hearts hims Judge, Luke xiv. 26, 27.

Quest. 4. What conscience do I make of secret sins? Do for a vain heart, wandering thoughts, spiritual deadness?

NECESSARY COUNSELS TO ALL PROFESSORS.

SECT. V.

I WILL shut up all with five or six concluding counsels, (which the Lord impress upon the heart of him that writes, and those that read them) to preserve and antidote the soul against the danger of insinuation and leaven of hypocrisy.

Counsel 1. Intreat the Lord night and day, for a renewed right spirit. All the helps and directions in the world will not dote and preserve you from hypocrisy; nothing will be found able to keep you right, till sanctification hath first set you right. *Ixxxvi. 27.* "I will put my Spirit within you; and cause you to do all my statutes."

A bowl may keep by a strait line, so long as the impressed form is in the hand that delivered it remains strong upon it; but as that wears off, so its motion fails, and its own basis sways and turns it. A flash of conscience, a pang of warm affection, or the influence of a great example or a good education, may influence an unrenewed heart, and push it on the way of salvation for a season; but the heart is not influenced, must, and will return to its own natural course again. And I think there wants nothing but time, or a suitable temptation, to discover the true temper of many a professor's spirit: pray, therefore, as that holy man did, *Psal. cxix. 80.* "Let my heart be steadfast in thy statutes, that I be not ashamed."

Counsel 2. Always suspect and examine your ends in what you do. Sincerity and hypocrisy lie much in your ends and designs; as the ends are, so are you. The intentions of the heart lie deep; a man may do the same action to an holy end, and his person and service be accepted with God; which another doing for a corrupt end, it may be counted his sin, and both his person and service be abhorred by the Lord. We find two men riding in one chariot, and both of them concerned in the same expedition, Jehu, the son of Nimshi, and Zedab, the son of Rechab, *2 Kings x. 15, 23.* But though the action they engaged in was one, and the same, yet the different ends aimed at, made the same action an excellent duty in Jonadab, and an act of vile hypocrisy in Jehu: *Idem quod duo faciunt, non est idem.* It was the saying of a good soul, commended for a good action, that the work indeed is good, but I fear the ends of it. Self ends are creeping and insinuating things into the best actions.

Counsel 3. Scare yourselves with the daily fears of the sin that will follow hypocrisy. Look upon it as the most odious sin in the eyes of God and men; to want holiness, and be bad enough, but to dissimulate and pretend it, when we have it

ward and punishment of it will be out of measure dreadful. xxiv. 51. "He shall cut him asunder, and appoint him
"with hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Counsel 4. *Be daily at work in the mortification of those seeds which breed hypocrisy.* It is plain, without much sifting, that pride, glory, self-love, and a worldly heart, are the seeds out of which this cursed plant springs up in the souls of men. Dig but to the bottom, you shall certainly find these things there; and till the Lord comes to kill and mortify these, hypocrisy will spring up in all you converse with. God, and in all your converses with men.

Counsel 5. *Attend the native voice of your own conscience, at the day of sickness, fear or trouble, and take special notice of those reproaches or upbraidings, which like a stitch in your side, will give you pain at such times:* Commonly in that lies your greatest danger: Beware of the evil which conscience brands and marks at such times, when you are living in the practice of some secret sin, or in the neglect of some known duty: These frights of conscience mark out the place wherein your danger mostly lies.

Counsel 6. *Let us all that profess religion be uniform and steady in the profession and practice of it, without politic reserves, and*

O take heed of this Laodicean neutrality and indifference. Christ hates: Be sure your ground be good, and then build upon it. Stand your ground. The religion of time-servers is but a shifting sand. They have sluices in their consciences which they can open or shut as occasion requires; Every fox will at least have two holes in his den, that if one be stopt, he may escape at the other. The hypocrite poiseth himself so evenly in a mediocrity, that, as it is said of the Pharisee, Let Anthony win, let Augustus win, all is one: So let Christ win, or let Antichrist win, he hopes to make every wind that blows serviceable to waft him to the port of his own interest.

The hypocrite hath always more of the moon than of the sun; little light, many spots, and frequent changes: It is easier for him to bow to the cross, than to bear the cross; to sin, than to be forgiven.

Our own story tells us of a poor simple woman that lived in the reign of queen Mary and queen Elisabeth, and would not say her prayers both in Latin and English, that she might not please one side or other; and let God, said she, take care of him best. What is noted as an act of ridiculous simplicity in a time-serving hypocrite accounts a point of deep policy in a true Christian.

The times under Dioclesian were Pagan; under Constantine Christian; under Constantius, Arian; under Julian, Apostate; under Jovian, Christian again: And all this within the space of a few years.

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be a man but of one design, and be sure that be an honest and good design, to secure heaven, whatever becomes of earth : To hold integrity, whatever thou art forced to let go for its sake.

Take heed of pious frauds: Certainly it was the devil that married these two words together, for they never did, nor can a lie betwixt themselves, nor was ever such a marriage made in heaven.

Never study to model religion, and the exercises thereof, in consistency with, or subserviency to your fleshly interests: If your religion be but a mock religion, your reward shall be but a mock heaven that is a real hell.

O the vanity and inutility of these projects and designs! Men strive to cast themselves into such modes, and stint themselves to such measures of religion, as they think will best promote, or secure their earthly interests: but it often falls out, contrary to their expectation, that their deep policies are ridiculous follies; they become the grief and shame of their friends, and the scorn and song of their enemies. And consider it fares with them, as with him that placed himself in the middle of the table, where he could neither reach the dish above him, nor that below him, *Esuriunt medii*, &c. and, which is the very best of it, if earthly interest be accommodated by sinful neutrality, and Laodicean indifferency in religion, yet no good man should feel a temptation to embrace it, except he think what is wanting to the sweetness of his sleep, may be fully recompensed to him by the stateliness of his bed, and richer furniture of his chamber; I mean that a fuller and higher condition in the world, can make him amends for the loss of his inward peace, and the quiet repose of a good conscience: These by-ends and self-interests are the little passages through which hypocrisy creeps in upon the professors of religion.

O let this be your rejoicing, which was Paul's, "The testimony of your conscience, that in all sincerity and godly simplicity, without guile, in fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, you have had your conversation in this world," 2 Cor. i. 12.

Let that be your daily prayer and cry to heaven, which David's, Psal. xxv. 21. "Let integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait on thee."

Counsel 7. *Keep your hearts day and night under the awe of God's all-seeing eye*: Remember he beholds all your ways, and pondereth all your thoughts; how covertly soever hypocrisy may be carried for a time, all must and will out at last, Luke xii. 3. Secrecy is the main inducement to hypocrisy, but it will fall out with the hypocrite, as it did with Ottocar the king of Bohemia, who refused

every secret thing into judgment. Thus did Job, and him, Job xxxi. 1, 4. Thus did David, and it preserved xviii. 21, 22, 23. Thus do thou also, and it will preserve less and without guile to the day of Christ.

A

TOKEN FOR MOURNERS

OR THE

ADVICE OF CHRIST TO A DISTRESSED M

BEWAILING THE DEATH OF HER DEAR AND ONLY SO

Wherein the Boundaries of Sorrow are duly fixed, E
strained, the common Pleas answered, and divers Ru
support of God's afflicted Ones prescribed.

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

*To his dearly beloved brother and sister, Mr. J. C. and
the Author wisheth grace, mercy, and peace*

DEAR FRIENDS,

THE double tye of nature and grace, beside the many passages that for so many years have linked and glewed tions so intimately, cannot but beget a tender sympathy in you under all your troubles, and make me say of every affliction that befalls you, *Half's mine.* I find it is with our affections as the strings of musical instruments exactly set at the same height; when one be touched, the other trembles, though it be at some distance.

Our affections are one, and so in a great measure have our afflictions also. You cannot forget that in the years lately past the Almighty visited my tabernacle with the rod, and in one year I saw the mat, and the bench, the tender mother, and

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I dare not say that ever I felt my heart discontentedly rising swelling against God; no, I could still justify him, when I sensibly smarted by his hand: If he had plunged me into a sea of sorrow, yet I could say in all that sea of sorrow, there is not a drop of injustice: But it was the over-heating and over-acting of my flesh and unmortified affections and passions that made so sad impressions upon my body, and cast me under those distempers which soon bittered all my remaining comforts to me.

It was my earnest desire, so soon as I had strength and opportunity for so great a journey to visit you, that so, if the Lord pleased, I might both refresh and be refreshed by you, after all my sad and disconsolate days. And you cannot imagine what comfort and pleasure I projected in that visit; but it proved to us, as all other comforts of the same kind ordinarily do, more in expectation than in fruition: For how soon after our joyful meeting and embraces the Lord overcast and darken our day, by sending death into your tabernacle, to take away the desire of your eyes with a stroke, to crop off that sweet and only bud from which we promised ourselves so much comfort. But no more of that, I fear I am gone too far already. It is not my design to exasperate your troubles, but to comfort them; and for that purpose have I sent you these papers, which I hope may be of use both to you and many others in your condition, since they are the after-fruits of my own troubles; things that I have not commended to you from another hand, but which I have myself in some measure, proved and tasted in my own trials.

But I will not hold you longer here; I have only a few things more I desire for, and from you, and I have done.

The things I desire are,

First, That you will not be too hasty to get off the yoke which God hath put upon your neck. Remember when your child was in your womb, neither of you desired it should be delivered thence till God's appointed time was fully come; and now that you travail again with sorrow for its death: O desire not to be delivered from your sorrow one moment before God's time for your deliverance be fully come also. Let patience have its perfect work; that comfort which comes in God's way and season, will stick by you, and do you good indeed.

Secondly, I desire, that though you and your afflictions had a meeting, yet you and they may have a comfortable parting. If I have the effect that upon your hearts which God sent them for, I doubt not but you will give them a fair testimony when they go off.

If they obtain God's blessing upon them in their operation,

evil of sin, the vanity of the creature, and the fulness of God ever you yet saw. Afflictions are searchers, and put the searching and trying its ways, Lam. iii. 14. When our hearts are brought out by affliction, happy are we, if, by the light of affliction, we are brought out sin. Blessed is the man whom God chasteneth, and bringeth out of his law, Psal. xciv. 12. There are unseen causes, roots of our troubles; you have an advantage now to sift our affections and principles from which they spring.

Fourthly, I wish that all the love and delight you bear to your little one, may now be placed, to your greater advantage, on Jesus Christ; and that the stream of your affection to him be made much the stronger, as there are now fewer channels for it to be divided into. If God will not have any part of your happiness to be divided among his children, then let it wholly lie in himself. If the jealousy of God hath removed that which drew away too much of your affection from him, and hath spoken by this rod, saying, Stand aside, thou art in my way, and fillest more room in thy parent's heart than he longs to thee: O then deliver up all to him, and say, Lord, I will give thee my whole heart entirely, and undividedly to thyself. Henceforward there shall be no parting, sharing, or dividing of the affections between the creature, let all the streams meet, and centre in thee.

Fifthly, That you may be strengthened with all might against temptation, man to all patience, that the peace of God may keep your hearts and minds, labour to bring your hearts to a meek submission under the rod of your Father. We had fathers of the flesh who required of us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much more submit to subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? Is it comely for children to contest and strive with their father? Or is it thine honour to be freed from the yoke by struggling under it? O that you might be in a like frame with his that said, Lord, thou shalt smite me, and I will bear. It was a good observation that one made, *Anus et quiescendo fit sapiens*; 'The soul grows wise by sitting quietly under the rod. And the apostle calls those excellent fruits which the saints gather from their sanctified afflictions, *the precious and able fruits of righteousness*, Heb. xii. 11.

Lastly, My heart's desire and prayer to God for you, is that you may die daily to all visible enjoyments, and by these frequent reverses with death in your family, you may be prepared for the change and dissolution, when it shall come.

O friends! how many graves have you and I seen opened up for dear relations? How oft hath death come up into your

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gone, our bosom relations, that were as our own souls, are gone, and do not all these warning-knocks at our doors acquaint us, that we must prepare to follow shortly after them?

O that by these things our own death might be both more familiar to us; the oftener it visits us, the better we should be acquainted with it; and the more of our beloved relations it removes before us, the less of either snare or intanglement remains for us when our turn comes.

My dear friends, my flesh and my blood, I beseech you, for religion's sake, for your own sake, and for my sake, whose comfort is in great part bound up in your prosperity and welfare, that you frequently, ponder seriously, and apply believingly these scriptural consolations and directions, which, in some haste, I have gathered for your use; and the God of all consolation be with you.

I am,

Your most endeared Brother,

JOHN FLAVEL

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TOKEN FOR MOURNERS.

— — — — —
LUKE vii. 13.

And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

TO be above the stroke of passion, is a condition equal to any other; to be in a state of sorrow without the sense of sorrow, is a distinction beneath beasts: but duly to regulate our sorrows, and to bring our passions under the rod, is the wisdom, duty, and excellency of a Christian. He that is without natural affections, is deservedly ranked amongst the worst of heathens; and he that is able rightly to manage them, deserves to be numbered with the best of Christians. Though when we are sanctified we put on the Divine nature, yet, till we are glorified, we put not off the infirmities of our human nature.

in this woman's example, to whose excessive sorrow Christ stop in the text: "He saw her, and had compassion" said to her, "Weep not."

The lamentations and wailings of this distressed mother, the tender compassions of the Lord in beholding them, up more pity in his heart for her, than could be in her dear and only son.

In the words we are to consider both the condition of and the counsel of Christ with respect unto it.

First, The condition of this woman, which appears dolorous and distressed; her groans and tears moved the very heart of Christ to hear and behold them: "When he saw her, he had compassion on her."

How sad an hour it was with her, when Christ met her, what is so distinctly remarked by the evangelist, ver. 12. said, "Now when they came nigh to the gate of the city there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother." she was a widow, and much people of the city was with her.

In this one verse, divers heart-piercing circumstances of affliction are noted.

First, It was the death of a son *. To bury a child, must needs rend the heart of a tender parent; for what a loss but the parent multiplied? A child is a part of the parent in another skin: But to lay a son in the grave, a son who bore the name, and supports the family; this was ever accounted a great affliction.

Secondly, This son was not carried from the cradle to nor stripped out of its swathing, to be wrapped in its winding sheet. Had he died in his infancy, before he had engaged affection and expectation, the affliction had not been so pungent, as now it was: death smote the son in the flower and prime of time. He was a *man*, (saith the evangelist) ver. 12. a *young man* (as Christ calls him) ver. 14. he was now arrived at that age when he made him capable of yielding his mother all that comfort which had been the expectation and hope of many years, and the fruit of many cares and labours: yet then, when the end of her sorrows were greatest, and her hopes highest, even in the flower of his age he is cut off.

Thus Basil bewailed the death of his son: † 'I once

* ΟΥΤΩΣ ΕΝ ΤΗ ΚΑΤΑ ΜΑΡΚΟΝ ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ ΕΡΩΤΕΙΤΑΙ ΤΟ ΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΟΝ ΤΗΣ

A TOKEN FOR MOURNERS.

‘ who was a young man, my only successor, the solace of my
 ‘ the glory of his kind, the prop of my family, arrived to the en
 ‘ ing age; then was he snatched away from me by death, whose
 ‘ voice but a little before I heard, who lately was a pleasant
 ‘ tacle to his parent.’

Reader, if this hath been thine own condition, as it hath been
 that writes it, I need say no more to convince thee that it was a
 rowful state indeed, Christ met this tender mother in.

Thirdly, And which is yet more, he was not only a son, but
 only son: so you find, in ver. 12. “He was the only son of
 “ mother;” * one in whom all her hopes and comforts, of that
 were bound up. For, *Omnis in Ascanio, stat chari cura parentis*.
 gil. All her affections were contracted into this one object. If
 have never so many children, we know not which of them to spare
 if they stand like olive plants about our tables, it would grieve
 see the least twig amongst them broken down. But surely the loss
 of one out of many is much more tolerable than all in one †.

Hence it is noted in scripture as the greatest of earthly sorrows.
 Jer. vi. 26. “O daughter of my people, gird thee with sackcloth
 “ and wallow thyself in ashes. Make thee mourning as for an
 “ son, most bitter lamentation.” Yea, so deep and penetrating is
 grief, that the Holy Ghost borrows it to express the deepest spiritual
 troubles by it, Zech. xii. 10. “They shall mourn for him, (namely
 “ Christ,) whom they have pierced as one mourneth for an only
 son.”

Fourthly, And yet, to heighten the affliction, it is superadded
 12. “And she was a widow.” So that the staff of her age, on which
 she leaned, was broken: ‡ she had now none left to comfort or support
 her, in her helpless, comfortless state of widowhood; which
 condition not only void of comfort, but exposed to oppression,
 contempt.

Yea, and being a widow, the whole burthen lay upon her alone
 she had not an husband to comfort her, as Elkanah did Hannah
 1 Sam. i. 8. “Why weepest thou, and why is thy heart grieved?
 “ Am not I better to thee than ten sons?” This would have been
 great relief; but her husband was dead, as well as her son,
 gone, and she only surviving, to lament the loss of those comforts
 that once she had. Her calamities came not single, but one
 another, and this reviving, and aggravating the former. This
 her case, and condition, when the Lord met her.

Secondly, Let us consider the counsel which Christ gave her,

respect to this, her sad, and sorrowful case : “ And when
“ saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her
“ not.” Relieving and supporting words ; wherein we
sider,

1. The occasion.
2. The motive.
3. The counsel itself.

1. The occasion of it, and that was his seeing of her.
ing at the gate of the city, how accidental, and occasional
seems, yet without doubt, it was providentially suited to the
tended to be wrought : The eye of his omniscience foresaw
this meeting was by him designed as an occasion of the
miracle which he wrought upon the young man. Christ has
eye to discern poor, mourning, and disconsolate creatures
though he be now in heaven, and stands out of our sight
we see him not ; yet he sees us, and his eye (which is upon
troubles) still affects his heart, and moves his bowels for

2. The motive stirring him up to give this relieving, and
able counsel to her, was his own compassion : She neither
nor desired it from him ; but so full of tender pity was he
wards her, that he prevents her with unexpected consolation
heart was nothing so full of compassion for her son, as Christ
her ; he bore our infirmities, even natural, as well as moral
the days of his flesh ; and though he be now exalted to
glory, yet still he continues as merciful as ever, and as
touched with the sense of our miseries, Heb. iv. 15.

Lastly, The counsel itself, *Weep not* ; herein fulfilling
a comforter to them that mourn, whereunto he was anointed
lxi. 1, 2, 3. Yet the words are not an absolute prohibition
and sorrow ; he doth not condemn all mourning as sinful
pressions of grief for dead relations as uncomely ; no, Christ
have his people stupid, and insensate ; he only prohibits the
and extravagancies of our sorrows for the dead, that it should
such a mourning for the dead as is found among the heathen
sorrow without measure, because without hope, being in
that grand relief, which the gospel reveals.

The resurrection of her son from the dead, is the ground
which Christ builds her consolation, and relief ; well might she
Weep not, when he intended quickly to remove the cause of
tears, by restoring him again to life.

Now, though there be somewhat in this case extraordina-

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yet those that now bury their relations, if they be such as die in Christ, have as good and sufficient reason to moderate their passions as this mourner had, and do as truly come within the reach and compass of this Christ's comfortable, and supporting counsel, *Weep not* as she did: For do but consider, what of support or comfort can any particular and present resurrection from the dead give us, more than that it is, and as it is, a specimen, handsel, or pledge of the general resurrection? It is not the returning of the soul to its body, to live an animal life again, in this world of sin and sorrow, and shortly again to undergo the agonies, and pains of death again, that is in itself any such privilege as may afford much comfort to the person raised, or his relations: It is no privilege to the person raised, for it returns him from rest to trouble, from the harbour back again into the ocean. It is matter of trouble to many dying saints, to hear of the likelihood of their returning again, when they are got so nigh to heaven.

It was once the case of a godly minister of this nation, who was much troubled at his return, and said, I am like a sheep driven from the fold of the storm almost to the fold, and then driven back into the storm again; or a weary traveller that is come near his home, and then must go back to fetch somewhat he had forgotten; or an apprentice, whose time is almost expired, and then must begin a new term.

But to die, and then return again from the dead, hath less privilege, than to return only from the brink of the grave; for one that is sick hath not yet felt the agonies and last struggles, or pangs of death, but such have felt them once, and must feel them again, they must die twice, before they can be happy once; and, besides, during that little time they spend on earth betwixt the first and second dissolution, there is a perfect *ἀμνησία*, forgetfulness, and insensibleness, of all that which they saw, or enjoyed, in their estate of separation. It being necessary both for them and others, that it should be so. For themselves it is necessary, that they may be content to live, and endure the time of separation from that blessed and ineffable state, quietly and patiently; * and for others, that they may live by faith, and not by sense; and build upon divine, and not human authorities, and report.

So that here you see, their agonies and pangs are doubled, and yet their lives not sweetened by any sense of their happiness, when they return and remains with them; and therefore it can be no such privilege to them.

And for their relations: Though it be some comfort to receive them again from the dead; yet the consideration that they are returned

part with them again, and feel the double sorrows of a part which others feel but once; surely such a particular is considered in itself, is no such ground of comfort as we might imagine it to be.

It remains, then, that the ground of all solid comfort against the death of our relations, lies in the general resurrection, and what is in a particular one, is but, as it were, and evidence of the general: and there the apostle places 1 Thes. iv. 17. that we shall see and enjoy them again, at the coming. And surely this is more than if (with this text) we should presently receive them from the dead, as a son: And if we judge not so, it is because our hearts are to measure things rather by time and sense, than by faith.

Thus you see the counsel, with its ground, which, in this part, is common to other Christian mourners with her; the grief being but inconsiderable, and of little advantage.

Here, then, you find many aggravations of sorrow more than other; a son, an only son, is carrying to the grave; yet he commands the pensive mother not to mourn.

Hence we note,

Doct. That Christians ought to moderate their sorrows for dead relations, how many afflicting circumstances and aggravations soever meet together in their death.

It is as common with men, yea, with good men, to exceed in their sorrows for dead relations†, as it is to exceed in their lights to living relations; and both of the one, and the other may say, as they say of waters, It is hard to confine them within their bounds. It is therefore grave advice which the apostle gives in this case, 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30. “But this I say, brethren, the time is short; it remaineth that both they that have wives, as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and those that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; for he hath said, the floating world is near its port;‡ God hath contracted the sails of man’s life; it is but a point of time to live, and shortly it will not be a point to choose whether to live or not, children or not. All these are time-eaten things, before the expected fruit of these comforts be ripe, we are already rotten. It is therefore an high point of wisdom to look upon these things which shortly will not be, as if already they were not, and to comfort ourselves in the loss of these carnal enjoyments, as the wise man behaves himself in the use of spiritual ordinances; he hath heard not, and we should weep as if we went not: the

them so to heart, as to be broken-hearted for the sin they live in, or deeply affected with the glory revealed. We also ought to be sensible of the stroke of God upon our dear relations; but still we must weep, as if we wept not; that is, we must keep our grief within bounds, and moderation in our sorrows, and not to be too deeply concerned for these dying, short-lived things.

To this purpose the apostle exhorts, Heb. xii. 5. "My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, neither faint when thou art rebuked of him." These are two extremes, despising and fainting: when God is correcting, to say, I do not regard it, let him take all, if he will; if my estate must go, let it go; if my children must die, let them die: this is to despise the Lord's chastening; and when we cannot bear it, that we should bear it thus lightly.

There is also another extreme, and that is fainting: if, when our dear ones are taken away the heart be taken away, and when children are taken away then the spirit of the parent dies also; this is fainting under the cross. Thou lamentest, saith Seneca, thy deceased friend; but I would have thee grieve beyond what is meet: that thou shouldest not grieve at all, I dare not require thee; tears may be excused, if they do not exceed. Let thine eyes, therefore, be neither wholly dry, nor so full that they overflow: weep thou mayest, but wail thou must not.

Happy man, that still keeps the golden bridle of moderation upon his passions, and affections, and still keeps the possession of himself, though whatsoever he lose the possession of.

Now the method in which I propose to proceed, shall be,

1. To discover the signs,
2. To dissuade from the sin,
3. To remove the pleas,
4. To propose the cure of immoderate sorrow.

First, I shall give you the signs of immoderate sorrow, and shew you when it exceeds its bounds, and becomes sinful, even a sorrow that ought to be sorrowed for; and, for clearness sake, I will first allow what is to be allowed to the Christian mourner, and then you will the better discern wherein the excess and sinfulness of your sorrow lies.

And, *First*, How much soever we censure, and condemn immoderate sorrow: yet the afflicted must be allowed an awakened, and tender sense of the Lord's afflicting hand upon them. It is no virtue to bear what we do not feel; yea, it is a most unbecoming temper not to tremble when God is smiting.

The Lord saith to Moses, in the case of Miriam, Numb. xii. "If her father had spit in her face, should she not be ashamed?"

"of God hath touched me." And it is a mercy if we have any friends that are wise, faithful, and experienced; they are born for such time as this, Prov. xvii. 17. but be they what they will, they cannot pity as God, relieve and succour as he; and oftentimes we may learn with Job, chap. xxi. ver. 4. "As for me, is my complaint to mine ears?" And if it were, why should not my spirit be troubled?" q. d. What great advantage can I get by these complaints? I may burden the heart of my friend, but how little doth that ease my own? Yet the very opening of the heart to an experienced, tender Christian, is such a relief, and the engaging his prayers is more. Thus far you may go safely, in all this there is no danger.

Thirdly, *The afflicted person may (ordinarily) accuse, judge, condemn himself, for being the cause and procurer of his own troubles.* He may lawfully be discontented and vexed with himself for his folly, when the iniquity of his heels compasseth him about: truly it is but seldom that any great affliction befalls a gracious person, but he saw the need of such a rod before he felt it.

Hath God smitten thy child, or friend, and didst thou not foresee some sharp trial coming? Did not thy fond, secure, carnal temper need such a scourge to awaken, quicken, and purge thee? Or, if thou did not foresee it, it is now your duty to search and examine yourselves. So the church, in her affliction, resolved, Lam. iii. 40. "Let us search and try our ways." When God is smiting, we should be a searching: Surely our iniquities will enquire after us if we do not enquire after them: Yea, in the day of affliction, a gracious God is inquisitive about nothing more than the procuring and provoking cause of his troubles, Job x. 2. "Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me;" q. d. Lord, what special corruption is it that hath brought this rod is sent to rebuke? What sinful neglect doth it come to hurt me for? O discover it now to me, and recover me now from it.

And having found the root and cause of their troubles, ingenuous souls will shame themselves for it, and give glory to God by an humble submission and vindication of the equity of his proceedings, Job vii. 20. "I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, thou preserver of men?" He thinks it no shame freely to discover unto God, and deeply to abase himself before him for his folly.

I remember a choice note that * Mr. Brightman hath in his commentary upon the Canticles.

'Holy men, saith he, after their hearts are renewed by repentance, are not ashamed to remember and confess their slips, and the shameful falls to the glory of God; for they account that the great

how willing should we be to take such shame to us? Holy not ashamed to acknowledge, Psal. xxxviii. 5. "My wo
"and are corrupted, because of my foolishness." He
man that thus befools himself before God.

It is true, God may afflict from prerogative, or for tri
may always see cause enough in ourselves, and it is safe
it upon our own folly.

Lastly, *The afflicted Christian may, in an humble, subm
ner, plead with God, and be earnest for the removal of th*

When affliction presseth us above strength, when it dis
duty, or when it gives advantage to temptation; then v
with David, "Remove thy stroke from me, I am consu
"blow of thine hand," Psal. xxxix. 10. Even our Lord J
in the day of his troubles, poured out his soul with stron
many tears, saying, "Father, if thou be willing, let th
"from me," Luke xxii. 42. Oppressed nature desires
even our renewed nature desires freedom from those clog
tations, which hinder us in duty, or expose us to snares.

Thus far we may safely go.

But sorrow then becomes sinful and excessive, when,

First, *It causeth us to slight and despise all our other m
enjoyments as small things, in comparison of what we ha*

It often falls out, that the setting of one comfort, clou
nights all the rest. Our tears for our lost enjoyments s
eyes, that we cannot see the many other mercies which y
We take so much notice of what is gone, that we take
notice of what is left. But this is very sinful, for it in
both ignorance, ingratitude, and great provocation.

It is a sin springing from ignorance. Did we know t
our sins, we should rather wonder to see one mercy left
twenty are cut off. They that know they have forfe
mercy, should be thankful that they enjoy any, and pa
they lose any of their comforts.

Did we know God, even that sovereign Lord at whose
comforts come and go, who can the next moment blast
main, and turn you into hell afterwards, you would prize
he yet indulges to you, at an higher value. Did you
the fickle, vanishing nature of the creature, what a flow
bubble it is; O how thankful would you be to find so m
in your possession!

Did you know the case of thousands, as good, yea, bett
whose whole harvest of comfort in this world is but a b

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well, but still you have a husband, a wife, other children; or if you have comfortable accommodations for yourselves, with health to enjoy them; or if not, yet have you the ordinances of God, if you be, an interest in Christ and in the covenant, pardon of sin, and hope of glory. What, and yet sink at this rate, as if all your mercies, comforts, and hopes, even in both worlds, were buried in one grave? Must Ichabod be written upon your best mercies, because mortality is written upon one? Fy, fy, what shameful ingratitude is here!

And really, friend, such a carriage as this under the rod of small provocation to the Lord to go on in judgment, and make an end of all that remains, so that affliction shall not rise up the second time.

What if God, taking notice how little thou regardest the many deserved favours thou yet possessest, should say, well, if thou thinkest them not worth the owning, neither do I think them worth the continuing? Go, death, there is a husband, a wife, other children yet left, smite them all. Go, sickness, and remove the health of the body yet left; go losses, and impoverish his estate yet left; go reproach, and blast his reputation, which is yet sweet; what wouldst thou think of this? And yet, if you be out of Christ, you are in danger of a far sadder stroke than any, or all yet mentioned? what if God should say, Prizest thou not my mercy? Hast thou no value for my goodness and forbearance towards thee? Is it nothing that I have spared thee thus long in thy sins and rebellions? Well then, I will stretch out my hand upon thy life, cut off that thread which hath kept thee so many years from dropping into hell.

O think then what you have done by provoking the Lord, through your vile ingratitude! It is a dangerous thing to provoke God, when he is already in a way of judgment. And if you be his own people, and so out of the danger of this last and worse stroke; yet know that you have better mercies to lose than any you have yet lost. Should God cloud your souls with doubts, let loose Satan to buffet you, remove joy and peace from your inner man, how soon would you be convinced that the funeral of your dearest friend is but a trifle to you.

Well then, whatever God takes, be still thankful for what he leaves. It was the great sin of Israel in the wilderness, that though God had delivered them from their cruel servitude in Egypt, miraculously fed them in the desert, and was leading them on to a land flowing with milk and honey; yet as soon as any want did but but to pinch them, presently all these mercies were forgotten and slighted. Num. xiv. 12. "Would to God (say they) we had died in Egypt." And Num. xi. 6. "There is nothing at all beside this man."

Some Christians have such public spirits, that the church swallow up their personal troubles. Melancthon seemed little notice of the death of his child which he dearly loved, almost overwhelmed with the miseries lying on the church.

And it was a good evidence of the graciousness and public spirit of Eli's spirit, who sitting in the gate anxiously waiting for tidings of the army, when the tidings came that Israel fled before the Philistines, that his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas were dead, and the ark of God was taken, just at the mention of that word, *Ark of God*, before he heard out the whole narration, he quickly presaged the issue, he sunk down and died, 1 Sam. iv. 17. O that was the sinking, the killing word; had the messenger told him of the death of his two sons, like enough he had supported it; but the loss of the ark was more to him than sons or daughters.

But how few such public spirits appear even among private Christians in this selfish generation? May we not with the apostle compare them to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. xii. 21. "All seek their own, and not the things that are of God." Few men have any great cares or designs lying beyond the limits of their own private interest. And what we say of cares and sorrows: If a child die, we are ready to die too, but private sorrows pierce us not.

How few suffer either their domestic comforts to be swallowed up in the church's troubles, or their domestic troubles to be comforted up by the church's mercies! Now when it is thus with us, when we regard what mercies or miseries lie upon others, but are content upon our own afflictions, this is a sinful sorrow, and we cannot but be sorrowed for.

Thirdly, Our sorrows then become sinful and exorbitant when *they divert us from, or distract us in our duties, so that our course with heaven is stopt and interrupted by them.*

How long can we sit alone musing upon a dead creature, when our thoughts easily flow; but how hard to fix them upon the living God, when our hearts should be in heaven with our Christ, they are laid in the grave with our dead. May not many afflicted souls justly say, that their troubles had taken away their Christ from them, (and so sweet sensible communion) and laid the dead child in their hearts.

Poor creature, cease to weep any longer for thy dead remembrance, weep rather for thy dead heart. Is this thy compliance with God's design in afflicting thee? What, to grow a greater stranger to God than before! Or is this the way to thy cure and comfort, to refrain prayer, and turn thy back upon God?

Or if thou darest not wholly neglect thy duty, yet thou

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Rouse up thyself, Christian, and consider this is not right. Surely the rod works not kindly now. What, did thy love to God expire when thy friend expired? Is thy heart as cold in duty, as thy body is in the grave.

Hath natural death seized him, and spiritual deadness seized thee? Sure then thou hast more reason to lament thy dead heart, than thy dead friend. Divert the stream of thy troubles speedily, and labour to recover thyself out of this temper quickly; lest sad experience shortly tell thee, that what thou now mournest for is but a trifling sorrow, what thou shalt mourn for hereafter. To lose the heavenly warmth and spiritual liveliness of thy affections, is undoubtedly a far more considerable loss, than to lose the wife of thy bosom, or the sweet child that ever a tender parent laid in the grave.

Reader, if this be thy case, thou hast reason to challenge the first place among the mourners. It is better for thee to bury ten degrees of love than to remit one degree of love or delight in God. The effect of God in smiting was to win thy heart nearer to him by removing that which estranged it; how then dost thou cross the very design of God in this dispensation? Must God then lose his delight in thy fellowship, because thou hast lost thine in the creature? Surely when thy troubles thus accompany thee to thy closet, they are not ordinary and extravagant troubles.

Fourthly, Then you may also conclude your sorrows to be excessive and sinful, *When they so overload and oppress your bodies, that they endanger your lives, or render them useless and unfit for service.*

Worldly sorrow works death, 2 Cor. vii. 10. that is, sorrow in the manner of worldly men*; sorrow in a mere carnal, natural way, which is not relieved by any spiritual reasonings and considerations. This falls so heavy sometimes upon the body, that it sinks under its weight, and is cast into such diseases as are never more wrought out or healed in this world. "Heaviness in the heart of a man makes it stoop," saith Solomon, Prov. xii. 25. The stoutest body stoops under heart-pressures.

It is with the mind of a man, saith one, as with the stone *tyr* as long as it is whole it swimmeth; but once broken, it sinks presently. Grief is a moth, which, getting into the mind, will in a short time, make the body, be it never so strong and well-wrought, as a piece, like an old seary garment.

Philosophers and physicians generally reckon sorrow among the chief causes of shortening life. Christ was a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, and this some think was the reason that

Many a man's soul is to his body, as a sharp knife to a thing which easily cuts it through; and what do we by poring and pondering upon our troubles, but whet the knife that it may cut deeper and quicker? Of all the creatures that ever lived (devils only excepted) man is the most able and apt to be his own tormentor.

How unmercifully do we load our bodies in times of affliction! How do we not only waste their strength by sorrow, but deprive them of necessary refreshment? They must carry the load, but receive no refreshment: If they can eat the bread of affliction, and tears, they may feed to the full; but no pleasant bread, and no sleep is permitted them. Surely you would not burden others if you do your own bodies: You would pity and relieve a brother groaning and sinking under an heavy burden, but you will not relieve your own bodies.

Some men's souls have given such deep wounds to the body, that they are never like to enjoy many easy or comfortable days more whilst they dwell in them.

Now, this is very sinful and displeasing to God; for it is not such a tender care for our bodies, that he would not have allowed up of over much grief, no, though it be for sin, 2 Sam. xii. but even to that sorrow sets bounds; how much less with respect to sorrow for temporal loss? May not your stock of natural strength be employed to better purposes, think you, than these? Turn and come, that you may earnestly wish you had that health and strength again to spend for God, which you now so lavishly waste, and indigently cast away upon your troubles, to no purpose or advantage.

It was therefore an high point of wisdom in David, and no doubt for our imitation, who, when the child was dead, did mourn, arose, washed himself, and eat bread, 2 Sam. xii.

Fifthly, when affliction sours the spirit with discontent, and makes it inwardly grudge against the hand of God, and the trouble is full of sin, and we ought to be humbled for it before the Lord.

Whatever God doth with us, or ours, still we should have good thoughts of him. A gracious heart cleaves nearer and nearer to God in affliction, and can justify God in his severe strokes, acknowledging them to be all just and holy, Psal. cxix. 75. "also that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faith hast afflicted me." And hereby the soul may comfort itself in the remembrance to itself its own uprightness and sincere love to God, which hath been of singular use to some souls, to take right measures.

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est comforts, argues plainly that we love him for himself, and for his gifts only. And thus his interest in the heart is deeper than any creature-interest is. And such is the comfort that hath risen to some from such discoveries of their own hearts by close smart afflictions, that they would not part with it, to have their comfort (whose removal occasioned them) given back in lieu of it.

But to swell with secret discontent, and have hard thoughts of God as if he had done us wrong, or dealt more severely with us than he should. O this is a vile temper, cursed fruit springing from an evil root, either a very carnal, ignorant, proud heart; or at least from a very disordered, if renewed, heart. So it was with Jonah when God sent him his gourd: "Yea, (saith he) I do well to be angry even unto death." Jonah iv. 9. Poor man! he was highly distempered at this affliction, and out of frame; this was not his true temper, or ordinary frame, but a surprize; the effect of a paroxysm of temptation, in which his passions had been over-heated.

Few dare to vent it in such language: But how many have hearts imbittered by discontent, and secret risings against the Lord. Which, if ever the Lord open their eyes to see, will cost them more trouble than ever that affliction did, which gave the occasion of it.

I deny not but the best heart may be tempted to think and speak frowardly concerning these works of the Lord; that envious adversary, the devil, will blow the coals, and labour to blow up our sorrows at such times into high discontents: The temptation was strong upon David himself, to take up hard thoughts of God, and to conclude, "Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain;" q. d. How little privilege from the worst of evils hath a man by his godliness. But he soon suppressed such motions: "If I should say thus, I shall offend against the generation of thy children:" Meaning, that I should condemn the whole race of godly men through the world; for who is there among them all, but is, or hath been, or may be, afflicted as severely as myself?

"Surely, it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more," Job xxxiv. 31. What God doth with you, speak well, and think well of him, and of his works.

Sixthly, *Our sorrows exceed due bounds when we continually cite and provoke them by willing irritations.*

Grief, like a lion, loves to play with us before it destroy us. A strange it is that we should find some kind of pleasure in rousing our sorrows. It is * Seneca's observation, and experimentally true, even a corruptible heart hath some pleasure in his afflictions.

“ When they saw that she went out hastily, followed her, and said, ‘ she goeth to the grave to weep there,’ ” John xi. 32. as saith * Calvin, ‘ that seek to provoke their troubles, by going to the grave, or often looking upon the dead body.’

Thus we delight to look upon the relics of our decease, and often to mention their actions, and sayings, not so much for the matter of holy, and weighty instruction, or imitation, for that is the warrant, and commend the action ; but rather to rub the wound, and fetch fresh blood from it, by piercing ourselves with some little yet wounding circumstances. I have known many that will talk of the features, actions and sayings, of their children, hours together, and weep at the rehearsal of them, and many months after they are gone ; so keeping the wound open, and excruciating their own hearts, without any benefit by them : A lock of hair, or some such trifles, must be kept for purpose to renew their sorrow daily, by looking on it. Count Jacob would not have his son called Benoni, lest he should renew his sorrow, but Benjamin.

I am far from commending a brutish oblivion of our dear ones, and condemn it as much as I do this childish and unprofitable remembrance. O friends ! we have other things to do under these : Were it not better to be searching our hearts, and when God’s rod is upon us, and studying how to answer to it, by mortifying those corruptions which provoke it ? Surely these works not kindly till it comes to this.

Seventhly, Lastly, Our sorrows may then be pronounced when they deafen our ears to all the wholesome, and sweet words of counsel, and comfort, offered us for our relief, and

Jer. xxxi. 15. “ A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, bitter weeping : Rachel weeping for her children, would not be comforted for her children, because they were not.” She admit no comfort, her disease is curable by no other means but restoration of her children ; give her them again, and she will be quiet ; else you speak unto air, she regards not whatever

Thus Israel, in the cruel bondage in Egypt, Moses brought the glad tidings of deliverance ; “ But they hearkened not, because of the anguish of spirit, and their cruel bondage.” vi. 9.

Thus obstinately fixed are many, in their trouble, that will not take any advice, or comfort, find any place with them ; yea, I have seen some exceeding quick and ingenious, even above the rate of common parts and abilities, in inventing shifts, and frames

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say what you will, they mind it not, or, at most it abides not with them. Let proper, seasonable advice, or comfort be tendered; if they refuse it; your counsel is good, but they have no heart to receive it now. Thus, Psal. lxxvii. 10. "My soul (saith he) refused to be comforted."

To want comfort in time of affliction, is an aggravation of affliction; but to refuse it when offered us, wants not sin. Time will come when we would be glad to receive comfort, or hear a word of support, and shall be denied it.

O it is a mercy to the afflicted to have Barnabas with them, an interpreter, one among a thousand; and it will be the great sin of folly of the afflicted, to spill like water upon the ground, those excellent cordials, prepared and offered to them, out of a froward and dead spirit, under trouble. Say not with them, Lam. iii. 1. "My hope is perished from the Lord, remembering mine affliction, and my misery, the wormwood and the gall." It is a thankless pity the wormwood and gall of affliction should so disgust a Christian, as that he should not at any time be able to relish the sweetness that is in Christ, and in the promises. And thus I have patched the first part of my design, in shewing you wherein the danger of mourners doth not lie, and in what it doth.

Secondly, Having cleared this, and shewn you wherein the danger lies; my way is now prepared to the second thing proposed, namely, to dissuade mourners from these sinful excesses of sorrow, and keep the golden bridle of moderation upon their passions in time of affliction. And O that my words may be as successful upon the pensive souls that shall read them, as Abigail's were to David. 1 Sam. xxv. 32. who, when he perceived how proper and seasonable they were, said, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who sent thee this day to meet me, and blessed be thy advice."

I am sensible how hard a task it is I here undertake, to lay down and allay mutinous, raging, and tumultuous passions; to give a check to the torrent of passion, is ordinarily but to provoke it, and make it rage and swell the more.

The work is the Lord's, it wholly depends upon his power and blessing. He that saith to the sea when the waves thereof roar, be still, can also quiet and compose the stormy and tumultuous sea. He can rage in the breasts of the afflicted, and casts up nothing but the froth of vain and useless complaints of our misery, or the dirt and filth of foolish and wicked complaints of the dealings of the Lord with us.

The rod of affliction goes round, and visits all sorts of people.

Here, therefore, I must have respect to two sorts of whom I find in tears upon the same account; I mean, the lost dear relations, the regenerate, and the unregenerate. I am to both, and shall endeavour their support and assistance, for the unregenerate call for our help and pity, and must not be and wholly slighted in their afflictions. We must pity them, not pity themselves *. The law of God commands us to help if fallen under its burden; how much more a man sinking under a load of sorrows?

I confess, uses of comfort to the unregenerate are not (or in use among us, and it may seem strange whence any thing of should be drawn for them that have no special interest in the promises.

I confess also I find myself under great disadvantages for to I cannot offer them those reviving cordials that are common to Christ and the covenant, for God's afflicted people; but yet the goodness of God even to his enemies, that they are wholly without supports or means to allay their sorrow.

If this, therefore, be thy case, who readest these lines; and unsanctified, mourning bitterly for thy dead friends, a cause to mourn for thy dead soul, christless and graceless, a childless or friendless: no comfort in hand, nor yet in hope, trouble, and no vent by prayer or faith to ease thy heart.

Poor creature! thy case is sad, but yet do not wholly sink thyself to be swallowed up of grief: thou hast laid thyself in the grave, yet throw not thyself headlong into the grave; that will not be the way to remedy thy misery: but wait a while, and ponder these three things.

First, *That of all persons in the world, thou hast most reason to be tender over thy life and health, and careful to preserve it: yet thy troubles destroy thee, thou art eternally lost, undone for ever.*

"Ily sorrow (saith the apostle) works death." And if it works death, it works thy damnation also; for hell follows that path. Rev. vi. 8. If a believer die, there is no danger of hell to the second death hath no power over him; but woe to thee if it find thee in thy sin: beware, therefore, what thou dost against thy soul and life; do not put the candle of sorrow too near that tapers which thou hangest over the mouth of hell.

O it is far better to be childless or friendless on earth, than to be childless and remediless in hell.

Secondly, Own and admire the bounty and goodness of God manifested to thee in this affliction: that when death came into thy

thy name been in the commission, thou hadst been now past h

O the sparing mercy of God ! the wonderful long-suffering of towards thee ! Possibly that poor creature that is gone never voked God as thou hast done : thy poor child never abused me neglected calls, treasured up the ten thousandth part of that guilt thou hast done : so that thou mightest well imagine it should r have cut thee down, that hadst so provoked God, than thy little one.

But, O the admirable patience of God ! O the riches of his suffering ! Thou art only warned, not smitten by it : is there no in this worth thankful acknowledgment ? Is it not better to black for another on earth, than in the blackness of darkness for c Is it not easier to go to the grave with thy dead friend, and there, than to go to hell among the damned, where there is weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth ?

Thirdly, This affliction for which thou mournest, may be the greatest mercy to thee that ever yet befel thee in this world. God now made thy heart soft by trouble, shewed thee the vanity of the world, and what a poor trifle it is which thou madest thy happiness : there is now a dark cloud spread over all thy worldly comforts. Now, O now ! if the Lord would but strike in with this affliction, and by it open thine eyes to see thy deplorable state, and take off thy heart for ever from the vain world, which thou now seest hateful thing in it ; and cause thee to chuse Christ, the only abiding for thy portion. If now thy affliction may but bring thy sin to remembrance, and thy dead friend may but bring thee to a sense of a dead soul, which is as cold to God and spiritual things, as his blood is to thee ; and more loathsome in his eyes than that corpse is, or shall be to the eyes of men : then this day is certainly a day of the greatest mercy that ever yet thou sawest. O happy death, that shall prove life to thy soul.

Why this is sometimes the way of the Lord with men, Job x 8, 9. " If they be bound in fetters, and holden in cords of affliction, then he sheweth them their work and their transgression. " they have exceeded : he openeth also their ear to discipline. " commandeth them that they shall return from iniquity."

O consider, poor pensive creature, that which stole away thy life from God is now gone ; that which eat up thy time and thoughts, that there was no room for God, soul, or eternity in them, is now all the vain expectations that thou raisedst up unto thyself, from a poor creature which now lies in the dust, are in one day quite per-

from you, they belong to the people of God, and you have nothing to do with them.

I shall therefore turn from you to them, and present such comforts to them, to whom they properly belong, which will be of great use to you in reading, if it be but to convince you of the privilege and state of the people of God in the greatest troubles in this world, and what advantages their interest gives them for peace and settlement, beyond that state you are in.

And here I do with much more freedom and hope of success apply myself to the work of counselling and comforting them. You are the fearers of the Lord, and tremble at his word; sin is more formidable to you than the greatest affliction; you would rather chuse to bury all your children, than provoke and grieve your heavenly Father. Your relations are dear, but God is dearer to you by far.

Well then, let me persuade you to retire a while into your closets, and redeem a little time from your unprofitable sorrows, ease your hearts before the Lord, and beg his blessing upon those quieting, and heart-composing considerations that follow. Some are more general and common, some more particular; but all of them such as, through the blessing of God, will be very useful at this time to your souls.

Consideration 1. *Consider, in this day of sorrow, who is the author of this rod by which you now smart; is it not the Lord? And if the Lord hath done it, it becomes you meekly to submit to it.* Job xli. 10. "Be still, and know that I am God."

Man and man stand upon even ground; if your fellow does any thing that displeases you, you may not only enquire what he did it, but why he did it? You may demand his grounds and reasons for what he hath done; but you may not do so here. You are expected that this one thing, *The Lord hath done it*, should stop any farther disputes or contests, silence and quiet you, whatever he hath done. Job xxxiii. 13. "Why dost thou strive with him? For he giveth not an account of any of his matters. For the Supreme being must needs be an unaccountable and uncomprehensible Being."

It is a shame for a child to strive with his father; a servant to contend with his master; but for a creature to quarrel and strive with the God that made him, O how shameful is it! It is highly reasonable that you be subject to that will which has proceeded, and that he who formed you and yours should be able to do both as seemeth him good. It is said 2 Sam. iii. 26. "The Lord hath done it."

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was crompt off by him that owned it, yea, by him that formed it. his dominion be absolute, sure his disposal should be acceptab

It was so to good Eli, 1 Sam. iii. 18. "It is the Lord, let him say what seemeth him good:" And it was so to David, Psal. xxxix. 1. "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it." let it be for ever remembered, "That he whose name alone is Jehovah, is the Most High over all the earth," Psalm lxxxiii. 18.

The glorious sovereignty of God, is illustriously displayed in his things, his decrees and his providences: With respect to the first, he saith, Rom. ix. 15. "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." Here is no ground of disputing with him; for so it is said, ver. 20. "Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the pottter power over the clay?"

And as to his providences, wherein his sovereignty is also manifested; it is said, Zech. ii. 14. "Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord, for he is raised up out of his habitation." It is spoken of his providential working in the changes of kingdoms and desolations that attend them.

Now, seeing the case stands thus, that the Lord hath done it: let us leave it to his pleasure to have it so, and that if it had not been his will, it could never have been as it is; he that gave thee (rather lent thee) thy room, hath also taken him: O how quiet should this consideration leave thee? If your landlord, who has many years suffered you to dwell in his house, does at last warn you out of it, though he tells you why; you will not contend with him, or say he has done you wrong. Much less if he tells you it will be more for his profit and accommodation to take it into his own hand, than let it to you any longer.

Doubtless, reason will tell you, you ought quietly to pack up and quit it. It is your great landlord, from whom you hold (at pleasure) your own, and your relations lives, that hath now warned you out from one of them, it being more for his glory, it may be, to have it in his own hands, by death; and must you dispute the case with him?

Come, Christian, this no way becomes thee, but rather, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." Look off from a dead creature, lift up thine eyes to the sovereign, wise, and holy pleasure that ordered this affliction. Consider who he is, and what thou art; yea, pursue this consideration till thou canst say, I am now filled with the will of God.

Consideration 2. *Ponder well the quality of the comfort you*

said of the wicked, Psal. lxxvii. 14. that they are full of yea, and of children that do survive them too; for *they are a substance to their babes*. Full of sin, yet full of children; children live to inherit their parents sins and estates together.

It is the mistaking of the quality and nature of our enjoyments, so plunges us into trouble when we lose them. We think so necessary a connection betwixt these creatures and our souls, that we are utterly undone when they fail us.

But this is our mistake; there is no such necessary dependence; we may be happy without these things: father, mother, wife, or child, in which our chief good abides; we have higher, better, and more enduring things than all these may perish, and yet our soul be secure and safe in our comfort in the way, as well as end, may be safe enough when these are gone: God hath better things to comfort his people than these, and worse rods to afflict you with than the loss of these. Had God let your children live and flourish; and ease and rest in your tabernacle, but in the mean time inflicted eternal judgments upon your souls; how much more sad had been?

But as long as our best mercies are all safe, the things of salvation in them remain, and only the things that have no end are removed; you are not prejudiced, or much hindered in the attainment of your last end, by the loss of these things.

Alas! it was not Christ's intent to purchase for you a content in the enjoyment of these earthly comforts; but to deliver you from all iniquity, purge your corruptions, sanctify your nature, and your hearts from this vain world, and so to dispose and direct you to your present condition, that, finding no rest and content here, you the more ardently pant and sigh after the rest which remains for the people of God. And are you not in as probable a way to attain your end now, as you were before? Do you think you are not advanced by these methods of providence, to be weaned from the world, to more pleasant and prosperous ones? Every wise man regards his present station and condition to be best for him, which most promotes and secures his last end and great design.

Well then, reckon you are as well without these things as with them; yea, and better too, if they were but clogs and snares to your affections; you have really lost nothing if the thing which your eternal happiness consisteth in be yet safe. Many of God's children have been denied such comforts as these, and have been deprived of them, and yet never the farther from

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Before this relation, whose loss you lament, was born, the time of your enjoyment and separation was unalterably fixed and limited in heaven by the God of the spirits of all flesh : And although it is a secret to you whilst your friend was with you ; yet now it is a plain and evident thing that this was the time of separation before appointed ; and that the life of your friend could by no means be prolonged or abbreviated, but must keep your company just so far, and part with you.

This position wants no full and clear scripture authority for its foundation : How pregnant and full is that text, Job xxiv. 5, 6. “ His days are determined, the number of his months are appointed thee : thou hast appointed him his bounds, which he cannot pass.”

The time of our life, as well as the place of your habitation, is prefixed before we were born.

It will greatly conduce to your settlement and peace to be well established in this truth ; that the appointed time was fully come when you and your dear relation parted ; for it will prevent and save a great deal of trouble which comes from our after-reflections.

O if this had been done, or that omitted ; had it not been for such miscarriages and oversights, my dear husband, wife, or child, had been alive at this day ! No, the Lord's time was fully come when all things concurred, and fell in together to bring about the pleasure of his will ; let that satisfy you : Had the ablest physicians in the world been there, or had they that were there prescribed any other course, as it is now, so it would have been when they had done. Only it must be cautioned, that the decree of God no way excuses any voluntary, or sinful neglects or miscarriages. God overrules these things to serve his own ends, but no way approves them ; it greatly relieves, against all our involuntary and unavoidable misapprehensions and mistakes about the use of means, or the timing of them, for it could not be otherwise than now it is.

Objection. But many things are alleged against this position, that with much seeming countenance from such scriptures as the Psal. liv. 25. “ Blood-thirsty men shall not live out half their days.” Eccl. vii. 18. “ Why shouldst thou die before thy time.” Psal. cxix. 24. “ O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days.” Job xxvii. 10. “ I am deprived of the residue of my years.” And, 1 Peter iii. 27. “ The fear of the Lord prolongeth days, but the years of the wicked shall be shortened.” It is demanded what tolerable sense we can give these scriptures, whilst we assert an unalterable fixity of the term of death.

He that appointed the seasons of the year appointed the seasons of our comfort in our relations: And as those seasons can be altered, no more can these. All the course of providence is guided by an unalterable decree; what falls out casually to our apprehension yet falls out necessarily in respect of God's appointment.

O therefore be quieted in it, this must needs be as it is.

Consider. 4. *Hath God smitten your darling, and taken away the light of your eyes with this stroke? Bear this stroke with patient quiet submission: For how know you but your trouble might have been greater from the life, than it now is from the death of your child.*

Sad experience made a holy man once say, It is better to weep for ten dead children, than for one living child: A living child may prove a continual dropping, yea, a continual dying to the parent's heart. What a sad word was that of David to Abishai, 2 Sam. 11. "Behold, (saith he) my son, which came out of my belly, seeketh my life." I remember Seneca, in his consolatory epistle to his friend Marullus, brings in his friend thus aggravating the loss of his child.

'O, (saith Marullus) had my child lived with me, to how much modesty, gravity, and prudence, might my discipline have formed, and moulded him? But, saith * Seneca, (which is more to be considered) he might have been as others mostly are; for look, (saith Seneca) what children come even out of the worthiest families; such children exercise both their own, and others lusts; in all whose life there is not a day without the mark of some notorious wickedness upon them.

I know your tender love to your children will scarce admit of jealousies of them; they are for the present, sweet, lovely, innocent companions, and you doubt not but by your care of their education and prayer for them, they might have been the joy of your household.

Why doubtless Esau, when he was little, and in his tender age, was promised as much comfort to his parents as Jacob did; and Isaac's affection not but Isaac and Rebecca (a glorious pair) spent as many prayers and bestowed as many holy counsels upon him, as they did upon Jacob his brother; But when the child grew up to riper years, then he became a sharp affliction to his parents; for it is said, Gen. xxv. "That when Esau was forty years old, he took to wife Judith the daughter of Berith the Hittite, which was a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebecca." The word in the original comes from a root which signifies to imbitter †: This child imbittered the minds of his parents by his rebellion against them, and despising their counsels.

And I cannot doubt but Abraham disciplined his family as s

many and as frequent prayers for his children, and particu-
 his son Ishmael, as any of you : We find one, and that a ve-
 tical one, recorded, Gen. xvii. 18. " O that Ishmael might
 " fore thee : " And yet you know how he proved, a son that
 him no more comfort than Esau did to Jacob and Rebecca.

O how much more common is it for parents to see the
 evils of their children, than their virtues and graces ? A
 one parent lives to rejoice in beholding the grace of God
 forth in the life of his child, there are twenty, it may be an
 that live to behold, to their vexation and grief, the work-
 ruption in them.

It is a note of * Plutarch, in his morals, Nicoles (saith he)
 to see the noble victory obtained by Themistocles his son ;
 ades, to see the battle his son Cimon won in the field ; no-
 pus, to hear his son Pericles preach and make orations. Aris-
 heard his son Plato's lectures and disputations ; but men
 commonly live to see their children fall a gaming, revelling,
 and whoring : Multitudes live to see such things to the
 And if thou be a gracious soul, O what a cut would this
 very heart ! to see those (as David spake of his Absalom)
 out of thy bowels, to be sinning against God, that God w
 lovest, and whose honour is dearer to thee than thy very

But admit they should prove civil and hopeful children,
 est thou not live to see more misery come upon them than the
 endure to see ? O think what a sad and doleful sight was t
 dekiaah, Jer. l. 10. " The king of Babylon brought his chi-
 " slew them before his eyes." Horrid spectacle ! and tha

Consider. 5. *How know you, but by this stroke which*
ment, God hath taken them away from the evil to come ?

Is it God's usual way, when some extraordinary cala-
 coming upon the world, to hide some of his weak and te-
 out of the way by death, Isa. lvii. 1, 2. he leaves some, and
 others, but taketh care for the security of all. He provid
 for Methuselah before the flood. The grave is an hidin
 some, and God sees it better for them to be under-gr
 above ground in such evil days.

Just as a careful and tender father, who hath a son
 school, hearing the plague is broke out in or near the pla-
 his horse presently to fetch home his son before the danger
 culty be greater. Death is our Father's pale horse which
 to fetch home his tender children, and carry them out of h

"him that goeth away, for he shall return no more, nor so
"native country."

And is there not a dreadful sound of troubles now in our ears, not the clouds gather blackness? Surely all things round about seem to be preparing and disposing themselves for affliction. Days may be nigh in which you shall say, "Blessed is the v
"that never bare, and the paps that never gave suck."

It was in the day wherein the faith and patience of the saints exercised, that John heard a voice from heaven, saying to
"Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth."

Thy friend by an act of favour is disbanded by death, whilst thyself art left to endure a great fight of affliction. And now if troubles come, thy cares and fears will be so much the less, and thy death so much the easier to thee; when so much of thee is in heaven already. In this case the Lord, by a merciful dispensation providing both for their safety, and thy own easier passage to

In removing thy friends before-hand, he seems to say to thee he did to Peter, John xiii. 7. "What I do thou knowest not
"but thou shalt know hereafter." The eye of providence has prospect far beyond thine; probably it would be a harder task thee to leave them behind, than to follow them.

A tree that is deeply rooted in the earth, requires many strokes to fell it; but when its roots are loosed before-hand, then a single stroke lays down upon the earth.

Consider. 6. *A parting time must needs come, and why is not as good as another?* You knew before-hand your child or friend mortal, and that the thread that linked you together must be cut. If any one, (saith Basil), had asked you when your child was born, What is that which is born? What would you have answered? Would you not have said, It is a man? And if a man, then a mortal, a vanishing thing. And why then are you surprized with what is to see a dying thing dead?

He, (saith * Seneca), who complains that one is dead, complains that he was a man. All men are under the same condition, to what share it falls to be born, to him it remains to die.

We are indeed distinguished by the intervals, but equalized by the issue: "It is appointed to all men once to die," Heb. ix. 27. There is a statute law of heaven in the case.

Possibly you think this is the worst time for parting that could be, had you enjoyed it longer, you could have parted easier; but

Had God given you such a privilege as was once granted the English parliament; that the union betwixt you and your friends should not be dissolved till you yourself were willing it should be dissolved; when, think you, would you have been willing it should be dissolved?

It is well for us and ours that our times are in God's hand, and not in our own. And how immature soever it seemed to you, it was cut down; yet it "came to the grave in a full age, as corn in its season," Job v. 26. They that are in Christ, and the covenant, never die unseasonably, whensoever they die. (See one upon the text), 'They die in a good old age; yea, they die in the spring and flower of youth; they die in a good season; i. e. they are ripe for death whenever they die. When they godly die, it is harvest time with him; though in a natural sense he be cut down while he is green, and cropt in the bud of youth; yet in his spiritual capacity he never dies before he is ripe. To ripen him speedily, he can let out such warm rays and beams of the Holy Spirit upon them, as shall soon mature the seed into a preparedness for glory.'

It was doubtless the most fit and seasonable time for them to die; they could die in, and as it is a fit time for them, so for us. Had it lived longer, it might either have engaged you more in your parting would have been harder; or else have stumbled you more by discovering its natural corruption. What a stinging aggravation of your sorrow would that have been?

Surely the Lord of time is the best judge of time; and do we more discover our folly and rashness, than in presuming upon the times either of our comforts or troubles; as for our comforts we never think they can come too soon; we would have them whenever the season be fit or not, as Num. xii. 13. "Hearken, O Lord." O let it be done speedily; we are in post-haste for our comforts, and for our afflictions we never think they can come too soon; not at this time, Lord, rather at any other time.

But it is good to leave the timing both of the one and the other to him, whose works are all beautiful in their seasons, and doth any thing in an improper time.

Consider. 7. *Call to mind in this day of trouble, the covenant you have with God, and what you solemnly promised him in the day he took him for your God.*

It will be very seasonable and useful for thee, Christ, at this time to reflect upon these transactions, and the frame of mind in those days, when an heavier load of sorrow prest thy shoulders, than now feeldest.

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door of hope ; ah ! what good news wouldst thou then have accorded it, to escape that danger with the loss of all earthly comforts.

Was not this thy cry in those days ? ‘ Lord, give me Christ, deny me whatever else thou pleasest. Pardon my sin, save my soul, and, in order to both, unite me with Christ, and I will never reopen my mouth. Do what thou wilt with me ; let me be friendless, let me be childless, let me be poor, let me be any thing rather than a christless, graceless, hopeless soul.’

And when the Lord hearkened to thy cry, and shewed thee mercy when he drew thee off from the world into thy closet, and treated with thee in secret, when he was working up thy heart to the terms of his covenant, and made thee willing to accept Christ upon his own terms ; O then, how heartily didst thou submit to his yoke as most reasonable and easy, as at that time it seemed to thee ?

Call to mind these days, the secret places where Christ and thou made the bargain ; have not these words, or words to this sense, been whispered by thee into his ear with a dropping eye, and melting heart ?

‘ Lord Jesus, here am I, a poor guilty sinner, deeply laden with sin ; fear and trouble upon one hand, and there is a just God with a severe law, and everlasting burnings, on the other hand ; blessed be God, O blessed be God for Jesus the Mediator, who hath interposed betwixt me and it. Thou art the only door of hope, which I can escape, thy blood the only means of my pardon and salvation. Thou hast said, “ Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden.” Thou hast promised, that he that cometh to thee, shall in no wise be cast out.

‘ Blessed Jesus, thy poor creature cometh to thee upon these terms of couragements : I come, O but it is with many staggerings, many doubts and fears of the issue ; yet I am willing to come and make a covenant with thee this day.

‘ I take thee this day to be my Lord, and submit heartily to all thy disposals ; do what thou wilt with me, or mine, let me be rich or poor, any thing or nothing in this world : I am willing to be thine, thou wouldst have me, and I do likewise give myself to thee this day, to be thine ; all I am, all I have shall be thine, thine to do with thee, and thine to be disposed of at thy pleasure. Thou shalt henceforth be my highest Lord, my chiefest good, my last end.

Now, Christian, make good to Christ what thou so solemnly promised him : He, I say, he hath disposed of this thy dear relation as pleased him, and is thereby trying thy uprightness in the

this dear child ; I reserve this out of the bargain ? I shall dare that thou shouldst kill this comfort. If so, thou dost this but prove thyself an hypocrite ; if thou wast sincere in covenant, as Christ had no reserve on his part, so thou hast none on thine.

It was all without any exception thou then resignedst to ; now wilt thou go back from thy word, as one that had outwitted himself, and repents the bargain ? Or, at least, as one that hath gotten these solemn transactions in the days of thy distress ; hath Christ failed in one tittle that he promised thee ? Canst thou if thou canst, with the least unfaithfulness ; he hath been true a tittle on his part, O be thou so upon thine ; this day is the proof, remember what thou hast promised him.

Consider. 8. *But if thy covenant with God will not quite methinks God's covenant with thee might be presumed to*

Is thy family, which was lately hopeful, and flourishing, a full tabernacle, now broken up and scattered ? Thy posterity, which thou raisedst up to thyself great expectations of long old age, cut off ? So that thou art now like neither to have a monument or memorial left thee in the earth.

Dost thou sit alone, and mourn to think whitherto thy comforts are now come ?

Dost thou read over those words of Job, chap. xxix. verses 4, 5. and comment upon them with many tears ; “ O that in months past, as in the day when God preserved me !
“ candle shined upon my head, and when by his light
“ through darkness ! as I was in the days of my youth,
“ secret of God was upon my tabernacle, when the Almighty
“ yet with me, when my children were about me.”

Yet let the covenant God hath made with thee, comfort thee in this thy desolate condition.

You know what domestic troubles holy David met with in succession, not only from the death of children, but, which was worse, from the wicked lives of his children. There was murder, and rebellion in his family ; a far sorer trial than their infancy could have been ; And yet see how sweetly he kept himself from the covenant of grace, in 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. “
“ my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me
“ a lasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure, for this
“ salvation and all my desire, although he make it not to
“ I know this place principally refers to Christ, who was

those that were left were not such as he desired ; so it may abundantly comfort you also, whatever troubles, or deaths, are unto your families, who have an interest in the covenant. For,

First, If you are God's covenant people, though he may afflict you yet he will never forget you, Psalm iii. 5. he is ever mindful of the covenant : You are as much upon his heart in your deepest afflictions, as in the greatest flourish of your prosperity.

You find it hard to forget your child, though it be now turned a heap of corruption, and loathsome rottenness ; O how doth your mind run upon it night and day ! your thoughts tire not upon the object : Why surely it is much more easy for you to forget your child, whilst living, and most endearing, (much more when dead and undesirable) than it is for your God to forget you. Isa. x. 15. " Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb ? Yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee."

Can a woman, the more affectionate sex, *forget her sucking child* her own child, and not a nursing child ? Her own child, whilst it hangs on the breast, and, together with the milk from the breast, draws love from its mother's heart ; can such a thing as this be forgotten by nature ? possibly it may, for creature-love is fickle, and variable. But, *I will not forget thee* ; it is an everlasting covenant.

Secondly, As he will never forget you in your troubles, so he will order all your troubles for your good : It is a *well-ordered covenant* or a covenant orderly disposed ; so that every thing shall work together for your good.

The covenant so orders all your trials, ranks and disposes your various troubles so, as that they shall, in their orders and places, sweetly co-operate, and join their united influences to make you happy.

Possibly you cannot see how the present affliction should be for your good ; you are ready to say, with Jacob, Gen. xlii. " Joseph is not, and Simeon is not ; and ye will take Benjamin away ; all these things are against me." But could you once see how sweetly, and orderly all these afflictions work under the blessing and influence of the covenant, to your eternal good, you would not only be quiet, but thankful for that which now so much afflicts and troubles you.

Thirdly, This covenant is not only well ordered in all things, but *sure* : the mercies contained in it are called, " the sure mercies of David," Isa. lv. 3. Now how sweet, how seasonable a support doth this consideration give to God's afflicted under the rod !

work of their hands, but also, in enjoying the fruit of the pains for him.

Probably such thoughts you have had, and raised yourselves great expectations of comfort in your old age; but now you see you built upon the sand, and where were you had not a firmer bottom to build upon? But bless the covenant-mercies are more sure, and solid! God, heaven, never start or fade, as these things do.

The sweetest creature-enjoyments you ever had or had in this world, cannot say to you, as your God doth, "I will not leave thee, nor forsake thee." You must part with your dear ones, how well soever you love them; you must bid adieu to your bosom, how nearly soever your affections be linked and delighted in her. Your children and you must be separated, they are to you as your own soul.

But though these vanish away, blessed be God there is one that abides. 'Though all flesh be as grass, and the good thereof as the flower of the grass, though the grass withereth, and the flower thereof fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord shall be upon it; yet the word of our God shall stand for ever.' 1 Pet. 1, 6, 7, 8. There is so much of support contained in this consideration, that could but your faith fix here, to realize it, I might lay down my pen at this period, and say, done, there needs no more.

Consideration 9. *The hope of the resurrection should restrain all excesses of sorrow in those that do profess it.*

Let them only mourn without measure, who mourn without hope. The husbandman doth not mourn when he casts his seed into the earth, because he sows in hope; commits it to the ground with expectation to receive it again with improvement. Why the case here, and just so the apostle states it, 1 Thess. 4, 13. "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others who have no hope; for if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

Q. d. Look not upon the dead as a lost generation; the death hath annihilated, and utterly destroyed them: O that they were not dead, but only asleep; and if they sleep, they shall awake. You do not use to make outcries and lamentations for your dear ones, when you find them asleep upon their beds; death is but a longer sleep, out of which they shall as surely

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"that reckoned I must part with them; and I part with them
"one that makes account to have them."

He speaks, no doubt, of that enjoyment of them, which his pleasant contemplations of their virtuous actions could give him; for he was wholly unacquainted with the comfortable, and heart-supporting doctrine of the resurrection. Had he known the advantages which would result thence, at what a rate may we think he would have spoken of the dead, and of their state; But this you profess to believe, and yet sink at a strange rate. O suffer not Gentilism to outvie Christianity, let not Pagans challenge the greatest Believers, to out-do them in quiet, and cheerful behaviour under afflictions.

I beseech thee, reader, if thy deceased friend have left thee a solid ground of hope that he died interested in Christ, and the comfort; that thou wilt distinctly ponder these admirable supports, which the doctrine of the resurrection affords.

First, That the same body which was so pleasant a spectacle to thee shall be restored again; yea, the same *numerically*, as well as the same *specifically*; so that it shall not only be *what* it was, but the *who* it was. "These eyes shall behold him, and not another," Job xix. 27. The very same body you laid, or are now about to lay in the grave, shall be restored again: Thou shalt find thine husband, wife, or child, or friend again: I say the self-same, not another.

Secondly, And farther, this is supporting, that as you shall see the same person that was so dear to you; so you shall know it to be the same that were once endeared to you on earth in so close a tie of relation.

Indeed you shall know them no more in any carnal relation, dissolved that bond: But you shall know them to be such as were your dear relations in this world, and be able to single them out among that great multitude, and say, this was my father, mother, husband wife, or child; this was the person for whom I wept, and made supplication, who was an instrument of good to me, and whose salvation God then made me instrumental.

For we may allow, in that state, all that knowledge which is *comulative* and *perfective*, whatsoever may enlarge and heighten our felicity and satisfaction, as this must needs be allowed to do. Luther's judgment in this point, * being asked by his friends at supper the evening before he died, replies thus, *What* (saith he) *befel* Adam? he never saw Eve, but was in a deep sleep when God formed her; when he awaked and saw her, he asked not what she was, nor what

manner we also shall be in the other life renewed by Christ, and shall know our parents, our wives, and children.

And this among other things, was that with which Paul comforted the lady Italica, after the death of her dear husband, telling her that she should know him in the world to come among the glorified saints. Yea, and a greater than either of these, I know Paul comforted himself, that the Thessalonians, whom he had converted to Christ, should be "his joy and crown of rejoicing, in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming," 1 Thess. ii. 19. This must needs imply his distinct knowledge of them in that state, and must be many hundred years after death hath separated them from each other. Whether this knowledge shall be by the glory of discerning any lineaments or property of individuation in the glorified bodies of our relations; or whether it shall be by immediate revelation, as Adam knew his wife, or as Peter and John knew Moses and Elias in the mount; as it is not possible to determine, so it is needless to puzzle ourselves about it.

It is the concurrent judgment of sound divines, and of the countenance from scripture and reason, that such a knowledge of them shall be in heaven; and then the sadness of this parting shall be abundantly recompensed by the joy of that meeting. We are considering.

Thirdly, That at our next meeting, they shall be unto us more desirable, sweet, and excellent, than ever they were in this world. They had a desirableness in them here, but they were altogether lovely, and, in every respect, desirable; they had no infirmities, both natural and moral; but all these are removed in heaven, and for ever done away: No natural infirmities in the glorified bodies, or sinful ones upon perfected spirits of the just. What lovely creatures will they appear to you then, when that which is now sown in dishonour, shall be raised in honour! 1 Cor. xv. 42. And then, to crown all,

Fourthly, You shall have an everlasting enjoyment of them in heaven, never to part again. The children of the resurrection shall die no more, Luke xx. 36. you shall kiss their pale lips no more; you shall never fear another parting from them. You shall together with the Lord for ever, 1 Thes. iv. 14. And the apostle thought an effectual cordial in this case when he wrote to the Thessalonians to "comfort one another with these words."

Consid. 10. *The present felicity into which all that die in Christ are presently admitted, should abundantly comfort Christians in their mourning.*

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and in the covenant. Yea, though they had died in silence, their conversations would speak for them, and the tenor of their lives leave no ground of doubting touching their death. O dying in their infancy and youth, though they carried not such actual hope with them, yet they have left good grounds of hope behind them.

Parents, now ponder these grounds; you have prayed for them, you have many times wrestled with the Lord on their behalf; you have taken hold of God's covenant for them, as well as for yourselves, and dedicated them to the Lord; and they have not, by their actions of theirs, destroyed those grounds of your hope, but that you may, with much probability, conclude they are with God.

Why, if the case be so, what abundant reason have you to be quiet, and well satisfied with what God hath done? Can there be a better than where they are? Had you better provisions and entertainment for them here than their heavenly Father hath above?

There is no Christian parent in the world, but would rejoice to see his child out-strip and get before him in grace, that he may be more eminent in parts and services than ever he was: And what reason can be given, why we should not as much rejoice to see our child get before us in glory, as in grace? They are gotten to heaven a few years before you, and is that matter of mourning? Would your child (if he were not ignorant of you) say, as Christ did to his friends, a little before his death, when he saw them cast down at his thoughts of parting, John xiv. 28. "If ye loved me, ye would have rejoiced, because I go to the Father." q. d. Do not value your present sensible comfort, from my bodily presence with you, before my glory and advancement in heaven. Is this love to me? Or is it not rather self-love?

So would your departed friend say to you: 'You have professed much love all along to me, my happiness seemed to be very dear to you. How comes it to pass, then, that you mourn so exceedingly now? This is rather the effect of a fond and fleshly, than of a rational and spiritual love; if you loved me with a pure spiritual love ye would rejoice that I am gone to my Father. It is infinitely better for me to be here, than with you on earth, under such grief and sorrow. Weep not for me, but for yourselves.'

Alas! though you want your friends company, he wants yours; your care was to provide for this child, but Jesus Christ hath provided infinitely better for it than you could; you intended to leave him an estate, but he a kingdom for it; you thought upon such or

in his own; stript them out of those garments you provided, clothed them in white robes, washed in the blood of the Lamb. Let not your hearts be troubled, rather rejoice exceedingly, inasmuch as God made you instruments to replenish heaven, and bring forth an heir for the kingdom of God.

Your child is now glorifying God, in an higher way than he can, and what though you have lost its bodily presence for a while yet, I hope you do not reckon that to be your loss, which is but God's greater glory.

When Jacob heard his Joseph was lord of Egypt, he rather parted himself with Joseph, than his Joseph with him in wants and distress: so should it be with you: You are yet rolling and tossing in a tempestuous sea, but your friend is gone into the quiet shore: you desire rather to be there than that he were at sea with you.

Consideration 11. *Consider how vain a thing all your trouble and self-veaxation is; it no way betters your case, nor eases your mind.*

As a bullock, by wrestling and sweating in the furrow, makes his yoke to be more heavy, and galls his neck, and spends his strength the sooner, and no ways helps himself by that: Why thus hast thou thy case with thee; if thou be as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke. What Christ saith of *caring*, we may say of *grieving*, (27.) "Which of you, by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature?"

Cares may break our sleep, yea, break our hearts, but they add nothing to our stature, either in a natural, or in a civil notion. Sorrowing may sooner break our hearts, than the yoke God has put on you.

Alas! what is all this but as the fluttering of a bird in a snare, which, instead of freeing, doth but the more entangle itself. Therefore a wise resolution of David in this very case, when the will of God was signified in the death of his child, 2 Sam. xii.

"now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

Can I bring him back again? No; I can no more alter the course and work of God, than I can change the seasons of the year, or alter the course of the sun, moon and stars, or disturb the order of the day and night; which are all unalterably established by the firm constitution and ordinance of heaven.

As these seasons cannot be changed by man, so neither can the course and way of his providences be changed. Job xxiii. "The Lord is of one mind, and who can turn him? And what his soul desireth, that he will do."

so, his tears and cries to God before had the nature and use of means to prevent the affliction: but when it was come, and could not be prevented, then they were of no use, to no purpose in the world. "Wherefore should I fast?" Q. d. To what end, use, or purpose will it be now.

Well then, cast not away your strength and spirits to no advantage; reserve them for future exercises and trials: Time may come that you may need all the strength you have, and much more to support greater burdens than this.

Consideration 12. *The Lord is able to restore all your lost comforts in relations double to you, if you meekly submit to him, and patiently wait upon him under the rod.*

When Esau had lost his blessing, he said, "Hast thou but one blessing, my father?" Gen. xxvii. 38. But your Father has more blessings for you than one: his name is the "Father of mercies," 2 Cor. xiii. 11. He can beget and create as many mercies for you as he pleaseth; relations, and the comforts of them, and his command.

It is but a few months, or years past, and these comforts, which you now lament were not in being; nor did you know where they should arise to you, yet the Lord gave the word, and commanded them for you; and, if he please, he can make the death of these like a scythe to the meadow that is mown down, or a razor to the head that is shaved bare; which, though it lay you under the present trouble and reproach of barrenness, yet doth but make way for a double increase, a second spring with advantage.

So that even as it was with the captive church, in respect of her special children, in the day of her captivity and reproach, the Lord made up all with advantage to her, even to her own astonishment. Isa. xlii. 20. "The children which thou shalt have, after thou art lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, the place is too small for me; Give place to me that I may dwell."

Thus may he deal with you, as to your natural children, and relations; so that what the man of God said to Amaziah, 1 Chron. xxv. 9. may be applied to the case in hand. "Amaziah said to the man of God, but what shall we do for the hundred talents?" The man of God answered, the Lord is able to give thee more than this."

O say not, What shall I do for friends and relations? Death has robbed me of all comfort in them. Why the Lord is able to give you much more. But then, as ever you expect to see your future blessings multiplied, look to it, and be careful that you neither

whilst they were endearing each other by mutual affection. This must be yielded to be an extraordinary trial meekly receives, and patiently bears it from the hand of

You have heard of the patience of Job, (saith the apostle 11.) "and seen the end of the Lord." Not only the grace or intention of the Lord in all his afflictions, but the happy issue the Lord gave to all his afflictions, of which you have counted, Job xlii. 10. "The Lord gave Job twice as much before." The number of his children was not double he had, as all his other comforts were: But though the Lord restored the same number to him again that he took away is likely the comfort he had in these latter children was what he had in the former. There is nothing lost by waiting patiently, and submitting willingly to the Lord's dispose.

It is as easy with the Lord to revive, as it is to remove comforts in relations. There is a sweet expression to this purpose Psal. lxxxi. 28. "For thou, Lord, will light my candle, my God will enlighten my darkness."

Every comfortable enjoyment, whether it be in relation to health, or friends, is a candle lighted by providence for our use in this world, and they are but candles, which will not always burn, and those that last longest will be consumed and waste away, but oftentimes it falls out with them as with candles, they burn out before they are half consumed; yea, almost as soon as they are up, and then we are in darkness for the present.

It is a dark hour with us, when these comforts are put out. David's faith did, and ours may comfort us with this, that he who put out the candle, can light up another: "Thou, Lord, shall light my candle, the Lord my God shall enlighten my darkness." If this is, the Lord will renew my comforts, alter the present state I am in, and chase away that trouble and darkness which lies upon me: Only beware of offending him, at whose command lights and comforts come and go. Michal displeased the Lord, therefore had no child unto the day of her death, 2 Sam.

Hannah waited humbly upon the Lord for the blessing of children, and the Lord remembered her; he enlightened her with that comfort, when she was as a lamp despised. If you have lost but God can restore it, yea, double it if he sees it convenient for you. And if not, then,

Consideration 13. *Consider, though he should deny you the comforts of that kind, yet he hath far better to bestow such as these deserve not to be named with.*

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Men's names are to be continued in their issue, in their male especially, and consequently to fail in such as want
See English sue, Num. xvii. 4. and a numerous issue is deer
Annotations small honour, Psal. cxxvii. 4, 5. God therefor
on the place. mised here to supply, and make good the want of
 and whatsoever, either honour here, or memorial
 after, might from it have accrued to them, by bestowing upon
 matter of far greater honour, and more durable; a name bett
 before the names of sons or daughters.

It is a greater honour to be the child of God, than to ha
 greatest honour, or comfort, that ever children afforded their p
 in this world.

Poor heart, thou art now dejected by this affliction that lies
 thee, as if all joy and comfort were now cut off from thee in this

A cloud dwells upon all other comforts, this affliction hath
 bittered thy soul, that thou tastest no more in any other earthly
 forts, than in the white of an egg. O that thou didst but consid
 consolations that are with God for such as answer his ends in
 tion, and patiently wait on him for their comfort! he hath co
 for you far transcending the joy of children.

This some hath found when their children have been cut off
 them, and that in so eminent a degree, that they have little v
 their comfort in children, in comparison with this comfort.

I will therefore set down a pregnant instance of the point in
 as I find it recorded by the grave and worthy author of that exc
 book intitl'd, *The fulfilling of the scripture.*

Another notable instance of grace, with a very remarkable pa
 in his condition, I shall here mention. ' One Patrick Mackev
 ' who lived in the west parts of Scotland, whose heart, in a re
 ' able way the Lord touched, and after his conversion (as he sh
 ' to many Christian friends) was in such a frame, so affected v
 ' new world, wherein he was entered, the discoveries of God, a
 ' a life to come; that for some months together he did seldom
 ' but was still taken up in wondering. His life was very remar
 ' for tenderness, and near converse with God in his walk; and, v
 ' was worthy to be noted, one day, after a sharp trial, having his
 ' son suddenly taken away by death, he retired alone for se
 ' hours, and when he came forth did look so cheerfully, that to
 ' who asked him the reason thereof, and wondered at the sa
 ' such a time; he told them, He had got that in his retirement
 ' the Lord, that to have it afterwards renewed, he would be co
 ' to have a new heart.

Would it please the Lord to make this sun arise and sh^{ine} you, now when the stars that shined with a dim and borrow^{ed} are gone down, you would see such gain by the exchange; quickly make you cast in your votes with him we now in^{deed} and say, Lord, let every day be such as this funeral day; hours be as this, so that I may see and taste what I now o^{nce} gladly would I part with the dearest and nearest creature-o^{wn} in this world. The gracious and tender Lord hath cordials reserved on purpose for such sad hours; these are s^{ent} given before some sharp trial, to prepare for it, and someti^{me} to support under it.

I have often heard it from the mouth, and found it in th^e a sweet Christian now with God, that a little before the Lord her dear husband by death, there was such an abundant the love of God unto her soul for several days and nights that when the Lord took away her husband by death, thou a gracious and sweet tempered (and by her most tenderly husband, she was scarce sensible of the stroke, but carried up all earthly things, their comforts, and their troubles: so th^{at} almost lost the thoughts of her dear husband in God. And the Lord taken that course with her, she concluded that not been possible to be borne by her, she must have sun^d such a preparative.

A husband, a wife, a child, are great, very great things, as by other creatures; but surely they will seem little things, to nothing, when the Lord shall set himself by them befor^e.

And how know you, but God hath bidden these earthly stand aside this day, to make way for heavenly ones? I God is coming to communicate himself more sweetly, mor^e than ever to your souls; and these are the providences w^{hich} cast up, and prepare the way of the Lord. Possibly God^{'s} in their death is but this: child, stand aside, thou art in^{com} and fillest my place in thy parent's heart.

Consideration 14. *Be careful you exceed not in your gr^{eatness} loss of earthly things, considering that Satan takes the c^{are} of all extremes.*

You cannot touch any extreme, but you will be touch^{ed} enemy, whose greatest advantages lie in assaulting you h^{ere}.

Satan is called, *The ruler of the darkness of this world* 12. i. e. his kingdom is supported by darkness. Now, the^{re} fold darkness, which gives Satan great advantage; the d^{arkness} the mind, viz. ignorance; and the darkness of the cond^{ition}.

sired that the hand of God should have been stretched out upon a person, estate, and children, but that he promised himself a no advantage therein, to poison his spirit with vile thoughts of
 "Do this (saith he) and he will curse thee to thy face."

What the Psalmist observes of *natural*, is as true of *metaphorical* darkness, Psal. civ. 20. "Thou makest darkness, and it is night wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth, the young lions do roar after their prey."

When it is dark night with men, it is noon-day with Satan; our suffering-time is his busiest working-time; many a dismal suggestion he then plants, and grafts upon your affliction, which is much more dangerous to us than the affliction itself.

Sometimes he injects *desponding* thoughts into the afflicted soul. "Then, said I, I am cut off from before thine eyes," Psal. xxxix. and Lam. iii. 18, 19. "My hope is perished from the Lord, rendering my affliction, and my misery, the wormwood and the gall."

Sometimes he suggests *hard* thoughts of God, Ruth i. 20. "The Lord hath dealt very bitterly with me." Yea, that he hath dealt more severely with us than any other, Lam. i. 12. "See and hold, if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is come unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of my fierce anger."

And sometimes murmuring and repining thoughts against the Lord; the soul is displeased at the hand of God upon it. Jonah was angry at the hand of God, and said, "I do well to be angry, unto death," Jon. iv. 9. What dismal thoughts are these? how much more afflictive to a gracious soul, than the loss of outward enjoyment in this world.

And sometimes very *irreligious* and *atheistical* thoughts, there were no privilege to be had by religion, and all our pains, and care about duty, were little better than lost labour, Psal. lxxiii. 13, 14. "Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency; for all the day long I have been plagued, and chastened every morning."

By these things Satan gets no small advantage upon the afflicted Christian; for albeit these thoughts are his burden, and God will not impute them to the condemnation of his people; yet they rob the soul of peace, and hinder it from duty, and make it act uncomely under affliction, to the stumbling and hardening of others in sin: beware therefore, lest by your excess of sorrow ye give advantage to the devil; we are not ignorant of his devices.

eyes are upon you. It is a true observation that a late author hath made upon this case: 'What will the Atheist, will the profane scoffer say when they shall see this? and malicious they are, that if they do but see you in they are straightway scornfully demanding, Where is your God? But what would they say, if they should hear you yourselves believably cry out, Where is our God? Will they not to cry, this is the religion they make such boast of, which how little it does for them in a day of extremity: they talk of promises, rich and precious promises; but where are they to what purpose do they serve? They said they had a treasure in heaven; what ails them to mourn so then if their riches are gone?

O beware what you do before the world; they have eyes to see what you can do, as well as ears to hear what you can say: and as your carriage under trouble is so much like their own, never think your principles are better than theirs. Carnal wisdom will be drawn to think, that whatever fine talk you might have of God and heaven, your hearts were most upon the same things as theirs were, since your grief for their removal is as great as theirs.

They know by experience what a stay it is to the heart, to have a faithful friend to depend upon, or to have hopes of an estate shortly to fall to them; and they will never be persuaded to have any such ground of comfort if they see you as much distressed as they that pretend to no such matter.

By this means the precepts of Christ to constancy and composure in all estates, will come to be looked upon (like those of the Pharisees) only as *magnifica verba*, brave words; but such as are intended to be practised; and the whole of the gospel will be taken for an airy notion, since they that profess greatest regard to it, are least helped thereby.

O what a shame is it that religion should, in this case, make more difference betwixt man and man! wherefore shew to the world (whatever their common censures are) that it is not so much to care to differ from them in some opinions, and a little strictness in humility, meekness, contempt of the world, and heavenly-mindedness; and now let these graces display themselves by your patient deportment under all your grievances.

Wherefore hath God planted those excellent graces in your hearts, but that he might be glorified, and you benefited by the exercise of them in tribulation: should these be suppressed and hid, and only the pride, passion, and unmortified earthliness of your hearts be discovered in time of trouble, what a shame

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I beseech you, therefore, be tender of the name of God, it will not be so of your own peace and comfort.

Consider. 16. *Be quiet, and hold your peace, you little know many mercies lie in the womb of this affliction.*

Great are the benefits of a sharp, rousing affliction to the people of God at sometimes, and all might have them at all times, were we more careful to improve them. Holy David thankfully acknowledged, Psal. cxix. 71. "It is good for me that I have been afflicted."

And surely there is as much good in them for you, as for him; Lord sanctify them to such ends and uses as his were sanctified.

Such a smarting rod as this came not before there was need of it, and possibly you saw the need of some awakening provision for yourselves; but if not, the Lord did: he took not up the stone to smite you, till his faithfulness and tender love to your souls prevailed upon him to correct you.

You now sit pensive under the rod, sadly lamenting and deplores the loss of some earthly comfort; your heart is surcharged with sorrow, your eyes run down upon every mention and remembrance of your dear friend: why, if there were no more, this alone may satisfy the need you had of this rod; for doth not all this sorrow and parting plainly speak how much your heart was set upon, how your heart was glewed to this earthly comfort?

Now you see that your affections were sunk many degrees down into the creature, than you are aware of: and what should God do in this case by you? Should he suffer you to cleave to the creature more and more? Should he permit it to purloin, and exhaust your love and delight, and steal away your heart from himself? That he could not do, and love you. The more impatient you are under this affliction, the more need you had of it.

And what if by this stroke the Lord will awaken your drowsy affections, and recover you out of that pleasant, but dangerous spiritual slumber you were fallen into, whilst you had pillowed your head upon the pleasant, sensible creature-enjoyment? Is not this really better for you than if he should say, Sleep on: he is joined to idols, let him alone; he is departing from me, the fountain, to a broken cistern, let him go.

Yea, what if by this stroke upon one of the pleasantest things that had in this world, God will discover to you, more sensibly and usually than ever, the vanity both of that and all earthly comforts, so that you shall from henceforth never let forth your heart, hope, your love, and delight to any of them, as you did before?

is *rectified*, and your *affections* to all other enjoyments *moderated*: and is this nothing? O doubtless it is a great to you, than to have your friend alive again.

And what if by this rod your wandering, gadding heart whipped home to God? your neglected duties revived? decayed communion with God restored? a spiritual, heavenly heart recovered? What will you say then?

Surely you will bless that merciful hand which removed obstructions, and adore the Divine wisdom, and goodness, that a device as this recovered you to himself. Now you can praise constantly, more spiritually, more affectionately than before the blessed rod, which buds and blossoms with such fruits as this be written among your best mercies, for you shall have cause to adore and bless God eternally for this beneficial affliction.

Consider. 17. *Suffer not yourselves to be transported by immoderate grief, because God hath exercised you with a smart rod; for, as smarting as it is, it is comparatively less than what others, as good as yourselves, have felt.*

Your dear relation is dead; be it so, here is but a sin before you, but others have seen many deaths contrived upon their relations, to which yours is nothing.

Zedekiah saw his children murdered before his eyes, and those eyes (alas too late) put out. The worth of that excellent book before-mentioned, tell of that choice and godly gentlewoman in the north of Ireland, who when the rebellion broke out there, she saved three children, one of them upon the breast, not gone far before they were stripped naked by the Irish; their admiration, spared their lives, (it is like, concluding that death and hunger would kill them) afterwards going on at the foot of the mountain which runs to Lochneach, others met them, and would have cast them into the river; but this godly woman, not dismayed, begged a little liberty to pray, and as she lay naked on the frozen ground, her resolution not to go on her own feet, to so unjust a death, upon her knees, having called her, and she refusing, was dragged by the hair of her head that rugged way, to be cast in with her little ones, and covered with stones.

But she then turned, and on her knees says, You should be sure, be Christians, and men I see you are; in taking away these miserable lives, you do us a pleasure; but know, that as you have wronged you nor yours, you must remember to die also you, and one day give an account of this cruelty, to the judge of heaven and earth. Hereupon they resolved not to murder them

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goes by, unto whom she calls for God's sake to take them in, they being Irish, refused ; she desired a little bread, but they had none ; then she begs a coal of fire, which she obtains, and thus, with some fallen chips, made a little fire, and the child taking a piece of the hide laid it on the coals, and began to gnaw the leather ; but without an extraordinary Divine support, what could this do ?

Thus they lived ten days, without any visible means of having no bread, but ice and snow, nor drink except water. The two boys being near starved, she pressed them to go out of her sight, not being able to see their death ; yet God delivered them as miraculously at last, as he had supported them all that while.

But judge whether a natural death, in an ordinary way be comparable to such a trial as this ; and yet thus the Lord did by the choice and eminently gracious woman.

And Mr. Wall, in his *None-but-Christ*, relates as sad a passage of a poor family in Germany, who were driven unto that extremity of famine, that at last the parents made a motion one to the other to sell one of the children for bread to sustain themselves, and they did so, but when they came to consider which child it should be, their hearts were so relented, and yearned upon every one, that they resolved rather to all to die together. Yea, we read in Lam. iv. 10. "The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children."

But why speak I of these extremities ? How many parents, some godly ones too, have lived to see their children dying in misery and phaneness, and some by the hand of justice, lamenting their rebellion with a rope about their necks.

Ah ! reader, little dost thou know what stings there are in the afflictions of others ! surely you have no reason to think the Lord dealt more bitterly with you than any. It is a gentle stroke, and a merciful dispensation, if you compare it with what others have felt.

Consideration 18. *If God be your God, you have really lost nothing by the removal of any creature-comfort.*

God is the fountain of all true comfort ; creatures, the very best and sweetest, are but cisterns to receive, and convey to us what comfort God is pleased to communicate to them ; and if the cistern be broken, or the pipe cut off, so that no more comfort can be conveyed to us that way, he hath other ways and mediums to do it by, of which we think not of ; and if he please he can convey his comforts to his people without any of them : And if he do it more immediately, there shall be no losers by that ; for no comforts in the world are

Is the fulness of the fountain yours? and yet do you yourselves, because the broken cistern is removed; The better are no better, Jer. ii. 13. Cisterns have nothing but what receive, and broken ones cannot hold what is put into them; then do you mourn, as if your life were bound up in them. You have as free an access to the fountain as you had before the advice of an Heathen, (and let them take the comfort of a pair, by a new earthly comfort, what we have lost in the old.)
 “Thou hast carried forth him whom thou lovedst, (saith the Lord,) seek one whom thou mayest love in his stead: It is better than to bemoan thy loss.”

But if God never repair your loss in things of the same kind, know he can abundantly repair it himself.

Ah! Christian, is not one kiss of his mouth, one glimmering countenance, one seal of his Spirit, a more sweet and substantial comfort, than the sweetest relation in this world can afford you? If your stream fail, repair to the fountain, there is enough still; God was, and what he was, though the creature be not.

Consideration 19. *Though you may want a little comfort in life, yet surely it may be recompensed to you by a more*

The removal of your friends before you may turn to your advantage, when your hour is come that you must follow them; how have many good souls been clogged and ensnared in this hour, by the loves, cares, and fears they have had about the living; must leave behind them in a sinful, evil world!

Your love to them might have proved a snare to you, and you to hang back, as loth to go hence; for these are the things that make men loth to die. And thus it might have been with you, except God had removed them before-hand, or should give you this day such sights of heaven, and tastes of divine love, as should subvert and mortify all your earthly affections to these things.

I knew a gracious person, (now in heaven) who, for many years before her last sickness, complained that she found it hard to part with her dear relation, and that there was nothing proved a greater trial to her soul than this: It is much more easy to think of going to heaven, than of leaving friends, who are in heaven before us, than of parting with them, and leaving our desirable and dear ones behind us.

And who knows what cares and distracting thoughts you will be pestered and distracted with upon their account? What will come of these when I am gone? I am now to leave to you what I know to what wants, miseries, temptations, and afflictions, in this world, and what a dreadful, desolating, dangerous world

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And some have been enabled cheerfully to do so when they parting from them. * Luther could say, "Lord, thou hast given me a wife and children, I have little to leave them; nor wilt thou teach, and keep them; O thou Father of the fatherless, Judge of the widow." But every Christian hath not a Lutheran faith; some find it a hard thing to disentangle their affections at a time: But now, if God has sent all yours before you, you have much the less to do; death may be easier to you than others.

Consideration 20. *But if nothing that hath been yet said will satisfy you, then, lastly, remember that you are near that state, place which admits no sorrows, nor sad reflections, upon any accounts as these.*

Yet a little while, and you shall not miss them, you shall need them, but you shall live as the angels of God: We now live partly by faith, partly by sense, partly upon God, and partly upon the creature; our state is mixed, therefore our comforts are so. But when God shall be all in all, and we shall be as the angels, God in the way and manner of our living; how much will the state be altered with us then, from what it is now?

Angels neither marry, nor are given in marriage, neither shall they be children of the resurrection; when the days of our sinning are ended, the days of our mourning shall be so too. No graves were opened till sin entered, and no more shall be opened when sin is excluded.

Our glorified relations shall live with us for ever; they shall not grow old, nor plain no more, die no more; yea, this is the happiness of that state to which you are passing on, that your souls being in the near conjunction with God, the fountain of joy, you shall have no occasion to turn your countenance out of him. You shall not be put upon these exercises of patience, nor subjected to such sorrows as you now feel, any more. It is but a little while, and the end of all these things shall come. O therefore bear up, as persons that expect such a day of jubilee at hand.

And thus I have finished the second general head of this discourse, which is a dissuasive from the sin of immoderate sorrow.

3. I now proceed to the third thing proposed, namely, to remove the pleas and excuses for this immoderate grief. It is natural to men, yea, to good men, to justify their excesses, or at least to extenuate them, by pleading for their passions, as if they wanted not cause enough to excuse them. If these be fully answered, and the soul once convinced, and left without apology for its sin, it is then a fair way for its cure, which is the last thing designed in this treatise.

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Answer 2. The loveliness and beauty of our children and relations, though it must be acknowledged a good gift from the hand of God, yet it is but a common gift, and often times becomes a snare, and in its own nature, but a transitory, vanishing thing, and therefore no such great aggravation of the loss as is pretended.

I say, it is but a common gift; Eliab, Adonijah, and Absalom as lovely presences as any in their generation. Yea, it is not common to the wicked, with the godly, but to the brute animals as well as men, and to most that excel in it, it becomes a temptation. The souls of some had been more beautiful and lovely, if their bodies had been less so. Besides, it is but a flower which nourishes the mouth, and then fades. This therefore should not be reflected as so great a circumstance to aggravate your trouble.

Answer 3. But if your relation sleep in Jesus, he will appear a thousand times more lovely in the morning of the resurrection, than ever he was in the world. What is the exactest, purest beauty of mortals, to the incomparable beauty of the saints in the resurrection? "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father," Matth. xiii. 43. In this hope you part with your relation, therefore act suitably to your hopes.

Plea 3. Oh! but my child was nipped off by death in the bud; I did but see, and love, and part: Had I enjoyed it longer, and had time to suck out the sweetness of such an enjoyment, I could have borne it easier; but its months or years with me were few, that they only served to raise an expectation which was quickly disappointed, and therefore the more sadly disappointed.

Answer 1. Did your friend die young, or was the bond of some other relation almost dissolved as soon as made? Let not this be so intolerable a load to you; for if you have ground to hope he died in Christ, then they lived long enough in this world*. It is said, he hath sailed long enough that hath won the harbour; he hath fought long enough that hath obtained the victory; he hath run long enough that hath touched the goal; and he hath lived long enough upon earth that hath won heaven, be his days never so few.

Answer 2. The sooner your relation died, the less sin hath he committed, and the less sorrow felt: What can you see in this but sin or sorrow? A quick passage through it to glory is a special privilege. Surely the world is not so desirable a place, that Christians should desire an hour's time longer in it for themselves, than serves to fit them for a better.

Answer 3. And whereas you imagine the parting would have

drawn up by a single hand, but when it hath spread and root many years in the earth, it will require many a strong hard tug to root it up. Affections like those under-ground are fixed and strengthened by nothing more than consue long-possession; it is much easier parting now, than it hereafter, whatever you think. However, this should sa that God's time is the best time.

Plea 4. O but I have lost all in one, it is my only one, I left in its room to repair the breach, and make up the loss had given me other children to take comfort in, the loss been so great; but to lose all at one stroke is insupportable.

Answer 1. Religion allows not unto Christians a liberty sing the death of their dear relations by so hard a word as them is; they are not lost but sent before you *: And it is ful thing for a Christian to be reproved for such an undpression by a heathen; it is enough to make us blush to an heathen said in this case †, ‘Never say thou hast lost’ (saith Epictetus) but that it is returned. Is thy son dead? only restored. Is thy inheritance taken from thee? It turned.’ And a while after he adds, *Εἰ τὰ το θεοῖς φίλον τ* i. e. ‘Let every thing be as the gods would have it.’

Answer 2. It is no fit expression to say you have lost except that one be Christ; and he being once yours, cannot be lost. Doubtless, your meaning is, you have lost all you of that kind; and what though you have? Are there not more of comforts yet remaining, of a higher kind, and more perdurable nature? If you have no more of that sort, yet you have better, what cause have you to rejoice!

Answer 3. You too much imitate the way of the world in complaint; they know not how to repair the loss of one comfort by another of the same nature, which must be put in its room to up the vacancy: But have you no other way to supply your loss? Have you not a God to fill the place of any creature that leaves? Surely this would better become a man whose portion is in God than one that professes God is his all in all.

Plea 5. O but my only one is not only taken away, but I have no more; I have no expectation or probability of any more: I must rely upon myself as a dry tree, never to take comfort in children any more, which is a cutting thought.

Answer 1. Suppose what you say, that you have no hope of expectation of another child remaining to you; yet if you have any other better things than children, you have no reason to be

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“in his walls, a place and a name better than of sons and daughters; even an everlasting name that shall not be cut off.” There are better mercies, and higher hopes than these; though your hopes from children, or from children, should be cut off, yet if your eternal mercies are secure, and such as shall not make you ashamed, you should not be so cast down.

Answer 2. If God will not have your comforts to lie any more in your children, then resolve to place them in himself, and you shall not find cause to complain of loss by such an exchange: You will find that in God which is not to be had in the creature; one hour's communion with him, shall give you that which the happiest parents never yet had from his children; you will exchange brass for gold, perishing vanity for solid and abiding excellency.

Plea 6. But the suddenness of the stroke is amazing, God gave little or no warning to prepare for this trial: Death executed its commission as soon as it opened it. My dear husband, wife, or child was snatched unexpectedly out of my arms, by a surprizing stroke, and this makes my stroke heavier than my complaint.

Answer 1. That the death of your relation was so sudden and surprizing, was much your own fault, who ought to have lived with the daily sense of its vanity, and expectation of your separation from it; you knew it to be a dying comfort in its best estate, and it was such a wonderful thing to see that dead, which you knew before to be dying: Besides, you heard the changes ringing about you in other families; you frequently saw other parents, husbands, and wives carrying forth their dead: and what were all these but warnings given to you to prepare for the like trials?

Surely, then, it was your own security and regardlessness of death made this affliction so surprizing to you; and who is to be blamed for that, you know.

Answer 2. There is much difference betwixt the sudden death of infants, and that of grown persons; the latter may have much to do; many sins actually to repent of, and many evidences of interest in Christ to examine and clear, in order to their more comfortable death; and so sudden death may be deprecated by the

But the case of infants, who exercise not their reason, is far different; they have no such work to do, but are purely passive; that is done in order to their salvation, is done by God immediately upon them; so it comes all to one, whether their death be quick, or more slow.

Answer 3. You complain of the suddenness of the stroke; another will be ready to say, had my friend died in that manner,

“soul? Which long for death, but it cometh not, and
 “more than for hid treasures: Which rejoice exceeding
 “glad when they can find the grave.”

That which you reckon the sting of your affliction, c
 have reckoned a favour and privilege. How many ten
 and other relations, who loved their friends as dearly as
 have been forced to their knees, upon no other errand
 beg the Lord to hasten the separation, and put an end to
 which to them was much greater than the sorrow for th

Plea 7. You press me to moderation of sorrows, an
 ought to shew it; but you do not know how the case star
 there is a sting in this affliction, that none feels but mys
 how intolerable is it now! I neglected proper means
 preserve life, or miscarried in the use of means. I now
 neglect, or such a mistake about the means, as I cannot
 greatly to contribute to that sad loss which I now, too l

O my negligence, O my rashness, and inconsiderat
 doth my conscience now smite me for my folly! and by
 vate my burden beyond what is usually felt by others. H
 ably applied myself to the use of proper means, and kep
 such courses and counsels as those that are able and sh
 have prescribed, I might now have had a living husba
 child: whereas I am now not only bereaved, but am ap
 have bereaved myself of them. Surely there is no sorro
 my sorrow.

Answer 1. Though it be an evil to neglect, and sligh
 ordained by God for recovery of health, yet it is no
 ascribe too much to them, or rely too much on them? the
 in the world are weak and ineffectual, without God's ass
 concurrence, and they never have that his assistance or c
 when his time is come; and that it was fully come in y
 case, is manifested now by the event. So that if your
 had the most excellent helps the world affords, they v
 availed nothing. This consideration takes place only in
 who see what the will of God is by the issue, and may no
 by any whilst it remains dubious and uncertain, as it gen
 in time of sickness.

Answer 2. Do you not unjustly charge, and blame yo
 that which is not really your fault, or neglect! How
 chargeable in this case, will best appear by comparing
 stances you are now in, with those you were in when yo
 was only corrected by sickness: and it was dubious to y

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Or, if divers methods and courses were prescribed, and persuaded, and you now see your error, in preferring that which was improper, and neglecting what was more safe, and probable; yet so long as it did not so appear to your understanding at that time, you followed the best light you had to guide you at that time, you were most unjust to charge the fault upon yourselves, for choosing that course that then seemed best to you, whether it were so in itself or not.

To be angry with yourselves for doing, or omitting what was done, or omitted, according to your best discretion, and judgment, because you now see it by the light of the event, far otherwise than you did before; it is to be troubled that you are but men, or that you are not as God, who only can foresee issues and events; and that you acted as all rational creatures are bound to do, according to the light they have, at the time and season of action.

Answer 3. To conclude, Times of great affliction are ordinary times of great temptation, and it is usual with Satan then to charge us with more sins than we are guilty of, and also make those things to be sins, which, upon impartial examination, will not be found to be so.

Indeed, had your neglect or miscarriage been known or voluntary, or had you really preferred a little money (being able to give before the life of your relation, and did deliberately choose to hazard this, rather than part with that; no doubt, then, but there had been much evil of sin mixed with your affliction; and your conscience may justly smite you for it, as your sin; but in the other case, which is more common, and I presume yours; it is a false charge, and ought not to abet the design of Satan in it.

Judge by the sorrow you now feel by your friend, in what degree he was dear to you, and what you could now willingly give to redeem his life, if it could be done with money. Judge, I say, by this how groundless the charge is that Satan now draws up against you, and you are but too ready to yield to the truth of it.

Plea 8. But my troubles are upon a higher score, and account my child or friend is passed into eternity, and I know not how to part with his soul; were I sure my relation were with Christ, I should be quiet; but my fears of the contrary are overwhelming; O it is terrible to think of the damnation of one so dear to me.

Answer 1. Admit what the objection supposes, that you have no grounds to fear the eternal condition of your dear relation; yet it is utterly unbecoming you, even in such a case as this, to dispute with or repine against the Lord.

First, His indisputable sovereignty over them, R
 “Who art thou, O man, who disputest with God?” I
 the matters of eternal election and reprobation. What
 will not be gracious to those that are so dear to us?
 wrong done to them or us thereby? Aaron’s two sons
 in the act of sin, by the Lord’s immediate hand, and yet
 peace, Lev. x. 3. God told Abraham plainly, that t
 should not be established with Ishmael, for whom he
 prayed, *O let Ishmael live before thee!* and he knew th
 no salvation out of the covenant, and yet he sits down
 the word of the Lord.

Secondly, But if this do not quiet you, yet methinks his
 ing love and mercy to you should do it. O what do
 God, that root and branch hath not been cast together i
 that the Lord hath given you good hope, through grace
 be well with you for ever. Let this stop your mouth
 your spirit, though you would have grounds for this fe

Answer 2. But pray examine the grounds of your f
 it may not proceed from the strength of your affections t
 welfare of your friend, or from the subtilty of Satan, des
 by to overwhelm and swallow you up in supposed, as
 just grounds and causes? In two cases it is very proba
 may proceed only from your own affection, or Satan’s t

First, If your relation died young, before it did any
 stroy your hopes. Or,

Secondly, If grown, and in some good degree hope
 did not in life, or at death, manifest, and give eviden
 with that clearness as you desired.

As to the case of infants in general, it is none of ou
 judge their condition; and as for those that sprang from
 parents it becomes us to exercise charity towards them
 ture speaks very favourably of them.

And as for the more adult, who have escaped the poll
 world, and made conscience of sin and duty, albeit they
 fested what you could desire they had; yet in them,
 Abijah, “may be found some good things toward the L
 you never took notice of. Reverence of your authority,
 and shame-facedness, reservedness of disposition, and
 things, may hide those small and weak beginnings of g
 in children, from the observations of the parents. Go
 that in them that you never saw; he despiseth not the
 things.

much upon it, I even idolized it, that was my sin: and, saith another, I wanted due affections, and did not love my relation, at least not spiritually as I ought; that was my sin. Now God is visiting me with all the neglects and defects that hath been in me towards my relation.

Answer 1. There is no man so thoroughly sanctified, as not to fail, and come short in many things pertaining to his relative duties: as to speak, as the thing is, the corruptions of the holiest persons are as much discovered in this, as any other thing whatsoever; and it is a very common thing for conscience, not only to charge the failures upon us, but to aggravate them to the utmost when God hath made the separation. So that this is no more than what is usual, and very common with persons in your case.

Answer 2. Admit that which the objection supposes, that God had afflicted you for your sin, and removed that comfort from you which you idolized, and too much doted on; yet there is no reason you should be so cast down under your affliction: For all this must be, and probably is the fruit of his love to, and care of your soul. Rev. iii. 19. He tells the afflicted, for their comfort, "Whom I love, I rebuke and chasten." How much better is it to have that idolized enjoyment taken from you, in mercy, than if God should say concerning you, as he did of Ephraim, Hos. iv. 17. "He hath joined to idols, let him alone."

O it is better for you that your Father now reckons with you for your follies with the rod in his hand, than to say as he doth to some, let them go on, I will not hinder them in, or rebuke them for their sinful courses; but will reckon with them for all together in hell at last.

Answer 3. And as to what you now charge upon yourself, that your neglect of duty did spring from the want of love to your relation, your sorrow at parting may evidence that your relation was rooted deep in your affection; but if your love was not so spiritual and pure, to love and enjoy them in God; that was undoubtedly your sin, and is the sin of most Christians, for which both you, and others, ought to be humbled.

Plea 10. God hath blessed me with an estate, and outward comforts in the world, which I reckoned to have left to my posterity, and now I have none to leave it with, nor have I any comfort to think of it; the purposes of my heart are broken off, and the comfort of all my other enjoyments blasted by this stroke in an hour. If these are the pains and cares of many years perished.

Answer 1. How many are there in the world, yea, of our own acquaintance, whom God hath either denied, or deprived both of

children left in the world, whose bowels you may refresh he hath bestowed upon you ; and your charity to them less turn to a more considerable account, than if you had estate to your own posterity.

Surely we are not sent into this world to heap up goods for our children : and if you have been too eager in this you may now read God's just rebuke of your folly. Bless God yet an opportunity, to serve him eminently by your charity. God deny you other executors, let your own hands be your own to distribute to the necessity of the saints, that the blessings that are ready to perish may come upon you.

Plea 11. O but the remembrance of its witty words and actions, is wounding.

Answer 1. Let it rather lift up your hearts to God in thanksgiving for the child he hath given you, than fill your heart with discontent at his hand in removing it. How many parents are there in the world whose children God hath deprived of reason and understanding, that they only differ from the beasts in external shape. And how many shew betimes so perverse a temper, that no comfort can be expected from them.

Answer 2. These are but small circumstances, and trifles in themselves ; but by these little things Satan manages his design against your soul, to deject or exasperate it : And it is not your business at this time ; you have greater things to do, words and actions of children to mind ; to search out the cause of the affliction, to mortify the corruption it is sent to rebuke, to bring your hearts in the will of God ; this is your work.

Plea 12. Lastly, It is objected, O but God hides his face from me in my affliction ; it is dark within, as well as without, and my case more deplorable, greatly afflicted, and sadly dejected.

Answer 1. Though you want at present sensible comforts, yet you have reason to be thankful for gracious supports. Though the beams of God's countenance shine not upon you, yet you find that his loving arms are underneath you ; the care of God works for you when the consolations of God are withdrawn from you.

Answer 2. To have God hide his face in the time of trouble is a new or unusual thing ; God's dearest saints, yea, his own children have experienced it, who in the deeps of inward and outward affliction when wave called unto wave, felt not those sweet, sensible comforts of comfort from God, which had always filled his soul for the love of Christ cry in extremity, " My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ! " Then sure we need not wonder, as if some saints

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your Father hath given you to drink; accept the punishment of your iniquities; say, Good is the word of the Lord, It is the Lord, him do what he will: You would soon find the case altered with him, but the comforting spirit finds no delight, or rest, in a turbulent and tumultuous breast.

And thus I have satisfied the most considerable pleas urged for the justification of our excesses.

4. I come now to the last thing proposed, namely, the means of curing and preventing these sinful excesses of sorrow for the death of our dear relations.

And, although much hath been said already to dissuade from these evil, and I have enlarged already much beyond my first intention, yet I shall cast in some farther help and assistance towards the curing of this distemper, by prescribing the following rules:

Rule 1. If you would not mourn excessively for the loss of creature-comforts, then beware that you set not your delight and love excessively, or inordinately upon them, whilst you do enjoy them.

Strong affections make strong afflictions; the higher the tide of joy, the lower the ebb. According to the measure of our delight in the enjoyment, is our grief in the loss of these things. The apostle speaks of these two graces, temperance and patience, together in the preceding chapter, 2 Pet. i. 16. and it is very observable how intemperance and impatience are inseparably linked in experience, yea, the experience of the best men. You read, Gen. xxxvii. 3. "Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age; and made him a coat of many colours."

This was the darling; Jacob's heart was so exceedingly set upon him, his very life was bound up in the life of the lad. Now when the supposed death of the child was brought to him, how did he carry it? See ver. 34, 35. "And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins; and mourned for his son many days: and all his sons, and all his daughters, rose up to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. And he said, for I will go down into the grave to my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him."

Here, as in a glass, are the effects of excessive love to a creature represented: Here you may see what work immoderate love will make, even in a sanctified heart.

O therefore let your moderation be known to all men, in your delight and sorrows about earthly things; for ordinarily the proportion of the one is answerable to the other.

Rule 2. If you would not be overwhelmed with grief for the loss of your relations, be exact and careful in discharging your duty

affliction, as the guilt charged upon us in times of affliction makes our load so heavy.

O what a terrible thing is it to look upon our dead friend whose conscience is accusing and upbraiding us for our duties and such or such sins committed? O you little think how a spectacle this will make the dead body of thy friend to

Conscience, if not quite stupid or dead, will speak at such times. O therefore, as ever you would provide for a comfortable death, or meet again at judgment; be exact, punctual, and respectful, in all your relative duties.

Rule 3. If you would not be overwhelmed by trouble, for the loss of dear relations, then turn to God under your trouble, and pour out your sorrows, by prayer, into his bosom.

This will ease and allay your troubles. Blessed be God for the ordinance of prayer; how much are all the saints beholden to it at all times, but especially in heart-sinking and distressful times. In some relief, when in distress, we can pour out our troubles into the bosom of a wife, or faithful friend; how much more when we pour our complaint before the gracious, wise, and faithful God. Remember you before of that holy man, who having lost his dear and only son, got to his closet, there poured out his soul freely to the Lord. When he came down to his friends that were waiting below him, and fearing how he would bear that stroke, he came down to his duty with a cheerful countenance, telling them he would not mind to bury a son, if it were possible every day, provided he might have such comfort as his soul had found in that private hour.

Go thy way, Christian, to thy God, get thee to thy knees in this cloudy and dark day; retire from all creatures, that thou mayest have thy full liberty with thy God, and there pour out thy sorrows before him, in free, full, and broken-hearted confessions of sin, and thyself worthy of hell, as well as of this trouble; justify the Lord in his smartest strokes; beg him, in this distress, to put under thee his lasting arms; intreat one smile, one gracious look, to enlighten thy darkness, and cheer thy drooping spirit. Say with the prophet Isaiah xvii. 17. "Be thou not a terror to me; thou art my hope, O Lord, my strength, of evil." And try what relief such a course will afford thee. Remember, if thy heart be sincere in this course, thou shalt be able to stand before that holy man, Psalm xciv. 29. "In the multitude of my afflictions, O Lord, which I had within me, thy comforts have delighted me."

Rule 4. If you would bear the loss of your dear relation with patience and moderation, eye God in the whole process of the affliction more than the secondary causes and circumstances of the matter less.

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Secondly, As a father's hand correcting thee in love and faithfulness. Prov. iii. 11. "Whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, "father the son in whom he delighteth." O if once you could see affliction as a rod in a father's hand, proceeding from his love, intended for your eternal good; how quiet would you then be!

And surely if it draws your heart nearer to God, and mortifies more to this vain world, it is a rod in the hand of special love: If it is in your love to God, doubt not but it comes from God's love to you.

Thirdly, As a just and righteous hand. Hast not thou procured this to thyself by thy own folly? Yea, the Lord is just in all that he come upon thee; whatever he hath done, yet he hath done thee no wrong.

Fourthly, Lastly, as a moderate and merciful hand that hath punished thee less than thine iniquities deserve: He that hath brought thee into affliction, might justly have cast thee into hell. It is the Lord's mercy that thou art not consumed. Why doth the lively man complain?

Rule 5. If you will bear your affliction with moderation, compare it with the afflictions of other men, and that will greatly comfort your spirits.

You have no cause to say God hath dealt bitterly with you, that there is no sorrow like your sorrow: Look round about you, and impartially consider the condition that others are in; and find nothing inferior to you in any respect. You had one dear child, Aaron had two at a stroke, Job all at one stroke; and both these an immediate stroke from the hand of God. Some godly parents have lived to see their children die in their sin by the hand of justice; others have seen them live to the dishonour of God, and breaking their own spirits, and would have esteemed it a mercy if they had died from the womb, and given up the ghost when they came out of the belly, as Job speaks.

In what misery have some parents seen their children die! holding them as so many terrible spectacles of misery before their eyes; so that they begged the Lord, with importunity, to let them cut off his hands, and cut them off; death being in their esteem, nothing but those continual agonies in which they have seen them lie welter from day to day. O you little know what a bitter cup others have given them to drink? Surely, if you compare, you must say, the Lord hath dealt gently and graciously with me.

Rule 6. Carefully shun and avoid whatsoever may renew your sorrow, or provoke you to impatience.

his trouble for the loss of his dear wife ; but he calls Benjamin.

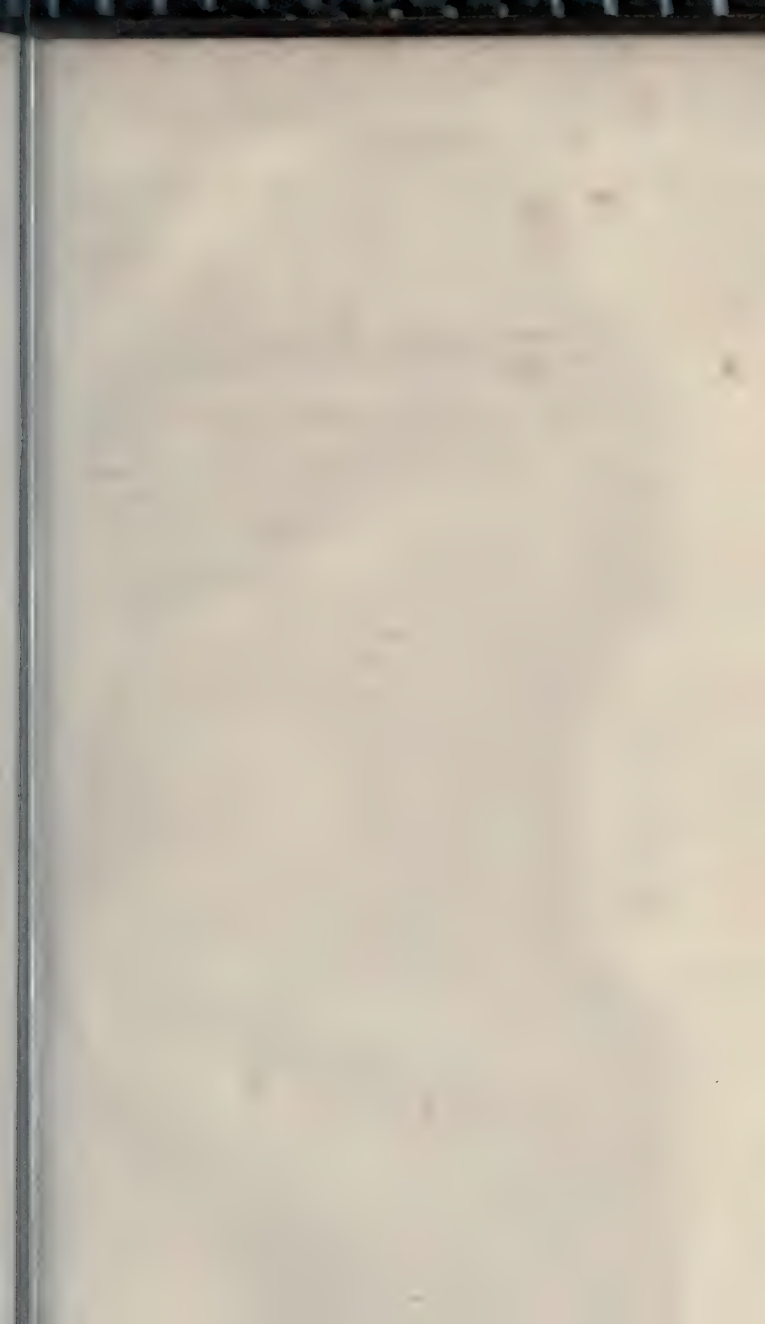
Your impatience is like tinder, or gunpowder, so long as you prevent the sparks from falling on it, there is no great danger to you that carry such dangerous prepared matter in your bosom. You cannot be too careful to prevent them. Do by murmuring, do by blasphemous thoughts ; think quite another way, on every occasion.

Rule 7. *In the day of your murmuring for the death of your friends, seriously consider your own death as approaching. You and your dead friend are distinguished by a small point of time.* 2 Sam. xi. 13. *I shall go to him.* Surely your own death, as approaching also, will greatly allay your rows for the dead that are gone before you.

We are apt to fancy a long life in the world, and the loss of those comforts which we promised ourselves so much of in this world, and comforts of our lives from, seems an intolerable thing.

But would you realize your own deaths more, you would be so deeply concerned for their deaths as you are. Could you look into your own graves more seriously, you would be more composed into your friend's grave more composedly.

And thus I have finished what I designed from this scripture. O Father of mercies, and God of all comforts, whose sole business it is to comfort them that are cast down, write all his promises to your hearts, that they may abide there, and reduce your afflictions to that frame which best suits the will of God, in the profession you make of subjection and resignation thereunto.



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