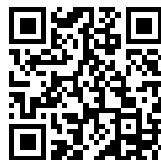
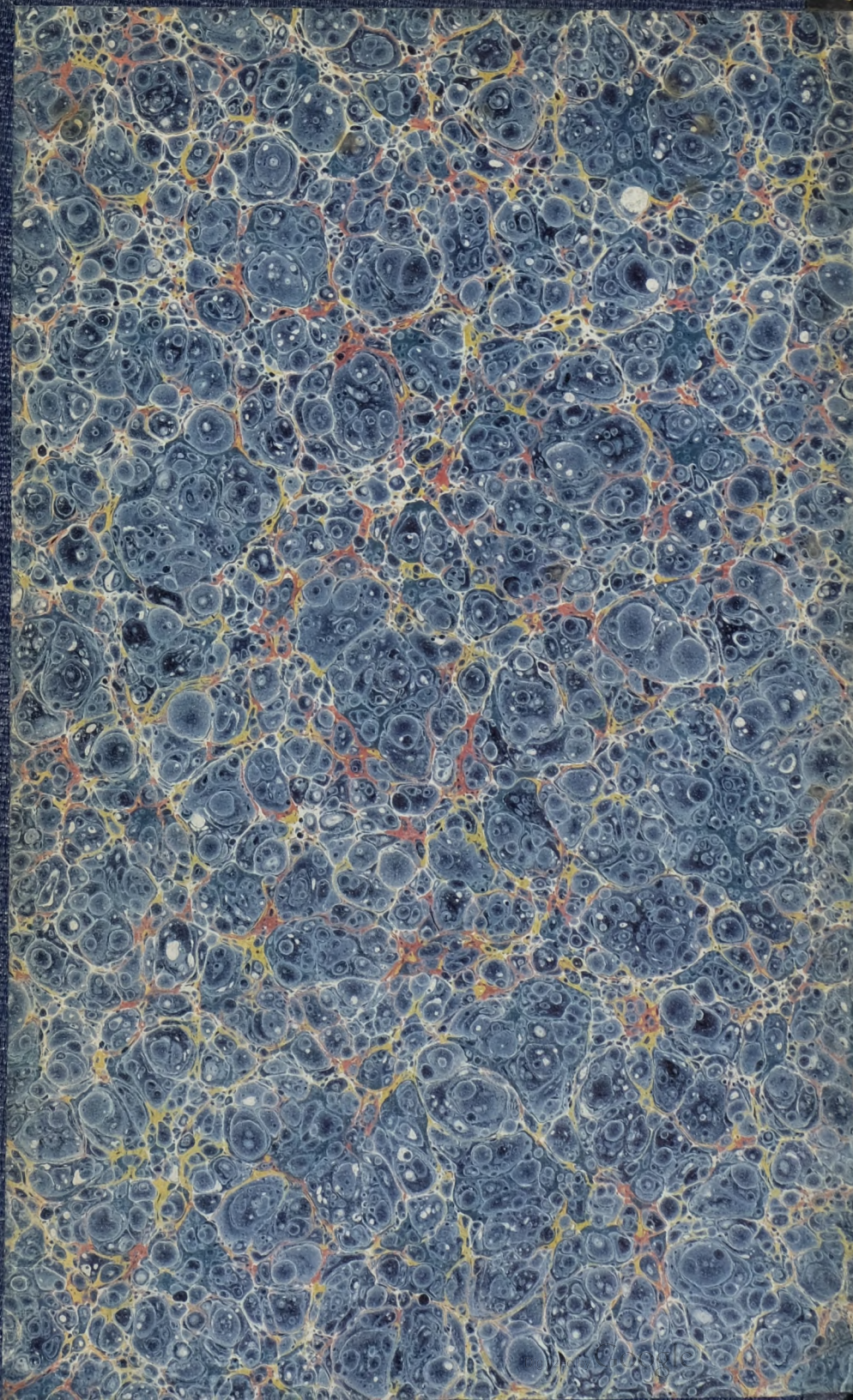

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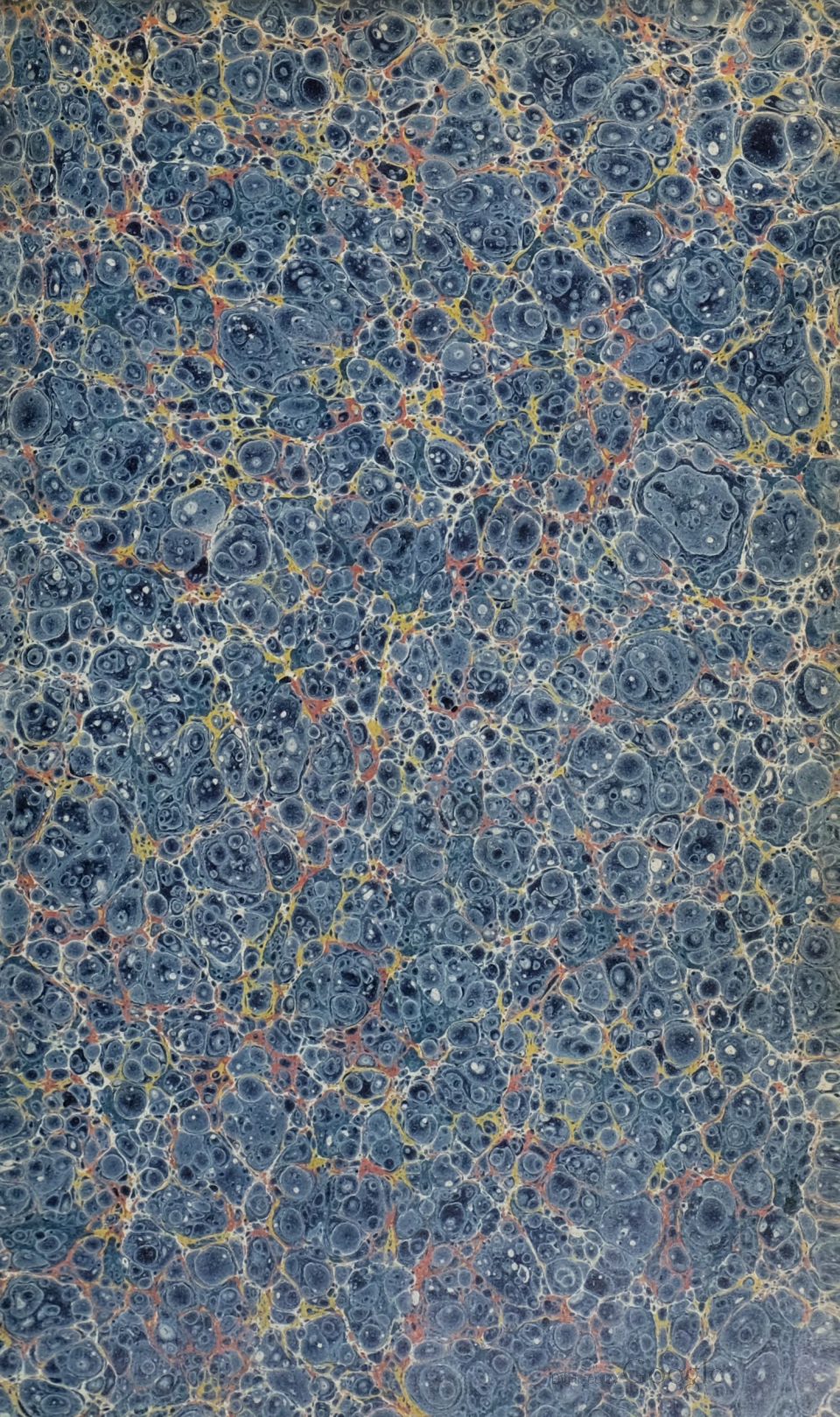
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THE
MISCELLANEOUS THEOLOGICAL WORKS

OF

HENRY HAMMOND, D.D.,

ARCHDEACON OF CHICHESTER, AND CANON OF CHRIST CHURCH.

THE
MISCELLANEOUS
THEOLOGICAL WORKS

OF

HENRY HAMMOND, D.D.,

ARCHDEACON OF CHICHESTER AND CANON OF CHRIST CHURCH.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

BY JOHN FELL, D.D.,

DEAN OF CH. CH., AND LORD BISHOP OF OXFORD.

THIRD EDITION.

VOLUME III.
CONTAINING SERMONS.

OXFORD:
JOHN HENRY PARKER.

M DCCCL.



OXFORD :
PRINTED BY I. SHRIMPTON.

THIRTY-ONE SERMONS

PREACHED

ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

BY

HENRY HAMMOND, D.D.,

ARCHDEACON OF CHICHESTER, AND CANON OF CHRIST CHURCH.

“How shall they hear, without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?” *Rom. x. 14, 15.*

“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” *St. Mark xvi. 15.*

PART I.

OXFORD:

JOHN HENRY PARKER;

M DCCC XLIX.



OXFORD :
PRINTED BY I. SHRIMPTON.

THE
CHRISTIAN'S OBLIGATIONS
TO
PEACE AND CHARITY.

DELIVERED
IN AN ADVENT SERMON AT CARISBROOK CASTLE,
ANN. 1647.

AND
NOW PUBLISHED WITH NINE SERMONS MORE.

BY
HENRY HAMMOND, D.D.

FOR HIS MOST SACRED MAJESTY.

THE sermon of peace and charity which your majesty was pleased to call for about twelve weeks since, by which means it had the favour to become one of the earliest addresses made to your majesty after the recalling of those votes^a, hath now taken the confidence to appear more public, that it may demonstrate and testify the reality of your majesty's inclinations to peace, (which alone could render this trifle considerable to you), and the sincere desire of your most private undisguised retirements, to make the way back to

^a [Both houses of parliament had resolved (Jan. 3 and 15) that they would receive no more messages from the king, and that they would send no address to him for the future, and that if any other person should do so he should be considered guilty of high treason. This vote of non-addresses was repealed August 3. The king probably sent for the sermon about the end of June, 1648, if we may judge from the expression "twelve weeks since," compared with the date of the dedication, Sept. 16. Why it was not sent earlier than August 3, it is not easy to say, but perhaps Hammond, who was at that time under confinement, had not access to his papers. The sermon itself was preached on St. Andrew's day, 1647, "the third of Advent," but was probably intended for the previous Sunday, the text being taken from the first lesson for evening service. The last of these ten sermons was prepared proba-

bly for the morning service of the same day, and perhaps Hammond did not arrive at Canisbrook in time to preach them. Hammond had been removed from his attendance on the king Dec. 27 of the previous year, and upon his expulsion from his canony in March, 1648, was with Sheldon kept in close confinement, in Oxford, though most of the other expelled members of the University had been banished from Oxford. The reason of this no doubt was to prevent their having access to the king, over whom it was feared that they might exert too much influence. Their imprisonment was afterwards assigned as a reason why their attendance could not be granted to his majesty at the treaty of Newport, Charles having requested their attendance in a letter dated August 28. It is to the refusal of the House of Commons that he alludes in the concluding sentence of the dedication.]

your throne by none but pacific means, even then when others thought it their duty by the sword to attempt it for you.

The other few sermons added to the volume have no errand but to attend this, that it may with a little more solemnity approach your sacred presence, and enjoy that liberty which is denied to

Your majesty's most obedient,
and most devoted subject and servant,

H. HAMMOND.

Sept. 16, 1648.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE arrangement of the Sermons in the present volume follows the order observed in the folio edition of the author's works, and is entirely independent of the time of their delivery or publication. They belong to three different classes. The first ten, as the reader will perceive by the Dedication, were published towards the close of the year 1648. They came out in a small 4to. volume, under circumstances which are explained in the note at page 3, and a second edition was published in 1652, but they were never again reprinted apart from the other Sermons. With regard to the time at which they were written or preached, the present editor can give no further information than what the attentive reader will gather for himself. It may be sufficient to notice that the first and last were prepared for delivery in Advent, 1648, and that the author has himself specified the time at which the seventh, eighth, and ninth were preached, and from the latter being called an Easter Sermon, at St. Mary's in Oxford, A.D. 1644, we may perhaps infer that the other two preached in Lent, 1643, and 1645 respectively, were preached at some other church in that city. But the style of the sermon and the frequent quotations of Greek and Latin phrases sufficiently indicate, that at whatever church they may have

been preached, the audience must have been members of the University. It will be observed that the first and the tenth sermons intended for the King, are more sparing in these quotations from ancient authors in the original languages.

With regard to the remaining five, it can only be inferred from their learned character, that they were intended for a University audience, or at least for an educated congregation. It must not be forgotten that the court was held at Oxford during the year 1644. The royal proclamation convoking the parliament to meet at Oxford on the following 22nd of January, bears date, Dec. 22nd, 1643, and there were there assembled eighty-three members of the upper, and a hundred and sixty-five of the lower house, and they continued to sit till April 16th, when the King adjourned the parliament. A troop of horse had previously been sent under Sir John Byron to Oxford, for its defence.

The next two Sermons are amongst the earliest, if they are not quite the earliest production of Hammond's pen, but they did not appear in print till 1657, and then only as an after-thought, as it appears, and with the view of giving an interest to a volume of additional notes to his Paraphrase and Annotations.

These two sermons are spoken of by his biographer^a as a specimen of a considerable number which he was from time to time called upon to preach at the visitations of the clergy, and at St. Paul's cross. The latter forms the subject of an interesting anecdote, in which Dr. Potter, the Dean of Worcester, is spoken of as ascribing his worldly prosperity to his having followed the advice there given. The story must be in some respects inaccurately told, as Dr. Potter died at the commencement of 1646, and it is not likely that the last five or six years of his life having been spent however well,

^a Life, p. xxvi.

would have entitled him to be spoken of as one 'whose memory, for his remarkable charity and all other excellencies befitting his profession and dignity in the Church, is precious.' Besides, his preferments, such as they were, were all conferred upon him some years previously. Of this sermon it only remains to notice, that it was preached at St. Paul's cross, and not as is stated in the title, which is reprinted exactly from the folio, in St. Paul's church.

The remaining nineteen Sermons were not published till after the author's death, 1664, and as they appeared without any advertisement, it is not known who was the editor, or from what materials they were selected. The title-page indicates that they were preached on several occasions, but there is none but internal evidence to shew the period at which, or the audience before whom they were preached. They have all, with the exception of the fourth and the last five, the character of University sermons, and it will be observed that once in the fifth sermon (p. 363) his audience are addressed as 'right honourable.' The reader will find in many of them, expressions which lead to the supposition that they were preached at Oxford, whilst the King's troops were there. With regard to the six which seem exceptions to this, there appears no sufficient ground on which to hazard a conjecture, as to whether they were preached in his parish of Penshurst, before the civil war broke out, or in Worcestershire after he had taken up his residence at Westwood Park.

They were published in a small folio, which is divided into two parts; the first, which contains the twelve Sermons, was printed for Royston, the well-known publisher of the royalist and episcopalian divines. The other nineteen, which now came out for the first time, were printed for Garthwaite, whose publications were also for the most part of the same class. His name appearing in the title-page leads to the sup-

position that Sheldon was the editor, for Garthwaite was Sheldon's publisher. This part also bears the *Imprimatur* of Geo. Stradling, domestic chaplain to Sheldon, then Bishop of London. They were reprinted in 1675, and also in the complete collection of the author's works in 1684.

Nov. 8, 1850.

N. P.

CONTENTS.

SERMON I.

(Page 5.)

THE CHRISTIAN'S OBLIGATIONS TO PEACE AND CHARITY.

Isaiah ii. 4.

They shall beat their swords into plough shares, and their spears into pruning hooks.

SERMON II.

(Page 23.)

CHRIST'S EASY YOKE.

Matthew xi. 30.

My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.

SERMON III.

(Page 48.)

EPHRAIM'S COMPLAINT.

Jeremiah xxxi. 18.

I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn Thou me, and I shall be turned.

SERMON IV.

(Page 69.)

JOHN BAPTIST'S WARNING.

Matthew iii. 2.

Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

SERMON V.

(Page 85.)

GOD IS THE GOD OF BETHEL.

Genesis xxxi. 13.

I am the God of Bethel.

SERMON VI.

(Page 107.)

THE NECESSITY OF THE CHRISTIAN'S CLEANSING.

2 Corinthians vii. 1.

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves.

SERMON VII.

BEING A LENT SERMON AT OXFORD, A. D. 1643.

(Page 128.)

CHRIST AND BARABBAS.

John xviii. 40.

Not this Man, but Barabbas.

SERMON VIII.

BEING A LENT SERMON AT OXFORD, A. D. 1645.

(Page 151.)

ST. PAUL'S SERMON TO FELIX.

Acts xxiv. 25.

And as he reasoned of righteousness, and temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled.

SERMON IX.

BEING AN EASTER SERMON AT ST. MARY'S IN OXFORD, A.D. 1644.

(Page 173.)

THE BLESSING INFLUENCE OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

Acts iii. 26.

God having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

SERMON X.

PREPARED AT CARISBROOK CASTLE, BUT NOT PREACHED.

(Page 196.)

GOD'S COMPLAINT AGAINST REVOLTERS.

Isaiah i. 5.

Why should you be stricken any more? you will revolt more and more.

SERMON XI.

A SERMON PREACHED TO THE CLERGY OF THE DEANERY OF SHORHAM IN KENT, AT THE VISITATION BETWEEN EASTER AND WHITSUNTIDE, A.D. 1639, HELD AT ST. MARY-CRAY.

(Page 217.)

THE PASTOR'S MOTTO.

2 Corinthians xii. 14.

For I seek not yours, but you.

SERMON XII.

PREACHED IN ST. PAUL'S CHURCH BEFORE THE LORD MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF LONDON, ON APRIL 12, A.D. 1640.

(Page 239.)

THE POOR MAN'S TITHING.

Deuteronomy xxvi. 12, 13.

When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase the third year. . . Then thou shalt say before the Lord thy God . . .

SERMON XIII.

(Page 273.)

Ezekiel xvi. 30.

The work of an imperious whorish woman.

SERMON XIV.

(Page 297.)

Philippians iv. 13.

I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me.

SERMON XV.

(Page 316.)

Proverbs i. 21.

How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity?

SERMON XVI.

(Page 336.)

Matthew i. 23.

Emmanuel, which is by interpretation, God with us.

SERMON XVII.

(Page 353.)

Luke ix. 55.

You know not what spirit you are of.

SERMON XVIII.

(Page 374.)

Ezekiel xviii. 31.

For why will ye die?

SERMON XIX.

(Page 393.)

Jeremiah v. 2.

Though they say, The Lord liveth; surely they swear falsely.

SERMON XX.

(Page 411.)

Luke xviii. 11.

*God, I thank Thee, that I am not as other men, extortioners, &c.,
or even as this publican.*

SERMON XXI.

(Page 444.)

Matthew iii. 3.

Prepare ye the way of the Lord.

SERMON XXII.

(Page 466.)

John vii. 48.

Have any of the Pharisees believed on Him?

SERMON XXIII.

(Page 489.)

Matthew x. 15.

*It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah
in the day of judgment, than for that city.*

SERMON XXIV.

(Page 507.)

Acts xvii. 30.

*And the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now
commandeth all men every where to repent.*

SERMON XXV.

(Page 528.)

Acts xvii. 30.

*And the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now
commandeth all men every where to repent.*

SERMON XXVI.

(Page 550.)

Romans i. 26.

For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections.

SERMON XXVII.

(Page 580.)

Galatians vi. 15.

But a new creature.

SERMON XXVIII.

(Page 598.)

2 Peter iii. 3.

Scoffers walking after their own lusts.

SERMON XXIX.

(Page 616.)

2 Peter iii. 3.

Scoffers walking after their own lusts.

SERMON XXX.

(Page 632.)

1 Timothy i. 15.

Of whom I am the chief.

PARS SECUNDA.

SERMON XXXI.

(Page 648.)

1 Timothy i. 15.

Of whom I am the chief.

SERMON I.

THE CHRISTIAN'S OBLIGATIONS TO PEACE AND CHARITY.

ISAIAH ii. 4.

They shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks.

THE day is the third of Advent, designed by the Church for the celebration of the closer and nearer approach of the Majesty of heaven to this lowly sinful earth of ours, that *εὐλογημένη ἐρχομένη βασιλεία*, "blessed coming kingdom," as it is styled, Mark xi. 10. And the text is a piece of an Advent chapter, the very contents bespeak it so, Isaiah prophesying the coming, i. e. Advent of Christ's kingdom. All the unhappiness of it is, that this part of the prophecy about transforming of swords seems not yet to be fulfilled in our ears, that after so many centuries, Christ is not yet so effectually and thoroughly born amongst us, as was here foretold, that those glorious effects of His incarnation are not yet come to their full date, i. e. in effect, that Christ is come to His birth, and with Him all the well-natured charitable qualities, all the unity and peace and bliss in the world, and through the contrivances of the enemy-power, there is not liberty or "strength to bring forth," all the precious issues of Christianity are resisted and obstructed and stifled in the womb, [Isa. xxxvi.] the temper of the pretending world being so strangely distant from the temper of Christ, the prophecies of His coming having so little of the sword in them, and the practice of Christendom so nothing else. Blessed Lord, that we might once be able to reconcile these contrary *φαινόμενα*, that we might one day celebrate an Advent indeed, and that the completion of the prophecy of this text might be an ingredient

SERMON. in the solemnity, that this of ours might be one of those
 I. nations and people judged and rebuked, i. e. convinced and

converted by the incarnate Saviour, for then would these
 [Isa. ii. 4.] words of the text be verified of us, "They shall beat their
 swords," &c.

The words are the character or effect of Christ's kingdom, of the state and power of His gospel in men's hearts; and I shall view them, first, absolutely, in the several parts or branches of this character: and then relatively, as they are peculiarly verified of the state of the gospel, or as they are a character of that.

In the absolute view you have, 1. The swords and spears on one side. 2. The plough-shares and pruning-hooks on the other. 3. The passage or motion of one of these into the other, by way of beating.

In the relative view we shall, 1. have occasion to vindicate the truth of this prophecy against the contrary appearances. 2. To shew you how, and by what means Christianity undertakes to work this great work, to beat the swords, &c.

I begin with the absolute view, and in that, with the most formidable part of the prospect, the swords and spears. Sharp assaulting piercing weapons found out and forged by the passions and wits of men, to arm their rage, to satisfy their covetings and ambitions, to manage all the quarrels that the carnal or diabolical affections of men have commenced or inflamed through the world. These are the gross elements made use of by the prophet figuratively to express the instruments of our hostilities that lie more covertly in our hearts, these invisible swords and spears, animosities, uncharitable, unpeaceable humours, that Christ came to allay and temper, to transform and beat into other shapes. And to put off the figure, and give you plain words instead of it; three sorts there are of these quarrels or hostilities, which seem all to be comprehended in these words.

1. Though more improperly, our hostilities against God, our rebellions and resistances against His will, our contrary walkings to Him, the throwing off that yoke of moral or
 Ps. ii. [3.] Christian duties, "breaking those bands, casting off those
 cords," and that either, 1. In an universal dislike of His
 [Luke xix. 14.] government, a direct *nolumus hunc*, that professed atheism

that begins to set up to gather disciples and proselytes abroad in the world, that chair of the scorner, that disclaims religion as a pusillanimous thing, a ridiculous pedantic quality, that hath in their opinion dispirited and emasculated the world: or else, 2. By particular oppositions to His commands in the retail, sinning over all the precepts on either mount, taking part with the law of the members, against all the empires of the law of the mind, and under a Christian profession doing as much despite unto Christ as he that hath shut Him out of his mouth, and brain also; and in relation to these hostilities it is, that we ministers are posted from heaven like so many heralds at the news of a battery, or approach of the enemy, to demand a parley, before men proceed any further in their giantly *θεομαχία*, or fighting against God, and our embassy is very submissive, as though God did beseech you by us, as Lot doth the Sodomites on their assault of the angels, "We pray you brethren, do not so wickedly," [Gen. xix. 7.] we pray you in Christ's stead that you will not proceed in your course, that you will be pacified and reconciled unto God; and sure these are formidable slaughtering weapons, very bloody threatening enemies, that make God think fit to send out embassies for treaty, and not venture His heaven to be stormed by them. [2 Cor. v. 20.]

A second sort of hostilities possibly here meant are these against ourselves, the fatalest and bloodiest in the world, the piercing and wounding, and butchering our own poor souls, deforming and enfeebling them with our wasting habits of sin, exhausting the very principles of civil ingenuous nature, leaving never a vital spark or seed of humanity behind, but violating and grieving and quenching all, a direct *felonia de se*, murdering and assassinating these divine creatures which God had prepared to people heaven, and casting them out to the noisomest dunghills, employing them to the meanest offices in the world. Nay hostilities to the flesh itself; those sins that undertake to serve the grosser part of us, to have special fidelities and kindnesses to the flesh in all their warings against the soul, are not yet so faithful in their performances, work oft the greatest malices to that very flesh, cast it sometimes into the fire, sometimes into the water, [Mark ix. 22.] despoil it of all the honour, beauty, spirits, joys, and life

S E R M. I. itself, leave it the piteousest, disfigured, rifled, wasted flesh imaginable, and so have their malices and treacheries against that also. But the truth is, these are but the *προπύγμαί*, or *σκιαμαχίαι*, the prelusory lighter brandishings of these swords: the uncharitablenesses here especially designed are in the third place, those that (as our material swords and spears) are ordinarily employed against our brethren, or fellow Christians, either upon their lives, or their reputations, or their souls.

1. On their lives, when either our ambitions, or revenges, or which is the worst of all, and the bloodiest assassinate (when it is set on it, when it is gotten into the Jesuit chamber of meditation) our *πικρός ζήλος*, bitter envying or zeal, when that I say, like the blood of the mulberries to the elephant, shall inflame us to a brutality, a thirst of our brethren's blood, turning the Christian into a Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the Lord; giving the Church that new notion of militant in shedding as much of other men's blood (and triumphing in that effusion) as in the primitive times it poured out of its own veins, when the heathen persecutors called for it; when Christians shall design God sacrifices, bloody cannibal oblations, and, in that other stern sense of the Apostle's words, *λογικὰς θυσίας*, "rational human sacrifices," whole herds and hecatombs at once, and think to avert judgments, to work expiations, to perform supererogating services to God by that means.

2. On their reputations, whether in the language of the slanderer and reviler, "whose words are spears and arrows, and his tongue a sharp sword," in the Psalmist's dialect, the preparative to that former practising on the life, putting men into wild beasts' skins, that they may be worried, and torn to pieces in their disguises; or whether yet in the higher strain of the censorious anathematizer, that breathes out woes and damnations, passes that bloody sentence upon all that walk not in his path toward Canaan; this spiritual assassinaey, this deepest dye of blood being most satanically designed on souls, and (because they cannot get those into their power) practising it in effigy, slaughtering them here in this the other Calvary, the place for the crucifying of reputations, turning men (upon any, upon no occasion) out of

the communion of their charity, when they cannot out of bliss, and no doubt rejecting many whom the angels entertain more hospitably. SERM.
I.

Lastly, on men's souls, whether by terrors or by invitations, by the sharp or by the soft weapon, working ruin and destruction on them: by the sharp, forcing to violate their consciences in hope to get their bodies or estates off from the torture,—as the Englishman is observed through impatience of any present pressure, to venture the vastest future danger that will pretend to ease or rescue him at the instant, and therefore they say the use of the rack was superseded in this nation,—and they that can be instruments in this savage enterprise, that can thus operate under the great Abaddon, in this profession of assaulting and wounding of souls, for which Christ was content to die, are sure some of the בני דמים “the sons of bloods,” in the plural, as the Hebrews call them; and so he also that is so skilled at the soft weapon, that by the fair insinuating carriage, by the help of the winning address, the siren mode or mien can inspire poison, whisper in destruction to the soul,—as the poetic present that had secret chains in it, fettering and enslaving of him that was pleased with it, ἡσθη τῷ δώρῳ καὶ ἐδέθη, καὶ ὁ λύσων οὐκ ἦν, in the orator, the delight brought shackles, the beauty bands along with it, but no man to loose him that was presently ensnared by them,—he that can tole^a on the tame, well-natured, easily seducible into all the luxury, and the hell, the sin and the damnation imaginable, he is one of the fair-spoken swordmen, that David speaks of, “whose words are softer than butter, and yet are they very swords.” You have had a view of the artillery in the text, the interpretation of the hostile weapons, “the swords and spears,” the furniture of the heathen's armoury before Christ's coming, (good God, that in their travel round about the world, they were not at length all transported hither, and like the teeth of old, sowed and sprung up a whole harvest of swords and spears, of animosities, and uncharitablenesses in this our land!) I hasten to the more innocent tools, the weapons of the husbandman's

^a [Johnson says of this word that it seems to be some barbarous provincial word meaning to train, to draw by de-

grees. It is used by Locke and Fletcher and others.]

S E R M. warfare against his enemies, barrenness and unprofitableness,
 I. the "plough-shares and the pruning-hooks" on the other side, my second particular. The signification of these emblems or hieroglyphics you will soon discern, when you but consider them, first, in the general notion, wherein both of them agree, instruments of husbandry; and then in their several particular proprieties. In the first, they both accord to express unto us the spiritual industry and skill, the office and the craft of dressing and cultivating of souls: we are God's husbandry, His beloved plantation, entrusted ministerially under Him to our own, to our brethren's diligence.

1. Every man to take the care of his own field, his own soul, to help it to all the dressing and improving, to water it with his tears, when it is a dry soil, drain it with action and business, yea, and mix it with new mould, affiance and comfort in Christ when it is too moist, (the dissolving or weeping earth,) and when it is too beggarly and lean, to enrich it with all the whole mine of fatness that lies treasured to that purpose in the Word of God, to ply it through each season from the seed-time of repentance (that sowing in tears), to the harvest in joy and cheerfulness, the bringing our sheaves with us, these worthy meet-fruits of that repentance; this earth of ours, I say, is thus to practise upon itself, or when it can do nothing else (the driest parched unregenerate soul) yet still, with that, to cleave, and open, and gasp toward heaven, to be ready to receive and suck in those showers, those influences which that is ready to afford us, and after all the planting and watering, to acknowledge all to be God's [Ps. cxxvi. 6.] *καρποφορία*, His fructifying or giving of increase. And not only thus every man to be his own husbandman under God, but,

2. Every man again to help in his brother's field, to make his art and trade of husbandry as communicative and gainful as he can, not as the manner is of the covetous worldling, to enclose his skills for fear any man else should be as prosperous as he, but to diffuse our charity, and not only, as the ancients did, write books of husbandry (our spiritual georgics and geonics), but go bodily and labour in the vineyards by our aid, and by our example encourage all the neighbourhood into this trade of thriving, set to that glo-

rious work of civilizing deserts, banishing briars and thorns (to which the lapsed Adam was condemned) quite out of the country, weed out all the ferity and barbarity out of men's minds, bring the whole region from the neglected waste to the trim fruitful inclosure, from the wilderness to the garden, and as far as it is possible towards some degree of return towards Eden, towards paradise again, I mean towards the innocence and fertility of that : and if ever there was a time when the province was large (I would I could say the harvest great) and need to pray to the Lord God of the harvest to send a whole army of labourers, not with their military, but their husbandly instruments for the *ἔργα φιλανθρωπίας, οὐ στρατηγίας*, the grand charitable act, which Cyrus in Xenophon^b preferred before the military, to dress a wild people, and plant some seeds (of Christianity shall I say? nay) of honest civil nature amongst Christians, to make men ingenuous heathens, one pitch above savage or cannibal, to give a little Europe breed instead of a whole Afric of wilder creatures, and so in some measure to take away Christ's reproach, which the most unchristian lives of the generality of Christians have cast upon Him, this certainly were a season for such prayers in Christendom, and all the plough-shares and pruning-hooks in a country would be little enough for that purpose.

But then somewhat is here noted by the particular proprieties of the plough-shares and the pruning-hooks: the plough-shares, they are for the breaking up our fallow grounds, wounding and tearing asunder our firm fast hardened habits of sins, that quarry of earth and stone, with the fair green even surface over it, fetching up the root of the weeds and thorns, our corrupt customs of atheism and profaneness, that grew so voluntarily and so fast, nay, the very green sward, as we call it, the more innocent, blameless face of unregenerate morality, which though it have no great hurt in it, yet must give place to this seed of Christ, furrowing and turning it up all, that there may be the bare earth, as it were, the *solum subactum*, the broken humble contrite heart ready for this new sower, for the infusions of grace, which will never thrive if there be any thing left to

^a [Xen. Cyr. viii. 4. 7.]

S E R M.
I.

[Matt. ix.
37, 38 ;
Luke x. 2.]

[Jer. iv. 3 ;
Hos. x.
12.]

SERM.
I.

encumber or resist, to overtop or wrestle with it: and so you have the interpretation of plough-shares here, the rendering of the impenitent heart, the preparing it for grace, the humbling the proud sinner; and fitting, and softening, and emptying him for Christ.

[John xiii.
10.]

Then for the pruning-hooks, if that be the exact rendering of the Hebrew, you have then under that colour the dressing of God's plantations, the supervenient work of pairing and cutting all excrescences, in the regenerate child of heaven,—parallel to the washing of His feet, which were cleansed already, in Christ's answer to St. Peter,—lopping off the suckers, the luxuriances, that will still return, as long as we have that root and fomes of flesh about us, and if they are suffered to grow too lavishly, will soon suck away all the vital fructifying juice from the branches, at least exhaust very much of that heavenly store, which would be husbanded at the best advantage, every dram more preciously employed.

[Matt. xiii.
30; xxi.
34.]

But if our margin have made the better conjecture, as many times it doth, and the scythes, which you meet with there, carry away the importance of the original from the pruning-hooks, you have then God's calling for His fruits in the time of harvest, sending His mowers into the field, His strict requiring and earnest expecting the plentiful issues of all His care, the growths and fructifyings of His graces; and then put all these together,—as indeed the various readings may both stand good, or the hook or sickle, which may probably be the yet fitter rendering of the word, will supply the place both of text and margin, be accommodable to either, to both uses,—and then you have here the entire positive

[Isa. v. 2—
6.]

business of all Christianity, sometimes to break up, sometimes to prune, sometimes to prepare the fruits for God's barn, to begin, to advance, to perfect that great work of fruit-bearing, that only design of all God's methods and dispensations amongst us, the kindly vintage which He expects so passionately after all His husbandry. And, O what an exprobration will it be to us, the *ecce labruscas* there, our nothing but wild grapes, our sour unsavoury fruits of unrighteousness after all this dressing! And let that serve for the second particular of the absolute view, there is only the third behind, the motion or passage from one of these to the

other, from the swords to the plough-shares, from the spears to the sickles or hooks, and that by way of beating; "they shall beat," &c. S E R M.
I.

The same individual metal, which was even now a sword, having suffered some change in the fire and anvil, comes out new forged in the other shape; the same affections that were even now maliciously acted by Satan, formed and whet at the Philistine's forge, *ὄπλα ἀδικίας*, weapons of all the villainy in the world, the disquieters of the honour and peace of Christendom, the only *boutefeux*^c abroad, our passions and appetites, let them be but transformed by the spirit of Christ, let the fire and hammer pass on them, and without being destroyed in that fire, they come out new moulded, instruments of righteousness, zeal for the reforming our own lives, emulation for purity, and for fructifying; that Saul that was even now an Apostle or messenger of the Jewish consistory to Damascus, and had then such a heart full of swords and spears, was so furious a blasphemer of Christ, and persecutor of Christians, may continue his metal still, his title and almost his name and office, and be the gallanter Apostle of Christ, the more abundant labourer for ever after. Christianity doth not mean such enmity to nature, such scorn and contumely to our human souls, as to throw all away as dross and refuse, to mortify any other members upon earth, but those which signify our sins, "fornication, uncleanness, envyings, seditions," &c. As for the affections or faculties themselves, have they been never so profane and unhallowed, a breathing on them, or a consecrating them anew, a putting them to purer and more honourable uses for the future, will serve the turn; the censers of Corah, with a little change, will become excellent plates for God's sanctuary. Let that love that even now was transported and lavished out on the sensual object, "be baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire," come out a pure ethereal love, fastened on "the beauty of holiness,"—that angelical purity to be transcribed into thine and thy brethren's hearts,—and the more flaming this love is, the more gracious and more acceptable it is like to be. Let but the hostility that is now let loose

^c [Johnson says this word means an incendiary; one who kindles feuds and discontents. It is used in the works of King Charles.]

S E R M.
I.

upon the persons, the sins, the personal affronts, nay, perhaps the graces and virtues of other men, be retrenched and retired, and reflected on our own sins, and then let there be as much steel in the weapons, as much zeal in the revenges and indignations as ever; may but the ambitions and aspirings of the worldling—that, like air, pent up in too close a coop, works such *σεισμούς* and tempests, such shaking palsy fits in the regions about us,—be fastened according to St. Paul's advice on a new object, transformed into the *διώκετε [τὴν]* [1 Cor. xiv. 1.] *ἀγάπην*, "pursuing of charity," as of a prize in the Olympic games, into the *φιλοτιμῆσθε ἡσυχάζειν*, taking as much pains, striving as emulously to contain himself and others in quiet, to restore a battered kingdom to peace again, as contentious men use to put the world into a combustion, and then our swords may become very edifying weapons, our contentions very excellent, profitable contentions, every man striving to surpass and exceed the other in meekness, patience, contented taking up the cross of Christ,—those more than Olympic *ἀγῶνες*, to which the incorruptible crown is assigned,—overcoming men in charity and well doing. Do but you enter into the school of Christ,—the most boisterous raw uncultivated you, that have least of this sacred temper about you,—and that will be able to infuse it: which brings me to my second general, the relative aspect of these words, as they are a character of the gospel state of the kingdom of Christ, and so the fitter for an Advent sermon. And in that we are, I. to consider what truth there is in that prediction to justify and vindicate this prophecy against all the contrary appearances, "they shall beat," &c. One objection it is clear there is against the truth of this prophecy, and it were more for the credit of Christendom that there were an hundred others so this might be superseded, the contrary practice of the generality of Christians.

[2 Pet. iii. 4.] Blessed Lord! where is this promise of Christ's coming, this consequent of His birth and kingdom among men? for since swords came once into the world, since the sweet of revenge and the advantage of spoiling others was once tasted, since that bloody issue once began to break out, what hath all our Christianity done to stop or staunch it? It is true, what historians tell us, that at the time of Christ's birth there was a

notable cessation of arms over the whole world, and the ἀπο-
 γραφή, not taxing but enrolling that brought Christ's parents
 up to Bethlehem, and so occasioned His birth there, was an
 effect and immediate product of that cessation, and it was a
 remarkable act of providence, that upon a former peace and
 so command for that enrolling, in the same Augustus' time,
 proclaimed at Tarracone in Spain, as Sepulveda tells us,—
 which if it had succeeded Christ in any likelihood had not
 been born in Bethlehem,—there brake out some new broils
 that deferred the peace and enrolling till this very point of
 time, when Christ was carried up in Mary's womb to obey
 the prediction of His birth in Bethlehem. But sure all this
 would be but a very imperfect completion of this other pro-
 phecy in my text; this peace was soon at an end, and be-
 sides, was rather the midwife to bring Christ into the world,
 than Christ to bring this peace. And yet to see how some
 observers have been willing to pitch upon this one passage of
 story, the shutting of Janus' temple about the birth of Christ,
 —the catholic peace in that part of the world at that point of
 time,—as the main thing that was pointed at in this verse.

Their reason is clear, because as for a long time before, so
 since that time there was never any such completion of it;
 Christ born in an halcyon hour, had scarce ever any one after-
 wards whilst He lived: and for His posterity He makes the
 profession, "He came not to bring peace, but a sword," that
 is, He foresaw this would be the effect of His coming; Chris-
 tianity would breed new quarrels in the world, some men
 really hating one another upon that score of difference in
 religion,—and they say no feuds are more desperately implac-
 cable, no swords more insatiably thirsty of blood than those
 which Christ brought into the world,—but most men making
 this the πρόφασις, the pretence and excuse of all their bloodi-
 ness. It was Du Plessis' account to Languet, why he had
 not a mind to write the story of the civil wars of France, be-
 cause if he had said truth, he must render new originals and
 causes of these wars, hound that fox to a kennel which would
 not willingly be acknowledged, charge that on an emulation or
 rivalry of state, which (like the harlot, that coming fresh from
 her unclean embraces, had wiped the mouth) came demurely
 and solemnly, and superciliously out of the Church, the only

S E R M.
 I.
 Luke ii. 1.

[Matt. x.
 34.]

S E R M.
I.

sanctuary to give impunity and reputation, apology at least, to the blackest enterprises; and between the *πρόφασις* and the *αίτια*, the true and the pretended causalities, the effect, God knows, is generally too sad. Mahomet that professed to propagate his religion by the sword hath not brought such store of these bloody weapons, so rich a full-stocked artillery into the world, hath not kept them so constantly employed, so sharp set, so riotous in their thirsts of blood, as hath been observable in Christendom. I am sure that Cæsarean section, practising upon our own mothers, our own bowels, fellow Christians, fellow Protestants, fellow professors,—shall I add fellow saints? but sure sanctity, if it were sincere, would turn these swords into plough-shares,—was never so familiar among Turks, or savages; nay, as Erasmus hath sweetly observed, among the wildest beasts in nature,—which are not beast enough to devour those of their own kind,—as it is amongst Christians of this last age almost in every part of the world. Only the bladder of snakes in Epiphanius hath been our parallel, they were there but few hours together but one of them had devoured all the rest, and when—to try the experiment how solitude and want of prey would discipline the devourer's appetite—he was shut up alone in the bladder, his vulturous stomach lets loose upon himself, and within few minutes more one half of him devours the other; so many divided and subdivided enmities, and when all others are wanting such bloody practisings upon ourselves, that if it be true which Psellus saith, that the devils feast on the vapour that is exhaled from the blood of men, sure the Christian devils, and of late the English, are the fattest of the whole herd, the richliest treated of any, since whole tables were furnished for them of the blood and flesh of their worshippers. And thus far I confess myself unable to vindicate this prophecy in this sense of it, that so it should actually prove that Christianity would really drive swords out of the world; I should be glad to be secured by the millenary, that ever there would come an age when this prophecy would thus be completed, but more glad if this nation might have the happiness within some tolerable term to enter upon its millennium, that the *Pacem Domine in diebus nostris*, “Peace in our time, our age, O Lord,” were not such a desperate *non*

licet form, and that for “deliverance from battle and murder,” as scandalous a piece of litany, as that other “from sudden death” hath been deemed among us.

I have sufficiently shewed you in what sense these words have no truth in them; it is time I proceed to shew you in what sense they have: and that will be either,

1. By telling you that this prophetic form is but a phrase to express the duty and obligation of Christians; “they shall beat their swords into plough-shares,” i. e. it is most certainly their duty to do so. Charity is the only precept, peace the only *depositum*, that Christ took any care to leave among them; and then, be there never so many swords in Christian nations, yet it were more obediently and more christianly done, if they were beaten into plough-shares: there is a thousand times more need of amending men’s lives, than of taking them away, of reforming ourselves, than of hating or killing our brethren; one broken heart is a richer and more acceptable sacrifice to God, than a whole pile of such bloody offerings, such Mosaical consecrating ourselves to God upon our brethren; and then, as Clemens^d speaks of seals or rings, that those that have the impressions and sculptures (as of idols, so) of bow, or sword, must not be worn by the disciple of Christ, the pacific Christian; or as the Polonian, being asked concerning two brethren that desired to be of his congregation,—as being of a trade which was suspected to be unlawful, the making of images or faces to put upon guns, or ordnances,—gave answer, that he knew no great danger in those images; if there were any thing unchristian, it was sure in the guns, which they were used to adorn: so certainly that Christ that came to cast idolatry and heathenism out of the world, desired also to cast out that heathenish custom of wallowing in one another’s blood, of hunting, and worrying, and devouring one another, and with the Christian faith to introduce the brotherly charity into His Church, this being the most strict, and most frequently reiterated command of

^d [αἱ δὲ σφραγίδες ἡμῖν ἔστων πελειὰς, ἢ ἰχθύς, ἢ ναῦς οὐρανοδραμοῦσα· ἢ λύρα μουσική, ἢ κέχρηται Πολυκράτης· ἢ ἄγκυρα ναυτική ἦν Σέλευκος ἐνεχράττετο τῇ γλυφῇ· κἂν ἄλιεύων τις ἢ ἀποστόλου μεμῆσται, καὶ τῶν ἐξ ὕδατος ἀνα-

σπαμένων παιδίων· οὐ γὰρ εἰδῶλων πρόσ-
ωπα ἐναποτυπωτέον· οἷς καὶ τὸ προσέ-
χειν ἀπείρηται· οὐδὲ μὴν ξίφος, ἢ τόξον,
τοῖς εἰρήνην διώκουσιν ἢ κύπελλα τοῖς
σωφρονοῦσιν.—S. Clem. Alex., Pæda-
gog.,] lib. iii. cap. 11. [tom. i. p. 289.]

S E R M. Christ, and that the importance of this prophecy, in the first
I. place.

2. The truth of this prophecy will be most clear, if you observe the "They" in the front, and the reflection of that [Isa. ii. 4.] on the former part of the verse, "Christ shall judge among nations, and rebuke many people;" He shall set up His kingdom in men's hearts, subdue and conquer them; that is the meaning of judging,—as the administrators of the Jewish nation, and they that subdued their enemies, were called judges for some time,—and He shall mould men anew into an evangelical temper, that is the interpretation of rebuking; and then, "They," i. e. these subjects of this kingdom of His, these malleable tame evangelical new creatures, that are effectually changed by the spirit and power of Christ's doctrine in their hearts, they that are His disciples indeed, they shall beat their swords into those more edifying shapes, shall profess more christianly trades, and if they do not, be sure they are at the best, if not anti, yet pseudo-christians, either professed enemies, or false friends of Christ; [John xiii. 35.] "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if you love one another:" no other character of difference to distinguish a disciple of Christ from any man else, but the *ecce ut se invicem diligunt*, "behold how they love," how they embrace, not how they pursue, or slaughter, "one another:" and so there you have the difficulty cleared, how it comes to pass that there is so little charity among Christians; why? because there is so little Christianity among Christians, so much of the hypocritical guise, of the form of Christian piety, but so little, so nothing of the power of it discernible among us; had but Christ the least real influence on our hearts, it would inflame and animate us with love; had we any of that "salt within us," the only preservation from putrefaction and rottenness of spirit, it would be as the naturalists observe of it, *ένωτικόν*, *unitive*, and bring along what our Saviour hath joined with it, the peace with others; it is the propriety and peculiarity of the gospel, where it is entertained, to impress this well-natured quality; and wherever it is not impressed, it will not be censorious to affirm, in despite of all the glorious appearances to the contrary, that those men have received the gospel, the name, the grace of

Mark ix.
50.

Christ in vain, which will be demonstrated to you, if I proceed to my second, or last particular, to shew you by what means Christianity undertakes to work this great work, to beat our swords into plough-shares, and our spears, &c. And that is by three strokes, as it were, and impressions upon our souls, 1. by inculcating a peculiar strain of doctrines; 2. by prescribing a peculiar spirit; 3. by setting before us a peculiar example. Every of these very proper moral instruments to this end, though (God knows) the stubborn unmalleable weapons of our warfare have too often the honour of resisting and vanquishing them all.

For the first, his peculiar strains of doctrines, they are of two sorts; either they are the direct contrary to these swords and spears, or else such by way of consequence and result. Directly contrary; such is that of "not avenging ourselves," the *μη ἀντιστηναι τῷ πονηρῷ*, not retributing of trouble or violence to the injurious, but leaving God and His vicegerents to work all these necessary acts of revenge, or repayment; such is that of loving, blessing, praying for enemies; and, let me tell you, not only our own, but (which is worth the considering) our God's enemies: for, 1. such are all the cursers and persecutors of disciples; the true Christian's enemies there spoken of, they are all God's enemies also, as Saul's persecuting of Christians was the persecuting of Christ: there is no possible separating the hatred of the brethren from enmity to Christ, and therefore Polycarpus an apostolical person and bishop and martyr, one of the first angels of Smyrna in the Revelation, commanding to pray for them that persecute us, takes in not only the heathen powers, and princes, the greatest enemies of God then living, but in plain words the *ἐχθροὶ σταυροῦ*, the renouncers and enemies of the cross^e, i. e. certainly of Christ Himself. 2. Such were the Samaritans, direct enemies of Christ, and yet such it will not be permitted the disciples to curse. 3. Because the commandment of mercifulness lying on us proportionably to God's pattern,—to be merciful as our Father in heaven is merciful,—it is there said, that He

S E R M.
I.[2 Cor. vi.
1.][Rom. xii.
19.]
[Matt. v.
39.][Matt. 5.
44.][Phil. iii.
18.][Luke ix.
55.][Luke vi.
36.]

* [S. Polycarp. Ep. ad Philip. cap. 12. The passage does not occur in Greek. The Latin version is, *Orate etiam pro regibus et potestatibus et*

principibus, atque pro persequentibus et odientibus vos, et pro inimicis crucis, ut fructus vester manifestus sit in omnibus, ut sitis in illo perfecti.]

S E R M. I. is merciful to the evil, as well as to the unthankful, to those that have sinned against virtue, in general, as well as against that particular of gratitude; and it is clear, God loves His enemies as well as ours, and out of that love gave His Son for those that had sinned against the first, as well as the second table, and consequently, so are we obliged to do also. Lastly, because St. Paul's reason against avenging ourselves is grounded on God's sole prerogative of punishing malefactors. "As it is written, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay it," saith the Lord; and this privilege of God's sure extends to the punishing of His own, as well as our enemies. Having named this, I need not mention any more plain doctrines of direct contrariety to these hostile weapons; if God hath left us no kind of enemies to hate, neither our own, nor His, the first, the ordinary object of our animosity and revenge; the second, of our very piety and zeal: and so the furious and the pious sword, the Jehu-zeal for the Lord of hosts, as well as that other for ourselves, the slaughtering of Christ's or the Christian's enemies, be quite excluded out of our commissions, then sure there is no excuse for keeping so much profitable metal in that unprofitable, cutting, piercing shape; there is far more use of those materials in another form, in that of the plough-share and pruning-hook, the work of repentance being still as necessary, as that other of uncharitableness is unchristian. But then this is not all that Christ hath done by way of pacific doctrines, some other doctrines He hath as effectually contrary to swords and spears, though not so directly and visibly, some mines more secretly to supplant this bloody temper; such are His teaching His disciples humility, and meekness, and patience, and contentedness with our own, four graces, which if once received into our hearts, are the "breaking the bow," the "knapping the spear asunder," the rending up all unpeaceableness by the roots. What are the roots of strife and contentions among men? or in St. James' style, "from whence come wars, and fightings among you?" *πολεμοὶ* and *μάχαι*, of the greater and lesser size, the piracies of the first or second magnitude, "are they not from the lusts that war and rage in your members?" what be those lusts? why, the spawn of those two great sensual

Rom. xii.
19.

[2 Kings
x. 16.]

[Ps. xlvi.
9.]

[Jas. iv. 1.]

principles, anger and desire, sometimes pride, sometimes stomach, sometimes impatience of injuries, and sometimes, and most especially, covetousness, the desiring to have somewhat which God had not made my lot; and nothing but huddling, and blending, and confusion of proprieties, throwing the lots into the helmet again, can give me hope of attaining it; all the irregular swords and spears in the world are in the hands of these lusts, both to forge and manage, and the graces that Christ prescribes, are sent to drive these all out of the field: the humility that Christ prescribes is directly contrary to that pride; the meekness or obedience to superiors, so inculcated in the New Testament, is the mortifying that stomach; the patience, and taking up the cross, and denying myself that hellish piece of sensuality, that of revenge, *ἀντιπαράσπεται*, is sent out to dwell with that impatience; and contentedness with whatever lot, with that of ravening and coveting. O let but the beatitudes in Matt. v. plant these blessed seeds in us, and our swords will presently be out of fashion, and within a while assaulted and eaten through with the tamest creatures, the rust that themselves beget; your carnal affections will lie useless by you, or else be undiscernibly transformed into calmer and more profitable shapes; and that is the first part of Christ's method in working this change, by a new strain of precepts or doctrines.

His second way is by a new kind of spirit, whether by that we mean the spirit of Christ, or the spirit of the gospel.

1. The spirit of Christ, taken almost in the naturalist's acception of the word "spirit" for a kind of vital or animal spirit. For this flowing from Christ our head, and passing freely through all the members, unites not only to Him, but one to the other also in a vital fellow-membership, to which you know nothing is more contrary or destructive than the sword, division or separation; and this is the argument in St. Paul for the strictest charity, not so much as to tell a falsity one to another,—which is sure less than drawing of swords, calling down fire from heaven one upon another,—because, saith he, "you are members one of another;" all members are united in one spirit. And then though some members are sometimes corrupt and diseased, and therefore

S E R M.
I.

SERM. I. offend and grieve the other members; nay, 2. though one member sometimes work real injury to the other, the petulance of the hand or tongue bring mischief to the whole body: and 3. though the members generally differ in opinion one from the other, the smell liking that which the taste utterly dislikes; yet is neither one nor all of these ground sufficient for any member to bear malice, revenge, any thing but love and tenderness of care and bowels towards the other, because of the uniting spirit that passes through them, and gives them joys and sorrows in sympathy one with another, but never animosities, or indignations, underminings or betrayings one of the other.

But then, 2. that which I chiefly mean by the new kind of spirit, is, the spirit of the gospel. In Luke ix. there is a reference to this,—as to a consideration that all disciples of Christ are much concerned in, and from ignorance whereof all our bloody, and fiery, and thundering designs against our own, or the enemies of Christ do proceed,—*οὐκ οἴδατε οἴου πνεύματος ὑμεῖς*, “you know not,” or consider not, “what kind of spirit you are of:” the gospel spirit, it seems, was peculiarly qualified, a spirit of a special temper, nothing favourable to the proposals of the Boanerges; and if you would know the kind of it, you shall have it, first positively, then negatively; positively the gospel spirit is (a jewel, will you call it, or) an asterism made up of all those celestial gems even now touched on, poverty of spirit, mourning, meekness, purity of heart, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, not after the cannibal-feast of fellow Christians' blood; again, of mercifulness, peace-making, being persecuted and reviled,—and *πᾶν πονηρὸν ῥῆμα*, not a piece of Rabshakeh's railing rhetoric to be had in hell, which is not poured out on them, and endured cheerfully by them in obedience to Christ,—put all these together, and mix with them such a proportion of self-denial, and cheerful following of Christ, whithersoever He leads, and the quintessence, the elixir that by the help of the alembic is fetched out of all these in union, or refraction, is, in the chemist's style, the spirit of the gospel, the spirit of Christianity. If you will yet more perfectly understand it, you must then look on it negatively, as it is in that place by Christ set opposite to the

[Luke ix.
55.]

[2 Kings
xviii. 19.]

spirit of Elias ; Elias' spirit you may discern by the five considerations or respects that his person is capable of. S E R M.
I.

1. Elias was under the law.

2. Elias was a prophet.

3. Elias was a zealot, as the author of the book of Mac-
cabees calls him and Phinehas, and so he was peculiarly in
that passage to which the disciples refer. [1 Mac. ii.
54. 58.]

4. Elias called for judgments from heaven.

5. That judgment was particularly fire.

And proportionably to these five Elias' spirit was

1. A legal spirit. 2. A prophetic spirit. 3. A zealous spirit. 4. A cursing spirit. 5. A fiery spirit. And by the opposition to each and all of these five, you will be able to make up the new qualified spirit, the spirit of the gospel.

I. The legal spirit is that which was observable in the time of the law, especially in order to the planting of the Israelites in Canaan, and rooting out of the inhabitants, and that was a rough, bloody, hating, eradicating spirit ; and that legal is certainly outdated and abolished now, and in its place the spirit of the gospel, a smooth, loving, planting spirit, quite contrary to that.

2. The prophetic spirit was that which received immediate directions from Heaven : I mean not from the supernatural influences and motions of grace preventing, or exciting, sanctifying or assisting in the heart of the regenerate man, but (as the spirit of sanctification and the spirit of prophecy are very distant things, so) I say, from the extraordinary revelations of His will by Urim and Thummim, by vision, by dream, by coming of the Spirit, or of the word of the Lord upon them, or to them, *θεοφορουμένοις*, acted and carried by God. And the gospel spirit is that which after the out-dating of prophecies, pretends to no such special revelations, to no other direction, or incitation, or impulsion of the Spirit, than that which lies visible in the New Testament,—*verbum vehiculum spiritus*, and *διακονία πνεύματος*, the word is it that brings and administers the Spirit unto us,—the Spirit that incites us to perform those duties that the word hath prescribed us,—and if to any thing else, contrary to that, hath then need of the exorcist to bind or cast out that spirit,—the spirit which [1 John
iv. 1.] when it comes to be tried whether it be of God or no, pre-

S E R M. tends not like Mahomet to be a talking with God, whilst he
 I. lies foaming in an epileptic fit, but is content to be judged and discerned by the old plain doctrines of the gospel, a regulated, authorized, ordinary, sober spirit.

Numb.
xxv. 5.

3. The zealous spirit was a thing peculiar among the Jews, introduced and settled by the example of Phinehas and Elias by way of precedent and standing law to that nation, whereby it was lawful when a man was taken in some notorious facts, (specified by their law, idolatry, &c.) to run him through, to kill him in the place, without expecting any legal process against him. This was expressly commanded by Moses, "Slay ye every one the men that are joined to Baal-Peor," and accordingly practised by Phinehas upon incitation from God; and when it was done so by a Jew, in the cases provided by the Jewish law, and by divine impulsion, and the person assured that it was so, there was then no harm in it; but when that incitation from God was but pretended only, not true, when in any case but that prescribed by the law, then it was perfect butchery and villainy even among those Jews: and unless in those few precedents of Phinehas and Elias, and the Maccabees, i. e. zealots,—for so the word Maccabee signifies in the Syriac,—it will be hard to find either in Scripture or Josephus,—where there were whole multitudes of such men,—any one example of this practice justifiable even in a Jew; and in opposition to, and not compliance with that, is the gospel spirit quite contrary to the heights of the Jewish practice, never sheds blood upon any but regular commissions, an obedient, orderly, temperate, cool spirit.

4. The cursing spirit, that may be of two sorts; either in passing judgments on men's future spiritual estates, a censorious damning spirit, such as hath been usual in all kind of heretics almost that ever came into the Church;—*nos spirituales*, "we the spiritual," and in the king of China's style, *fili cœli*, "sons of heaven," and all others *animales et psychici*, "animal carnal men;"—or 2. in wishing, praying, calling for curses either on God's or our enemies; and you may know the gospel spirit by the opposition to these, a hoping, charitable, merciful, deprecating, blessing spirit.

Lastly, the fiery spirit is a vehement, violent, untractable, unreconcilable spirit, sets all, wherever it comes, into a

flame and combustion, and will never have peace with any thing which it can possibly consume; nay further, it infuseth warmth, and distempers, and turbulencies into all that come within any reach of it, communicates and diffuses its violences to all others; and the ~~gospel~~ spirit is direct antipodes to that, an allaying, quenching, quieting, cooling spirit. And so you see this ~~gospel~~ spirit, the spirit of the gospel, of what a temper it is in all these respects, a spirit more fit than lightning to melt the swords in our scabbards, to new forge these hostile weapons into those that are more civil and profitable; and that was the second course by which Christianity was to work this metamorphosis, to beat these swords, &c.

3. And lastly, our Saviour hath contributed toward this great work by the exemplariness of His own practice in this kind; not only, in the first place, in refusing to have the fire from heaven, that the Boanerges would have helped Him to, [Luke ix. 54, 55.] against the Samaritans,—professed enemies of Christ, and of all that had any kind looks toward Jerusalem; and besides, notorious heretics and schismatics, and yet pretenders to the only purity and antiquity, against all sense and reason, and so most arrogant hypocrites also; and yet all this not enough to inflame Christ's Spirit into that of Elias', or to change His temper into any thing of zeal or anger against these:—nor only, in the second place, in reprehending and trashing of St. Peter's zeal, when it drew the sword in his Master's defence against the high-priest's servants, and indeed against the very crucifiers of Christ: nor only, in the third place, in refusing the aid even of angels from heaven (when they were ready upon His summons) against the heathens that attached Him: but fourthly, and above all, by that answer of His to Pilate, "If My kingdom were of this world, then should My servants fight," &c.,—which was certainly part of that good confession before Pilate mentioned with such honour, 1 Tim. vi. 13,—inferring that because His kingdom was not of this world, because He was not a worldly or an earthly king, therefore His servants were not to fight for Him against a legal power of heathens, though it were but to save Him from crucifying. It is clear it was one of His accusers' main hopes to find Him in Judas Gaulonita's doctrine, that "it was unlawful for God's people (and so for Him that under-

[Matt. xxvi. 52, 53.]

John xviii. 36.

S E R M. I. took to be God's Son) to be subject to idolaters," making advantage of piety (as the Gnostics after did) toward their secular ends, the freeing themselves from subjection in this world: but our Saviour every where disclaims that doctrine; both vindicating Cæsar's use by his coin, and in that good confession to Pilate, which it is demonstrable, that what was not to be done in defence of Christ when He was in that danger and under that persecution, is no more to be attempted in that case for religion, for Christianity itself. I shall shut up this by leaving in your hands that most glorious lively image of His whole soul and life, delivered to us in one medal, that "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest unto your souls." To which if you add the sealing, and the practising of this, in the giving up His soul, laying down His life, an offering of charity even for enemies, and yet further for those enemies' souls, this one amulet hung about your necks, one would think were sufficient to charm all the weapons of our warfare, that are so unmercifully carnal, to exorcise and conjure all the swords and spears out of the world, to work new transfigurations and metamorphoses among us, to return the bears and vultures into their old human shapes again, and proclaim an universal truce to all the military affections we carry about us, to our wraths, our covetings, our aspirings, a Sabbath, a jubilee of rest and peace, like that which Jamblichus talks of in the spheres, a *καθολικὴ ἁρμονία*^f, a catholic constant harmony and accord, a present pacification of all our intestine broils, and so a quiet and rest unto our souls; and till this be done, till this Advent prophecy be fulfilled in your ears, you must know there is little of Christianity among us, little of evangelical graces, or evangelical spirit, nothing but legal at the best. That in God's good time there may be more, not in the brain or tongue to elevate the one or adorn the other, but in the *βάθος καρδίας*, the depth and sincerity of the heart, more of the work and power, the spirit and vital energy of the gospel, God of His infinite mercy grant us all, even for the sake and through the operation of His Son Jesus Christ, that wonderful counsellor, that mighty God, that Father of this evangelical state, that Prince, and that God of

Matt. xxii.
21.
[1 Tim. vi.
13.]

[Matt. xi.
29.]

[Isa. ix. 6.]

^f [Vide Jamblich. de Vita Pythag., p. 52. 4to. Amst. 1707.]

peace; to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be ascribed as is most due, the honour, the glory, power, praise, S E R M.
I.
might, majesty, and dominion, which through all ages of the world hath been given to Him that sitteth on the throne, to the Holy Spirit, and to the Father evermore. *Amen.*

SERMON II.

CHRIST'S EASY YOKE.

MATT. xi. 30.

My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.

S E R M. T H A T the Christian's heaven should be acknowledged his
— I. — only blissful state, and yet they which pant for bliss never

[Hag. ii.
7.]

[Isa. liii.
2.]

[Num. xiii.
32; xiv.
36, 37.]

[Num.
xiii. 33;
Deut. ix.
2.]

think fit to enquire after it: that Christ, the way to that heaven, should be truly styled by one prophet, "the desire of all nations;" and yet they that look on Him be affirmed by another prophet, "to see nothing in Him that they should desire Him:" that a rational creature should be made up of such contradictions, as to desire life most importunately, and yet as passionately to make love to death; to profess such kindness to immaterial joys, and yet immerse and douse himself in carnal; to groan and languish for salvation, i. e. an eternal state of purity, and yet to disclaim and fly it, whensoever any impure delight is to be parted with; might have leave to exercise and pose a considering man, were there not one clear account to be given of this prodigy, one reason of this fury, the many "evil reports that are brought up of the way to this good land," the prejudices, fatal prejudices, infused into us, the vehement dislikes and quarrels to all Christian practice, that only passage to our only bliss. We have heard of an angel with a flaming sword at the gate of paradise, which our poetic fear and fancies have transformed into a serpent at the door of the Hesperides' garden,—that angel fallen and turned into a devil,—we have heard of the cannibal Anakims in the confines of the promised land, that devour all that travel toward that region: and our cowardly sluggish aguish fancies have transplanted all these into

Christendom, made them but emblems of Christ's *duri sermone*, the hard tasks, unmerciful burdens that He lays on His disciples, yea and conjured up a many spirits and fairies more, sad direful apparitions, and sent them out all a commanded party to repel or to trash us, to intercept or encumber our passage toward Canaan, to pillage and despoil the soul of all Christian practice, of all that is duty in discipleship.

Three of these prejudices our Saviour seems to have foreseen and prevented in the words of this text.

1. That there is no need of doing any thing in discipleship; Christ came to free from yokes, to release from burdens, the gospel is made all of promises, obedience to precepts is a mere unnecessary; and for the preventing of that prejudice, you have here as a yoke, and a burden, so both of Christ's owning, *ζυγός μου* and *φορτίον μου*, "My yoke and My burden."

A second prejudice of them that being forced to confess the necessity of Christian obedience, do yet resolve it impossible to be performed, discerning the burdens in my text, must have them unsupportable burdens, no hope, no possibility for us to move under them; and then *studium cum spe senescit*, their industry is as faint as their hope, desperation stands them in as much stead as libertinism did the other, they are beholden to the weight of their burdens for a *supersedeas* for taking them up: and for the preventing of that prejudice, you have here this character of Christ's burden, not only supportable, but light, "My burden is a light burden."

A third prejudice there is yet behind, of those that having yielded the both necessity and possibility of Christian obedience, are yet possessed of the unpleasingness and bitterness of it, like those in the prophet, cry out, "The burden of the Lord, the burden of the Lord," the yoke a joyless melancholic yoke, the burden a galling pinching burden; and to them hath our Saviour designed the *χρηστὸν* here, as the most significative epithet to express the nature of the Christian yoke: we have rendered it but imperfectly, "My yoke is easy;" it signifies more richly, "My yoke is a benign yoke," all pleasure and profit made up in the word *Κύριος χρηστὸς*,

[Jer. xxiii.
38.]

S E R M. "the Lord is gracious;" τὸ χρηστὸν τοῦ θεοῦ, signifies, "the bounty," we render it, the "goodness of God," that which immediately before is, "the riches of His bounty," and proportionably the ζυγὸς χρηστὸς, "a gracious bountiful yoke," a mine, a treasure of bounty, a good, a joyous, and a gainful yoke.

II. —
1 Pet. ii. 3.
Rom. ii. 4.

And he that is thus answered in all his objections, confuted in all his fears, and prejudices, and excuses for libertinism, if he do not acknowledge the reasonableness of Christ's advice, "take My yoke upon you," take it for its own sake, though it were not laid upon you by Christ, My necessary, My light, My gracious yoke; he that will not accept of some office in the house of so good a master, I know not what kind of address to make to him, I must leave him to Pythagoras' spondes, that could cure a madman, καὶ ἐπινοροθοῦν, rectify the errors of his appetite first, and then his mind, first of his spleen, and then his brain, before any portion of this bread of life will be diet for him.

I have drawn you the lines which lie folded up in this text; the filling each up with colours in the shortest manner I could devise, would prove a work of more time than is now my portion. The expedient I have resolved on is, to leap over the two former, and only fasten on my last particular, as that which includes and supposes the two former, as that which will bring its reward with it, invite and feed your patience, and in all probability obtain your belief, because there is never an interest, never a passion about you that it contradicts.

Your patience being thus armed with a sight of the gesses^a, but one stage, and that the smoothest you ever passed, I shall presume you ready to set out with me; and it is to consider that anticipation of the third prejudice in the epithet affixed to Christ's yoke, in the fulness of its significance, ζυγὸς μου χρηστὸς, "My yoke is a benign, a gracious, a pleasant, a good, and a gainful yoke."

^a [This word, which is often used by Hammond, is said in Todd's edition of Johnson's Dictionary to mean "a stage: so much of a journey as passes without interruption." It is not as Todd supposes an error of the press for 'gest.'

Richardson's Dictionary speaks of it also as the same word as gest, deriving it from *giste*, a couch or place to rest in, and this from the word *gēsir*, to lie, which he further traces to the Latin *jacere*.]

Yea, and that in this life, at the taking the yoke upon you; a present goodness in it here, though there were never a treasure of rewards, never a heaven after it: at least as the present paradise of a true disciple is considered apart, abstracted from that future expectation, "My yoke is a good yoke," is for the present; the ἐστὶ, "is," hath an influence on the χρῆστος, as well as on the ἐλαφρόν, on the gainfulness of the yoke, as well as the supportableness of the burden. And so you see the full of my scope, the utmost of my design, the present advantages of a Christian course, the instant goodness of Christ's service beyond all other callings and preferments in the world; a yoke, but that a good one, a yoke that shall never be repented of by him that bears it, whatever it be apprehended to cost him at the taking up.

And 1. you may please to observe that a yoke hath nothing of hardship in it, it is smoothed and fitted to the neck, rather to ease than press, rather to defend than gall; not as a weight or burden, but only an instrument of advantage, to make the burden that is to be undergone more easy and supportable; and therefore our Saviour counts of it as that which a rational man would be content to take up of his own accord, if he knew the benefit of it, "take My yoke upon you," and be richly rewarded in the taking, "and you shall find rest unto your soul." The entrance on discipleship, making the new vow, converting to God, is this taking Christ's yoke upon us, (as the performing the vow, the practice of the several duties, is the moving under the burden.) And, to prevent mistakes, to forestal all possible objections, I shall acknowledge to you that there is some difficulty in that taking, though not in that yoke, τρηχὺς τὸ πρῶτον, some difficulty in the first setting out, in the breaking off from the former course whatsoever it were, somewhat of fancy, somewhat of interests against it.

Of fancy: to take leave of an old familiar, to carry out the whole body of sin to its funeral,—that *pompa mortis*, so much more grievous than death itself,—to give up the earth to earth, corruption to corruption, with all the pompous solemnities attendant on an hearse; this, I say, hath somewhat of sadness in it, especially to the inferior brutish part of the man, like the Persian commander in Herodotus, his

SERM.
II.

[Matt. xi.
29.]

S E R M. fall is lamented by the horses, and oxen, and Bœotians, all
 II. the bestial rude herd of man joining in the *θηρωδία*.

So besides, there is somewhat of interests, some uneasiness again in the motion necessary to so vast a change, some injury to the old possessors, *aliquid iniqui*, somewhat of pressure in the change itself; some pain in spiritualizing of flesh, racking it, fetching it from the leas, rarifying and attenuating the *πνεῦμα παχυνόμενον ἀπὸ μοχθηρᾶς διαίτης*, the spirit incrassate by vicious diet, as Philoponus calls the habituate sinner, of returning the gross habit of sin to a spareness and slenderness of stature, an exinanition of that carnal appetite which hath brought in all the grosser joys which hitherto we have fed on; and the truth is, this even with St. Paul himself goes for a mysterious piece, "Behold I shew you a mystery, we shall all be changed;" the change of the natural to a spiritual body is a greater work than the raising of the dead: no wonder then that the natural man generally is not so well satisfied with this. Saul is fain to be struck down in the place; a kind of *λειποψυχία*, or "swooning fit," an piration of the animal man necessary to so great a change; as the LXXII have cast Adam not into a sleep (as the Hebrew text) but into an *ἔκστασις*, a being hurried out of himself to make him capable of an helper. Thus when Christ was first born in Bethlechem, Herod the king was troubled and all Jerusalem with him. Such great stupendous felicities are not brought forth without some pangs at birth, some unpleasant throes at the delivery; the very earthly Canaan is not come to, but by passing through a proœmial wilderness. Thus much by way of concession of the some difficulty to the carnal man in taking up of Christ's yoke, the minute of the new creation. But that being supposed,

Let me now tell you, this is all that is of hardship in the Christian's life, all the unacceptable even to flesh and blood, the instant of putting on the yoke, of entering into the traces, of harnessing for the future race, *ὠδίνες θανάτου*, as the Greek in the Acts reads it, "the child-birth pangs of dying to sin, of mortifying" *πάθη ἐπὶ γῆς*, the affections that are so fastened on the earth, that like a plantagnus torn from its soil, they bleat and roar again; the concussion or flesh-quake that follows the sudden stop in the vehement course, the vertigo that

1 Cor. xv.
[51.]

[Gen. ii.
21.]

[Matt. ii.
3.]

[Acts ii.
24.]

the forcible turn in the rapid motion begets, the smart that the passing through the purgative fire costs us; and the fear of this one sharp minute is that that betrays us to all the drudgery and torments in the world, that which makes us so shy of piety, so afraid of all spiritual conceptions: as, you know, that one terror of dying, parting of such ancient mates, makes some good men not over-willing to be with Christ, though they acknowledge it never so much a more valuable state; whereas could we but arm ourselves for this one act of spiritual daring, the pain of ascending the mount Tabor, and being transfigured with Christ, we should soon resolve of the *bonum est esse hic*, "it is good for us to be here," [Matt. xvii. 4.] and set presently to build us tabernacles, never to return to our old shapes or tents again; could we but resolve to set out on this voyage, encounter this one giant, son of Anak, the breaking off from our old customs, there were then nothing but Canaan behind, that *οὐθαρ ἀρούρης*^h, as once Homer called Greece, "the pap of the earth," that fountain of milk and hive of honey,—all the bees and hornets driven out of it,—a succession of uninterrupted felicities streaming through it. Could we but repel the fancy, or support the pangs of one short travail, in contemplation of the joy which the man-child will within a few minutes bring into the world with him, *ῥηϊδίη δ' ἤπειτα πέλει*ⁱ, I am confident Christ would be once more not only *προσδοκία ἐθνῶν*, in Jacob's prophecy, [Gen. xlix. 10.] not only the expectation, but withal the joy, the sensuality of the very Gentiles, that which flesh and blood, man in every of his most inferior capacities, the rational, the moral, yea, and the carnal man would thirst with more joy, taste with more ravishment, devour with less satiety than aught which his present confections of luxury did ever yield him, and thence break out into the Virgin Mother's *Magnificat*, a transportation of joy for the approach of the birth of so much blessedness; or into old Simeon's *Nunc dimittis*, desire no more joy in this life, than that which infallibly attends the taking a Saviour into his arms, those intimate embraces of Christ in the regenerate heart.

To make this more visible and acknowledged in the retail

^h [Il. ix. 141, 283.]

ⁱ Hesiod. [Op. et Dies,] lib. i. [290.]

SERM. II. than it is in the gross, in the coin than it is in the bullion, I shall require your patience but to these two heads of probation: one, by viewing severally some of the chief duties of Christianity: the other, by enumeration of the special good things which have ever been prized by mankind.

The first, I say, by surveying the duties of a Christian, the tasks that are prescribed him by Christ, the particulars of his yoke and burden. Consider them a while, and if they be not the object of all other men's envy, if his toils be not demonstrably the vastest pleasures, his exercises the most joyous diversions and highest rank of entertainments that any mortal hath arrived to, I shall be content with Cassandra's fate, never to be credited in my affirmations.

[Matt. xxv. 21.]

For instance, well-doing in general, in the first place, the conscience of any degree of that, of having discharged any part of duty, that *euge bone serve*, from the god within thee, what a ravishment is it to any the meanest undertaker, what an olio of all high tastes compounded together? Their very enemies could say it of the Athenians in Thucydides, that "there was nothing that they could count feast or banquet, but the having done what they oughtⁱ." And the Persians^k, when they beheld the solemnity of the Grecian Olympic games, such courage and patience of the combatants, and no reward expected but an olive crown, expostulate with Mardonius, why dost thou bring us to fight against those who fight not for money, but virtue? A conscience of having done well, served in with a few leaves about it, was it seems the daintiest dish, and most animating, emboldening reward in nature. And if a Christian cannot outvie those heathens, if it be not in our breasts, as it is in the translations of our

[Prov. xv. 13. 15.]

Bibles, "a merry heart," all one with "a good conscience," and the attribute of that "a continual feast" to thee as it was to Solomon, believe it, thy taste is mortified, thou art no competent judge of dainties: and that is one part, or indeed the sum of all Christ's yoke, ἀγαθὴ συνείδησις ἐν πᾶσιν, "in all things a good conscience."

[Heb. xiii. 18.]

In the second place, not to lead you out of the most vulgar

ⁱ μήτε ἐορτὴν ἄλλο τι ἡγίζεσθαι ἢ τὸ πέν] ἀγαθὸς [οὐ] πᾶσαν ἡμέραν ἐορτὴν τὰ δέοντα πράξαι.—[Thuc. i. 70.] And ἡγείται; Diogenes in Plutarch. de [animi] tranquill. [tom. ii. p. 177 C.] ἀνὴρ [δὲ, εἰ-^k Herod., lib. viii. [cap. 26.]

road, that our discourse may be the more demonstrative, the trinity of theological virtues, faith, hope, and charity, what are they but so many elevations of the soul above all that is mean and painful; so many steps of entrance into obedience and bliss, into discipleship and paradise together? SERM. II.

For "faith," it is St. Peter's expression, *πιστεύοντες ἀγαλλιάσθε*, "believing, you do exult for joy;" faith naturally hath that acquiescence and joy in it, and that a *χαρὰ ἀνεκλάλητος καὶ δεδοξασμένη*, an inexpressible and glorified joy, even in this life. Take it but in the meaner of its offices, as it is a trusting God with our temporal weal, a full submission not only to the will but wisdom of God, a resolution that God can choose for us better than we for ourselves, that whatever He sends, His hottest or bitterest potion, is fit for our turns, and so, absolutely better, and even to us (when we see it is His will) more eligible, more desirable than any thing we could have prayed for. That cheerful valiant resignation of all into God's hands, with an old Eli's *Dominus est*, "It is the Lord," let Him do what seemeth Him good, [1 Sam. iii. 18.] what a blessed pill of rest is this unto the soul! what a sabbath from all that servile work, those horrid perjuries, those base submissions, that the covetous mammonist or cowardly trembler drudges under! Though the earth shake, or the hills be carried into the midst of the sea, he is the cube indeed that Socrates pretended to be, he hath a basis that will not fail, his feet stand fast, he believeth in the Lord. He hath gotten a superiority of mind, that all this region of meteors cannot disquiet; he hath rifled all the sects of the old philosophers, robbed each of them of his master-piece, the sceptic of his *ἀδιαφορία* and *ἀταραξία*, indifference and untroubledness, the Stoic of his *μὴ ποιεῖν τραγωδίας*¹, he hath none of the tragical complaints how tragical soever his sufferings be, and Epicurus of his *γαλήνη*, tranquillity or calm of mind, to the acquiring of which all his philosophy was designed, a thing so hugely pleasurable, that he hath been taken for a carnal voluptuous swine ever since, upon no other merit but for seeking out those great composers of the soul, so much beyond all other sensuality: those boasts, I say, and prides, those dreams and wishes of

¹ [Vide Antonini ad Scipsum, lib. iii. cap. 7.]

S E R M. those philosophers, are now the reality and acquisition of a
 II.

Christian, an epicurism which faith, and only faith, undertakes to furnish us with. A thing so deeply considerable, that I cannot but resolve all the differences of men's estates and fortunes as well as souls, their secular felicity and infelicity, as well as piety and impiety, to proceed from this one fountain opened by Christ to the house of David. No prince more happy than the peasant in the present advantages of this life, but as he hath more faith than he, the spring of our daily misery as well as our sins is the ὦ δὲ λιγὸ-πιστοί, "O ye of little faith."

[Matt. vi. 30.]

And so certainly for hope, that second Christian gem, that royal high-priest of ours that enters within the veil, takes possession beforehand of all that is rich or secret, brings down all the treasures of another world to be our daily portion in this, hope of eternity, hope of heaven, you will not wonder if I assure you it is a far pleasanter companion than the possession of all worldly preferments. You would be amazed to hear a papist describe his purgatory flames so scorching, and yet go cheerfully out of this world into the midst of those flames; but he will satisfy your wonder when he tells you that the expectation of the heavenly joys that those flames do confirm and ascertain to him, though after never so many hundred years, "the precious hope that dwells there", and the assurance of a title in heaven", a portion in that glorious ἀπογραφῆ, or enrolment, is richly sufficient to allay those flames, to make those scorplings supportable." And then judge what a confluence of pleasures is this one grace supposed to be, which is resolved sufficient to sweeten and recommend a Tophet, to make torments desirable; like the kind gales and benign vapours under the line that Manardus tells of°, which make the torridest clime habitable; and the presence of that fourth in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, which makes the three children sing in the midst of flames.

[Dan. iii. 25.]

[1 Cor. xiii. 13.]

As for charity, that is certainly the μείζων τούτων, superior to either faith or hope, for joy and pleasure, as well as use and excellency. Can there be any thing so ravishing as love,

^m μούνη δ' αὐτόθι ἐλπῖς.—[Hesiod. Op. et Dies i. 96.]

ⁿ τοῦνομα ἐν Διὶς ἀλλῆ.
^o Epist. medicin.

love of so for ever-satisfying a beauty, that heroical improvement and elevation of soul, the want of which is as great a punishment as it is a sin, as much of hell in the extinction of this flame as in the raging of that, in the chill numbed as in the raving tormented spirit, as fatal a lethargy from the one as fever from the other. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha," saith St. Paul. Blessed Apostle, I cannot imagine thy gospel spirit could permit thee to deliver those words as a wish or prayer for curses on any even enemy of Christ; may not this form of speech be a scheme of apostolic rhetoric? "If any man love not the Lord Jesus," he is, and shall be, for the very present he is the interpretation of those thundering sounds, "anathema maranatha," a miserable accursed creature; the very not loving, the chilling of that blessed passion within his breast, is the saddest curse that the devil could design his hatedest enemy.

Add unto this that other branch of charity, that ray which Prometheus in the figure stole from heaven to inspire and warm the world with, that inferior elementary fire, love of our fellow-men, our fellow-Christians, and tell me if there be any thing so capable not only of the *quam bonum*, but the *quam jucundum* too, that hath so much of the pleasant as well as the virtuous in the composition. The ground of all pleasure is agreement and proportionableness to the temper and constitution of any thing; the reason, saith Boethius, "that men love music so well, is the answerableness of the notes in that to those observed by nature in the fabric of our bodies:" and say we, is there any thing so agreeable and harmonical, so consonant to our reasonable nature, to the ingenuity of our kind, and consequently so universally delightful to all, that have not put off man in exchange for panther and tiger, as that which Christ hath left us our duty, yea and our reward, the loving of the brethren; that language, that song of love that we are to practise here, that we may chant it in heaven eternally? It is said to be a speech of Christ's which the Nazarene Gospel hath recorded, though our Bibles have not,—and it seems by St. John, all was not written which Christ spake to them,—*Nunquam læti sitis nisi cum fratrem in charitate videritis*, "There is no spectacle of

[1 Cor.
xvi. 22.][John xx.
30; xxi.
25.]

SERM. II. delight to a Christian," nothing of value sufficient for a disciple to rejoice at, "but to see his fellow-disciples embracing one another in love;" and they say Mahomet was such an admirer of this quality, that "he once resolved to have inserted a precept of good-fellowship among his laws, because he thought he had observed" (though most ridiculously mistaken) "that that which is indeed the bane, was a promoter of this charity." I conceive I have the suffrage of all mankind, that "charity is a pleasing grace," and of the wisest and most pondering observers, that "friendship is the only sweet neighbour and companion of life^p," that which being drained from its baser mixtures,—which would otherwise cause satiety,—becomes the prime ingredient in the glorified saints, of whose state we understand little, but that they are happy and love one another, and in that for ever happy, that they for ever love one another; *charitas nunquam excidit*, and so their bliss *nunquam excidit* neither. And then, behold and admire the goodness of this yoke; Christ's design even in this life to set up charity, friendship above all virtues, as high as it is above all felicities, to settle that for the prime Christian duty which hath most of present blessedness in it, to make that our burden which is our bliss, our yoke which is our boon, and withal to separate it from all those mixtures which would either embitter or shorten, cool or satiate our love, the lusts and excesses and the prides, that would make the most ingenuous delight either less ingenuous or less delightful; that love of my brother's virtues, love of his soul; love of the nature that Christ assumed and died for, and carried to heaven with Him; love of the image of God in Him, that most transporting durable pleasure; and all this will be abundantly sufficient to make up a second instance of the *χρηστός ζυγός*, the graciousness and pleasantness of this yoke.

[1 Cor. xiii. 8.]

[Ex. xx. 17.]

A third shall be by referring you to the most extemporary view of the commands of the Decalogue, which Christ came not to destroy, but to fill up and perfect. Temperance is the only epicurism; continence or conjugal chastity the only *supersedeas* to that black flame that is the incontinent's daily hell even in this life: but above all, that precept of the Old, and mystery or craft of the New Testament, "Thou shalt not

^p ἡδὺς γέλτων τῆς ἡμετέρας ζωῆς.

covet," that of contentment with whatsoever lot, the prohibition of all desires, which seemeth such a galling restraint to the carnal man, with his bored tub of insatiate desire, as Jamblichus calls it, about him, but to him that hath taken this yoke upon him, is the gainfullest, not duty, but donative, not burden, but purchase, and preferment, that any mortal is capable of. The philosopher could resolve it the way to help any man to whatever he wanted, *destrahere cupiditatibus*, to pare so much off from his desires, as his desires were larger than his fortune. To bring down his ambitions to his lot, would be as rich a prize as the compassing and acquiring all his ambitions: contentment is (in earnest) the philosopher's stone, that makes gold of any thing; the Pandora's box, that hath all wealth, and honour, and pleasure in its disposing; makes the poorest eremite, the richest possessor; the most scorned abject, the most honourable person; the recluse, or the mortified Christian, the most voluptuous liver in a kingdom; every diminution that can come by the malice of men or devils, a pleasurable calamity^s; whilst the largest possessions in nature, without this one skill, *ἔμαθον καὶ μεμύημαι*, this sovereign piece of alchymy, are still the perfectest beggary imaginable. The devil's whole map or landscape of all the kingdoms and glory, if (as liberally offered, so) actually bestowed, is not able to satisfy the lusts of one eye; much less to fill up the angles and vacuities of one heart without it. That one prudent instruction of

Quod sis esse velis nihilque malis^t,

in one poet, or

Permites ipsis expendere numinibus^u

in another, or

ἀλλ' ἔχε συγῆ μῦθον, ἐπίτρεψον δὲ θεοῖσι

in a third^x, "stand still and see the salvation of our God," is [Ex. xiv. a far richer provision than all their more glittering fictions of golden apples, and golden showers, and golden fleeces, and ^{13.}]

^q *πᾶσα ἐπιθυμία.*

^r *πίθος τετρημένος ἀπέραντος ἐπιθυμία.*

^s [*τοῖς δ' ἐγὼ ἀντὶ πυρὸς δώσω*] *κακὸν, ὃ κεν [ἅπαντες]*

τέρπωνται [κατὰ θυμὸν, ἐν κακὸν ἀμφαγαπῶντες.]

— Hesiod. Op. et Dies i. [58.]

^t [Martial. x. 47.]

^u Juv. x. 347.

^x Od. τ'. [502.]

S E R M. golden rods, that could make such sudden metamorphoses,
 II. yea and of the χρύσεια δίκτυα^y, the golden nets, the golden
 [Luke xx. ages can afford us. "In heaven," saith Christ, "they neither
 35, 36.] eat, nor drink, marry, nor are given in marriage," and yet
 are better satisfied and pleased than they below that are fed
 in Mahomet's dining-room, or lodged in his seraglio: the
 not desiring those pleasures of life is to them the same thing
 with advantage that the enjoying them is to others,—as the
 poet that begs two things of Mars^z, "either valour for war,
 or peace that he may not need that valour," would be richly
 provided for, which soever was granted him:—and this is, in
 Christ's language, being ισάγγελοι, "equal to the very
 angels." It seems it is the angels' special advantage above
 us men, that they desire not the ταῦτα πάντα, the "all these
 things," which the luggage of flesh about us makes to us so
 necessary; and no such crane, such engine to elevate our
 nature to this ἰσαγγελία, to this so "angelical a state," as
 μὴ ἐπιθυμεῖν, this so liberal a "science of contentment,"
 which not only makes romances creditable, finds mines in
 our closets, under every cushion we kneel on, rains down
 both the Indies into our treasury, satisfies all our needs, fills
 all our vacuities, but is withal the noblest act of wisdom, of
 superiority of mind, of prowess, and conquest of ourselves,
 that any book but that of life, any place but heaven can give
 us story of; and therefore sure a ζυγὸς χρηστὸς, "a yoke,"
 a command of Christ, but that a benign and gainful yoke, in
 the third place.

A fourth instance I cannot omit, though I suppose the
 most vulgar fancy hath prevented me in it,—because Aris-
 totle hath a note in his Rhetorics that "some kind of auditors
 are most wrought upon by such,"—and that is from the
 catalogue of the blessing graces, in the fifth of Matthew,
 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, the meek," &c. In the pre-
 sent they are blessed, yea and would be so, though there
 were never a heaven of blessedness behind for them. Will
 you examine the truth of this in a few of them?

1. Poverty of spirit: whether a preparation of spirit to be

^y [χρύσεια δῶρα.—Hom.] Od. π'. [185.]

^z $\frac{\text{θάρος}}{\text{δὸς μάκαρ, εἰρήνης τε}}$ θάρσος

δὸς μάκαρ, εἰρήνης τε [μένειν ἐν ἀπήμοσι θεσμοῖς.]

Hom. hymn. in Mart. [15.]

poor, and then it is blessed contentment that just now we parted with; or whether it be humility, blessed humility, and then, beside the advantages it hath toward another life, "grace to the humble, to the humble more grace," and at last heaven to the humble, yea, and more heaven,—as in the learned rules of husbandry they are appointed "to plough, to sow, and to reap too all naked^a," humility portrayed by that nakedness, being the only auspicious posture, the only catholic qualification for all seasons:—beside these advantages, I say, it is over and above, even in the eye of the world, an amiable graceful quality, hath a present secular blessedness in it, a calm of soul to itself, a controlling loveliness in respect of others, and a world of conveniences attending it. It is that wherein heaven and earth are met as rivals: God Himself a making court to it, "With him will I dwell," and in the oracle, γάνυμαι τόσον ὅσον Ὀλύμπῳ there are two residences, palaces, thrones for God, heaven and an humble soul; and for men, a plain φίλτρον and θελκτήριον, to them, an enchantment or charm of respect and love, wherever it is met with; whereas in the mean time pride goes alone in state, only with a train of menial scorns and curses after it; it is a kind of excommunicating sin, drives away confidants, counsellors, servants, graces, the very credit and reputation which it courts, all kind of company but devils and parasites, that *pessimum genus inimicorum*, that worst kind of devil of the two. So true is that of Solomon, "Better is it to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud:" the comparison there is set as betwixt the lowly and proud, so betwixt the humble spirit and dividing the spoil; there is no need to mention any benefit of humility, the humble spirit, it seems, is reward enough to itself, and all the proud man's prizes are not comparable to it in this life.

So for meekness, it is a lovely grace again; "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit," a more gallant embroidery, more enamouring dress, which hath more of the agreeable in the look of it, than all the other helps of beauty can afford that sex which is there spoken of: but especially that notion

^a — γυμνὸν σπείρειν, γυμνὸν δὲ βοωτέιν, γυμνὸν δ' ἀμάσθαι.—Hes., [Op. et Dies] lib. ii. [10.]

SERM.
II.

[Jas. iv. 6.]

[Is. lvii
15.]

Prov. xvi.
19.

1 Pet. iii. 4.

SERM. II.
[Ex. xx.
12.]

of meekness that consists in obedience to our lawful superiors, which,—beside the other many conveniences of it, “that thy days may be long in the land,” &c., long life in a Canaan, —is a most advantageous gainful duty, such as if it had applications made to it, would infallibly leave the prince the only uneasy person in the kingdom, because he only were assigned the task, the painful, thankless, yet necessary task of commanding, and deprived of the *obsequii gloria*, that far more glorious, I will add, and pleasant way of obeying. The glory of it such, as that Gerson having discerned in the angels two habitudes, one “of waiting upon God^b,” the other “in the ruling and managing of things below,” resolves, that if that angel were to set himself out in a lustre, to triumph in a magnificent, it would be certainly in the Virgin Mary’s style, *humilitatem famuli*, that he were a meek servant of God’s, rather than a prince of so many myriads of subjects. And for pleasure, I shall profess my sense so far from doting on that popular idol, liberty, that I hardly think it possible for any kind of obedience to be more painful than unrestrained liberty: were there not some bounds of magistrate, of laws, of piety, of reason in the heart, every man would have a fool, they say, I add, a mad tyrant to his master, that would multiply him more sorrows than the briars and thorns did Adam, when he was freed from the bliss at once, and the restraint of paradise, and was sure greater slave in the wilderness than he was in the enclosure. Would but the Scripture permit me that kind of idolatry, the binding my faith and obedience to any one visible, infallible judge, or prince, were it the pope, or the mufti, or the grand Tartar, might it be reconcilable with my creed, it would be certainly with mine interests, to get presently into that posture of obedience. I should learn so much of the barbarian ambassadors in Appian^c, which came on purpose to the Romans to negotiate for leave to be their servants: it would be my policy, if not my piety, and may now be my wish, though not my faith, that I might never have the trouble to deliberate, to dispute, to doubt, to choose, (those so many profitless uneasinesses,) but only the favour

^b Mentemque profundam circum-eunt.—Boeth. [This is a mistaken reference, no such passage occurring in

Boethius.]

^c [This is probably a mistake for Livy. Vide Liv. vii. 31.]

to receive commands, and the meekness to obey them; so demonstrably true is the μακάριοι οἱ πραεῖς,—the very meekness is their blessedness,—and from thence this part of the gainfulness of this yoke. SERM.
II.
[Matt. v.
5.]

I will detain you but with one more of that catalogue, that of mercifulness, the pleasurablest burden in the world; there is no such kind of inward delight, and sensuality, as it were. Liberality is a kind of tickling to the soul^d, it is hard to conceal the pleasure of it, to keep it from boiling over, from running out at mouth in vain-glory. To make a poor man happy, and by a seasonable alms to relieve and rescue him that was as it were appointed to death, is that godlike quality, as Pythagoras agrees with Christ, that kind of creative power, that of all things men are best pleased with; and therefore naturally they love those better, as their creatures, whom they have thus obliged, than any their liberalest benefactors: this the good-natured tyrant Phalaris, if his image be truly drawn in his epistles, took more joy in than in all his other greatness, designed that tyranny (that cost him and others so dear) to no other end, than that it might yield him that one pleasure, the power of obliging many; and accordingly he woos and beseeches to be allowed this favour, nay, quarrels and threatens his bull to those that would not afford him this joy of pouring out his largesses upon them. This so delightful a piece of duty, so perfect voluptuousness to any ingenuous man, is withal, let me tell you, be it never so incredible, the gainfullest trade, the thrivingest way of merchandize for the wealth of this world, that any projector can direct you to. Give me leave for once to interpose in secular affairs thus far, as to assure you of that, that I will pawn my whatever is mine for the truth of it,—and for which I conceive I have so many plain promises in the Scripture, that it were infidelity (in me, I am sure) to doubt of it,—that the exercise of this duty of alms-giving was never the impoverishing of any family, but constantly the enriching. Let it be tried, and I will once set up the insurer's office, that whatever goes out on that voyage, shall never miss to come home with gain; there is no man that parteth with any

^d ὅς μὲν γὰρ [κεν ἀνὴρ ἐθέλων] μέγα δῶρ,
χαίρει τῷ δῶρῳ καὶ τέρπεται [δὲν κατὰ θυμόν.]—Hes., lib. i. [355.]

S E R M. II.
[Mark x. 30.] thing for "Christ's sake," saith He, "but he shall have an hundredfold more in this life." Add but this *χρήσιμον* to the *χρηστὸν*, this of gain to that of delight, the policy to the even sensual ravishment of it, and you will resolve that Christ was a good master; that if you had been called to counsel at that great parliament, had had your negative in that power of making laws for mankind, you would not have chosen a smother and more agreeable yoke for yourselves, than this that Christ hath designed for you.

I promised to make this as evident by another head of probation, the enumeration of the special goods that have ever been prized by mankind; but that were a new deep, and you have no stock of patience to hold out that voyage. Among all that have ever pretended to that title, I will suppose that of honour hath gotten the primogeniture, supplanted all other pretenders in an ingenuous auditory. And therefore one word to that, and I shall think I have made good my undertaking.

Honour I conceive to be the daughter of heroic action, and specially of victory: and is there any such sweeping triumphant conqueror in the world as the regenerate Christian? *νικᾷ κόσμον*, "he overcometh the world;" overcomes himself, that lion and that bear that David combated with, his furious rageful passions, Achelous in all his shapes; and is always in pursuit of that victory, *νικᾷ*, still in the present, he is always overcoming; overcomes enemies, the injurious person by not retributing of injuries^e, the very tyrant persecutor,—whose adoration he hath when he can get none of his mercy, whilst the other that is frightened out of his conscience and integrity, is scorned and kicked into hell by him,—yea, and the devil, that *τὸ πονηρὸν*, "the evil one," whom when the Christian resists, he conquers,—*fugiet*, "he shall fly from thee,"—yea, and overcomes, and reproaches, and triumphs over all the world besides, practises those duties upon Christ's commands, which neither Jew nor heathen ever thought themselves obliged to. Athenagoras^f can challenge all the philosophers and lawgivers of the world to equal Christ in one precept, or Christians in one practice of theirs, that of blessing of enemies; and no Goliath of Gath

^e *πονηρὸν ἀγαθῶν.*

^f [p. 42. ed. Dechair, Oxon. 1706.]

being able to answer his challenge, no uncircumcised Philistine of confidence to meet him,—

S E R M.
II.

μῶνως ἀνὴρ συλῆσεν ὄλον στρατὸν,

the Christian is the only victor, he conquers the whole world about him, yea, and those glittering courtiers of the superior world, outvies and conquers angels in that one dignity of suffering for Christ, and so becomes the renownedest champion under heaven.

To this I should add again, if I had not said so much of it already, and if it were not a baser earthier consideration, the profit and secular advantage of which the Christian life, let the insensate worldling think what he will, hath the peculiar only promise from Him which hath the sole disposing of it. Some mistakes there are in judging what worldly prosperity is; let it be rescued from these mistakes, as particularly from that of signifying a present few months vicissitude of power and wealth,—so sure to be paid (and confuted from deserving that title) by that of the prophet, “When thou ceasest to spoil thou shalt be spoiled,”—let it [Is. xxxiii. 1.] signify, as alone it doth truly signify, that competency, not that superfluity, which hath all the advantages, and none of the pains of wealth in it, and no question the doing our duty, though it be the present leaving of all for Christ's sake, is that which doth not use to fail of the liberalest sort of harvest, the hundred-fold more in this life, i. e. all the true advantages of those possessions, without that addition which would be bare profitless encumbrance; and which, if it were added, would prove a most disadvantageous diminution. I shall venture the brand and punishment that belongs to the most infamous cheat, whenever any disciple of Christ shall think fit to call me his underminer or enemy for this doctrine, when he shall think fit to tell me really that honesty is not the only prudence, the surest foundation and treasure of worldly bliss.

I have done with the particulars I promised: and now put all together, and you will never think the preacher a tyrant more, never pity the melancholic, but envy the ravishments of him that hath taken up this yoke,—yea though it have a cross annexed to it,—to follow Christ; you will never put in

S E R M.
II.

for your part in Mahomet's paradise, exchange your purer gospel for a grosser Alcoran, having in this very yoke of Christ a satisfaction to all your longings, a richer harvest of joys in the present possession, than all the false prophets and false Christs could feign for their clients in the latest reversion. And having thus fortified you, I shall now challenge the rival Satan to come out to thee, to bring forth his pleas and pretensions for thee, to interpose his exceptions if he have any, why this hour should not be the solemn era, the date of thy long farewell to the kilns and fleshpots of Egypt, why this minute should not be that of the blessed shrill trumpet's sound, that of proclaiming a jubilee, a manumission for thee,—and all thy fellow-captives,—never to return to his galleys again, who art offered so far a more gainful, more easy, more pleasant, and more liberal service. Satan, I am confident, dare not say his wages are comparable to those that here I have tendered thee from Christ; let him shew me in all his kingdoms of the earth, in his treasury of gold, or gynæceum of beauty, any thing fit to be a rival with the graces, not which the poets feign, but which the sermon on the mount prescribes,—ingredient and constitutive of a Christian,—both for the gain and pleasure, the commodity and the delight of them even to flesh and blood,—when the one bedlam heat of youth or lethargic custom of sin is over,—and I shall no longer pretend to get any proselyte out of his hands.

And if after all this I must be content with the fate of other sermons, to have played a vain-glorious prize, ἀέρα δέρον, wounding none but the air this whole hour together; if I must miscarry in this so charitable undertaking, and may not be heard when I come but to comply with you in all your interests, to direct you through one Canaan to another, to lay you out a paradise here for your road to an eternal heaven, I confess I am fallen upon a peevish auditory, a company of sick fancies and crest-fallen souls. For whose cure,

I might yet further set off all this, and improve it into little less than a demonstration, by the view of the contrary not only unpleasant and unprofitable, but even painful tormenting trade of sin; those so many limbos in passage to the deeper hell; that Sodom of filth and burning in the way to

[1 Cor. ix.
26.]

a Tophet of worms and flames. But I had rather fancy you the sheep in Aristotle which the green bough would lead, than the goats in the same philosopher, that the nettles must sting, whom the cords of a man might draw, than the whips of scorpions drive into paradise, into Canaan; being confident that I have at this time revealed such precious truths unto you, that he whom they do not melt and charm, and win to enter into this so necessary, so feasible, so gainful a service, father Abraham's divinity would prejudge and conclude against him, that "neither will that man convert, though one should rise from the dead and preach unto him." If there be any here of this unhappy temper, the only reserve I have to rescue him is my prayer, that God would touch his heart, that he would say Ephphatha, that if there be any consolation in Christ, any comfort of love, any virtue, any praise, any such thing as paradise here, or heaven hereafter, we may every of us think of these things, and having entered into the blessed family of this good master, we may all serve Him acceptably here, fight under His banner, overcome by His conduct, and reign with Him triumphantly hereafter.

Now to Him which hath elected, created, redeemed, called, justified us, will consummate us in His good time, will prosper this His ordinance to that end, will lead us by His grace to His glory; to Him, &c.

S E R M.
II.

[Luke xvi.
31.]

[Mark vii.
34.]

[Phil. iv.
8.]

SERMON III.

EPHRAIM'S COMPLAINT.

JER. xxxi. 18.

I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus ; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke : turn Thou me, and I shall be turned.

S E R M.
III.

THIS text is a sad soliloquy of a provoking afflicted people. *Ephraim transmigran-tem*, reads the Vulgar ; and sure מתנודד, which we read “bemoaning,” would be better rendered thus, “the ten tribes sealed up in a black night, a fatal last captivity.”

To parallel our state with Israel in the *transmigran-tem*, is not my design, much less in the bemoaning ; that is but a piece of unseasonable pusillanimity that our English hath imposed upon the text, and our Saviour hath inspirited us into a more cheerful guise in suffering, the *χαίρετε καὶ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε*, “rejoice and be exceeding glad,” the most blissful joyous condition of any.

[Matt. v.
12.]

The parallel, I fear, will prove too perfect in the words themselves, which Ephraim then was overheard to utter, and perhaps some infidel hearts may be a whispering now ; and that I may prevent this parallel I have pitched upon these words, “I have surely heard Ephraim,” &c.

The sense of Ephraim’s *μονωδία* thus sadly muttered, it is possible you may not articulately understand : I shall briefly be his interpreter, by giving you a plain paraphrase of the verse.

‘I heard the ten tribes in a melancholic reflection on their state, thus whispering within themselves ; We have long been punished by God, and no more wrought on by those punish-

ments than a wild unmanaged bullock,' i. e. not reformed or mended at all by this discipline,—the Targum hath cleared the rendering *אנחנו לא נלמדנו*, "We have not been taught," and the Septuagint's *οὐκ ἐδιδάχθημεν*^a hath done so too,—but then, 'turn Thou me, return my captivity, restore us to our liberty and our Canaan again, and then no doubt we shall be turned, reformed and mortified by that change^b.'

Having thus laid bare the words before you, you will presently discern the sum of them, a people unreformed under God's rod, petitioning to be released from that smart, because it did not mend them, pretending that prosperity would work wonders on them.

And this you will dissolve into these three specials, each worth our stay and pondering.

1. God's judgment, what course is fittest to reform sinners, not the delicate, but the sharp, that of smiting, *Tu percussisti*, "Thou hast smitten."

2. Man's judgment, or the sinner's flattering persuasion of himself, quite contrary to God's; a conceit, that roses are more wholesome than wormwood, that prosperity will do it better, and a bribing God with a promise that it shall do it,

^a And accordingly St. Chrysostome's Greek copy must be corrected, and read thus, *ἐπαίδευσάς με Κύριε καὶ οὐκ ἐπαίδευσθην, ἀλλ' ἐγενόμην ὡς μοσχὸς ἀδίδακτος*. "Thou hast instructed me, Lord, and I was not instructed, but I became as an untaught, unmanaged ox or heifer."—Tom. vi. [p. 413.] Scrm. Eundem esse Deum Vet. et Nov. Test. [This is the reading in the edition of Ducæus, as well as in that of Savile and the Benedictine editors, who all agree in considering this homily spurious. It occurs in each of these editions in the sixth volume.]

^b That this is the meaning of the words will appear by the consequents, when they are once rendered and understood aright, which now seem to resist this interpretation, and that is caused by the ill rendering of them. They are to be read thus, verse 19. "Surely when Thou shalt have turned me (or brought me back) I shall repent, when Thou shalt shew me (Thy mercies) I shall strike my thigh,"—a ceremony which was used by the Jews in the days of atonement or expiation, *diebus כפרים*,—"I am ashamed, ye and confounded, because I bear,"

&c.—i. e. I am so troubled at my punishment, that I can have no leisure to mend. 20. "Is Ephraim My son?"—Filius honorabilis mihi, saith the Vulgar,—"is he My darling?—Filius delicatus, "My fondling?"—i. e. sure he must thus think of himself, and believe of Me, that I am so fond that I cannot live without him; for else sure he would never say thus, that he will not repent unless he be well used, unless I bring him back to his country again. "When I have spoken enough with him,"—admonished, advised him sufficiently,—"I will in any wise remember him," i. e. his impentence, and chastise this obduration of his,— "therefore My bowels are troubled about him,"—i. e. I am very angry with him, for bowels note any violent affection. "Can I in any wise have mercy on him?"—when all My chastisements work not upon him, when he will not amend without prosperity. That this is the sense, and not that which our English inclines to believe, appears by this, that these ten tribes returned not, and therefore the next verse, 21, must be applied to the twelve tribes, not the ten.

S E R M. *converte et convertar*, "Thy smittings have done no good on
 III. me: turn Thou me, and I shall be turned."

3. The stating of this difficulty betwixt God and man, and in that, the falseness of man's judgment; and the fallaciousness of such his promise: 1. In respect of God, who will never send them prosperity, that adversity wrought no good on. And 2. of prosperity itself, which would never do that work on those, if God should send it, intimated in the prophet's recounting and upbraiding this speech of Ephraim, "I have surely heard Ephraim," &c.

I begin first with the first, God's judgment, what course is fittest to reform sinners, not the delicate but the sharp, that of smiting.

And all the proof I pretend to have from this text for this is the *percussisti* in the front. It is clear God had smitten Ephraim, and God's actions are a declaration of His judgment, His smiting a sufficient assurance that nothing else is judged by God so likely to reform Ephraim, and that upon these two plain heads of probation.

1. That whatever is, whatever is come to pass, is certainly God's will it should be.

2. That what was thus God's will, was designed to some benign end, and in short, to nothing in Ephraim, but his reformation.

1. That whatever comes to pass is certainly God's will. Not still His will, so as to be matter of decree,—save only of permission,—that thou shouldst do it, and therefore even those things that are most necessarily to come, shall be

Matt. xviii.
7.

Acts iv. 28.

matter of the greatest guilt, and woe to those by whom they come. But His will, His overruling decretory will, that I should suffer it, His hand and His counsel, *προορίζων γενέσθαι*, "predetermining that to be done" which none but Herod and Pilate, gentiles and devil, against the express will of God, and His child Jesus were gathered together to do. All the sin and furies, guilt and damnation of hell may be in the *ποιεῖν*, the doing or executing God's will,—as believe it, there is not a more formidable trade in the world than that of which Satan alone hath the patent, and men do but entrench on hell whensoever they exercise it, that of the *licitor et carnifex*, of being God's rods, God's executioners,—but

then all the mercy, and all wisdom, bounty, and divinity, sometimes the redeeming of a world, in the *γενέσθαι*, “the being done.” Not the softest affliction or bloodiest tyranny had ever come into the world had not God permitted, and for our sins decreed to permit the doors to be open for it. Not the lightest wound or deepest furrow on a poor Christian's shoulders, but hath characters of God's hand in it, superscribing him *νόμισμα Χριστοῦ*^c, in Ignatius' phrase, “the coin of Christ,” a stamp of His impressing; and as the painter had so interweaved his own face in Minerva's picture, that you could not behold one without discerning the other, so when the image of Christ is impressed on us, I mean the image of the crucified Saviour, the thorns on the head, the spitting on the face, the sponge of vinegar and gall at the mouth, and the one wound on the whole body, “when the conformity to this image of the Son is sealed upon us,” that seal of the Tiphereth, or the Magnus Adam, (as the cabalists are wont to call it,) I mean of the archetypal sufferer Christ, is impressed so hard that it prints quite through the bottom of him, leaves the impression on the *malcuth*, the bride, the house of Israel, the poor crucified Church here below; when I say that sad original is thus copied upon us, there is no avoiding the sight, no escaping the acknowledgment of that great Painter's face that drew these parallel signatures both on Christ and us, or in St. Paul's phrase, “predestined us to be conformable to that image of His Son,” *ἀνταναπληροῦν*,^{Rom. viii. 29.} by way of correspondence, of antitype, “to fill up the remainders of His sufferings in our flesh,” and as punctually elected us to this *συσταύρωσις*, this “co-suffering” for, and after Christ, as to the *συνδοξάζεσθαι*, we trust He hath, to the also “being glorified with Him.”^{Col. i. 24.}

[Rom. viii. 17.]

These are the *στίγματα Ἰησοῦ*, literally and exactly, the prints or brands of Christ, the works of His hands as well as the transcripts of His sufferings; and as this may give us a perfect satisfaction in whatsoever the most smitten condition, a *πᾶσαν χαρὰν*, all joy when we are thus vouchsafed and dignified^d, especially if we shall have transcribed the active as

^c [ὥσπερ γὰρ ἐστὶν νομίσματα δύο, ὃ μὲν Θεοῦ, ὃ δὲ κόσμου, καὶ ἕκαστον αὐτῶν ἴδιον χαρακτῆρα ἐπικείμενον ἔχει, οἱ ἄπιστοι τοῦ κόσμου τούτου, οἱ δὲ πιστοὶ ἐν ἀγάπῃ χαρακτῆρα Θεοῦ Πατρὸς

διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, δι' οὗ εἰὰν μὴ αὐθαίρετως ἔχωμεν τὸ ἀποθανεῖν εἰς τὸ αὐτοῦ πάθος, τὸ ζῆν αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἐστὶν ἐν ἡμῖν. —S. Ignat. ad Magn., cap. 5.]

^d καταξιοῦμενοι, Acts v. 41.

S E R M.
III.

well as passive part of His image, or if this suffering teach us to transcribe it, so will it be a first proof of the point in hand, a declaration of God's opinion by His prescriptions, that nothing is so fit for our turn as smiting.

Matt. v.
48.

But then this first proof will not perfectly come home to the conclusion, unless we improve and sharpen it with the second, that this smiting, as it already appears to be God's will, so it is by God designed to Ephraim's good, the greatest good for rebellious Ephraim, the bringing him to repentance, and that if any thing else could have tended so directly to that end, Ephraim had never been thus smitten. The foundation of this lies in the superlative love of God extended even to enemies, and that evidenced by His manner of prescribing that to us, with an *ab exemplo* from the example of His own perfection; who, it seems by that argument, is a benefactor and blesser even of enemies, and whatever He sends to the most hostile Ephraim, it is method of deliberate charity, the bitterest recipes designed on purpose,—neither by chance nor malice, those two heathen principles of theology, *τύχη* and *φθόνος δαίμονος*, but, I say, on purpose,—from love and pondering, from judgment and from bowels, as that which as long as there is any hope of recovery, will do it, if any thing, and therefore cannot in charity be withdrawn while there is hope; and when there is none, is then to be spared, not lavished out, like Galen's generous medications, that must not be dishonoured, or cast away on the desperate patient, but preserved to do noble and signal cures on those that are capable and worthy of them.

Such are these caustic plasters preparatory to the incarnative, the knife and the lance that Hippocrates reckons among the *μαλαγμάτων γένεα*, the mollifying preparations that the physician must always carry about with him: this is the new and, as late artists tell us, the truer notion of the fever, not as of a disease, but an endeavour and strife of nature to cure one, as when there is a thorn in the hand, or burdalous excrement in the body, nature heaves and plunges, puts itself into a passion and flame to thrust it out; and then to cure that fever, to quench that flame, to allay or trash nature in that march, is to disarm the friend, and side with the adversary: and such it seems was the messenger of Satan to St. Paul, that medicinal thorn in the flesh, to prick the rising,

[2 Cor. xii.
7.]

and let out the putrid humour, that he might not be puffed up, and exalted above measure, and God would not be so unkind as to hearken to his importunity, in giving it leave to depart from him. SERM.
III.

If you will further see the opinion and judgment of God in this matter, I shall mention but one evidence more of it, the notes of His constant practice through the whole Scripture.

The briars and thorns were immediately designed by God to the first sins, to repair the errors and crimes of paradise.

Afterward the rod was the only engine by which Moses was to work all his miracles on the rock, on the Egyptians, on the more obdurate Israel; all the exchange and variety was only this, the rod sometimes transformed into a serpent, or else multiplied into an army of frogs, and flies, and locusts, when an obdurate rebellious sinner, a Pharaoh was to be softened: and if you mark it, when upon the importunity of Moses God was persuaded to withdraw that rod, to intermix deliverances, these never wrought any good upon Pharaoh, "When Pharaoh saw that there was respite, respite but for a minute, he hardened his heart," &c. An observation that made St. Basil resolve that "it was God's patience," or *μακροθυμία*, that hardened Pharaoh's heart^e, the removings of His plagues, intercalations of mercy: the taking of the water from the fire, and letting it cool again, that as Aristotle saith, makes it freeze so hard and so speedily. The devil and the magicians would have been better at the cure of a hard heart than Moses and his prayers; they could only conjure up more blood, and more frogs, but could not remove any, and that it seems was the most likely means to have kept him humbled, and therefore in the New Testament it is

[Exod. iv.
et seq.]
Exod. viii.
15.

* [διόπερ ἐπειδὴ ἔδει συντριβῆναι αὐτὸν, ὁ φρόνιμος καὶ σοφὸς τῶν ψυχῶν οἰκόνομος δικήσατο αὐτὸν περιφανῶς γενέσθαι καὶ πᾶσιν ἐξάκουστον, ἵνα ἄλλοις γοῦν ὠφέλιμος διὰ τοῦ πάθους γένηται, ἐπειδὴ αὐτὸς ὑπὸ τῆς ἕγαν κακίας ἀνάστος ἦν· ἐσκληρυνε δὲ αὐτὸν τῇ μακροθυμίᾳ καὶ τῇ τῆς τιμωρίας ἀναβόλῃ ἐπιτείνων αὐτοῦ τὴν κακίαν, ἵνα εἰς τὸν ἔσχατον ὄρον ἀξήθεισης αὐτοῦ τῆς πονηρίας, τὸ δίκαιον ἐπ' αὐτῷ τῆς θείας κρίσεως διαφανῆ· διὰ τοῦτο ἀπὸ μικροτέρων πληγῶν αἰεὶ προστιθεῖς, καὶ ἐπι-

τείνων τὰς μαστίγας, οὐκ ἐμάλαξεν αὐτοῦ τὸ ἀνυπότακτον, ἀλλ' εὗρισκεν αὐτὸν καὶ τῆς ἀνοχῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ καταφρονούντα καὶ τοῖς ἐπαγομένοις αὐτῷ δεινοῖς ὑπὸ τῆς συνηθείας ἔμμε· ἐτήσαντα· καὶ οὐδὲ οὕτως αὐτὸν παρέδωκε τῷ θανάτῳ, ἕως αὐτὸς ἐαυτὸν ἐποίησεν ὑποβρόχιον ἐν τῇ ὑπερηφανίᾳ τῆς καρδίας αὐτοῦ, τῆς τῶν δικαίων πορείας κατατολμήσας, καὶ νομίσας ὡσπερ τῷ λαῷ τοῦ Θεοῦ, οὕτω καὶ αὐτῷ βάσιμον ἔσεσθαι τὴν ἐρυθρὰν θάλασσαν.—S. Basil., Homil. ix de Diversis, tom. ii. p. 77.]

S E R M. the Apostle's saving method in such great cures to call in
 III.
 the devil into consultation, to deliver men up unto Satan as

[1 Cor. v. 5.]

[Rev. xiv.
 10.]

the last and surest remedy; the continued stripes and the no respite, to give the impenitent to drink of the *ἄκρατος κέκερασμένος*, in the Apocrypha^f, that hath so posed the interpreters, the unmixed mixed wine, the all myrrh but no water, the all manner of embittering, heightening, but none of the allaying, cooling mixtures in it, and so still the potion of our crucified Master, i. e. by the way of this text, all smitings and disciplining; real, corporeal inflictions of Satan, to the diseasing and destroying of the flesh, and it seems no popular empirical means so probable, for the *ἵνα πνεῦμα σωθῆ*,

[1 Cor. v.
 5.]

“that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.”

And then, my brethren, to bring down this first particular unto ourselves, was there ever such a course of sour discipline, such a delivering up unto Satan, as this nation of ours hath for some years been under? Was there ever such real buffetings, not like that in St. Jerome's dream, to convert the Ciceronian into a Christian, but as upon a waking bedlam, a daily constant exercise of stripes, or like that on the possessed in the Gospel, the spirit taking us and tearing us till we foam again,—and our base reviling and slandering one another is that foam,—O how many sad falling fits hath this poor demoniac been wrestling under, and unless an overruling mercy interpose, perhaps the bitterest part of the agony still to come, in the struggling of life to return again! Is not this the antitype of a smitten Ephraim? I speak not this particularly of those that have been the sufferers under this rod; believe it, the catalogue of the smitten is larger than so: you may mark it that the rod itself is smitten whensoever it smites, at every blow wounded and torn by way of repassion.

[Luke ix.
 39.]

And so the most distant atoms of this kingdom are once united in this one sad notion of stripes and wounds, fit to become one common *ἔξαρχος θρηνοῦ*, precentor in the first note of this sad anthem, the *flagellasti me*, “Thou hast smitten me.” O that we could get but one word further, join all in the *ἀμοιβαῖον*, or counterpart, *et flagellatus sum*, in the real passive, and “I was smitten.”

^f [An evident mistake for Apocalypse.]

This were but justice unto God that hath taken all this pains with us, been at such an expense of coulters with these stony fallow hearts of ours. You shall see how rhetorically He expostulates it, "Will a lion roar in the forest to have no prey?" shall My chidings, and threats, and thunderbolts tearing your ephod and your altar, rending not the veil, but the temple itself from the top to the bottom, be spent all to no purpose? "Will a young lion give forth his voice from his den that he may take nothing?"—that is the best rendering of the place,—shall all this tragical scene designed and acted by God (all but our sin-parts in it) be but a beating of the air, or a scourging of the sea, unprofitably? no one sin in such a legion brought down, or vanquished by all this storming?

SERM.
III.

Amos iii. 4.

Nay, shall we at once evacuate and reproach, frustrate and defame His methods? pronounce unto all the world that God hath lost His design for want of conduct? shall we set up for the master wits? get proselytes away from heaven to Ephraim's heresy? preach back again to God's rod, and tell Him that afflictions are very improper engines to make batteries on souls? If so, then we are just the *indomiti juvenci* in this text, so perfectly untamed after all this smiting; I wish we could say as true in that that follows, the "turn Thou us, and we shall be turned," that the resolvedness not to benefit by stripes were not so like the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, that when this hath failed, any other method might hope to prove successful. That prosperity might do it, was Ephraim's fancy, though distant enough from God's, which brings me to my second particular, man's judgment, or the sinner's persuasion of himself, that roses are more wholesome than wormwood, that prosperity will do it better, and a bribing God with a promise that it shall do it; *converte et convertar*, "turn," &c.

And this we shall not fully carry away with us, if we do not view it distinctly in three notions:

1. As it was a persuasion or act of belief in Ephraim, that so it would prove: "turn Thou me," &c.

2. As a promise that it should be thus: "turn" and "I will," &c.

3. As in truth it was, an excuse to get off the rod, or to

S E R M.
III. procrastinate the repentance, the present method of smiting may be superseded, "turn Thou me," &c.

The first, an act of judgment in Ephraim. The second, of temporary resolution. The third, of artifice and design. In each of these Ephraim may chance to prove our mirror, it will be worth your patience that I shew you how. And

1. As it was a persuasion, or act of judgment in Ephraim, that prosperity was the way to make them better.

[Is. lv. 8.] It was a truth of God's own pronouncing, "that His thoughts are not like our thoughts," consented to by the philosopher,

οὔτι δέμας θνητοῖσιν ὁμοίος, οὔδε νόημα‡,

saith Xenophanes, "God hath no more of our fancies than of our shapes," heaven and earth are seldom of an opinion. It will be most pertinent and visible in matters of His providence.

When God hath designed the cross, the constant post and stage in our guesses to heaven, we must needs set up another economy, fancy it a kingdom of uncompounded felicities, crowd all the godly into one throne, and the ungodly into one footstool, bring Christ unto this earth again on a second more prudent errand, to have an age of reigning, not of suffering, among a world not of followers, but of fellow-kings, and so, in the Apostle's judgment, enclose Him in a kingdom of bastards, whom we are resolved, quite contrary to God's pronouncing, to be the only sons and saints of the millenium. To this end must prophecies be precipitated, and what belongs to the future (perhaps long ago past) conversion of the Jews, or our yet more future bliss, shall be all anticipated presently, the cross condemned and banished out of the world, and none like to be of the order of the new disciples, but he that will cast off that unchristian luggage, and so not follow Christ. Can there be a greater contrariety unto Christ's judgment, a more perfect antipodes to all that hath hitherto been gospel, than that which by pulling out one pin in the scene, hath been thus shifted into its stead?

[Phil. iv. 11.] And as in the general, so in the particular too, "In what state soever I am, therewith to be contented," is not to be

‡ [Xenophan. fr. i. ap. Steph. Poes. Philos. ed. 1573.]

had, by St. Paul's own confession, without a *μεμύημαί*, a great deal of mysterious instruction, such as in the *Eleusinia sacra* cost the client so many sighing patient years of attendance and purgation, before he could ascend to the *τελευταί* and *ἐποπτεΐαι*, "the heights of Christian contentment:" but especially to have any good opinion of afflictions, when they are actually on our shoulders, to be so tame as to think such a proportion of earth, with worm-wood imbibed, can prove useful or medicinal to any.

Will not a brave golden shower of cordials dispel poisons, raise a collapsed habit of soul, infuse a new stock of spirits, more probably far than a course of steel or quicksilver? Would not an army of sun-beams, that have light as well as warmth in them, subdue and thaw the most hardened heart in the whole quarry, dissolve the most icy crystal spirit better than a stroke of Moses' rod, or a crack of thunder?

Thus hard it is for flesh and blood to believe that God can choose best for us: "Are not Abanah and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Jordan? May not I wash there and be clean?" [2 Kings v. 12.] Would not a little kind usage, a few fatherly kisses and embraces, an inheritance, or portion given me in my hand, a fair demesne to keep hospitality upon, be more likely to work upon well-natured sinners, that do not love to be forced, will be as thankful as any man living, if they may be courteously treated, but "with a froward handling cannot choose but shew themselves unsavoury?" This driving and forcing men to repentance, is a violation of the gospel-liberty, a kind of constraining and violencing of the spirit, if it be enslaved to these beggarly rudiments of stripes and terrors, and savours much of the spirit of legal fear, that "Hagar or mount Sinai, that engendereth unto bondage," [Gal. iv. 24.] quite contrary to the free-born Sion, or Jerusalem spirit, "whereby we cry Abba, Father." [Rom. viii. 15.]

Further yet, I have heard Ephraim a murmuring as well as a bemoaning, I am so encumbered with the pressures of a villainous world, such a hurry of passion, of indignation and impatience, of a tumultuous grief and shame, that I have neither heart, nor joy, nor leisure to mend any thing. Thus it follows, ver. 19, "I am ashamed and confounded, because

S E R M. I bear the reproach of my youth ;” no possible reforming in
 III. such a state of confusion, such a kind of Tophet and hell as
 this.

And I heartily wish I did not speak to men that can think Ephraim in the right all this while, that with Jonas
 [Jonah iv. on the withering of the gourd can justify against God Him-
 9.] self, that “they do well to be angry even unto death,” that can really persuade themselves that afflictions are not for their turn, that they are as noxious to their souls as to their bodies, that as Hippocrates resolved of the Scythians, that the κέδματα, if they came from God, that all the curses and ill-turns that Heaven had to spare, would be confined to the poor, because their wants set them always a murmuring, and a blaspheming of God : so, I say, I wish we had not some of that atheist’s conceit, that cannot tell how to imagine that stripes should bring forth any thing but clamours and execrations, more ferity, more sullen atheisms, more bestiality to drown, opiate potions to benumb the sense of our calamities ; and many of us do this out of pure judgment that affluence is far the more probable way toward mending, that a Canaan were able to inspire Israelites, as the good soil in Plutarch was thought to infuse poetry into the oracle : and having experience to demonstrate the first part of Ephraim’s speech, being no more wrought on by all God’s smiting, than the most untractable steers, they go on with a presumption of the truth of the second, “that prosperity will do all that adversity hath not done : turn Thou me,” &c.

But then 2. I told you there was a second notion of these words, as they are an act of promise and temporary resolution, that “if God will but turn our captivity, we will infallibly amend.”

And it is very possible at a distance for a man to think himself in earnest when he so promises : it was Dio’s observation of Nero’s mother,—that professed herself content to be killed by her son, on condition he might be emperor^h,—that it is very ordinary at a distance to enter such obligations ; we will venture any the sorest payment from Satan after this life, so we may get but his kingdom of the earth, his seraglio of carnal felicities at the instant. The hypocrite

^h [Dion. Cass. Hist., lib. lxi. cap. 2.]

or false-hearted professor will make any bargains with God for the future, will not doubt but to be a disciple of Christ, so he may but first "go and bury his father," or with Jephtha's daughter, "have a month or two to go up and down the mountains, and bewail her virginity; she and her fellows:" be it the cloister or the altar, chastity, or death itself, as you know it is not resolved which it was that that vow belonged to, a little present felicity will be sufficient payment for either of them; only when the date of the undertaken returning begins to commence, when the sore part of the bargain comes to be performed, the Nero to kill as well as to reign, the cloister, to be actually entered, and with that the ἀμεταμέλητος μετάνοια, a vow never to return *ad sæculum* again, then the votary begins to understand himself better, finds it as improper to turn penitentiary in a palace as it was in a prison, as irrational to be condemned to Tantalus' as to Prometheus' fate, to be abstemious in a river of delights as patient of fastening to a mountain of torments: and had he known it, that he should thus have been taken at his word, have had his turning required as soon as his captivity was turned, his mortification expected at the restoring of his peace, and with the festivity and rest, the holiness also and services of a sabbath and jubilee, he would have even courted his rod, embraced his pleasanter gyves, or dunghill, have continued a slave in Egypt, rather than thus be circumcised in Canaan; have been bored through the ear by his old master, rather than thus dignified with the title of freeman, and denied the libertinism that belongs to it.

But the truth is, there is a third notion of these words, which will be a *supersedeas* to that of a promise, and that is, as this art of promising is only an excuse, or shift, or pretence to get off the present smart of the rod, or the impotency of the prophet to escape the smiting, or the being smitten, the cross or following of Christ.

Should the unmanaged horse, instead of the bullock in the text, desire his rider to put off his spurs and whip, and at once to ease him both of bit and saddle, and then promise to be the tractablest beast in nature, but till then profess that all those instruments of discipline should never tame him, I beseech you, what would be thought of this oration? would

S E R M.

III.

[Matt. viii.
21.]
[Judg. xi.
37, 38.]

S E R M.
III.

you certainly be persuaded that the beast spake reason, that it was a serious design of a generous obedience, a gallantry of a voluntary unconstrained virtue? If so, you may believe the beast within you, that makes the same proposal to God, and you. In the mean time it will not be amiss to resolve, that he that hath exceptions to God's methods, hath some other master to whom he is more inclinable to retain; he that will not serve God for nought, that is all for the thriving piety, the gainful godliness, that must have his reward just as he is a doing the work, a payment in hand even before he sets about the duty, will sure bring in little profit to God be he fed never so high, very thin returns of good life for all his donatives. He that will not now mend under the rod, edify by so many doleful lectures as have been read us out of a Zachary's and a Jeremy's roll, that hath arrived to Theodoret's *νοῦν ἀντίτυπον*, a mind that can reverberate judgments, and make them rebound, in more provoking sins against the hand that sent them, is of the Pharaoh, the anvil-temper, and, let him pretend, or promise, or flatter himself what he please, by holding out his white flag for treaty, he desired to be in case to maintain his fort still against God, and it is not victualling, and bribing, but starving and storming, must help to drive him out of it: which brings me to the third and last particular,

[Zech. v.
1.]
[Jer.
xxxvi. 2.]

The stating of this difficulty betwixt God and man, and in it the falseness of man's judgment and fallaciousness of such his promise, both in respect of God, who will never send them prosperity that adversity wrought no good on, and of prosperity itself, which would never do the work if God should send it.

For the first, in respect of God, who will never send them prosperity, that adversity wrought no good on. This you may judge of, not only by that great rule of state in heaven of "God's resisting the proud," and "surely God heareth not sinners," compounded into one gospel aphorism, "the incorrigible beggar can never have audience in heaven, nor returns from thence, save only of stones and thunderbolts," but especially on that wise ground of divine economy on which all these stripes are sent.

[1 Pet. v.
5.]
[John ix.
31.]

God's first method of calling us off from the world, is the

soft and friendly, the "having therefore these promises, let us cleanse ourselves," a heaven, a paradise, and a Canaan, to confirm angels, and bring men to bliss, to draw with the cords of a man, with the bands of love; and if that prevail, afflictions are superseded,—and were it not that there is another special use of them, to illustrate our Christian virtues, and improve our crown, and withal to confute Satan when he accuses us of insincerity, the reformed Christian should never be thus exercised. But when prosperity will not work, when the calmer physis is digested into nourishment of the disease, then, and not till then, the vomit comes in on the reserve, the tempest and deluge to drown those serpents that had engendered and thriven in the shallow and still waters, as to them that are sick of perfumes the noisomest smell is the only cordial: and then, as Cusanus¹ observes, there is in God *coincidentia contrariorum*, this severity is the only mercy, these wounds the only balsam, the hostile approach the most obliging charity; and as by the heathen artifice in Hero's *πνευματικά*, as soon as ever the fire was kindled upon the altar, the plummets fell, and the doors flew open, and the god appeared upon the chair of state; so by this rarifying power of flames and judgments the earthly obstacles are oft removed, and the deity set up and enthroned in the heart; and then sure it was good for that man that he was in trouble. And generally the rule is true in Gerson, *Omnes pœnæ non exterminantes sunt medicinales*, all mulcts that are not undoing, and our law admits not of any but such as are *salvo contenemento*, are a piece of charity and physis in the judge. For this cause are many sick and weak, nay many fallen asleep, if we will believe the Apostle, and all these judgings of the Lord the only antidotes against that fatal poison, the being condemned and ruined with the world.

S E R M.
III.[2 Cor. vii.
1.]
[Hos. xi.
4.][Ps. cxix.
71.][1 Cor. xi.
30.]

And then you will not blame the wit or piety of the old heathens, who deified all their benefactors, that they had temples for such fevers as these, the friends that had so obliged them; I am sure St. Augustine makes it his wonder that upon that score they had not erected one altar more, *impietati hostium*, to the impiety and rapine of their enemies,

¹ [De Conjecturis, lib. ii. cap. 1. p. 94.]

S E R M. which was constantly, if they had but the grace to make use
 III. of it, so royal a benefactor.

Amos iii.
5.

The sovereign power of this receipt being thus considered, you will give it leave to be the last in God's prescribing, and the most depended on; and the patient being not fit for the cost or trouble of any further experiments, when these have proved successful, the greatest mercy of the physician is to leave him with these cupping glasses at the neck, that if there be ever a spark of vital spirit within, it may by this assistance discharge itself of that poisonous vapour, and yet possibly overcome and quit the danger, but if not, it is sure too late to divert to any new course; the fetching out the cordials will but enhance the bill, and maintain the lamp a little longer, will never beget a new stock of spirits, or spring of life, when it is once so quite exhausted; and therefore the conclusion is clear, and the prophet Amos hath expressed it by an apt resemblance, "Shall one take up a snare from the earth, and take nothing at all?" Shall God remove His judgments from a nation, while the sins are still at the high water? Infallibly He will not do it: if He do, it is a sad presage; His soft hand is but absolute desertion, the leaving to ourselves is the giving us up to our bloodiest enemies, that unseasonable heaven is the far worse Tophet of the twain.

Let but the present calamities work the cure on us, and then all the Canaans in the world are ready at hand to perfect it, the old peaceable flourishing England, hid under that heap of thunderbolts, is ready to be our bath and *palæstra* once again, to refresh and confirm what was thus acquired, and to beget a whole treasure of health in us; but till then, prosperity is quite beside the purpose, a mere ignorant empiric prescription which hath nothing of purging or medicinal in it, should it be administered, it would never reform or convert any; the demonstrating of which is the undertaking of the last minute of my last particular, that in respect of prosperity itself, which in this case will never do the work if God should send it.

The beast that is not tamed or humbled by the whip or goad, the rich pasture in all reason will never break or work on. The liberty of that field is a new temptation, and the plenty strengthens for a sturdier resistance, and both liberty

and plenty, respite and peace are apt to be mistaken for a reward of the former stubbornnesses, far from any restraint of them. S E R M.
III. -

Will you see it exemplified in the most eminent stories of deliverances and prosperities that the Scriptures take notice of? that will enforce the conclusion *a majori*.

You have Lot of Sodom, and Noah of the old world, the remnant preserved from that double deluge of fire and water, and as soon as they are landed in their fair havens, the same calm shipwrecks both, and their prosperity is branded by holy writ for the mother of their two bestial sins, incest and drunkenness. [Gen. xix.
33, 35.]
[Gen. ix.
21.]

Look back from thence into Eden, and there that happy at once and innocent pair, are not by plenty secured from coveting; beauty, and sweetness, and desire of knowledge, the perfections and temptations of paradise, are the ruin to innocence itself; and then what do you think the swine would have done there, when the lambs committed such early riots? what an havoc would an army of roysters have made in that garden, where Adam himself (if you will believe the Rabbins' rendering of the Psalmist's יָלַבְּ אֲבֹתָי) "abode not one night in that state of bliss and honour?"

Pass we from paradise unto heaven itself, where there is neither eating nor drinking, marrying nor giving in marriage, and so no room for carnal sins to do any thing but starve in, yet even there was matter for the filthiness of the spirit to feed on; the angels can grow proud and ambitious there, stumble and fall in plain heaven; adore and worship (and so damn) themselves in the absence of all other idols. And therefore from these experiments it would be no boast or hyperbole to affirm, and perhaps worth your pains to consider it, that if a profane impenitent should, upon an impossible supposition, be so prosperous as to enter heaven itself, it would be very far from reforming or converting him; such a gratifying and rewarding of sinners would but confirm them in their course; as when an habituate demure adulterer, oppressor, or the like, gets confident of his salvation, with these crimes unreformed about him, there is not an engine imaginable to fetch him off from his sins, but by first robbing him of his assurance; he must be thrown out of his [Luke xx.
35.]

S E R M.
III.

imaginary usurped heaven, before he will be really capable of coming thither. It is true there will be there in those sacred courts some good motives and attractives to reformation, examples of all the contrary virtues, if he were malleable enough to be controlled by such; the seraphim's pure divine flames of love, to reproach and upbraid his profane unclean fires of lust and rage; a quiet calm subordination of saints and angels under that great theocracy, to shame that petulance of his *ὁ δῆμος*, the irregularity of his rebel lusts against the *νοῦς αὐτοκράτωρ*, the monarchy of that divine beam within him; the principalities and powers, to make him blush and glow at those vile servilities and mean submissions to the paltry sins that he stands guilty of; a whole volume of patterns of all holiness in every saint, to reproach and libel his impurities: but when he hath in himself that one great example, that lust and pride, the filthiness of the flesh and spirit can inherit life, as suppose the impenitent in heaven, and he hath this example, he will then rather expect to be imitated himself, to gain proselytes to his delicate popular thriving heresy, to set up a new faction or society in heaven, all for prosperous liberty, than conform to that old regular subordination, that prelacy or hierarchy of archangels, and cherubims, and saints. In a word, we should have in such a new supposed platform, more hope to bring over and debauch angels, were they not confirmed, than danger of being disciplined or reformed by them; even raise Lucifer's expectation, that he might return to his old country again, at least give him more ground for that hope than Origen's charitable heresy could ever afford him; and all this though impossible enough, yet far more probable than for unclean atheists or hypocrites, remaining such, to enter into the kingdom of heaven, and then begin to reform when they are entered.

That divinity that first instates impenitents in pardon, and so in bliss, and then will have them mend by way of gratitude, supposes a degree of piety and generosity in those impenitents that nothing but a thorough conversion can plant in them. He that having a false graceless debtor to deal withal, will first absolutely cancel his bond, and then expect that payment from gratitude which law and sergeants could not extort from him, shall be allowed to be of Ephraim's

mind, that the sunbeams may dissolve that stone that the hammer could not. The Platonists and the papists have been a little more rational in ordering their fancies, placing their imaginary purgatory in their way to heaven not at the journey's end: and, if you mark it, they are not purgatory streams, but flames which they dream of, a *caldarium*, or scalding bath, or furnace, to fetch out and burn up dross, not a flowery Elysian field or paradise, only to upbraid it.

I shall make challenge to your memories and experiences, did you ever see any man flattered and gratified out of his sins by the increase and amiableness of his temptations? And yet it is certain that prosperity, and ease, and peace abound more with these than any other state, *acrioribus stimulis animum explorant*, in Tacitus^k, and as he, *felicitate corrumpimur*; so "because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God," could David say, their uninterrupted felicities first made atheists of them: is it likely that a few more hours of those joys would return them saints?

The eremites indeed in Theodosius the younger's time, left their solitude, and came to study perfection in the king's palace; but sure it was because they were (or else conceived themselves to be) advanced and arrived already to a spiritual height, to a full pancratic habit, fit for combats and wrestlings, and so came out to practise in these *agones*, that is, not because there were conceived to be less, but more temptations: and yet even for such, I should not be overforward to commend the design. Without question the still privacy had been the more prudent course. For so Licetus, that tells us of some lamps which under ground continued light for sixteen hundred years, concludes his observation, that as soon as ever they were brought forth into open air they went out immediately. And I need not tell you how many zealous-burning or fair-shining votaries the world hath had, whose imprisoned, retired, cloistered piety hath done so too.

And do not think that it is an appetite to other men's possessions, or an insidious praising of a lost treasure, that so they that have taken it up may return it again, if I tell you that which it is not these times have taught me, that affluence

^k [Secundæ res acrioribus stimulis rantur, felicitate corrumpimur.—Tac. Hist. i. 15.]

S E R M.
III.[Deut.
xxxiii. 15.]Esther
xvi. 2.[Ps. lxii.
10.][1 Tim. vi.
9.][Prov. xxx.
8.]

and abundance of riches, of ease, of even peace itself, is generally no safe commodity; there is not one of a hundred but is less Christian for it. Jeshurun waxed fat, began to thrive in the fair pasture, and, it follows, he kicked presently. And it is Aristotle's maxim, *πλοῦτος ὑβριστικὸς ποιεῖ*¹, 'riches make men insolent' and intolerable. Nay we have mention of the *πολλοὶ τὸν κόρον οὐ δυνάμενοι φέρειν*, and of *ferre fortunam*^m in Horace. It is a weight that many are not able to move under, the talents of gold are the saddest lading, ready to sink old Charon's boat in Lucian. It is sure that very bunch in the camel's back that made it so hard for him to enter that strait passage; and unless you have some confidence and some experience of your extraordinary gifts, or faculty of conquering the temptations of wealth and rest, particularly of taking out the sting and teeth that are peculiar to that serpent, the exact skill of allaying this quicksilver, believe me that piece of ancient advice would be no unsafe counsel to many of us, when riches increase, instead of setting the heart on them, not so much as to lend them an ear, to be deaf to the knocks of riches, when they are most importunate at the door. All the joys and high tastes that they can help you to, being not able to requite you for the damning sin of one insolence, one luxury, one impiety, nay for the pains that not only Petrarch but Aristotle, the heathen as well as Christian moralist, tells you it will cost the rich or idle man to resist those temptations, much less to repair the wound of a wasted conscience, that the courting of wealth when it is shy or coy, the *βούλεσθαι πλουτεῖν*, the resolving to become rich, or continue so, doth constantly cost us.

This is the most perfect earnest in the world; never was there Christian of any extraordinary proficiency, but was resolved of it as of a principle, and therefore put it into his prayers, not only under the petition against leading into temptation, but interpreted his daily bread to that sense, *τὸν τῇ ἐκάστη οὐσίᾳ ἡμῶν ἀρμόζοντα*, that which is most agreeable to every of our conditions, the neither poverty nor riches, with Solomon, but the *panem dimensi nostri*, that which is just even to the wants or cravings of a regular appetite, which is the only wholesome diet in the world.

¹ [Arist. Rhet. ii. 16.]^m [Hor. Od. iii. 27. 75.]

And as this hath sufficiently demonstrated the doctrine, so will it prove the most advantageous rise for use and application, and the conclusion of the whole matter. And that is in the Prophet Mical's phrase, to "shew thee, O man, what is good:" good to thee as thou art a man, in all thy capacities, to put thee upon a project, give thee a patent and monopoly of the greatest treasure and riches of the world, a secret that the worldling hath not known; for had he known it, he would never have disquieted the neighbourhood for such a warm prize snatched just out of the mint, such a singeing weight of gold that will so soon fire its passage, and fly from him again. And it is that treasure of Christ, shall I say? nay, of Epicurus' philosophy,—as, for want of his own writings, the Greek scholiasts on Aristotle are fain to tell us. In the one, the *γαληνὸν καὶ ἀτάραχον τῆς ψυχῆς κατάστημα*, the calm, untroubled constitution of mind, that all the *τὰ ἔξω*, the present or possible tempests of this world,—which are all extrinsical, perfectly extrinsical to a Christian,—have not had in their power to afflict or disquiet, to put out of that magnanimous pace of equable constant piety: in the other, that, not effect or fruit of faith, but faith itself, *ἡ πίστις νίκη*, 1 John v. 4. "Faith the victory and triumph over the world," using it as a tame conquered captive creature, contemning and defying it, and against all our tempters vindicating and maintaining that title of ours, which the blood of Christ helped to purchase for us, that of superiority and conquest over the world. Not only that of contentment with a little, a tame privative contentment,—which yet the Spaniard thinks fit to make rival with Jupiter, enough, when it is attained on earth, to get away all the love and value from heaven,—but of preferring the conveniences and advantages of that little,—nay, that admirably-valuable condition of the nothing at all,—the quiet and dignity of being fed immediately from God's own hand, of being a special part of His solitude, nay, of rejoicing in tribulations, the glorifying and magnifying God in that behalf beyond all others, and so being as in a state of ascendancy still, a yet more glorious condition, that of being under God's managery and discipline, a part not only of His retinue, but His skill, a piece of His craft and workmanship, hewed and squared and carved by those keen sharp instruments of

S E R M.
III.

[1 John
iii. 2, 3.]

His, to become so many ἀγάλματα Θεοῦ, 'incarnate statues of His divinity.' And I beseech you to tell me, is this a formidable condition? is not that of the prosperous atheist far more formidable? Tell me as men, as Christians, and not only as cattle of the herd; look but upon it with those eyes that hope one day to behold the face of God,—and "he that hath this hope must purify himself,"—and pronounce if there be any thing in the smitten Ephraim's fate, beside Ephraim's sins, that may discompose or terrify a servant of such a master, much less drive us into tempests and rages of fear, with oaths and curses, and damning of ourselves, that we know not that Christ that would lead us or bring us into this condition; a condition (look it never so sadly) which (believe me, or believe your Saviour upon His mount, His pulpit, or but believe your own souls, whenever you come to try it) shall prove a mine of comfort to you, even in this life, the true fountain, from whence the old ἡδονικὸν, the voluptuous or pleasurable, drew but drops or lappings, but will yield the illuminate Christian full streams of all the real joy and epicurism in the world.

Which as it shall be the sum of my present address to you, so of my prayers to God for ever for you, that He that knows best how to choose for us, will not suffer us to do it for ourselves, will answer the necessities of our health, and not the importunities of our appetites, that He will take our soul's part against our enemy flesh, and not our bodies, our estates, our satans against our souls; will teach us that patience and that joy, that tranquillity and that serenity, that courage and that anthem of his three martyr-children, that we may sing also in the midst of flames; denude us of all when that may fit us for our prizes; prescribe us any the scorchingest furnace here, which shall prove most instrumental to our present reformation and future bliss, to our life of obedience here, and of glory hereafter: which God of His infinite mercy grant us all, for His Son Jesus Christ His sake; to whom with the Father, &c.

SERMON IV.

JOHN BAPTIST'S WARNING.

MATT. iii. 2.

Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Two difficulties there are in these few words; what is meant by the kingdom of heaven, and what by repentance; and then one plain matter of practical divinity that results from the union of them. The difficulties must be explained, or else the doctrine will not be come by; the earth removed, ere the ore be sprang; the veil be rent, and then the oracle will appear. SERM.
IV.

The former, what is the importance of the kingdom of heaven, as being more disputable, I shall propose more civilly and tenderly and unconcernedly, as willing to give an example of that meekness and that charity that in matters of opinion will keep a Christian from noise or quarrel: but the latter, being more practical, to which your eternal weal is more closely consequent,—a little mistake in repentance being like the losing of a pin in a watch, the actions and motions of the whole life, even the success of every temporal enterprize or hope, depending on it,—you must give me leave to be more dogmatical, to affirm confidently, and, if need be, contend and quarrel you out of such errors. To begin with the first difficulty.

The kingdom of heaven in this place, I conceive to have a peculiar critical sense, different from what belongs to it in many other places; and to signify the destruction of the Jews, that remarkable vast *πανωλεθρία*, or small subversion of that Church and state, wherein the power and so king-

S E R M. dom of Christ was most illustriously visible against His per-
 IV. secutors. And if you must have the reasons of my conceit,
 I will give you a taste of them.

First, the parallel use of the phrase in some other places ; not to trouble you with many. In Luke xxi., where our Saviour having mentioned the beginnings of sorrows, ἀρχὰς ὠδίνων, beginnings of their throes of travail, and prolu- sions of this so bloody day,—“Jerusalem encompassed with armies,” and the prodigies that should be observable about that time, “the signs in the sun and moon,” &c., ver. 25, parallel to the relations in Hegesippus and Josephus, and predictions in Joel, “the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon,” &c.,—he then concludes in the words of this text, “When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.” [ver. 28.]

[Joel ii.
31.]

A second argument you may take from the Preacher, the Baptist, whose office it was to warn the Jews of this destruc- tion, as you may see Mal. iv. 5, 6 ; “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet,” i. e. John Baptist a prophesying, “before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord, and he shall turn the hearts of the fathers,” &c., directly the sermon of repentance, conversion in my text, “lest I come and smite the earth,”—τὴν γῆν ὕψαι, i. e. in the Scripture phrase, pecu- liarly the land of Judea,—“with a curse ;” the clear interpre- tation of this kingdom.

A third argument you may have from the consequents in this text, where the Baptist saith it over again to the Pharisees in other words, the μέλλουσα ὀργή, “the wrath ready to come,” and the “axe laid to the root of the trees :” and so it seems this kingdom was a heavy, slaughtering, hewing kingdom.

[Matt. iii.
7, 10.]

And so indeed the propriety of the word will bear,—which will serve for a fourth argument,—there being two notions of a kingdom ; the one as it signifies reigning, the other as executing judgment ; the first ruling, second coercing or punishing ; the first the golden sceptre, the second the iron rod ; that διάκονος Θεοῦ, royal “officer of God,” being ἕκ- δικος εἰς ὀργήν, “an avenger or executioner for punishment.” And for the matter in hand the case is most clear ; Christ was never so demonstrably a King as in that royal act of revenge upon His crucifiers ; then was His standard set up, His en-

Rom. xiii.
[4.]

sign displayed, the sign of the Son of Man appearing in heaven; "and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." SERM.
IV.
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Matt. xxiv.
30.

Once more, there is but one interpretation of this kingdom of heaven that can pretend against that which we have now given you, and that is, that it should signify the preaching of the gospel, which at John Baptist's sermon was not yet present, but ἤγγικε, "was at hand." But how could that be the thing meant, when Christ Himself—who was this King, and His preaching this kingdom—doth still continue the same style? [Matt. iii. 2.]
"Jesus began to preach and say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" the other kingdom was already come in Jesus' preaching, but still this kingdom is to come, yet future, though it were at hand. Yea, and when the Apostles were sent out a preaching, which sure was the presence of that kingdom, the same style was still continued by them, ἤγγικεν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς, "the kingdom of God is at hand upon you," and then immediately, to give the interpretation of that kingdom, they shake off the dust against them, a direful ceremony, "and it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city," the destruction that Sodom met with was more supportable than this. Matt. iv. 17.
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Luke x. 9.
—
ver. 12.

I will now flatter myself that I have given you some hints (and it is in kindness to my auditory that I do no more) to acknowledge it not improbable that the kingdom of heaven may have a peculiar separate notion in this and some other few places, from that which it ordinarily signifies, and so denote the fatal final day to the Jews, and that will give our Baptist a preacher of repentance, just as Jonas and Noah were, God's economy the same, and the style but little changed. "Repent, for within an hundred and twenty years the world shall be drowned," was the sum of Noah's sermon; "Repent, for within forty days Nineveh shall be destroyed," was Jonah's sermon; and "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand," —within the compass of this generation shall Jerusalem be destroyed,—was the Baptist's, the Christ's, the Apostle's sermon. And so I have done with my first difficulty. Gen. vi. 3.
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[Jonah iii. 4.]
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[Matt. iii. 2; xxiv. 34.]

The second will not detain or importune you so long, what is here meant by repent: it is in a word the amending of our lives, that *μετάνοια ἀπὸ νεκρῶν ἔργων*, repentance not for, Heb. vi. 1.

SERM.
IV.

but from dead works, the giving over the sins of the former life. The versicles before our Confession in the front of our liturgy have directed and authorized this interpretation, "Amend your lives," &c., and all other languages agree in this divinity; *μετάνοια* in Greek, 'a change of mind;' *תשובה*, in Hebrew, 'returning' or 'conversion;' *resipiscentia* in Latin, a 'return' to our wits again; and reformation or amendment of lives in English.

Having thus passed through the rougher part of your task of patience, seen what is most probably meant by the approaching kingdom of heaven, and what undoubtedly by repentance,—the first of which hath brought home the text very near the present condition of this kingdom: blessed Lord, that the latter might bring us home proselytes unto the text!—there is but one syllable left behind to exercise you, and that is the "for" betwixt this kingdom and this repentance, and the importance of it comprehends these two things: 1. That repentance is the only proper use of such direful denunciations, it is the only design of God's threats to extort repentance from us; the same Baptist that denounces the approach of the bloody slaughtering kingdom, requires repentance of his auditory; "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." 2. That repentance is the only way of averting that that is now at hand, and will otherwise undoubtedly invade them, "Repent, for it is at hand."

You see the double aspect of the *μετανοείτε*, "repent:" one upon the *βασιλεία*, the "kingdom;" the other upon the *ἤγγικε*, "it is at hand:" the double propriety of this grace, first, as the use of the doctrine, secondly, as the means to avert the judgment; to answer God's importunity, and to deprecate His wrath: a duty of justice to Him, and of prudence to ourselves: an aphorism of divinity and policy too, they will both come seasonably to our wants. We had need to make better use of the impendency of God's judgments, than, God knows, hitherto we have made; and we had need to find out some stronger antidote, some more approved *ἀλεξιπτήριον*, than hitherto we have taken: the Baptist's "for" will be instrumental to you for each of them. I begin first with the first, that repentance is the only proper use of such direful denunciations.

And that I must infer through these two steps or degrees: S E R M.

First, that no other use is sufficient but repentance; and IV.
 then that no repentance is sufficient but the *μετάνοια*, 'the change,' which is here defined.

First, no other use sufficient but repentance.

To pass by those so frequent, but abominable, uses which are made of these present calamities; in one, a supine stupidity, a constant wretchlessness, an intermitting all the duties of our callings till the times be better, and so making it impossible without a second miracle, that peace should prove peace, i. e. bring prosperity after it: in a second, the relieving his melancholic thoughts with a cup of Lethe, a sleeping pill of good fellowship, calling to the ocean to drown, when the hills will not be so kind as to fall upon him; like Saul sending to the minstrel, when the evil spirit came upon him; or like his second address, that to the witch,—for such is the cup wherein he divineth,—to charm the judgment that is ready to invade him: in a third, the multiplying of sins as fast as God multiplies judgments, like the elephants by the blood of the mulberries in the Maccabees, the more enraged in our *θεομαχίαι*, our fightings against God, by the bloodiness of the spectacle before us, advancing even to profaneness and atheism, like the emperor that, instead of reforming or trembling, would thunder back against Jupiter; all which I cannot compare better than to the effect of the famous plague in Thucydides^a, that saith he, "was pestilential to their souls as well as bodies, made them *θηριώδεις* and *ἀγρίους*, swept away civility and humanity as well as men, left nothing but ferity and savageness among them." To omit these,—which sure are no sufficient use, none of that *καιρῶ δουλεύειν*, "serving the time," which can be mistaken for *Κυρίῳ*, "serving the Lord,"—many other uses there are, with which men are willing to content themselves; many inferior vulgar graces the devil can allow us to be taught by these calamities, if by that means he may keep us off from this one grand necessary of repentance. When the whale approaches the ship, it is the mariner's stratagem to throw him out a barrel or two to sport with, to keep him from that nobler game he came for, the tossing and drowning the ship. When Xerxes was in danger

[1 Sam. xvi. 23.]

[1 Sam. xxviii. 8.]

[1 Maccab. vi. 34.]

^a [Thuc. ii. 52, 53.]

SERM.
IV.

in the tempest, Herodotus^b tells us of his nobles, *προσκυνέοντας ἐκπηδέειν ἐς τὴν θάλασσαν*, "they made their obeisance and leaped overboard to save their prince's life." And so when the Leviathan in the text, a devouring denunciation makes toward us, that naturally delights in that charitable cruelty, the tossing and drowning the sinner-part of the man and state, wounding the vessel through the ribs, shipwrecking the affections, the lusts, the reigning sin, the heathen prince, the devil in it,—that grand important work, that joy of such angels or messengers of heaven, that (to them so delightful) game of repentance,—some lower meaner vessels we have to cast out to it, some inferior contents to sacrifice, some nobles to leap overboard, some very virtues and graces we can have our great pilot Satan's leave to retribute to these storms, these denunciations, so the body of reigning sin may be kept unshipwrecked, so that fatal work of repentance may not be required of us.

One or two not inconsiderable graces these times may already have wrought in the most of us. In one man perhaps contempt of the world, having by our present miseries learned so much of the contemptibleness of it, and by the world's contemning and affronting of us, had provocations to all returns of contumely and revenge on a villanous world; and he that upon such unworthy usage, such barbarous, reproachful, incensing behaviour, can but hold up a slight quarrel with this petulant enemy, charge it with some unkindness, and in that pet break off that strict league of friendship, vow never to love the unkind, treacherous, false world so well again, persuades himself he hath made a most excellent sanctified use of these times. I confess I am glad to see such quarrels, glad that any thing can allay that mad passion, that *λιθομανία*, as Isidore calls it, that fury of love and doting on our earthen gods, glad that they that have been so long tormented in their own galleys, *suo calculo damnati ad metalla*, by their own tyrannical covetous minds condemned to that old Roman punishment, a digging and hewing in the minerals for ever, are by the bounty of these ill times returned from their thralldom, their captivity before their year of jubilee, expelled from these galleys, banished out of this in-

^b [Herod. viii. 118.]

quisition, glad that the world's forsaking of us can work any degree of cure on our fits of spleen, our hypochondriac passions to the world. It is possible that the man thus dispossessed of his own familiar may at length have hospitable thoughts for some nobler guests, that the ill usage from the harlot may bring the spouse into favour again, that the sense of the ill master that we have drudged under so long, may make us seek out some more gainful service, that the unprosperousness of the arm of flesh, the several failings of the second causes which we have idolized so often, the many delusions and ill successes we meet with in the world, may make some forsake those atheistical colours, and bring in proselytes to heaven, and so this contempt of the world may be a piece of procœmial piety, an usher or baptist to repentance; but till it be thus improved and built upon, till this excellent piece of philosophy be, as Clemens saith of the pagan school, *τελειουμένη διὰ Χριστοῦ*, baptized by that Baptist, christianized by the addition of repentance, till the thorns that are now in the flesh enter to the pricking and wounding of the heart, to the letting out all worldly trusts and airy hopes out of it, till he that is fallen out with this world, and his Egyptian master there, come with him in the gospel unto Christ in quest after the blessed heavenly Master, "running, and kneeling, and asking, Good Master what shall I do" to get my portion in another world? and pursue Christ's directions to the utmost in that design; that contemner of the world must still know, he hath not yet taken out the Baptist's copy, not made such use of the doctrine of the rod as is expected from him, he is not yet advanced so far as to John's baptism, to that *ἐν ὀλίγῳ Χριστιανὸς*, the so much as almost a Christian, which the Baptist could have made him. O then let him go on to the perfection of the text, not satisfy himself with that use of it.

[Mark x.
17.]

[Acts xix.
3.]
[Acts xxvi.
28.]

In another perhaps the complexion of the times hath had a yet nobler influence, inspired him with a perfect valour, an athletic habit of soul, a contempt of life itself, brought him to a dreadless approach of that supreme terror, and that not only the martial man, whose calling is to beard that lion, but even the soft courtier, who had imbibed no such bold principles; it is now no news to hear death kindly treated.

S E R M.
IV.

We can think of death as of a preferment, of the grave as one of the greatest dignities in the Church, and not only *ἐπαινεῖν*, but *μακαρίζειν*, bless this enemy,—when we have not so much meekness or charity for any other,—count them happiest and blessedest that come earliest to it. Each discontented Jonah hath his “Take, I beseech thee, my life from me;” the whole kingdom is become wilderness, a many prickly juniper-trees scattered every where in that wilderness, and an Elijah sat down under every one of those juniper-trees, “a sighing out his request for himself, that he may die; It is enough now, O Lord, take away my life:” and I see this passeth with some for a special piety and mortification; which let me tell you, considered aright, is an act of the sul- lenest atheism, a felonious intent against themselves, which because (like Saul) they are too cowardly to execute with their own hands, God must supply the armour-bearer’s place, be called in to do it for them. But I am not so uncharitable to think that all our thoughts of kindness to death are the congelations of such black melancholic vapours; it is, I hope, in some an obedience to Plato’s precept, the *πειρᾶσθαι εὐσχημο- νεῖν*, the endeavouring to behave one’s-self comely in whatever fortune, a Christian submission to God’s will in either of the *δοῖοι πίθοι*, which way soever the economy of providence dis- poses us, even as far as to death itself, no hatred or satiety of life, but an indifference to either lot, the hating life only as we are commanded to hate our parents, not with an absolute, but comparative hatred,—the denotation of the Hebrew *שנא*,— only choosing the rest, preferring the dormitory, the being asleep in Christ, in paradise with Christ, rather than to be in those uneasy postures, laborious marches, that a hill on earth provides for us; and then I shall commend your right- eous judgment, but yet still not flatter you, that this is a suf- ficient use of this Baptist’s sermon, of the present impendency of God’s punishments. Thou mayst not only be content, but wish to die and be with Christ, which is far better, more desirable even to the carnal man, most gladly exchange the torments of a brittle life for the joys of an eternity, and yet not have deposited the lust and basenesses of this nauseated life: the former is but an act of the judicative faculty, a con- clusion that such premises once considered cannot choose

[Jonah iv.
3.]

[1 Kings
xix. 4.]

[1 Sam.
xxi. 4.]

[Luke xiv.
26.]

[Phil. i.
23.]

but extort from us, but the other is an act of the will, which is not so easily brought to perform its duty, to mortify the flesh with the affections and lusts, the work of repentance here required of us. And I beseech you let us not be too confident that we have performed our task, though we could resolve to be content, nay glad to die with Christ,—for so you know Peter could do, and deny and blaspheme Him after it,—unless we have that second martyrdom,—that Cyprian^c, or somebody in his disguise, hath writ a book of,—that vital martyrdom of our exemplary, saintly, penitent lives to improve and consummate the other: and so still we are not got so far as repentance; we require more storms, more thunder-bolts, more rousing tempests, more pressing calamities yet, to drive us thither.

A third sort may have arrived to a third and greater degree of proficiency yet in the school of judgments, to a resolution and practice of patience under God's hand, how heavy soever it prove, and yet let me tell you, come short of repentance still: for, I beseech you observe, there is a double submission unto God, to His will, and to His wisdom; that to His will revealed as well as secret; revealed for the duties, secret for the sufferings of this life; the first in an active, the second in a passive obedience to heaven. The submitting to God's will in suffering what He lays upon us,—the utmost degree of patience that the most of us attain to, and when we have done that, think ourselves champions and martyrs of the first magnitude,—is but a very moderate degree of Christian fortitude, that which Christ needed not have ascended to the cross to preach unto us: a man must be a kind of mad atheist to come short of that, for what is it but atheism to think it possible to resist His will? and what but madness to attempt it? It is that high philosophy of submitting to His wisdom, the acknowledging God the best chooser for us, the stripes which He sends, far fitter for our turns than all the boons we pray for, His denying of our demands, the divinest way of granting them, and, in a word, the resolving that whatever is, is best, whatsoever He hath done, best to be done, whatsoever permitted, best to be permitted,—

οὐχ ὄγ' ἀνευθε θεοῦ τάδε μάλιστα^d, ———

^c [De laude martyrii ad Moysen et Maximum vulgo inscripta oratio.]

^d [Hom. II. ε'. 185.]

S E R M.
IV.

that very fury and madness of earth and hell, is a piece of God's economy,—whatsoever is revealed to be His will by its coming to pass among us, is (though the actors in that tragedy shall pay dearly for it, yet) better and more desirable and eligible for us, than all friends and patron guardians in heaven and earth, yea, and our own souls, could have contrived and chosen for us. The good Hezekiah's "Good is the word of the Lord which He hath spoken," when it denounced destruction to his whole family; old Nahum's גַּם זֶה לְטוֹבָה, "even this for good," to the heaviest news that ever came, so oft repeated, that we find him in Elias Levita, surnamed Gamzo, "even this," the firm adherence to the truth of that apostolical aphorism, that [Rom. viii. 28.] "all things tend to good to them that love God," from tribulation through seven degrees to sword or death itself, and the forming all our lives by the plastic virtue of this one article; this submission, I say, to His wisdom, superadded to that other to His will, and that attended with its natural consequent, [Rom. v. 3.] "a rejoicing in tribulation," is the lesson God's rod must teach us; yea and submission in actions as well as sufferings, to His precepts as well as to His decrees, doing cheerfully, as well as patiently enduring His will, or else we are still but punies in St. Paul's academy, but triflers in the school of the cross of Christ.

Once more, denunciations of God's wrath may set us a praying oftener than we were wont before, make us assiduous and importunate in that duty; the tempest in Jonah may [Jonah i. 5.] cast the heathen mariners upon their knees, crying every man unto his God, and yet for want of the clean hands to spread forth towards heaven, of the new soul to exhale and breathe forth those prayers, the liveliest of those flames, like all those which our earthly fire brings forth, faint and extinguish long before they come to that region of purity. [John ix. 31.] It was the blind man's divinity, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners," a principle of blind nature; and Hierocles a philosopher descants excellently upon it, "the sacrifice of such unreformed fools is but *πυρὸς τροφή*, but a feast for the fire to prey on, their offerings to the temple *ἱεροσύλοις χορηγία*, a prize for the sacrilegious to seize on; the wise man is the only priest, the only friend of God, *μόνος εἰδὸς εὐξασθαι*, the only man that knows how to pray, offering up himself

for a sacrifice, hewing his lower soul into an image, his upper into a temple of his deity." S E R M.
IV.

I might shew you some more of these inferior uses, imperfect sudden motions, that these judgments may have forced from us : and so still like chymics in the pursuit of the philosopher's stone, we meet with many handsome experiments by the way, please ourselves in our journey, though never attain to our journey's end : these sad times, and this forced study and contemplation of God in His judgments, may have cast us upon some considerable Christian virtues, and yet not advanced us within any ken of that great transcendant treasure, to which all the ignis and the sulphur, the fire and the brimstone of His judgments, that vast expense of thunderbolts, to the emptying of His armoury, was designed. Repentance is a higher pitch than any or all of these, and it is only repentance is the proper use of this sad doctrine ; and not all kinds that pass under that title neither : and that must be shewed you in our next stage.

And first, the repentance we speak of is not sorrow, whether for misery or for sin. For misery, that sluice which lets out such rivers of tears, which gets away all the custom from godly sorrow or humiliation : such sorrow as this, is admirably described by God, and called "assembling themselves for corn," fasting and praying only upon the loss and for the recovering of worldly plenty, and this, it seems, very reconcilable with all the impiety in the world, for it follows, "and they rebel against Me." Nor bare sorrow for sin neither, that which some men call repentance, and by so doing have filled hell with none but penitents, for I am confident there is not an unhappy creature there which hath not both these parts of sorrow, both for his misery, and for his fall that betrayed him to it ; had he not, hell were not half so much hell as it is, two of the sorest tormentors would be missing, the sense of the flames, and the gnawing of the worm, the one extorting the tears, the other the gnashing of the teeth. [2 Cor. vii.
9.]
[Ios. vii.
14.]

Nor, secondly, humiliation alone, though that were a great rarity to be found among us ; for though that might prevail to avert or defer secular calamities from a kingdom, as it did from Ahab,—and therefore our Satan that accuses this nation day and night before God, will not allow us this common [1 Kings
xxi. 27.]

S E R M. grace ; after all our sufferings the whole nation, God knows,
 IV. is as unhumiliated as ever,—yet will not a bare humiliation
 under God's rod be accepted for a sufficient return, when
 repentance and change is called for.

No, nor thirdly, the sudden passionate motions toward
 [Matt. xiii. reformation, the shooting up of the seed in the stony ground :
 5.] many such weak false conceptions there are in the world,
 and an *ἔκρυσις*, or speedy abortion, the common fate of them
 all, like the goats in the philosopher, that give milk when
 [Ps. lxxviii. they are stung, but never else. “ When He slew them they
 34.] sought Him, and turned them early and enquired after God.”
 Every one of these is but a poor imperfect payment of that
 great arrear, that God's terrors and imminent judgments are
 come, like the *ὑπηρέτης* in the Gospel, to arrest us for ; and
 [Matt. v. if we do not presently make our peace with our adversary, by
 25.] rendering him that only royal tribute, the sincere, impartial,
 uniform obedience of our whole age to come, and counting
 [1 Pet. iv. the time past of our lives sufficient to have wrought the will
 3.] of the gentiles, give ourselves up an early and voluntary
 sacrifice to Christ, first to be slain before Him, then brought
 forth,—like Antinous in Homer,

Ἄλλ' ὁ μὲν ἤδη κείται δὲ αἷτιος ἔπλετο πάντων^e,

“ there lies the sin, laid out a spotted corpse, that hath brought
 all the misery upon us,”—and then offered up upon His
 altars, so many devoted mortified new creatures that have the
 addition of fire to that of air and water in the mixture, the
 active, vital, as well as the sighing, weeping penitentiaries,—
 the imitation of the sacrifices of old,

— χρυσὸν κερασὶ περιχέας^f,

“ gold poured about the horns of the sacrifice,”—not only
 [Dan. iv. the ox or bestial part slain, but righteousness and mercy
 27.] to the poor used as the ceremonies of breaking off our
 sins, of slaying that sacrifice,—as in the primitive times
 no penitent was re-admitted to the Church without *ἀγα-
 θεργαίαι*, or alms-deeds, and for him that was in the Church
 there was yet no coming to the Sacrament without an offer-
 tory,—then still after all this passionate variety hath God's

^e [Hom. Od. χ'. 48.]

^f [Hom. Od. γ. 384.]

message not yet had audience from us, and till God may be heard by us, there is small hope that we shall ever be heard by God; for repentance is not only the only use of the denunciation, but withal the only preservative or phylactery, the only way of averting the judgment which is now at hand, my last particular, "Repent, for it is at hand." SERM.
IV.

And here I shall be able but only to draw you a scheme of what I had designed you, a rude draught of dead lines, and not venture to importune your patience with a *ζωγράφησις*, but only tell you that I had purposed,

1. To explain to you that mystery of Scripture, the distribution of God's judgments into reversible and irreversible.

And 2. to give you the mark or character in Scripture discriminating the one from the other; the reversible under God's word only, the "Nineveh shall be destroyed," and yet Nineveh repents, and Nineveh is not destroyed; the irreversible under God's oath also, "though these three men were in it, Noah, Daniel, and Job, as I live, saith the Lord, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters," &c. [Jonah iii.
4. 10.]
[Ezek. xiv.
14. 20.]

3. The commonness and frequency of the motion, of the *προκοπή*, or proficiency of one of these states into the other, the change that some addition of judgments, and years, and sins, and intercalary mercies, may make in God's decrees, their improvement into irreversible. Thus it is very possible that upon the first breaking out of these judgments upon this land, the beginning of this rousing sermon, the fate and state of this kingdom might be a reversible mutable state, like the souls of men in Maximus Tyrius, *ἀμφισβητήσιμοι καὶ ἐν μετρίῳ*, in a "pendulous middle posture." But since the prodigious unkindly working of these medicinal inflictions, as of the bitter water in the trial of jealousy, making the thigh to rot and the belly to swell; since to all the sins that before we had borrowed from our neighbours we have added so many more from the fiends and furies, to the rifling and impoverishing as it were of hell itself; since those armies of high uncleannesses, of lies, of crafts, of multiplied oaths, a strange discordant grating harmony in the ears of God, of sacrilegious rapines and profanations, of—, (I beseech you save me the pains of confessing them for you) that sin might be

S E R M.
IV.

exceeding sinful, and destruction exceeding destructive, and —after some intermission of judgments but none of provocations—since a dove-like emblem of peace hath been hovering over our heads, but not permitted to rest upon us, disclaimed and driven out of our region as a vulture or screech-owl, the most ominous hated enemy ; since the concurrence of all these, I say, it is also as possible we may be now improved and advanced to our full measure.

But then 4. I should have shewed you also the indiscernibleness, to the eye of man, of the difference of these distant states, till God by His promulgate sentence have made the separation ;—we have not such skill in palmistry as to interpret the lines and strokes in God's hand, which hath been long upon us, nor in symptoms, as to judge whether *ἀλέθριον κάρτα λίαν*, whether it be infallibly mortal or no ;—and from thence the possibility yet, that it may not be too late for us to return and live, to set God a copy of repenting. But then

5. Till this be done, every minute we breathe we suck our poison, we run upon all the spears and cannons in the world ; nay, if God should hear us before we have answered Him, if mercy should interpose before repentance and reformation make us capable of it, that very mercy were to be deprecated as the greatest judgment in the world, a kind of hell of desertion, a “ why should ye be smitten any more ? ” a not vouchsafing us the medicinal stripes, a delivering us up to ourselves as to the fatallest revengefullest enemies, the most merciless bloodiest executioners. God may spare us in wrath, relieve us in fury, give us a treacherous settlement, a palliate peace,—the saddest presage and forerunner imaginable ;—and such it is sure to be if the surface of the flesh be healed before the *βάθος καρδίας*, the depth of the wound in the heart, be searched and mollified, if God repent before we repent ; and against such mercies we have more reason to pray than against all the *πύρωσις* and intestine flames, all the Tophets, and purgatories, and hells, that the fury of men or devils can kindle within our coasts : the same motive that made St. Basil call for his fever again, to wit, if the recovering of his health were the reflourishing of his pride, may move us to pray for the continuance of this state fever till our impeni-

[Is. i. 5.]

tent hearts be humbled. I will make you my confessors; till S E R M.
 this kingdom be really and visibly the better for stripes, I IV.
 cannot without some regrets, some fears of uncharitableness,
 pray absolutely for peace for it. Lord, purge us, Lord, cleanse
 us with Thy sharp infusions, cure and heal our souls by
 these caustics of Thine, and then Thou mayest spare that
 charge, pour in Thy wine and Thine oil instead of them;
 but till then, *Domine nolumus indulgentiam hanc*, "Lord, we
 are afraid of Thy indulgence," we are undone if Thou be too
 merciful, we tremble to think of our condition if Thou
 shouldest give over Thy cure too early, if Thou shouldest
 tear off our plasters and our flesh together, restore our
 flourishing before Thou hast humbled and changed our
 souls.

I have done with my last particular also.

Please you now but to spell these elements together, the
 sad threats of a direful kingdom, the but one word between
 us and that, only repentance, to sanctify it to us, and avert
 it from us, the Baptist miraculously born to preach it to
 them, and the same voice now crying in the wilderness to
 this nation, in the midst of a whole Africa of monsters, a
 desert of wilder men; and if this raven sent out of the ark,
 the place of God's rest in heaven, thus long hovering over this
 earth of ours,—going to and fro only on this errand, to see
 whether the waters be dried up from off the earth, whether
 the deluge of sin be abated,—may not yet be allowed some
 rest for the sole of her foot: if at the heels of that, the dove-
 like Spirit moving once more upon the waters, may not find
 one olive leaf among us to carry back, in token that we are
 content to hear of peace, to be friends with God; if having
 Moses and so many prophets, the rod of the one so long on
 our shoulders, and the thunder of the other in our ears, we
 cannot yet be brought this day to hear this voice, this *φωνή*
κράζουσα, this clamorous importunate voice, "Repent" or
 perish irreversibly, I must then divert with that other proph-
 et, with an "O altar, altar, hear the word of the Lord,"
 because Jeroboam's heart was harder than that, with an "O
 earth, earth, earth," with a "Hear, O heaven, and hearken,
 O earth," fly to the deafest creatures in the world, because I
 can have no better auditors. In this case preaching is the

[1 Kings
 xiii. 2.]

[Jer. xxii.
 29.]

[Is. i. 2.]

S E R M.
IV.

most uncharitable thing, apt only to improve our ruin, like breath when it meets with fire, only to increase our flames. There is nothing left tolerably seasonable but our prayers, that our hearts, being the only whole creatures in the kingdom, may at last be broken also; that by His powerful, controlling, convincing Spirit, the proud atheistical spirit that reigns among us may at last be humbled to the dust; that in the ruin of the kingdom of Satan, his pride, his sorceries, his rebellions, may be erected the humble heavenly kingdom of our Christ, that meekness, that lowliness, that purity, that mercifulness, that peaceableness, that power of the Gospel spirit, that we may be a nation of Christians first, and then of saints; that having taken up the close of the angels' anthem, "Good will towards men," we may pass through "peace on earth," and ascend to that "Glory to God on high," and with all that celestial choir ascribe to Him the glory, the honour, the power, the praise, &c.

[Luke ii.
14.]

SERMON V.

GOD IS THE GOD OF BETHEL.

GEN. xxxi. 13.

I am the God of Bethel.

THE story of God's appearing to Jacob at Luz, is so known S E R M.
a passage, so remarkable even to children by that memora- V.
tive topic, the ladder and the angels, that I shall not need Gen. xxviii.
assist your memories, but only tell you that that passage at
large, that vision and the consequents of it, from the twelfth
verse of the twenty-eighth to the end of the chapter, is the
particular foundation of the words of this text, and the rise
which I am obliged to take in the handling of them. That
hard pillow which the benighted Jacob had chosen for him-
self in Luz,—and became so memorable to him by the vision
afforded him there,—he anointed and christened, as it were,
named it anew, on that occasion, into Bethel, the “house” or
residence “of God,” consecrated it into a temple, solemnized
that consecration, endowed that temple with a vow and reso-
lution of all the minchahs and nedabahs, acts of obedience
and free-will offerings, duty and piety imaginable; and the
whole business was so pleasurable and acceptable to God,
God's appearing to him, and his returns to God, that in the
words of my text,—twenty years after that passage,—God
puts him in mind of what there passed, and desires to be no
otherwise acknowledged by him than as He there appeared
and revealed Himself, “I am the God of Bethel,” &c.

For the clear understanding of which it will be necessary
to recollect the chief remarkable passages that are recorded
in that story, and seem to be principally referred to here,
and then I shall be able to give you the survey and the

S E R M. full dimensions of Bethel, the adequate importance of this
 V. text.

And the passages are more generally but three.

ver. 13—
15.

1. God's signal promises of mercy and bounty to Jacob, emblematically resembled by the ladder from earth to heaven, God standing on the top of that, and the angels busy on their attendance, ascending and descending on it; and then in plain words the emblem interpreted, the hieroglyphic explained, "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, &c. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, &c. And behold,"—there is the signal promise I told you of, that belongs to every pilgrim patriarch, every tossed itinerant servant and favourite of Heaven, that carries the simplicity and piety of Jacob along with him, though he be for the present, in that other title of his, the poor Syrian ready to perish,—"behold I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land: for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."

The second passage is, Jacob's consecrating of this place of God's appearance, anointing the pillar, and naming it Bethel, in the eighteenth and nineteenth verses.

ver. 20.

The third and last is Jacob's vow unto God, on condition of that His blessing him. "And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, so that I come to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God, and this stone which I have set for a pillar shall be God's house, and of all that Thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto Thee."

These are the three principal passages in that story, and in relation to each of these, I am now obliged to handle the words, and consequently to divide them, not into parts, but considerations, and so look on them as they stand.

First, in relation to God's promise there made; and so first, God is the God of Bethel.

[ver. 17.]

Secondly, in relation to this dreadful, this consecrated place, as Bethel signifies the residence, the house of God; and so secondly, God is the God of Bethel.

Thirdly, in relation to Jacob's vow there made, and so S E R M.
 of Bethel, as it follows in the verse, "I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst a pillar, and vowedst a vow unto Me." V.

I begin first with the first of these, the relation of the words to God's appearing and making promise to Jacob; so *Ego Deus Bethelis*, "God is the God of Bethel."

And in that first view you will have tender of three severals; I will give you them as they rise.

1. That God takes a great deal of delight in making and recounting of promises made to His children; the free omnipotent donor of all the treasures of the world, is better pleased to behold Himself our debtor than our prince, triumphs more in His punctual fidelity than His superabundant mercy towards us; He that loves us passionately, that once put Himself into a dropping sweat in a mere agony of love, poured out His heart-blood in that passion, that delights to do us good, joying more in dispensing favours and obligations than any man living in receiving them, doth yet more affectionately rejoice and triumph in seeing Himself engaged and obliged to us, in being faithful and just,—which relates to His performing His engagements, that which by promise He hath bound Himself to do, and so becomes His righteousness and His payment of dues,—than in the honour of being unlimitedly free to pour out acts of all mercy and unexpected bounty, matters of absolute choice whether He will do them or no. In the very story of which this text is a part, God certainly might have enriched Jacob by what means He pleased, conducted him home to his country upon that one score of His free mercy,—as well as He may bring His chosen to heaven merely by acts of free grace,—but you see He chooses to do it on that other style, as He is the God of Bethel, that ever since the mutual compact betwixt Him and Jacob there, hath stood obliged to this poor Syrian, and must deny Himself if He be not constant to Jacob. Thus Deut. vii. 9, "The Lord thy God He is God;" and the only attribute that there he proclaims Him in, is that of the faithful God; the faithful, and that further insisted on, which keepeth covenant and mercy; first covenant, and then mercy: and so Isa. lxi. 7, "Because

SERM.
V.

[1 Cor. x.
13.]
[Heb. vi.
10.]

of the Lord that is faithful." And how many times is this style repeated in the New Testament, "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able;" and "God is faithful, which will not forget your labour of love," &c.; is as exact and punctual in performing covenants, as strictly accurate in fulfilling of bargains, as the most covetous griping merchant on earth would require his chapman to be. And the reason or design of this method of Heaven, the aim of this economy, is presently discernible also.

First, to regulate and moderate the expectations and hopes of men, which are apt to be very sanguine and very precipitous, hoping proportionably to God's power, i. e. infinitely, unlimitedly, whatsoever our carnal hearts can aspire to, to have sins pardoned before they are mortified, to see God without any kind of purifying. Whereas this God of Bethel, that will be looked upon only as such, must be required to do no more than He hath promised to do, our hopes must be terminated in His revelations of His will, not whatever He may do by His infinite free power and grace, but what He in wisdom hath thought good to promise, as the rector of the universe, not as an absolute irrelative donor; and that is so far from a confinement or restraint, that it is a mighty enhancement of the mercy. His promises being generally conditional promises, and so exacting all manner of sincere honest endeavours towards cleansing, reach out to us, together with the mercy offered, an engagement of that purity and that sanctity, which, if it may be wrought in our hearts, is far the greater blessing of the two, hath more of divine and heavenly treasure in it, than the rescuing out of a sullen Laban's clutches: and so, as it is observed of Pomponius Atticus^a, that by lending to the poor, and requiring payment again of the loan at the day appointed, he did more good than if he had absolutely and freely given, taught them justice and indus-

^a [Præter gratiam quæ jam adolescentulo magna erat, sæpe suis opibus inopiam eorum publicam levavit. Cum enim versuram facere publice necesse esset, neque ejus conditionem æquam haberent, semper se interposuit, atque ita ut neque usuram unquam ab iis

acceperit, neque longius quam dictum esset, eos debere passus sit. Quod utrunque erat iis salutare. Nam neque indulgendo inveterascere eorum æs alienum patiebatur, neque multiplicandis usuris crescere.—Corn. Nep. in vit. Att. c. 2. p. 154.]

try, as well as relieved their wants,—and the two former the far richer donatives,—so God by this course of promises, conditional promises, conditional liberality, gives us duty and piety also into the bargain, all manner of obligations to it; and so is a thorough Paraclete, an exhorter and comforter both, puts Jacob in mind of his vowed necessary obedience, by the mention of the promises made in Bethel, and that is one prime aim of this method, of God's magnifying Himself in this relation.

S E R M.
V.

A second (benefit at least to us, and consequently) aim in God there is, to teach us by this copy, discipline us by this example, that we take care to allow God our proportionable returns, to be as just with God as punctually faithful in all our promises to Him, as forward to put God in mind of what we have obliged ourselves to perform to Him, as He by proclaiming Himself here “the God of the promises in Bethel,” and in so many other places “the God of Abraham,” i. e. that God that made so many promises to Abraham,—in which all the people of the world are concerned,—hath done unto us. This were an admirable lesson from hence to be transcribed into our hearts, to have our frequent set (weekly or monthly) audits with God, to tell Him freely how much we are in His debt; not only to recount those desperate arrears, the sins committed for which we come now for pardon, but especially the obligations entered which we might set ourselves bodily to perform, most freely and cheerfully commemorating before Him not only the *θειαι παραγγελιαι* and *ιεροι νόμοι*, the divine admonitions and holy laws whispered inarticulately in our hearts, which the heathen Porphyry tells of, the obligations that lie upon us as men and creatures, and must be discharged by us if ever we aspire to the dignity of Christians or saints, *πρώτον δεῖ ἄνθρωπον εἶναι, καὶ τότε θεόν*, we must approve ourselves men first, and then Christians, live a reasonable before we are ever capable of the angelical life,—first that which is natural, and after that which is spiritual,—but also the promises and engagements of an higher indenture, those of the Christian, either that one standing obligation entered at the font, which must be resolved to have a close influence upon every minute of the age after, or moreover all the many penitential resolutions,

[Gen. xvii.
7.]
[Heb. vi.
13.]

S E R M.
V.

[Rom. i.
17.]

ver. 11, 12.

chap. xxx.

all the occasional quarrels against sin, the indignations and vowed revenges on those boufefeux that have so disturbed our peace with Heaven. Would we but spend our time in this recounting and discharging of promises and obligations, pay God His plain dues of obedience, that which we are most strictly bound to by the law of Christ, and for which our own hands are so many times producible against us, we should not need much to take up our thoughts with the pride or confidence of our free-will oblations, the boasts of our charities and alms toward Heaven; he that would but consider that to be faithful,—as in God toward men, so in man toward God,—signifies not so much to believe the promises of others as to perform our own, that the faith by which the just do live, consists in the paying of our vows to Christ, as well as depending on His blood or promise for salvation, would endeavour to recover Christianity and faith to a better reputation in the world than now ordinarily seems to belong to it, would live more justly and more christianly than he doth. And let that serve for the first part of your prospect, the first observable in the first view.

The second thing from this title of God's, as it refers to His promises of mercy to Jacob, made in Bethel, and repeated now at his departure from Laban, is this, that God would have us consider the blessings we enjoy, and observe particularly how and whence they descend to us. This is the direct end of this vision to Jacob, "Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams," &c. The thriving of that stratagem of Jacob's, the invention of the peeled rods, whereby he was grown so rich in despite of Laban's malice, God will have ponderingly considered, and imputed as an act of His special interposition or providence, partly in justice, that the covetous Laban should not too much oppress him, "I have seen all that Laban doth unto thee," partly to make good His promise at Bethel, made then, and now most particularly performed, "I am the God of Bethel." And believe it, there is not a duty more necessary, and yet more negligently performed, more fruitful and nutritive of piety, and yet more wretchlessly despised and intermitted, than this; this of observing this ladder from heaven to earth, of beholding all the good things that we lawfully enjoy, descending in an

angel's hand, and that filled,—as the pitcher out of the well, or as Aaron's son's hands from his father at the entering on the high-priest's office,—from the hand of God standing on the top of the ladder. He that would thus critically examine his estate upon interrogatories, put every part of it upon the rack and torture, to confess without any disguise from whence it came, whether down the ladder from heaven or up out of the deep,—for there, it seems by the poets, Plutus or riches hath a residence also,—by what means it was conveyed, by whose directions it travelled into that coast, and what the end of its coming is, and so learn the genealogy, as it were, of all his wealth, would certainly acknowledge that he were fallen upon a most profitable enquiry. For beside that he would find out all the ill-gotten treasure,—that gold of Toulouse that is so sure to help melt all the rest, that which is gotten by sacrilege, by oppression, by extortion, and so take timely advice to purge his lawful inheritance from such noisome, unwholesome acquisitions, and thrive the better for ever after the taking so necessary a purgation,—he will, I say, over and above, see the original of all his wealth, all that is worthy to be called such, either immediately or mediately from God; immediately without any co-operation of ours, as that which is left us by inheritance from honest parents,—our fortunes and our Christianity together;—mediately, as that which our lawful labour, our planting and watering, hath brought down upon us, wholly from God's *καρποφορία* or *εὐοδία*, His prospering or giving of increase. And when we have once thus discerned the peculiarity of our tenure, only that of allodium, not from any *ἀλλ' ἐκ Διὸς*, but from God,—as the lawyers have derived that word,—all that we have held *in capite* from Heaven; as this will be the sweetening of our wealth to us, give it a flavour or an high taste whensoever we feed on it, more joy in one well-gotten morsel,—the festival of a good conscience,—than all the *τομαὶ* or *μερίδες*, the portions fetched from the bloody polluted heathen idol altars ever would afford us, so will it enflame our souls towards so royal a benefactor, teach us piety from our fields and coffers,—as even Aristotle can talk of his *εὐτυχία φιλόθεος*^b, “that rich men will love God, if for nothing else, yet because He hath

S E R M.
V.
[Lev. viii.]

[1 Cor. iii.
6.]

^b [Aristot. Rhet. ii. 17.]

S E R M.
V.

done them good turns;” and Hippocrates, that “though the poor did generally murmur and complain, yet the wealthy would be offering sacrifice,”—yea and inspire our whole lives with an active vital gratitude, by the use of this wealth to demonstrate and acknowledge whence we have received it, by refunding and employing it not on our own ways, our own humours, our own vanities, but as that which God hath conveyed into our hands as into an ecclesiastic treasury or corban, a storehouse of God’s, whence all His poor family is to be victualled; that which God pours out of heaven into our hands, being as particularly marked out for charitable, pious, i. e. heavenly uses, as that which by the bounty of men is entrusted to us particularly for those ends, and every rich man as directly and properly a steward of God’s, to feed His household when they want it, and as strictly responsible for this stewardship as

[1 Cor. xii. 28.] ever the *ἀντιλήψεις* and *κυβερνήσεις* were, the auxiliary governments, the deacons in the ancient Church, ordained by the Apostles for that charitable ministry. You remember the *πτωχοδεκάτη*, the poor man’s tything among the Jews every

Deut. xxvi. 12. third year, and till that was paid in “and given to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates and be filled,” their estates are to be counted profane and unhallowed, no looking for a blessing from God’s holy habitation. He that sacrifices all to his own desires, be they in the eye of the world never so blameless and justifiable, to his own belly, his own back, nay his own bowels,—as his own good nature and not Christian charity suggests to him,—he that hath not a month Abib, a green stalk, a first-fruits for heaven, an effusion of bounty, to consecrate and bless all that is kept for his own necessities, is either very unkind or very imprudent, either sees not from whence he hath received, and that is atheistical stupidity, or else never thinks of securing his tenure by the payment of his homage, of making so much as acknowledgment to this God, whose providence hath so wholly enriched him, the God of this Bethel in the text, and that is the unthriftiest piece of ingratitude, the wildest and most irrational ill-husbandry in the world.

The third and last observable in the first view in order to the promises of Bethel, is this, that our prayers and humble

dependence on God is the means required to actuate God's promises, to bring down His blessings upon us. In Bethel there were ascending angels, parallel to which must be those two ambassadors or nuncios, i. e. angels, of every honest Christian heart, before any messages from God, any descending angels are to be expected thence; and as it was then typified there, so God ever loves and appoints to have it still, "I am the God of Bethel;" and therefore whatever we want of either outward or inward accomplishments, secular or spiritual good successes, prosperities of kingdoms or of souls, would we but look critically into ourselves, we should go near to find imputable to the want in us of one or both these ascending angels, either that the things we would have, we dare not justify the asking or expecting them from God, because they are such only as we desire to spend on our lusts, [Jas. iv. 3.] and then we have not because we ask amiss; or else we are so over-hasty in pursuit of them, that we utterly forget the dependence and waiting upon God, the "stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." If He be not ready with His auxiliaries on our first call, deliverance shall come in some other way; the witch must prevent and supply the Samuel's place, the first creature that will look a little kindly upon us, shall get away all the applications from heaven,—as in some countries, whatsoever they chanced to see first every morning, they solemnly worshipped all the day after;—the most airy appearances of relief from the improbableest coast shall be able to attract our hopes and trusts, and unbottom us utterly from God, as Socrates is brought in by the comedian with his *ὦ δεσπότη ἀήρ*^c, a making his addresses to the air or clouds, when he had turned out all other worships out of his heart. The thing that makes a worldling such a piteous creature, such a meteor in Christ's, such an unstable wave of the sea in St. James' style, tossed perpetually betwixt ebbs and floats of hopes,—even without the association of any wind to drive him,—while the only poor, patient, waiting Christian that hath sent out his good genius on his message up the ladder, and waits contentedly and calmly for his return again, is the only fixed star in this lower firmament, his

S E R M.
V.

[Jas. iv. 3.]

[Exod. xiv.
13.]

[Jas. i. 6.]

^c [Aristoph. Nub. 264.]

SERM. V. feet stand fast, be the pavement never so slippery, he believeth in the Lord. That Orpheus that in his life-time had made his applications to as many gods as there be days in the year,—and thence perhaps it was that Mexico had so many temples,—grew wiser by more observation, and left in his will *ένα είναι μόνον*, “that there was but one.” It were well if we might do so too, profit by his experience, divest ourselves of all our airy poetic dependences betimes, and roll ourselves wholly upon God; it were the only probable thriving policy in the world.

I have detained you too long in the first isle of this Bethel, that which gives you a view of God’s promises there made. I hasten to the second, the *atrium interius*, to consider God in relation to this dreadful, this consecrated place, as Bethel literally signifies *Beth El*, the house, the temple of God, and so God hath a peculiarity of respect to that, “I am the God of Bethel,” in the second sense, i. e. the God of God’s house.

And here were a copious theme indeed should we take a view of the material Bethel, and in it observe

1. The voluntary institution and dedication of temples even before the law was given to the Jews,—as after it the *ἐγκαίνια*, or feast of dedication, being of a mere human original, instituted, as the feast of Purim, and the fast of the fifth and seventh month in Zachary, by the Jews themselves, and not by God’s immediate appointment, was yet celebrated, and consequently approved by Christ;—and after the Jewish law was laid asleep, yet the building and setting apart of synagogues, and oratories, and upper rooms; and since *basilicæ* and *κυριακαί*, the parallels of the Bethel here, the palaces of the great King and Lord, appropriate to His public worship whenever persecution did not drive it thence.

2. The vowed dedication and payment of tithes toward the endowing of Bethel before there was any such thing as Judaism in the world, which therefore it were strange that God’s subsequent command to the Jews, His own people, should make unlawful to a Christian, which otherwise, had He not commanded it, must have been as commendable now as it was in Jacob.

[Esther ix. 26.]

[Zech. vii. 3. 5; viii. 19.]

1 Macc. iv.

John x.

[22, 23.]

These, I say, with divers others, are the so many branches of this second consideration of these words, of the relation of God to Bethel: but I have not that unkindness to my auditory as to pursue them with such a shoal of unseasonable subjects. S E R M.
V.

There is another Bethel, the flesh of man, wherein God Himself was pleased to inhabit, *σκηνοῦν*, saith St. John, to pitch His tent or tabernacle there, to consecrate it into a very temple; our bodies are the temples of that Holy Ghost, by which Christ was so long ago conceived among us; and thence it is that His eyes and His heart are set so particularly upon this flesh of ours, to cleanse, and to drain, and to spiritualize it, to expostulate with us whenever we put it to any common profane uses, as if we violated and ravished Christ Himself, and forcibly joined Him to an harlot, and at last, if it prove capable of such dignity, to array it in all holiness and glory, to clothe it upon with beauty and with bliss immortal: and so God is the God of this Bethel also. [1 Cor. vi.
19.]

Beside this, there is yet one more invisible house of God wherein He delights to be enthroned, and by God's own confession, more than either in the temple of His own building, or the heaven of His own exalting, even the poor contemptible 'this man,' for whom nobody else hath any kind looks, he that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at His word; this is that lovely dress that is so ravishing in God's eyes, that sets out every cottage into a temple, the poorest peasant into the consecrated delight of Christ, the most abject stones in Luz, once anointed with this grace, into an awful royal Bethel, the "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price," *πολυτελής*. God is content to be at a great deal of charge in the purchase of it, to pardon the absence of a great many other excellencies which may possibly exalt us above measure, so He may acquire but this one desired beloved meekness instead of all. Let us but possess ourselves of this one jewel, the 'meek' in opposition to the proud, the 'quiet' in opposition to the tragical or turbulent, murmuring, impatient, atheistical spirit, and the God of Bethel hath a peculiar propriety to us: He that owns and defends His temples, that is [1 Cor. v.
2, 3.]

S E R M. the refuge of the very sanctuary itself, and never, but for the
 V. pride and insolencies and provocations of His Church, suffers
 the Philistines to seize on the ark of His glory, will be a
 refuge and sanctuary to us; the angels at Bethel shall become
 [Ps.lviii.1.] thy guardians, the cherubim-wings thy overshadowing, until
 this tempest, this tyranny be overpast.

I have done with the second view also, as the Bethel here
 is the dreadful house of God, though it be not the dread of
 it that hath made our stay so short there, but only my desire
 to hasten to my last, as my principally designed particular,
 as Bethel refers to Jacob's vow there made, as it follows in
 [ver. 13.] the verse, "where thou vowedst a vow unto Me;" and God
 hath a most particular respect and relation to such vows, and
 so in the chief though last place, *Ego Deus Bethelis*, "I am
 the God of Bethel."

A vow is a holy resolution, and somewhat more; the matter
 of both is the same, a piece of holy valour or courage, enter-
 ing under God's colours into a constant defiance of all the
 temptations and affrightments, invitations and terrors in
 nature. Only the bare resolution hath not the formality of
 a vow in it, is not made so immediately and directly to God,
 with such a particular invocation of Him as is required to
 the formality of a vow. Yet will not this difference be so
 great but that in all reason the good resolution ought to be
 allowed its title of pretension to God's owning—as He is the
 God of Bethel—as well as the vow, i. e. the material as well
 as the formal vow; God is a God of all such of either kind.
 I shall consider them undistinctly; whether resolutions or
 vows, they are of two sorts, either the general necessary vow,
 or resolution, that God shall be our God, as in chap. xxviii.
 21, "And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with
 me, &c., then shall the Lord be my God," a vowed resolu-
 tion of universal obedience unto God; or whether the matter
 of it be particularly qualified and restrained to free-will
 offerings, things that he was not otherwise bound absolutely
 to have done, but yet were very fit matter of resolution and
 vow, especially in such case as this, "If God will keep me in
 this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment
 to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in
 peace, then this stone shall be God's house, and of all that

Thou shalt give me I will surely give a tenth to Thee;" a S E R M.
 free-will liberality this, the business of this vow. V.

We shall look upon these two separately, and first on the former kind of them, and shew you how God is the God of such, the near respect and close relation He beareth to them, and that most eminently expressed in three particulars: 1. In approving and applauding the making of them. 2. In prospering them when they are made. 3. In looking after them as His own property and goods, most severely requiring the payment, the performance of them.

For the first sort then, the general necessary resolution or vow that God shall be our God, the solemn ceremonious entering ourselves into His family, the giving up our ears to this new master to be opened in the Psalmist's, bored in Moses' phrase, to part from the benefit of all sabbatical years or jubilees, to disclaim all desire of manumission, and to become His vowed servants for ever; this is that great duty of repentance, or conversion, or new birth, that is the sum of all Christianity, that spiritual proselytism to which the Jew was wont to be washed, as the Christian is baptized, and both to take upon them new names, new kindreds and relations, as if they had entered into the mother's womb again, and come out in new families, new countries, born neither of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, i. e. none of the principles of this world, *στοιχεία κόσμου τούτου*, the natural, the carnal, nay, nor the moral virtuous philosophical elements, but of God, of a supernatural, heavenly origination.

In a word, the cordial renouncing of all the impure, scandalous doubtful ways that either ourselves or any of the vicious company about us,—the Lacædemonian servants that God hath permitted to be drunk and bestial before us, to practise all villanies in our presence, that we might detest and abominate them the more,—have at any time formerly been guilty of. Such was Job's covenant with the eye, that that should not run its riotous courses over the beauties or wealth of others; such the covenant with the tongue, to break it off its customary oaths and loose language.

It were infinite to number up the several branches of these so necessary resolutions; that this God of Bethel is the God

S E R M. of such, is the thing that we are obliged to demonstrate.
 V.

And 1. In respect of God's approbation of such resolutions as these. There is no such snare or artifice of taking and obliging God to us, as our dedicating and consecrating ourselves to God. If Solomon consecrate a temple to God, God binds Himself to be present there, to hear and hearken, and answer what prayers and supplications soever any sinner shall make toward that temple. And sure the same privilege belongs to the animate as well as dead temple, to the temple of flesh as well as of stone, to the anointed pillar at Luz, when that turns Bethel, I mean, to the stony heart of man, when by the unction of the spirit that is mollified and fitted and squared, vowed and consecrated into an habitation for God, when out of these stones a child of Abraham, the faithful resolved new creature, is raised up. No such good news to heaven as this; not only approbation, but joy in heaven over one such convert prodigal: the music that Pythagoras talks of in the orbs, was that of the minstrels which our Saviour mentions at the return of that prodigal, to solemnize the *euge's*, the passionate welcomes of heaven poured out on penitents.

And if you please, I can do more than the Pythagorean would pretend to, make you auditors of one of those airs. No sooner doth the poor penitent votary begin to God in the Psalmist's note, "Then said I, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O my God,"—and let me tell you, could you hear those words in the language that David sang them, there were without a figure, rhythm and harmony, numbers and music in them,—but you may presently hear God Himself answering in the *ἀποβαιῶν*, or counterpart, echoing back a *Venite*, one in
 [Ps. xl. 7.]
 Isaiah, "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come," &c.; another in the Gospel, Christ taking up His part in the concert, "Come unto Me all ye," &c.; yea, and to make up the anthem complete, the third Person comes in also, "the Spirit saith, Come;" and after that, all the inferior orbs are called in to bear their part in the chorus, "the Bride saith, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst, come: and *Quicumque vult* is the title of the hymn that they all join in, Whosoever will thus come,—let him be sure of the hospitable reception,—“Let him take the water of life freely.” One signal evidence we

[2 Chron. vi. 38, 39; vii. 14-16.]

[Mat. iii. 9.]

[Luke xv. 7. 10.]

Isa. lv. 1.

[Mat. xi. 28.]

Rev. xxii. 17.

have of God's special approbation of such vows, in Abraham's circumcising himself and posterity; that, you know, was the solemnity of his coming to God, the ceremony of his proselytism, the sacrament and seal of his resolute vowed obedience unto God, of his renouncing that *ἀθέμιτος εἰδωλολατρεία*, those abominable gentile impurities, the *περισσεία κακίας*, the unnatural excrescences of lust, which the rest of his idolatrous countrymen had long been guilty of, and which brought that fire and brimstone from heaven before his eyes upon some of them. Abraham it seems resolved and vowed against those heathen abominations, covenanted with God a life of purity, and to that end a going out of that polluted country; then sealed this covenant to God,—as the custom of the eastern nations was in leagues and bargains,—sealed it with blood; and see what an obligation this proves to God, not only to call him and account him a friend of God, to style Himself by him, as He doth here by Bethel, "I am the God of Abraham," through the whole book of God; but the obligation goes higher upon God, it prevails so far that He comes down Himself, and assumes flesh on purpose to seal back the counterpart of that indenture to Abraham in blood also, and in that, that He is his shield, and an exceeding great reward to all that shall but resemble him to the end of the world, in that faithful coming, that vowed resolution of obedience to His commands. The short of it is, these resolutions and vows, if they be sincere, not the light transient gleam, the sighs only that we are so ill, or wishes that we were better, but the *voluntas firma et rata*, the ratified, radicated, firm purpose of new life, even before it grow to that perfection as to bring forth the *καρπὸν ἀξίους*, the worthy, meet, proportionable fruits of such change, are instantly accepted and rewarded by God, with pardon of sin and justification; and so God is the God of Bethel, hath a particular respect to these vows and resolutions at the very making of them; and that was the first thing.

And so again, secondly, for the prospering them when they are made. He that gives himself up to God becomes by that act His pupil, His client, part of His charge and family, an orphan laid at His gates, that He is bound to provide for, engaged by that application, if once accepted, to be His

S E R M.
V.

patron-guardian; as among the Romans he that answers to the *κράζειν ἀββᾶ*, to the client's calling him father, is supposed to adopt, undertakes the protection of the *hæredipeta*, obliges himself to the office and real duty of a father. And I remember the story of the Campanians^d, that could not get any aid from the Romans against a puissant enemy; they solemnly came and delivered themselves up into the Romans' hands by way of surrender, that by that policy they might oblige the Romans to defend them, and espouse their cause, with a *si nostra tueri non vultis, at vestra defendetis*, if you will not lend us your help, preserve our region, yet now we are your own, you are obliged to do it, *quicquid passuri sumus, dedititii vestri patientur*, whatsoever from henceforth we suffer, it will be suffered by your clients and subjects: and so certainly the resigning ourselves up into God's hands, the penitent sober resolution of "the Lord shall be my Lord," giving ourselves up not as confederates, but subjects, to be ruled as well as to be aided by Him; no such way in the world as that to engage God's protecting and prospering hand, to extort His care and watchfulness over us. He that comes out but resolutely into the field to fight God's battles against the common enemy, God and the angels of heaven are ready to furnish and fortify that man. Resolution itself, courage but upon its own score, is able to break through most difficulties, and the want of that is the betraying of most souls that come into Satan's power; but then over and above, the prospering influence of heaven that is still ready to assist such champions, the *κρυφαία χεῖρ*, which the LXXII puts in into the last verse of Exod. xvii., the secret invisible hand, by which God will assist the cordial Joshua, and have war against Amalek for ever, fight with him as long as Joshua fights, the co-operation of the Spirit of God with all that set resolutely about such enterprises of valour, His *συνεργεῖν* to our *ἐργάζειν*, this is a sure fountain of relief and assistance to such resolutions. Do but try God and

^d [Ad ea princeps legationis, sic enim domo mandatam attulerant, Quandoquidem inquit nostra tueri adversus vim atque injuriam justa vi non vultis, vestra certe defendetis. Itaque populum Campanum urbemque Capuam,

agros, delubra Deum, divina humanaque omnia in vestram Patres conceipti, populique Romani ditionem dedimus; quicquid deinde patiemur dediticii vestri passuri.—Liv. vii. 31.]

your own souls in this particular, for the vanquishing of any sin that your nature and temper is most inclined to. Take SERM.
V. but the method of this text; come into God's presence, resolve sadly and advisedly in that Bethel never to yield to that sin again; resolve not only on the end, but the means also that are proper to lead thither; foresee and vow the same resistance to the pleasant bait that to the barbed hook under it, to the fair temptation, that to the horrid sin itself; and then those weapons that may be useful for the resistance, the fasting and the watching,—that are proper to the exorcising that kind of devil,—be sure to carry out into the field with thee, and in every motion of the battle let the Moscs' as well as the Joshua's hands be held up, the sword of the Lord with that of Gideon, implore and importune that help of God's which hath given thee to will, to resolve, that He will continue His interposition, and give thee to do also, that having begun the good work in thee, He will not lose [Phil. i. 6.] the pledge, but go on also to perfect it: and whenever thou art next tempted to that sin, recall and remember this resolution of thine, bid that very remembrance of thine stand by on thy guard, and, if you please, by that token that this day I advised you to do so; and withal consider the temptation, that it is an express come just from Satan, that sworn enemy of souls, against which in God's presence the first time thou ever camest into the Church thou didst thus vow and profess open defiance and hostility, that this disguised fiend shakes a chain in hell, be his address to thee never so formal, and is now come on purpose to supplant or surprise thy constancy, to see whether thou considerest thy reputation with God or no, whether thou makest scruple of breaking vows and resolutions; and then, instead of treating with that sin, cry out to God to defend thee against it, either to give strength, or remove the temptation; and deal honestly and sincerely with thine own soul, betray not those helps that God thus gives thee in this exigence: and then come and tell me how it hath proved with thee. In the mean time, till thou hast made this experiment, be not too querulous of thine own weakness or the irresistibleness of sin; believe it, a few such sober trials and practisings upon anger, lust, and the like, and the benefit that would infallibly redound from thence, might

SER M.
V.

bring the ancient Church order of episcopal confirmation into fashion and credit again; which had it but its due ingredients and advantages restored to it,—every single Christian, come to years of knowledge and temptations, in the presence of God and angels and fellow Christians repeating that vow in his own name which was made by his proxies at the font, and the blessings of heaven powerfully called down by those who have a title to the promise of being thus heard,—as it would by the way fully satisfy all the pretensions and arguments of the anabaptist, so would it also be a more probable effectual restraint for sin, than those which have so solemnly decried, or but formally practised, that institution, have taken care to afford us in its stead.

But then, thirdly, God is a God of resolutions, to exact performance of them; the paltering trifler in this kind hath all the vengeance of the God of Bethel belonging to him, all that pertains to the sacrilegious profaner of that temple which Himself had consecrated, the censure and reward not only of the impious, but the fools. “When thou vowest a vow, defer not to pay; God hath no pleasure in fools;” and, “It is a snare to a man to devour that which is holy,” to profane that heart which is once consecrated to God, and after vows to make enquiry. To doubt of the performing, to falter in the execution of what is thus solemnly resolved in God’s service, is the fetching the sacrifice from the altar, and is sure to bring the coal of fire along with it, the perfectest treachery to a soul that any sacrilegious enterprise can design it. And yet God knows how many such fools there be in the world, that solemnly resolve themselves to His service, come to the font to make, to the table of the Lord to repeat these vows, and all their lives after do but busy themselves to wipe off the water of one, vomit up, disgorge the other; bequeath themselves to heaven in the presence of angels, and then repent of the fact, and labour all their lives long to retrieve and recover themselves back again; and the Apostle hath given those men their doom, “it had been sure better for them not to have known the way of righteousness,” never to have raised an expectation in heaven that they meant any kindness to it, than thus to cheapen it, and not come to the price of a little perseverance and constancy to go through

Eccles. v. 4.
Prov. xx.
25.

[2 Pet. ii.
21.]

the purchase. Had they never undertaken God's business, never put in for the title of friends and votaries, with a S E R M.
V.
 "Lord, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest," they had not been perjured, though they had been profane: but now the affront is superadded to the crime, the contumely to the impiety, and all the spiritual desertion, withholding and withdrawing of grace, and consequently the ἀδύνατον ἀνακαθίξαι, the impossibility for such to renew or recover themselves, without some prodigy of new bounty from heaven, —which provokers have little grounds to expect,—is directly become their portion. [Luke ix.
57.]

I have dwelt too long on the portal to Bethel, the general necessary resolutions or vows that are precursory to those other particularly qualified; I must in the last place be so just to the text and auditory, as to reserve a few minutes for those vows of building and endowing a house for God, which was but a free-will offering in Jacob, designed by him as a return of acknowledgment for God's care over him, if He shall bring him again to his father's house in peace; and so God hath a peculiar respect to such vows beyond all others, and in that relation, in the last place, *Ego Deus Bethelis*, "I am the God of Bethel." [Gen.
xxviii. 21.]

He that hath a long and a doubtful journey before him, a voyage of uncertainty and danger, and considers how little he hath of his own to contribute towards his convoy, how nothing but the benign gale from heaven to waft him safely thither,—and such certainly is the condition of some of us here at this time,—may well be allowed to call in and consult at Bethel, take directions from old Jacob here, how to set out and begin his journey; and that is with vowing a vow unto the Lord. This, I confess, was the main of my errand, which hath been thus prepared for and prefaced unto you all this while; and there is not a more prudent at once and Christian course, that hath more of piety and stratagem in it, nor a more agreeable, seasonable, proper use of the present distress, and an engagement on God to deliver us out of it, than thus to take ourselves now in the pliable season, and indent some acts of voluntary piety with heaven, most certainly and solemnly to be paid Him hereafter, whenever God shall so be with us as to return us home in peace, to restore

S E R M.
V.

us those halcyon days after which we are all so impatiently gasping. I say not with Jacob literally to build houses for God, material Bethels;—to design such stately structures in an age of destroying, were but a romance-project for any of us; nay, blessed be God, we need not a Solomon to erect, or Zorobabel to restore; a prop to preserve from falling will yet serve the turn;—but from this blessed copy every emulous, though weak hand to transcribe somewhat at the distance and in proportion to strength. One to undertake the building one room of such an house, a private *προσευχή* or oratory for God; I mean, to vow unto God the so many daily close retirements, by confession of sins and deliverances, to acknowledge in prostration of soul—if not of body also, to bear it company—the provocations that have whet God's glittering sword against us,—every man the plague of his own heart, the *ἐμὸν ἔγκλημα*, in the style of the ancient liturgies, “my fault, my exceeding great fault,”—and the fatherly goodness that shall have sheathed it again; and never to give over those constant returns of devotion,—with Daniel, three, nay,—with David, seven times a day, to keep some poor kind of proportion with such a deliverance: another, to vow the building a porch of such an house, when God shall furnish him with materials, where the poor may have but a dining place sometimes; I mean not the loose formal scattering of the crumbs of the table among them, but sequestering a set, and that a liberal part of all the revenue that God shall ever bestow, or now rescue out of the devourer's hand, and provide or preserve for us, that God in His poor members may have a first-fruits, a twentieth, a tenth, a fifth of all; every man out of the good treasure of his heart, not in obedience to any prescript *quotum*,—I shall be sorry to wrong any man so much, as so to change it from being his perfect free-will offering,—but as out of a heart attracted by heaven, a liberal, cheerful, heaven-like effusion; the constancy and equability of which, yea, and the performing it upon vow or promise, will yet be no blemish to it, or make it less like that of heaven, of divinity itself. But among all the epitomes of this Bethel, the *domicilia*, little (tents rather than) houses of God, which we are thus to consecrate and vow unto Him, here was one at Bethel that would never be

wanting, never left out in our thrivingest, sparingest vows, I ^{S E R M.} mean that pure crystal breast of Jacob's that God so de- ^{V.} lighted to dwell in,—as He was by the poet supposed to do in poor Pyramus' cottage,—that plain, honest, well-natured, undisguised heart both toward men and God, emblematically expressed by those smooth hands of Jacob, the fair open Campania of even, clear, unintricated designs, far from the groves and meanders, the dark depths, the intrigues, the dexterities and subtleties and falsecesses of the merchant worldling. Might but this judgment that hath preyed and gnawed so long upon the bowels of the kingdom but pare the heart of the Englishman into such a plain equable figure, leave never an angle or involution in it, make us but those direct-dealing honest fools that we are reproached to be,—but God knows are not guilty of that gracious Jacob-like quality;—might it but have that benign influence upon us here present; might it return us home with this one vow in every of our mouths and hearts, to be for the rest of our lives the English Nathanaels, the true Israelites, in whom there is no guile; might but this last minute of my hour make this one impression, I shall not hope on a rude multitude, but I say on my present auditory, to be content to live and die with downright honest Jacob, thrive or perish on clear direct Israelitish principles,—which will, I doubt not, one day have the turn of thriving in this world, when every thing else hath the reproach of imprudent and improsperous, as well as unchristian, the dove advanced when the serpent is licking the dust,—and with Drusus^c in Paterculus, instead of the artificer that would provide for the deep privacy,—that *sævi animi indicium* in the orator,—send for him that could design the diaphanous house, wherein there might be all evidence, every man thought fit to behold that without an optic or perspective, which will never be disguised or concealed from the eye of heaven; might we by the help of a fast vow now stricken, and with the blessing of God prac-

* [Cum ædificaret domum in palatio in eo loco ubi est quædam Ciceronis, mox Censorini fuit, nunc Statilii Sisennæ est, promitteretque ei architectus, ita se eam ædificaturum, uti libera a conspectu, imminuis ab omni-

bus arbitris esset, neque quisquam in eam despicere posset; tu vero inquit siquid in te artis est, ita compone domum meam ut quicquid agam ab omnibus perspicere possit.—Vell. Patere. ii. 14.]

S E R M.
V.

tised every hour of our lives after, come home to our father's house, old honest Jacob's plain tent, with peace and simplicity, cleanness, uncompoundedness of spirit,—a quality that would be able to commend and improve, christianize and bless that peace to us, and make it like that of God, a true and durable one;—I should then with all cheerfulness dismiss you with old Jacob into the hands of this God of Bethel, the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, that owned and blessed the simplicity and fidelity, the plainness and the trustiness of those three patriarchs, before all the glorious wisdom and politics of the world; whose sincerity and whose reward, whose uprightness and acceptance, integrity and crown, God of His infinite mercy grant us all. To whom with the Son, &c.

SERMON VI.

THE NECESSITY OF THE CHRISTIAN'S CLEANSING.

2 COR. vii. 1.

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves.

THERE is not, I conceive, any piece of divinity more unluckily mistaken, more inconveniently corrupted and debauched by the passions and lusts of men, made more instrumental to their foulest purposes, than that of the promises of Christ; whether by giving them the inclosure and monopoly of our faith,—the commands of Christ and the threats of Christ, which have as much right to be believed as they, His kingly and prophetic office, to which He was as particularly anointed as to that of our priest, being for the most part set aside as unnecessary, and by many steps and degrees at last not only left quite out of our faith, but withal fallen under our envy, become matter of quarrel against any that shall endeavour to obtrude them not only so impertinently, but so dangerously, either on our gospel, or on our practice,—or whether again by persuading ourselves and others that the promises of Christ are particular and absolute, confined to some few, and to those howsoever they be qualified; when the whole harmony and contexture of Christian doctrine proclaims directly the contrary, that they are general and conditional, a picture that looks every man in the face that comes into the room, but cannot be imagined to eye any man else, unrestrained to all so they shall perform the condition, and an *ἐσφράγισται ταμεία*, those diffusive store-houses sealed up against all who do not perform it.

S E R M.
VI.

SERM.
VI.

Shall we therefore have the patience, and the justice, and the piety awhile to resist these strong prejudices, to rescue this sacred theme from such misprisions, to set up the promises of Christ in such a posture as may have the safest and kindest influence, the benignest and most auspicious aspect upon our lives, not to swell and puff up our fancies any longer with an opinion that we are the special favourites to whom those promises are unconditionally consigned, but to engage and oblige our souls to that universal cleansing that may really enstate us in those promises, either of deliverance here or salvation eternally; that may, like the angel to St. Peter in prison, even to God Himself, shake off those gyves and manacles which have even encumbered His omnipotence, made it impossible for Him to make good His promises, temporal or spiritual, to such unclean uncapables as we? To this purpose there is one short word in the text which hath a mighty importance in it, the *ταύτας*, the 'these' annexed to the promises. What is the interpretation of that you must enquire of the close of the former chapter; and that will tell you, that upon coming out from the pollutions and villanies of an impure profane heathen world,—and such is our unregenerate estate, I would I could not say, such is the condition of many of us that most depend on God's promises,—on our going out of this tainted region, our strict separation from all the provoking sins of it, all the mercies of heaven and (which some have a greater gust and appetite to) of earth also, are become our portion, a most liberal hospitable reception; "I will receive you, and I will be a Father" to all such proselyte guests, "and you shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty;" as if His almightiness, which is here pawned for the discharge of these promises, could not bring them down upon us, unless by this coming out of Sodom,—to which this angelical exhortation was sent to rouse us—we should render ourselves capable of them.

[2 Cor. vi.
17, 18.]

In a word, the promises here, as all other in the Gospel, are not absolute, but conditional promises, on condition of "cleansing from all impurity," and not otherwise; and if there be in the whole world an engagement to cleansing, an obligation to the practice of the most defamed purity that a

profane age can scoff or rail at, this certainly may be allowed to pass for it. "Having therefore," &c. SERM.
VI.

The words are an exhortation to cleansing, and in them you may please to observe these three particulars :

1. The ground.
2. The address.
3. The exhortation itself.

The ground the fittest in the world for this turn when you shall consider it thoroughly ; *ἐπαγγελίας ταύτας*, "these promises."

The address, adding somewhat of sweetness to that of rational advice, "Having these promises, dearly beloved."

And the exhortation itself, in the remainder of the words at large in the whole verse. We shall content ourselves with the contraction of it, *καθαρίζωμεν ἑαυτοὺς*, "let us cleanse ourselves."

I begin with the first, the ground or foundation of the Apostle's exhortatory to cleansing, *ἐπαγγελίας ταύτας*, "these promises."

1. Promises.
2. And particularly, conditional promises.

And yet 3. more particularly, the conditional promises of this text, the "these promises" as they are set down in the end of the former chapter, are the most competent, most engaging, effectual arguments or impellents to set any Christian upon the work of Christian practice, that especially of impartial universal cleansing.

It will be best demonstrated if we take them asunder, and view them in the several gradations.

1. Promises are a very competent argument to that purpose, a bait to the most generous passion about us, our emulation or ambition, drawing us with the cords of a man, the most rational masculine affectives, I shall add,—to an ingenuous Christian man, as that signifies neither saint in heaven, nor beast on earth, but that middle imperfect state of a Christian here,—the most agreeable proper argument imaginable to set us a cleansing.

Two other arguments there are, both very considerable, I confess.

1. The love (in the moralist of virtue, but in the Chris-

S E R M. tian) of God Himself, and that love, if it be gotten into our
 VI. hearts, will be very effectual toward this end ; “ the love of
 [2 Cor. v. God constrains us,” saith the Apostle.
 14.]

2. The fear of those threats, those formidable denunciations which the Gospel thunders out against all unmortified carnal men, that horrid representation of our even Christian's God, as He is still under the gospel,—to all unreformed, obdurate sinners,—“ a consuming fire ;” and consequently, what
 [Heb. xii. 29.] “ a direful thing it is to fall into the hands of that living God :”
 [Heb. x. 31.] and “ knowing these terrors of the Lord, we persuade men,”
 [2 Cor. v. 11.] saith the same Apostle. There is some rousing oratory, some awakening rhetoric and eloquence in this also. And let me tell you, though it be but by the way, that I am not altogether of their opinion that think these terrors of the Lord are not fit arguments to work on regenerate men ; that fear is too slavish a thing to remain in a child of light, a Christian. I confess myself sufficiently persuaded that our Apostle made choice of no arguments, but such as were fit to be made use of by Christians, and those terrors are more than
 Heb. xii. 28. once his chosen arguments, even to those that “ had received the kingdom that cannot be moved,” and are exhorted *χάριμ ἔχειν*, “ to have grace,” to make use of that precious talent received,—which supposes a gracious person,—or possibly *χάριμ ἔχειν*, “ to be thankful” to this munificent donor for this inestimable gift, yea, and this duty raised to the highest pitch that a Christian is capable of, to serving God *εὐαρέστως*, whether that refer to the persons, and signify “ serving with all cheerfulness” and alacrity and well-pleasèdness, or to God, as we render it, “ serving Him acceptably with reverence and godly fear ;” you have still in this Apostle these terrors immediately annexed to enforce this duty, “ for our God is a consuming fire.” And so again you cannot but remember the advice of “ working,” and “ working out salvation,” and emphatically “ our own salvation, with fear and trembling ;” not only with love and faith, but peculiarly “ fear and trembling,” this trembling fit enough to accompany the saint to heaven gates, to salvation itself ; and therefore the *ἀφόβως*, “ without fear,” in the first of Luke, which we ordinarily join with the *λατρεύειν*, as if we were thereby obliged to serve Him without fear, is in ancient copies and editions joined with the *ῥυσθέντας*, “ that we being

[Phil. ii. 12.]

[Luke i. 74, 75.]

delivered without fear,"—i. e. without danger,—“might serve Him in holiness,” &c. And so I think it is a little clear, that the fear which is so cast out by perfect love, that, as the Apostle saith, 1 John iv. 18, “there is no fear in love,” is not the fear of God’s wrath, but of temporal dangers and persecutions. For so that love to Christ, if it be perfect, such as Christ’s was to us, chap. iii. 16,—and is referred to again, chap. iv. 17, “that as He is, so we should be in this world,”—will make us content to adventure any thing for the beloved, even death itself, the most hugely vast formidable,—as it is there, *τὰς ψυχὰς τιθέναι*, “to lay down our lives” for Christ,—but sure not the displeasing of God, and torments of hell; that were too prodigal an alms, too wild a romance valour, would have too much of the modern point of honour for St. John to prescribe, and so certainly is but misapplied to this business. And so still I cannot but think it wisdom and sober piety in him that said, he would not leave his part in hell,—the benefit which he had from these terrors,—for all the goods of this world; knowing how useful the flesh of the viper was to cure his poison, the torments to check the temptations, the apprehension of the calenture that attended to restrain from the pleasant but forbidden fruits that were always a soliciting his senses; and she that ran about the city,—that Novarnius tells us of,—with the brand of fire in one hand, and a bottle of water in the other, and said, “her business was to set heaven on fire with the one, and quench hell-flames with the other, that there might be neither of them left, only pure love to God to move or incite her piety,” had certainly a little of the *flatus* thus to drive her, her spleen was somewhat swollen or distempered, or, if one may guess by her appearing in the street, she was a little too wild and aerial in her piety. But this by the way, as a concession that there is (not only love, but) fear also that may set men a cleansing, as well as the promises in the text; the denunciation of punishments is as considerable an act of Christ’s kingly office, whereby He is to rule in our hearts by faith, as that of proposing rewards, that other act of regality, Rom. xiii. And the truth is, all is little enough to impress the duty: and happy is he that hath this threefold cord, this threefold obligation, paternal, and both kinds of regal, each

S E R M. actually in force upon his soul ; and eternally happy if either
 VI. or all may effectually perform the work on him.

But then still, if we observe distinguishingly, and exactly apply and proportion the arguments to the imperfect Christian state, you shall find that promises are the most proper, congruous, agreeable argument, most apt and hopeful to do the deed, to have the impression upon the heart.

Fear is an argument, but to an ingenuous nature not altogether so appropriate.

Hope, the relative to promises, is more generous than that, more noble, more worthy of the Christian's breast, a person of so royal an extraction.

On the other side, the love of God, for His own sake, love of His attributes and excellencies, that admirable, dazzling, amazing beauty of His divine essence, O ! it is a warming grace, infinitely melting and ravishing to those that have their hearts truly possessed with it.

But is not this, again, a little above the proportion of the imperfect, inchoate, very moderate state of the Christian in this life? is it not a little more proportionable to that of the future vision? The Christian, you know, here is made up of two contraries, the flesh and spirit, *ἐν σνωπαρίδι*, combined and yoked together ; and as the fear may be too degenerate for the spirit, so the love of so transcendent a spiritual object will be far too elevated and generous for the flesh, it is not capable of so pure, angelical a guest.

This of hope is of a middle temper, and so a little more congruous and apportioned to the middle state, more ingenuous than fear, and not so elevated as love. Let hell be set open wide upon us on one side, and it is apt to swallow us up with horror and despair, and so that fear may miscarry and ruin us ; let the transcendent excellencies of God be let loose on us on the other side, and they swallow us up again in ecstasy and amazement. When our Saviour comes into Peter's ship, clothed but with one ray of this infinite beauty,—the gracious miracle of the fish,—poor creature ! he falls down at Jesus' feet with a "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man : " and the text gives the reason, for "he was astonished" at such a presence of His. And you know what Moses thought of seeing God's face, *ut videam et vivam !* he

[Luke v.
8.]

should be never able to outlive it. And as the beholding and the presence, so the high pitch of love let in by that beholding, fastened on the divine lustre; it is most-what too high for our earthly state, even for the regenerate Christian in this life. The beholding Him in the reflection, and the dark beholding, is that which in the Apostle's judgment is the richest portion we can aspire to in this life; and that is the beholding Him in His graces and in His promises, as hope is but a glimpse of vision; and thus we cheerfully and with delight to our very flesh, expect that glory which shall be revealed; not which is revealed already, or if it were, would burn up and calcine this flesh of ours, turn the natural into a spiritual body, could not consist with such tempered or constituted tabernacles as now we carry about with us. And let that serve for the clearing the first step in the gradation, that promises are a fit and proper argument to work upon our present state, to set us a purifying.

And O that this might be our use of promises! no flattering ourselves into hell with a claim of heaven, but as a crane or engine to raise us from the depth, fetch us from the leas of sin, and like the sun-beams on this earth of ours, to attract and force us up toward its region of purity; that as the philosopher in Eunapius was taller in his study, in time of speculation, than at any other time, so this meditation and study of this part of the book of life, the promises of Christ, might be able to raise us above our ordinary pitch or stature, to rarify and so to cleanse. "Having therefore these promises, let," &c.

2. Of all promises the conditional are fittest for this turn, to oblige and engage us to purifying. It is the property of conditional promises never to belong to any but those that perform the condition. That which Christ requires of us in the great indenture between Him and us, as the homage to be performed to Him on our part, be it never so slight and inconsiderable, never so despicable a peppercorn, so pitifully unproportionable to the great rent He might require, or to the infinite treasure of glory that He so makes over to us, that mite of obedience, of faith, of love, of purity, is yet most strictly required by Christ, even now—under the *ἐπιείκεια* of the gospel—to be performed to Him. The mercy and the

S E R M.
VI.

pardon and the huge moderation of that court, though it hath mollified the strict law into never so much chancery, will not proceed further, and mollify obedience into libertinism; it hath treasures of mercy for those who have not obeyed the law in the strictness of perfect unsinning obedience; the evangelical righteousness shall serve turn where the legal is not to be had; but then still there must be honest punctual payment of the evangelical; and without that, the gospel is so far from being gospel, message of mercy, embassy of promises, that it is but an enhancement and accumulation of much sorer punishments on them that have sinned against that, that have not obeyed the gospel of Christ. Our Saviour hath brought down the market, provided as easy bargains of bliss for us as could be imagined; but this being granted, you must not now fancy another further second Saviour, that must rid you of these easy gainful tasks, which the first in mere kindness and benignity to you hath required of you.

[1 Pet. iv.
17.][Rev. xxi.
27.]

Be heaven and the vision of God never so cheap a purchase, yet the νόμος πίστεως, the law of faith, of gospel, is as that of the Medes and Persians, that no unclean thing shall enter therein; and that without holiness,—*ἁγιασμός*, all one with the *καθαρισμός* in the text,—without that sincere, though never so imperfect, sanctification, without cleansing, mortifying here, no man shall ever see the Lord. Should any boisterous, unclean, unqualified invader, *βιάξειν οὐρανὸν*, break in on those sacred mansions, commit such riots, such burglary upon heaven; heaven must be unconsecrated by such violence, cease to be the palace of God, a place of purity or of bliss: and if this be not an argument fit to impress this duty, the necessity, but withal the ease of the performance, the no heaven without it hereafter, and yet the no grievance by it here, if this be not an obligation to cleansing, I know not what may be counted such. He that hath taken down all the promises of the gospel as absolute, unconditionate promises, that sees his name written indelible in the book of life, I know not through what tube or perspective, and resolves that all the provocations, and sacrileges, and rebellions against heaven, shall never be able to resist his nativity, to disturb his horoscope, to reverse his fatal

destined bliss, may well be excused, if he be not over-hasty to cleanse or purify. S E R M.
VI.

It is an act of the most admirable power of the divine restraining or preventing grace, that some men that do thus believe this doctrine of unconditional promises, are yet restrained from making this so natural use of it, from running into all the riots in the world.

And certainly it is as irrefragable a convincing testimony of man's free will to evil, even after his reason and the spirit of God have offered him never so many arguments to the contrary, that many men which believe the conditionate promises, do not yet set resolutely a cleansing, the obligation hereto from reason being so direct and conclusive, that all the devils in hell cannot answer the force of it. Only our stupid, undisciplined, absurd, illogical hearts have the skill to avoid it, running headlong and wilfully after the old impurities, even then when they are most fully without all dubitancy resolved that all the joys of heaven are forfeited by this choice.

I have done with the second step in my gradation, the special convincing energy of the conditional promises to enforce cleansing.

Come we now to the third and last step in the gradation, the particularity of the 'these conditional promises,' in this text, promises of God's receiving us upon our separating, His being our Father, and we His sons and daughters, upon our coming out, &c., in the end of the former chapter.

God will not receive any uncleansed, polluted sinner, will not be a father to any, be he never so importunate or confident in his *κράζειν ἀββᾶ*, will not own him to any degree of son-ship, that doth not bodily set a purifying.

It was a virulent objection and accusation of the heathen Celsus against Christ, that He called all sinners to come unto Him, publicans, harlots, all, and had an hospitable reception for such; from whence his ignorance and malice was willing to conclude Christ's Church to be a sanctuary for such uncleannesses, a kind of Romulus' asylum, to be filled only with those inhabitants which all other religions had loathed and vomited out; and it was Zozimus' descant upon

S E R M. Constantine, that he turned Christian because he had committed those crimes for which no other religion would admit expiation. But Origen in his admirable writings against that heathen's objections makes a distinction of invitations: "There is," saith he, "the invitation of the thief, and the invitation of the physician; of the thief, to get as many companions; of the physician, as many patients as he can; the first to debauch the innocent, the second to recall the lapsed, to cure the diseased; the former to continue and confirm them in their former impure courses, the latter to purge out and to reform all their impurities;" and the latter only was the interpretation and design of Christ's call, 'that of sinners to repentance,' the very language in this text, the "come out and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing." [Matt. ix. 13.] And so Christianity in Zosimus' style, but another sense than what he designed it, is *δόξα πάσης ἀμαρτίας ἀναίπερικῆ*, "the strongest purgative in the world," the angel a hastening and leading out of Sodom with an escape, "fly for thy life, neither stay thou in all the plains," and then, and not till then, *καὶ γὰρ εἰσδέξομαι ὑμᾶς*, "and I will receive you." [2 Cor. vi. 17.] [Gen. xix. 17.]

And so still the peculiarity of these promises, these of our being sons, or our being received, hath a most persuasive quickening force toward the duty of purifying. Will any man be content to be that abject from God, that loathed, refuse, reprobated creature, such an one that all the prayers of all the saints on earth, intercessions and suffrages of martyrs and angels in heaven, yea, the very gaping wounds and vocal blood of Christ upon the cross, I shall add, the minutely advocacy and intercession of that glorified Saviour at the right hand of His Father, cannot help to any tolerable reception at God's hands? Can you have fortified yourself sufficiently against that direful voice of the "Go ye cursed into everlasting fire;" and not only not God, but not the so much as mountains or hills willing or able to receive you into any tolerable degree of mercy, not one Lazarus with one drop to cool the tip of a flaming tongue, but only the gaping insatiable pit, that irreversible abyss of pollutions and of horror, that region of cursings and torments, of sin and flames, the only hospital to receive thee? If thou canst think com-

[Matt. xxv. 41.]

[Luke xxiii. 30; Rev. vi. 16.]

[Luke xvi. 24.]

fortably of this condition, be well pleased to venture all this for the enlarging of thy carnal fruitions one minute longer, and withal disclaim the whole birth-right of thy Christendom, the dignity and inheritance of sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty; if thou dost not repent of thy long, tedious, prodigal march into the Egyptian far country only to accompany with swine, and be fed with their *κεράτια*, to which the advantages of sin are compared,—that wooden, unhealthy fruit of the *Carobe* or *arbor Ceratonia*, as Dioscorides and Pliny describe that which we render husks in the Gospel,—if, I say, we can upon deliberation prefer this starving and pining in the herd, before feasting and being embraced in the father's house, this portion of swine before that of sons, we have then a sufficient fortification against this argument in this text, a serious *supersedeas* for purifying: but upon no cheaper condition than this can it be sued out; you must give yourselves up to the certain fire and brimstone of Sodom, if you will still continue in the impurities and burnings of Sodom; not the least gleam of hope upon any terms but those of purifying. "Whosoever hath this hope on him," the this, that is, the conditional hope of seeing there, or here of being received by God, if it be *ἐλπίς ἐπ' αὐτῷ*, "hope on God," "he purifies himself," saith St. John. If he do not purify, it is either, SERM.
VI.
[2 Cor. vi.
18.]

1. Not so much as *ἐλπίς*, absolute throwing off, disclaiming all hope, perfect fury and despair; or if he have any hopeful thought about him, it is

2. None of the *ἐλπίς αὐτή*, none of the reasonable, grounded, conditional, but a flattering, fallacious, foundationless, because unconditionate hope, which the bigger it swells the more dangerous it proves; an aposteme or tympany of hope, made up either of air or putrid humour: and then *ἡ πλέον ἐλπίζουσι, ταύτη μᾶλλον κακῶς ἔχουσι*, like the consumptive patient, the more he hopes the further he is gone, the more deeply desperate is his condition.

Or 3rd, no *ἐλπίς ἐπ' αὐτῷ*, hope on Him, on God. It is a dependance on some fatal chain,—some necromantic trick, of believing thou shalt be saved, and thou shalt be saved,—nay, on Satan himself, some response from his oracle, that *ἐγγαστρίμυθος*, that wizard flesh within us, that hath thus

S E R M.
VI.

bewitched us to its false pleasures first, and then its fallacious hopes, the fatallest, horridest condition in the world: you may excuse the preacher and the Apostle, if it carry them both into a kind of *πάθος*, an outcry of love, and pity, and desire, to prevent this unremediable ruin to which thou art posting, to catch thee when thou art nodding thus dangerously, with a most affectionate, compassionate compellation of a "dearly beloved, let us cleanse." Which brings me to the second general, the address, adding somewhat of earnestness and somewhat of sweetness to the exhortation, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved."

The exhortation to purifying, reforming, mortifying of sins, is an effect and expression of the greatest kindness, sincerest love, and tenderest affection imaginable. You shall see this exemplified by the most earnest lover that ever was in the world. Will you believe the Holy Ghost? "Greater love than this hath no man shewed, than to lay down his life for his friend." Now our Saviour you know laid down His life,—somewhat more than the life of a mere man, the life of the *θεάνθρωπος*, that divine celestial person,—on purpose to fetch back this divine, but scorned, purity into the world again: "He gave Himself for us," saith St. Paul, "that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people," laid down His life for that only prize to which the Apostle here exhorts, this of purifying. You shall see it again, "God having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless us, in turning every one from his iniquities:" this turning from iniquities, the purifying in the text, was the prime end and design of Christ's coming into the world, of all His glorious offices, and the exercise of them, and that the most blessed work of mercy that could ever be meant to polluted souls; this turning is there the interpretation of His blessing of us, "to bless us in turning," &c. It were superfluous further to assist this truth, in shewing you what an act of benefaction and mercy, of charity and real blessing it is, to contribute in any the smallest manner to the mortifying of any sin in any; it is the rescuing him from the most noisome, miserable, putrefied, piteous condition in the world. The plagues of Egypt, the frogs, and flies, and lice, and locusts of Egypt, and the murrain and death of the first-

[John xv.
13.]

Tit. ii. 14.

Acts iii. 26.

born, were but the imperfect emblems of these unclean hated vermin in the soul, that devour all the fruit and corn of the land, all the Christian virtues and graces, despoil and depopulate all that is precious or valuable in it; and then what proud Pharaoh would not fall on his knees to Moses, to make use of his power with Heaven, to deliver him from such plagues as these?

And yet to see how quite contrary it is ordered in the world; God is fain to send suppliants to us, that we will but be content to part with an impurity, that we will but endure so huge a blessedness. You know we are ambassadors for Christ, and what is the nature of an embassy? why, setting up this impure unmortified sinner in a throne,—to have an embassy addressed to him, is an argument of a prince,—and not only men, but God Himself, as it were, prostrate before his footstool, the King of heaven to this proud reigning sinner on earth, to beseech him but to part with these weapons of his hostility against God, these provoking impurities; “as though God did beseech you by us,”—God Himself becomes the suppliant, and then we ministers may very well be content with the employment,—“we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled unto God.” Thus through the whole book of Canticles is the beloved husband of his Church most passionately wooing her to this duty, to this opening to him, giving him an admission, all upon this score, that he might come in to bless and purify; and O what rhetoric is bestowed on her! far beyond the “dearly beloved” in this text, [2 Cor. v. 20.] “Open to me, my love, my dove, my undefiled, my fair one:” he calls her fair and undefiled on purpose that he may make her such, and O that we had but that Saviour-like passion, that blessing kindness to our own poor perishing souls, some of those bowels of love to our own bowels! That we have not, is the greatest defect of self-love, the most contrary sin against our grand fundamental principle, that of self-preservation,—which can combine with the devil for the undermining and ruining and subverting of whole kingdoms, on that one commanding design of getting off the cross from off our own shoulders, on whomsoever it be laid, but cannot think fit to assist Heaven in purging out one refuse impurity out of the soul. Yet shall I not on such discouragements give it

S E R M.
VI.

over as a forlorn impossible hope, but proceed one stage further on this errand, to the last general, the exhortation itself, *καθαρίζωμεν ἑαυτοὺς*, &c., "Let us cleanse ourselves." 1. cleanse, 2. ourselves, 3. us ourselves; the verb is active, the pronoun reciprocal, and the verb and pronoun both plural. And so, beside the duty itself of cleansing, two circumstances of this duty we must learn from hence, namely, 2, that it is the Christian's task upon himself, this of purifying: then, 3, that it ought to be the common united design of all Christians, the Apostle and people together, to assist one another in this work, this of purifying.

For the first, the duty itself, *καθαρίζωμεν*, "cleanse." This is not the actual acquiring, but the motion and proficiency and tendency toward purity.

And so there again you have two things :

1. What this purity is ;
2. What this motion toward purity.

The purity is of two sorts; the first opposed to filth, the second to mixture: as the wine is pure, both when it is fetched off from the lees and dregs, and when it is not mingled with water. In the first notion, the purifying here, is the purging out of carnality; in the second, of hypocrisy; the first is the clean heart of David; the second, the right or sincere, single or simple spirit: the first from the filthiness of the flesh; the second, of the spirit: and you will never be prosperous alchymists, never get the philosopher's stone, never acquire the grand Christian hope, if you miscarry in either of these.

The first kind of purity again, that of the flesh, is twofold, proportionable to the two fountains and sources of carnality, *ἐπιθυμία* and *θυμὸς*, "lust and rage," that *κακίστη συνωρίς*, "infernal pair," that hath so undermined the peace of souls and kingdoms.

Lust, the common parent both to all fleshly and all worldly desire, to the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye; the lust of the flesh again, either the warm, or the moist carnality, the burnings of the incontinent, or the thirsts of the luxurious; that deluge of fire and water, that had and shall have the honour to divide betwixt them the first and second ruin of the world. And for the lust of the eye, that cold dry

piece of sensuality, that strange kind of epicurism, that mad raving passion after stones and minerals, the deifying of that forlorn element, which, saith Aristotle, *μόνη κριτήν οὐκ εἴληφε*, could never get any advocate to plead for it, that which struck Moses into such a passion, "these people have committed a great sin, have made them gods of gold;" this "love of the world and things of the world," extravagant desire, hot pursuit of such cold embraces,—like the embalmers in Herodotus, that had flames toward the chilled earth, the carcasses before them,—this dry juiceless sin, is yet able to pollute and defame the soul, as earth, you know, is as apt to foul and sully as any thing; covetousness is as irreconcilable with purity, as incontinence and intemperance, and all with the *ἐπαγγελίας ταύτας*, the "these promises" in the text.

SER M.
VI.

[Exod.
xxxii. 31.]
[1 John ii.
15.]

So, in the second place, for that of rage, it is a fruitful teeming mother, which contains all the more sublimate kinds of carnality, pride, and ambition, and all the generation of those vipers, "hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, and the like," all prime "works of the flesh," though somewhat more volatile and aerial, i.e. have more of Satan and Lucifer in them than the other. Even he that but sides in religion, that makes that band of all charity and humility, an engine of faction or pride, that saith, "I am of Paul," &c. ; is he not carnal? the most undoubted carnality in the world. A multitude of sins there are under this one head, able to bespot a man, a nation, into a leopard; and those spots are far from being the spots of sons, reconcilable with the promises of this text. But above all, one that pollutes in grain, that crimson dye, the guilt of blood, in which those souls that are rolled,—as every malicious, unpeaceable spirit certainly is, though he never had the courage to shed any,—look so direful in God's sight, that in comparison with them, the mire and mud of the basest swine may pass for a tolerable beauty; the blood of men, saith Psellus, yielding a fume or nidour that the devils,—and sure none but of their complexion and diet,—are fed and fattened with; and Maimonides to the same purpose, that it is the food of devils; that he that can feed on it, is a guest *על שולחן השדים*, "at the table of devils," and

Gal. v. 20.

ver. 19.

1 Cor. iii. 4.

S E R M.
VI.
1 Cor. x. 20.

literally guilty of that which St. Paul mentions so sadly, "I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils," partake of that Cyclops feast prepared, like hell, peculiarly for the devil and his angels,—those great Abaddons and Apollyons,—and cannot without injury and riot be snatched out of his hands, be swilled and wallowed in by us; those *Θυέστεια δέιπνα*,—that were so scandalously charged on the primitive Christians, and cost Justin Martyr and Athenagoras such Apologies,—their feasting on one another's flesh: which charge should it be now resumed, and brought in by Turks or Indians against us Protestants,—as they say it is, but certainly will be, when it is told in Gath and Askalon,—good God! what should we do for an apologist?

Come we then in the last place to the last degree of purity, that which excludes hypocrisy or mixture, the sin which hath so dyed this nation, given it an heir-apparency to all the Pharisees' woes. Not only that notion of hypocrisy which in our ordinary speech hath engrossed the title, the vain-glorious publishing all our own acts of piety; Oh! that is but a puny degree of this sin; I know not whether I should not do well to give it some good words in comparison to its contrary, the desiring to appear more impure, more impious than we are,—that gross, confident, bold-faced devil, the far more dangerous of the two:—but, I say, the other more secret nice hypocrisy, the falseness to God, taking in rivals into the heart, the partial, halting, mutilate obedience, that which keeps a reserve for Satan, for mammon, for myself, when all should be given up to God; but above all, that yet profounder piece, the Egyptian temple, a most glorious fabric most piteously inhabited, nothing but cats and crocodiles within instead of gods; that of the painted sepulchre, the noisome, poisonous secrecy under the loveliest disguise, the vault or charnel-house of rottenness, of all the impurity in the world,—the deep-digged Golgotha and Aceldama,—under the fairest and most inviting inscription; that histrionical piece of the beasts' tragedy, the couchant, but ravening, wolves under the sheep's clothing, the god brought in for the basest services, the impurest contrivances in the world, and never pretended to, or thought on, till we had those vile

[Matt. vii.
15.]

employments for him; and this you will acknowledge sufficiently inconsistent with the purifying in this text, and so with the "these promises."

Having given you the severals of this purity by the contrary branches of the impurity, we come now to the *καθαρίζειν*, the notion of cleansing or purifying, that is here so vehemently required of us: and that is not the having acquired this purity, having attained any perfection of this state in either kind; but only the being on the way, the constant motion and growth, a setting out, and progress and proficiency in it, a daily purging and rinsing of the soul, that good innocent kind of *ἡμεροβάπτισμος*, that pardonable pharisaism of assiduous washings; a daily slaughtering of the great defilers one after another, one day of execution for lust, another for rage; one for the impurities of the tongue, the oaths, the lies, the profanations, the blasphemies, the noisome unsavoury discourses,—blessed Lord, that this might but be the day of demolishing that Babel of strange heathen languages, the least degree of which is intolerable among Christians!—another for the impurities of the eye, and a whole ocean of purgations little enough for that; but above all, an every-day care for the drying up the great fountain of leprosy in the heart. In a word, a firm ratified resolution of mortifying and crucifying, a devoting and consecrating all, and making as much speed with them as we can. To that end, though the perfect purity be not acquired, yet must these three essays be made toward it, these three degrees of ascent and proficiency observed:

1. Barring up the inlets, obstructing the avenues against all future breakings in of the great polluters, the resisting all fresh temptations,—by the remembrance how dear they have formerly cost our souls, what floods of tears, if we have done our duty, what a whole shop of purgatives to get out one spot so contracted,—but especially, stopping the recurrence of the old profane polluted habits, that *ὄς εἰς βόρβον* [2 Pet. ii. 22.] *ρον*, the cleansed swine returned to her old beloved wallowing again.

2. Our daily, minutely recourse to that *digitus Dei*, "finger of God," which alone, say the Jews, can cleanse lepers, with a "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make us clean;" Thou [Luke v. 12.]

SER M. VI. canst prepare new Jordans of grace beyond all our rivers of Damascus, new banks, new treasures of purity.

And then 3, taking the seasonable advice of the Syrian servants, going down and washing in that Jordan, acting upon ourselves by the power of this grace, thus fitly co-operating with God to the utmost of our derivative strength; not lying like cripples on the bank when we have a Bethesda before us, which yet will cleanse none but those that go into it. And that brings me to the former of the two circumstances,—belonging to this duty,—denoted by the *ἐαυτοῦς*, cleanse ‘ourselves,’ that it is the Christian’s task upon himself, this of purifying; *καθαρίζομεν ἐαυτοῦς*, “let us cleanse ourselves.”

It is the prerogative of the grace of Christ, that he that is vouchsafed his portion of that, is thereby thus enabled to mortify sin, and advance toward purity; and it is the duty of all that are thus vouchsafed and dignified, to make use of that strength to that end, to purify themselves. For as Aquinas observes out of Aristotle, that those things are possible for us, which are possible by our friends, so what we are enabled to do by the grace of Christ, we are able to do. He that is born of God, is born an athleta and victor, the whole world is but a pigmy before him; this is the privilege of that high descent, that be he the impotentest creature in the world, considered in his natural, carnal, or moral principles, either as “born of blood, or of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man,” he hath yet an acquisition of a kind of omnipotence, from the derived communicated strength of Christ, as he is born of God; *ἰσχύει πάντα*, “he can do all things through Christ that strengthens him.” God by His preventing and subsequent grace, works in the Christian to will and to do merely of His good pleasure of bounty; and then the exhortation belongs to that Christian, to “work, and work out his own salvation.”

And were but the care and pains employed in the using and improving those talents which God hath given us, and calling to heaven for supplies, which is mis-spent and paltered away in pleading our impotencies and disabilities, and wants of grace,—that is, in accusing, in the old heathen style, God’s illiberal dealing with His children,—charging Heaven with

[John i.
13.]

[Phil. iv.
13.]

[Ibid. ii.
12.]

all our failings,—we might certainly reap better fruit of our time, be fairer proficient in this art of purging; and in the mean may spend our spirits most profitably in calling and hastening one another to this so possible, and withal so necessary, task; and that is the last particular, that it ought to be the united design of all Christians, the Apostle and people together, to aid and assist one another in this work of purifying, by entreaties, by exhortations, by all the engagements of love and duty; *καθαρίζωμεν ἑαυτοὺς*, “let us cleanse ourselves.”

S E R M.
VI.

The work, it is acknowledged, though possible to be gone through with, in such a measure as shall be sure of acceptance, is yet of some more than ordinary difficulty. How long hath this poor nation been about it? So many years in the refiner's fire, in God's furnace for purifying, worn out and rent to pieces under the fuller's soap; and yet, God knows, as full of dross and spots as ever, the poor leper-kingdom thrust out of the camp,—the temple,—banished from the old privileges of the Israelite, the oracle and the service of God, God spitting in the face of it, in Moses' style,—a kind of excommunicate state,—all on that charitable purpose, that it might be ashamed and apply itself to the priest, to God for His purgatives; I shall add, looked upon, prayed over by that priest so many years together; and that cure still as far from being perfected as ever, the leprosy spreading in the skin, the sins multiplying under the priest's inspection, under God's rod; at the end of a seven years' rinsing,—not with soap, but nitre,—a thousand times more odious spots, more provoking sins, more hellish impurities, than before. I remember what poor Porphyry was fain to do in pursuit of purgatives, the same that Saul after the commission of his sin that rent the kingdom from him, betake himself *εἰς θεουργίαν καὶ γοητεῖαν*, to magic and conjuring, make friends to the devil to help purify him. O that we, having met with luckier prescriptions,—recipes from heaven, that would be sure to prove successful,—would not betray all, for want of applying them, that while it is called to-day, while a poor spotted kingdom lies a gasping, the benefit of the last plunge, the *φύσεις ἡγραι*, might not be quite let slip, that this of purifying, the only true expedient yet untried,—whilst

S E R M.
VI.

[1 Kings
viii. 38.]

[Ps. cxxii.
1.]

all others are experimented to be but mere empirical state mountebankery,—might at length be thought on, prosecuted with some vigour, every man entering into the retirement of his own breast, there to search and view the spotted patient, the plague, the leprosy of his own heart! and again, every man making his arts of cure as communicative and diffusive, as charitable and catholic as he can; that as David was ravished with joy, when they said unto him, “Let us go into the house of the Lord,”—that pleasant news and spectacle, a conspiracy for piety,—so we for that only errand that sends us all to that house, the beginning and advancing of purity; every man, like an Israelite in his flight from Egypt, not only going out in haste,—a passover toward purity,—but also despoiling his Egyptian neighbours, robbing one of his lusts, another of his detractions, one of his atheistical oaths, another of his swinish excesses, one of his infidel tremblings and basenesses, another of his covetings and ambitions, his jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiments, his most valued precious sins,—the curses with which he hath clothed himself as with a garment, and which would one day, if they were not suatched from him, come like scalding water into his bowels, and oil into his bones,—and so yet, if it be possible, come out a troop, a legion of naked wrestlers, a whole shoal of candidates toward purity. Till somewhat be done this way, more than hitherto hath been done, peace may hover over our heads, express its willingness to light upon us; but *ad candida tecta columbæ*, that dove will not enter or dwell where purity hath not prepared for her: or if she should so unlearn her own humour, it were danger she would turn vulture, that most desirable blessing prove our fatallest curse, leave us in and to a state of all impurities, to deprecate and curse those mercies that had betrayed us to such irreversible miseries. Lord, purge, Lord, cleanse us; do Thou break those vessels of ours that will not be purified; cast us again into what furnace Thou pleasest, that we may at length leave our dross, our filth behind us: and having used Thine own methods toward this end, and purged our eyes to see that it is Thou that hast thought this necessary for us, that hast of very mercy, very fidelity thus caused us to be troubled, work in us that purity here, which may make us

capable of that vision, that peace, that fulness of sanctity and glory hereafter; which God of His infinite abyss of purity grant us all; to Whom, with the Son, that image of His Father's purity, and the holy, sanctifying, purifying Spirit, &c.

S E R M.
VI.

SERMON VII.

BEING A LENT SERMON AT OXFORD, A. D. 1643.

CHRIST AND BARABBAS.

JOHN xviii. 40.

Not this Man, but Barabbas.

S E R M. THIS passage of story not unagreeable to the time,—every
VII. day of Lent being a *προπαρασκευῆ* to the passion week,—
hath much of the present humour of the world in it, whether
we consider it as an act of censure, or as an act of choice :
both these it is here in the Jews.

1. An act of popular censure, i. e. most perfect injustice, very favourable to the robber, and very severe to Christ ; Barabbas may be released, the vilest wretch in the world, one that was attached for robbery and for insurrection, may become the people's favourite, be pitied and pleaded for, and absolutely pardoned: *dat veniam corvis*^a, the blackest devils in hell shall pass without any of our malice, our indignation, our animosities ; but an innocent Christ, or any of His making, one that comes from heaven to us, upon errands of holiness, of reformation, that by authority of His doctrine and example would put vice out of countenance, discover our follies, or reproach our madneses, and in the Wise Man's phrase, "upbraid our ways, and reprove our thoughts," He that hath no sins to qualify Him for our acquaintance, no oaths, no ribaldry to make him good company, none of the compliances or vices of the times to commend him to our friendship, at least to our pardon, none of that new kind of popularity of being as debauched and professedly vicious as other men, shall

[Wisd. ii.
12, 14.]

^a [Juv. ii. 63.]

be suspected, and feared, and hated, the most odious, unpardonable, unsufferable neighbour, "grievous unto us even to behold." Innocence is become the most uncomely degenerate quality, virtue the most envious, censorious thing; the not being so near hell as other men, the most ridiculous scrupulosity, and folly in the world. And the misery of it is, there is no discoursing, no reasoning this humour out of us, they had cried once before, and the crossing doth but more inflame them; the charm, that should have exorcised, doth but enrage the evil spirit, "Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas."

S E R M.
VII.

Wisd. ii. 15.

But besides this, I told you, these words might be taken in another notion, and under that it is that we are resolved to handle them, as an act of the Jews' choice, of their absolute unconditionate decree, their loving of Barabbas, and hating of Jesus, not before they had done either good or evil, but after one had done all the evil, the other all the good imaginable; then hating the Jacob, and loving the Esau; electing the robber, and rejecting the Saviour; the Barabbas becomes a Barabbas indeed, according to the origination of the name, a son of a father, a beloved son in whom they are well pleased, a chosen vessel of their honour, and Christ the only refuse vessel of dishonour, the only unamiable, undesirable, formless, beautiless reprobate in the mass: *Non hunc, sed Barabbam*, "Not this man," &c.

[Rom. ix.
11, 13.]

In the words under the notion of the choice, you may please to take notice of these severals:

1. A competition precedaneous to this choice, presumed here, but expressed in St. Matthew, *τίνα θέλετε ἐκ τῶν δύο*, "which of the two will ye," &c.
2. The competitors, Barabbas and Christ.
3. The choice itself, not only preferring one before the other, *non hunc, sed*, but 1. absolutely rejecting of one, *non hunc*, not this man; and then by way of necessary refuge pitching upon the other, *Non hunc, sed Barabbam*, "Not this man, but Barabbas."

[Matt.
xxvii. 17.]

And of these in this order.

And first, of the first, that there is a competition, before what the competitors are, or what the choice.

1. I say that there is a competition, a canvass, or plying,

S E R M.
VII.

before we come to choose any thing ; this is a truth most constantly observable, in all which we are most concerned in, in that transcendent interest, the business of our souls. Were there but one object represented to the faculty, one Christ, one holiness, one salvation, the receiving Him would be any thing rather than choice ; chance it might be, or necessity it might be ; chance it might be, that such a thing had the luck to come first, to prepossess and forestal us, to get our favour when there was nobody else to sue for it ; and indeed he that should be godly, or Christian on such a felicity as this, through ignorance only, or non-representation of the contrary, he that should give his voice unto Christ, because there was nobody else to canvass for it, that if Mahomet had plied him first, would have had as much faith for the Alcoran, as he hath now for the Bible, been as zealous for a carnal, sensual, as now for a pure spiritual paradise ; he that if he had been born of heathen parents, or put out to nurse to an Indian, would have sucked in as much of Gentilism, as by this civil English education he hath attained to of the true religion, that hath no supersedeas, no fortification against worshipping of sun and moon, posting from one heathen shrine,—as now from one sermon,—to another, but only that Christianity bespake him earliest, that idolatry was not at leisure to crave his favour, when Protestancy got it ; is, I confess, a Christian, he may thank his stars for it, *planetarius sanctus*, a saint, but such an one as a Jew would have been, might he have been a changeling stolen into that cradle, or the most barbarous China infidel, had he had (as he of old, *fortunam Cæsaris*, so) *fortunam Christiani*, the Christian's fortune to have tutored him. And so for virtue and sinlessness also, he in whom it is not conscience, but bashfulness and ignorance of vice, that abstains only from uncreditable or unfashionable, from branded or disused sins, swears not, only because he hath not learnt the art of it, hath not yet gotten into the court, or into the army, the schools where that skill is taught, the shops where those reversed thunderbolts, so tempestuously shot against heaven, are forged ; he that is no drunkard, no adulterer, no malicious person, only *quia nemo*, because he hath no company to debauch, no strength to maintain, no injury to provoke the uncommitted

sin ; is all this while but a child of fate, born under a benign aspect, more lucky, but not more innocent, more fortunate, but not more virtuous than other men. SERM.
VII.

Again, if there were no competition, as it might be chance, so it might be necessity too ; thou art fain to be virtuous, because thou canst be nothing else, goodness must go for thy refuge, but not thy choice, were there no rival sin, no competitor lust to pretend for thee.

It is therefore not only an act of wisdom, but of goodness too, observable in God's wonderful dispensation of things under the Gospel, to leave the Christian, *ἐν μεθορίῳ*, in the confines of two most distant people, improvable into good, and capable of evil, like Erasmus' picture at Rome, or that vulgar lie of Mahomet's tomb at Aleppo betwixt two loadstones, *ἀμφισβήτημα θεοῦ καὶ δαιμόνων*, as Synesius calls it, a stake between God on one side, and all the devils in hell on the other, made up of a Canaanite and an Israelite, a law in the members as well as a law in the mind, or as Antoninus^b, *πείσεις ἐν μορίοις*, persuasions in the members, many topics of rhetoric, many strong allecives to evil in the lower carnal part of the man, as well as invitations and obligations to good in the upper and spiritual. Thus did God think fit to dispose it, even in paradise itself, the flesh tempted with carnal objects, even before the first sin had disordered that flesh ; a palate for the sweetness of the apple to please, and an eye for the beauty to invite, as well as an upper masculine faculty, a reason for commands to awe, and threats to deter ; yea, and it seems in heaven itself, and the angels there, where is no flesh and blood, that *officina cupidinum*, shop or workhouse of desires, yet even there is an inlet for ambition, though not for lust, a liability to the filthiness of the spirit, though not of the flesh, or else Lucifer had still stood favourite, could never have forfeited that state of bliss. And so it is ever since in this inferior orb of ours, "Behold, I set before thee life and death, blessing and cursing," on one side all the joys of heaven to ravish and enwrap thee, the mercies of Christ to "draw thee with the cords of a man, with the bands of love," to force and violence thy love by loving thee first, by setting thee a copy

[Rom. vii.
23.]

[2 Cor. vii.
1.]

[Deut. xxx.
19.]

[Hos. xi. 4.]

^b [αἰσθητικῶν πείσεων. Antonini ad seipsum, lib. iii. cap. 6.]

S E R M.
VII.

of that heavenly passion to transcribe, but then withal death in the other scale, death which it seems hath something amiable in it too, it would not be so courted else, a *πορφύρα τοῦ σκότους*, as Macarius styles it, a gallantry of hell, a purple garment of darkness, that such shoals of men, and I tremble to think and say, so large a quantity of baptized Christians are so ambitious of, sell all that is comfortable and valuable in this life, to purchase it: and were there not both these set before us by God, life on one side, and death on the other, blessing on one side, and cursing on the other, a double canvass for thy soul, a rivalry, a competition, and somewhat on both sides amiable to somewhat in thee, life to the immortal, death to the perishing part of thee, blessing to the rational divine, cursing to the bedlam brutish part of thee, the man of God could not go on as he doth in that place, “therefore choose life, that thou and thy sons may live.” Were there but one in our reach, it were necessity still and not choice, and that most absolutely destructive of all judgment to come; hell might be our fate, but not our wages, our destiny, but not our reward, and heaven any thing more truly than “a crown of righteousness.”

Deut. xxx.
19.

[2 Tim. iv.
8.]

A piece of the philosopher there hath been a long while in the world, that hath had a great stroke in debauching the divine, that the understanding doth necessarily and irresistibly move the will, that whatever hath once passed the *judicium practicum*, got not only the assent of the judgment that it is true, but the allowance also that it is good and fit to be chosen, cannot choose but be desired and prosecuted by the will; from whence the divine subsumes, that where faith is once entered, though that but a speculative (I wish it were not sometimes but a phantastical) faith, there works must and will infallibly follow. I confess it were admirable news if this were true, if all that know these things were sure to do them, if there were no such thing possible as sin against light, sin against gospel, sin against conscience; if the lives of believers could not prove infidel, the actions of those that acknowledge God, that make no doubt of the truth of Christianity, could not avoid or escape being God-like and Christian, if it were but a flash of St. Augustine’s wit, that the wicked infidel believes contrary to faith, the wicked

[John xiii.
17.]

believer lives contrary to it; there were then but one care left a Christian, to be catechized aright, which the Solifidian calls faith; or to be confident of his own election, which the fiduciary calls faith; and then *Quis separabit?* any thing else will be wrought in me by Christ, or that any thing else will be unnecessary to be wrought. Instead of this pagan principle that ties up all in the chains of inevitable fate, if it be examined, give me leave to mention to you one aphorism of Christian philosophy, which is but the interpretation of the competition that now I speak of; that the will is no more necessitated to obey the suggestions of reason, than of the sensual appetite, of the upper than the lower soul, that it is an indifferent middle faculty, able to choose the evil and refuse the good, or,—to satisfy the philosopher's importunity, which resolves it impossible to choose the evil, unless under the appearance of good, you may take it in a clearer notion,—able to choose the pleasant and refuse the honest, to choose the sensual carnal, and refuse the intellectual spiritual good. And that you may see the ground of this, observe that the whole man is made up of three parts, spirit, soul and body.

S E R M.
VII.

1. The body or flesh lusting against the spirit. And 2. the spirit again lusting against the flesh. Those two extremes perfectly contrary one to the other in their appetites, and therefore called by the ancients, *ἄρρεν*, and *θῆλυ*, one the masculine, the other the feminine part, one the monarch in the soul, the other the *ὁ δημος*, or commonalty; one the *παιδαγωγός*, the master, the other the *παιδίον*, or child; one the *Θεὸς ἐν ἡμῖν*, the voice and image of God in us, the other the *θηρία*, the bestial part; one the man, the other the *τετράποδα*, the four-footed creatures in us. And these are contrary the one to the other, so that you cannot do, or, as the Greek, *ὕνα μὴ ποιῆτε*, so that you do not, this is a consequent of that contrariety, you do not the thing that you would; i. e. perhaps perfectly, purely without some tack or mixture, however I am sure, not quietly, stilly, without some opposition of the other. And then comes in in the third place, *ψυχὴ*, the soul, the elective faculty, i. e. the will betwixt them, courted and solicited by both, as that which hath the determining casting voice; if the beast can carry it, if the sensual suggestions get the consent of the

[Is. vii. 15,
16.]

[1 Thess.
v. 23.]
[Gal. v.
17.]

S E R M.
VII.

[Jas. i. 15.]

will; obtain the embrace, have its carnal proposals yielded to; then in the Apostle's phrase lust conceives, and within awhile proceeds from consent to act, bringeth forth sin; but when the spirit prevails, when the reason, the conscience, the God within thee, is allowed to be heard, when that chaste, sober, matronly spouse gets the embraces, the consent of the will, then the spirit conceives, and from thence spring all the καρποὶ πνεύματος, which the Scripture speaks of, the fruits and productions of the spirit. You see now the competition, the constant importunities and solicitations, the rivalry for thy soul, not an action of moment or importance in thy life, but the house is divided about it, the spirit for one way, and the flesh for another, and that that prevails, i. e. gets the will of its side, denominates the action, and the action frequently and indulgently reiterated, denominates thee either flesh or spirit, either captive to the law of sin, or obedient to the commands and dictates of Christ, a carnal sinner, or a spiritual disciple.

[Gal. v.
22.]

And then my brethren, by way of use:

1. You see the answer to that hard problem, what is the reason and ground of the infiniteness of those punishments that await sinners in another world: here you have the oil that maintains that accursed vestal fire, so much beyond Tulliola's or Pallas' lamp in Licetus, burning so many ages under ground and not consumed; I mean, this competition in this text,—the τίνα θέλετε ἐκ τῶν δύο, which of the two infinites will you,—and that other we mentioned of life and death, blessing and cursing, set before us by God, the leaving to our option whether of the two infinites we will have; this, and nothing but this, hath made it most perfectly reasonable, that despisers should perish eternally, that he that will condemn immortal life, that τὸν ἐν χερσὶν αἰῶνα^c, as Clemens, St. Paul's contemporary, calls it, that eternity put into our hands by Christ, and make his deliberate covenant with death, that his immortal part may die eternally, should be thought worthy, as the book of Wisdom hath it, to take his portion or part with it. And then,

[Acts xiii.
41.][Wisd. i.
16.]

^c [ὥστε οὖν ἀδελφοί μου, ἀγωνισώ-
μεθα εἰδότες ὅτι ἐν χερσὶν ὁ αἰὼν· καὶ
ὅτι εἰς τοὺς φθαρτοὺς ἀγῶνας καταπλέ-
ουσιν πολλοί, ἀλλ' οὐ πάντες στεφανοῦν-

ται, εἰ μὴ οἱ πολλὰ κοπιῶσάντες καὶ
καλῶς ἀγωνισάμενοι.—S. Clem. Ep. ii.
cap. 7. ἀγῶν seems to be a probable
emendation of αἰὼν in this passage.]

2. O how much the more care, and caution, and vigilance will it require at our hands, to keep guard over that one faculty, that spring of life and death, that fountain of sweet and poisonous water, that of choosing or rejecting, willing or nilling; never to dispense those favours loosely or prodigally, never to deny them rashly or unadvisedly, but upon all the mature deliberation in the world! "keep thy heart with all diligence," the heart this principle of action, keep it above all keeping, "for out of it are the issues of life." That "when I would do good, evil is present with me," temptations of the carnal appetite to the contrary, it matters little, so I hold off my consent, resist their importunity; and that all the devils in hell are a whispering blasphemy within me, it matters as little, so I reject the suggestions. Resist, and he shall fly; that he is loose to tempt, this is my infelicity perhaps, but not my guilt, yea and that mishap improved into a blessing, *ἑδόθη σκόλοψ*, this tempter a kind of donative of heaven, to busy my patience, and exercise my vigilance, to set out my Christian valour, to make me capable of the victory first, and then the crown; the nations left "to prove Israel," yea and to "teach them war, at least such as before knew nothing thereof." Only be sure that those nations get not the upper hand; to that purpose that they be not pampered and fed too high, till they grow petulant and unruly, that this *jumentum hominis*, as St. Jerome calls it, this ass, or beast-part of a man, prove not the rider's master: this is the greatest danger first, and then reproach in the world, which you will more discern if you proceed from the competition to the competitors, and consider who they are, in us spirit and flesh, God and devil, as in the Jews Barabbas and Christ, my second particular.

It is none of the least of God's mercies among His dispensations of providence, that the competition falls to be betwixt such persons so acknowledgedly distant, and hugely contrary, a Christ and a Barabbas; the one so precious, and the other so vile, the Prince of peace, and the author of an insurrection, a *σωτήρ* and an *ἀπολλύων*, "a Saviour" and "a destroyer;" had it been betwixt a Christ and a Nicodemus, a carpenter's son and a rabbi or ruler in Israel, the choice might have been more difficult, or the mistake more pardon-

SERM.
VII.

Prov. iv. 23.

[Rom. vii.
21.]Judg. iii. 1,
2.

[Is. ix. 6.]

S E R M.
VII.[John iii.
16.][Tobit vi.
8.][Gen. iii.
1.][Exod.
xxxii. 4.]
[2 Kings
xviii. 4.]

able; but "so God loved the world," such were the riches of His goodness to an infatuated rebellious people, He sets before them a beautiful Christ, and an odious foil to make Him more beautiful, to make it impossible for them to be so mad, as to refuse and finally to reject Christ, that was on such grounds, and in such company, a suing and importuning for their favour; none but a Barabbas to pretend against Him, that that notion had of Him might serve instead of the fish's gall to recover the blind Tobit's sight, help the blindest natural man to discern somewhat tolerable, if not desirable in the Christ, that in so poor a choice, an undervalued, prejudged, scandalous Jesus might have leave to be considered, and owe a preferment *alienis vitiis* to the faults of the other, though not *virtutibus suis* to any thing amiable or estimable in Himself. The same economy you may generally observe even from the first of paradise to this day; when our first parents were the prize, the competitors were of somewhat a distant making, God and the serpent, not the King of heaven and one of His chief courtiers, God and an archangel of light, but God and a damned spirit, a black prince, and he but in very homely disguise, but of a serpent, which though he were then a *τετράποδον*, as Cedrenus out of some of the ancients will have it, somewhat a taller and goodlier creature than now the serpent is, that his legs be cut off, yet the text saith, a beast for all that, aye and that beast branded for craft, infamous for the subtlest creature, and so not likely to prove the most honest and solicitous of their good; and this cunning Pytho had made friends to speak, contrary to his kind, there was sure some sorcery in that; and all this, one would think, was enough to have added authority to God by such a prejudged competitor. And just so was it to the Israelites at their coming out of Egypt, God and a cruel Pharaoh, a deliverer and a tyrant, one to have them slaves in Egypt, the other to have them princes in Canaan; a sufficient inequality betwixt the pretenders, that it might be impossible for any to prefer the onions and the garlick, before the manna and the kingdom. After, it was betwixt God and a golden calf, a calf still, no very honourable creature, though it were of gold; and anon betwixt God and a brazen serpent, serpent and brazen too, neither form nor metal to

commend it; and all along through the heathen world the competition was yet more unequal, betwixt the God of heaven, and wood and stone of the earth, the most glorious Creator, and vilest creature, nay the piece of wood, as the prophet sets it, that was not fit for any use, not so much as to be burnt, the very refuse of the refuse is the thing the idol was made of, and none but that idol thought fit to be a competitor with God for the adoration. If you look back to Judea again, at the time of the great competition for the hearts of Israel betwixt Rehoboam and Jeroboam, it was still of the same making, betwixt a king's son and a servant, a right heir and a cunning seducer, a kind of serpent again; yes, and betwixt the glorious temple of Jerusalem on one side, and the upstart Dan and Bethel on the other, the high-priest on one side, and the basest of the people on the other, betwixt the calves at that Dan, and the cherubims at that Jerusalem; and so still there was advantage enough, one would think, on God's side, against such competitors. And if we look now abroad into the most idolized adored Dianas, the sins that get all the custom away from Christ, the only rivals with Him for our souls, we shall find them but little advanced above that old pitch, little lovelier than the serpent, just such are our crafts, our unsanctified counsels, our wily artifices, that have nothing but serpent in their composition; little honourabler than the calf, just such are our gods of gold, which I cannot mention, but in Moses' passion, "O this people have committed a great sin, have made them gods of gold!" all piety transformed and contracted into the worship of that one shrine, our gain the only godliness we can hear of: and then a multitude more, of a yet viler making, fit only for a competition with that knotty refuse piece of wood of which the idol was made: the more shame they should outvie a most glorious God, a Christ, that if He had nothing in His life amiable, yet hath died for us, and so hath dearly purchased a title to our love, yea and a blessed spirit, come down on purpose to sublime our judicative faculty, to convince the world of the unreasonableness of sin; yea, and a poor thirsty panting soul,—which hath some reason to expect kindness from us,—a heaven and an immortal bliss.

Consider but a few of that glittering train of reigning sins

SERM.
VII.

[Is. xliv.
15—17.]

[1 Kings
xii. 27;
xiv. 30.]

[Ibid. xii.
29.]

[Exod.
xxxii. 31.]

[1 Tim. vi.
5.]

S E R M.
VII.

in this our land, in this my auditory, and be astonished, O earth, that they should ever be received in competition with Christ. The oaths, that all the importunity of our weekly sermons turned into satires against that sin, cannot either steal or beg from us, what gain or profit do they afford us? which of our senses do they entertain, which of our faculties do they court? an empty, profitless, temptationless sin, sensuality only to the devil part in us, fumed out of hell into our mouths in a kind of hypochondriacal fit, an affront to that strict command of Christ, His *ego autem* to His disciples, "but I say unto you," Christians, "swear not at all:" the best quality that it can pretend to, is that that Hierocles of old mentions with indignation, *πρὸς ἀναπλήρωσιν λόγου*, to fill up the vacuities of the speech, to express and man a rage, i. e. to act a madman the more perfectly. And of him that hath in his time sworn over all the hairs of his head, I would still ask but this one question, *τίνα τότε καρπὸν*, "what fruit had he then of this sin,"—then, when it was full in his mouth, a swelling his cheeks,—"whereof he is now ashamed," cannot choose but blush, his ears glow, or be in some pain till I have done speaking of it: and yet beyond this, the end of those things is death, a several fiend in hell most sadly to come, the payment of every of those gainless oaths. It were but a *ψυχρὸν*, or cold address to this kind of sinner, to bespeak him in that expostulating style; "what advantageth it to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" it were more to his purpose to demand, what advantageth it him to gain not one atom, or most diminutive part of the world, not the least acquisition of any thing desirable even to the carnal man, satisfactory to any part of his appetite, save that (in a manner, Platonic) designless love of sinning, and ruining his own soul, and yet to do that as sure, as if he had Satan's *totum hoc*, his whole exchequer of wealth and honour in exchange for it? I shall rather add, what shall that man give in exchange for his soul to get it back again, which he hath parted with so cheap without any barter, sold it for nought and taken no money for it, in the Psalmist's phrase, and now cannot redeem it with all his patrimony? It would grieve one, I confess, that did but weigh this sin in this balance, and observe the tekel in the wall over against it,

[Matt. v.
34.]

[Rom. vi.
21.]

[Matt. xvi.
26; Luke
ix. 25.]

[Is. lii. 3;
Ps. xliv.
12.]

[Dan. v.
5, 27.]

how light and kexy and impertinent a sin this is, to hear that any body should be damned for it in another world, part with such treasures for such trifles, make such African voyages, carry out the substantial commodities of a good land, and return with a freight of toys or monsters, pay so hugely dear for such perfect nothings; and yet it would grieve one more, that this sin should glitter in a protestant court, become part of the gallantry and civility of the place, aye and defame and curse our armies, that the improsperousness, ruin, perhaps *πανολεθρία*, of a whole kingdom should be imputable to one such sin, and all our prayers to heaven for you be outsounded and drowned with that most contrary eloquence. It were the justest thing in the world, that he, that upon my present instance,—this more than *δευτέρα νουθεσία*, second admonition,—will not now vow to part for ever with this one sin, so threatenful to his sovereign, his country, his own soul, to the hosts gone forth against the enemy, to all that is or should be precious to him, and so absolutely gainless to himself in his vilest capacity, even as a sensual brute, should never be admitted within these doors again, never be preached to more, never be considered a Christian so much as in profession, that will part with his true Christ or Jesus, rather than with the names of them to blaspheme by; that he should be delivered up to Satan, as the primitive offenders were, *βασανίζεσθαι*, to be corporally tormented by him, *εἰς ὄλεθρον σαρκὸς*, to the tearing that foul tongue, that noisome piece of flesh out of his mouth, that by that means at least, *παιδευθῆ μὴ βλασφημεῖν*, he may be disciplined or taught not to blaspheme.

Will you look into another sin,—a time of humiliation may be an excuse for the digression,—that of uncleanness, whether of the eye, the libidinous look, that men are so hardly persuaded to believe to be a sin,—i. e. in effect, that Christ forbad any thing under that phrase of looking on a woman to lust,—or whether that of the tongue, that *oris stuprum*, unsavoury discourse, rotten, putrid, noisome conversation, which makes it so absurd for that man ever to pray, —to bless God in the church, with that part that was so polluted in the chamber,—or whether the grosser sin, the making the members of Christ members of a harlot,—meant by the

S E R M
VII.[Tit. iii.
10.][1 Cor. v.
5.][1 Tim. i.
20.][Matt. v.
28.][1 Cor. vi.
15.]

S E R M. VII. Apostle as a huge expression, members of a swine, a toad, had been nothing to it,—what is this, but a Barabbas still, a robber in competition with Christ for that body, which is, saith 1Cor.vi.13. the Apostle, “for the Lord, and not for fornication.” A vile infamous crime, that stays not, for the most part, for its hell, its punishment in another world, meets with its *limbo*, its Tophet here, torments and curses enough in this life, if they might have leave to be considered.

[Acts xv. 20; xvii. 16; xx. 25; 1Cor. v. 10, 11; vi. 9; x. 7, 14; Gal. v. 20; Eph. v. 5; Col. iii. 5; 1 Pet. iv. 3; Rev. ii. 14, 20; xxi. 8; xxii. 15.] It is worth observing in the New Testament that the name of idolatry, not often mentioned there, doth most times very probably denote this sin of uncleanness or carnality; the observation might be made good at large, if it were now seasonable; and I would to God my auditory would be persuaded thus to keep themselves from idols, to fly from this kind of idolatry, that men’s natures have a thousand times more temptations to, than that other sin that bears the envy of all our misery, the idolatry that the sacrilegious so declaim at: believe me, there is not a sin more incompatible with the gospel mercy, a more irreconcilable rival of all godliness, a greater waster of conscience, griever and quencher of the spirit, a more perfect piece of atheism and heathenism, be it in the fairest outside Christian; nor withal a greater blasting and curse to a nation, an army, a garrison town, than the permission of this one sin, the voice of it crying to heaven, as loud as Sodom, for fire from heaven, for judgment upon the place. Remember the fierce judgment in Shittim, upon the people’s joining to Baal Peor, that filthy heathenish idol, expounded by committing whoredom with the daughters of Moab; the heads of the people, remember that, the heads of the people, the principal men in Israel, either because they were most guilty, or because the matter required such an expiation, must be hanged up against the sun, that the anger of the Lord might be turned away from Israel,—and I believe it would pose a man to give any reason why this sin (of adultery at least) in this land, as well as stealing of a trifle, should not be awarded in the style of that text with hanging up against the sun,—and the command there is to them in the place of judicature to see the execution of the law against them, “Slay you every one his men.” But this is a judaical out-dated punish-

Numb.
xxv. 1.

ver. 5.

ment among us, and it hath been the cunning of Satan that it should be so, who having prospered so far for his clients, would not be quiet till he had gotten all kind of restraint or discouragement of this sin to be so too, till he had made the foulest incest a far cheaper sin and safer possession, than the practice of some Christian virtues; nay, which is observable to the lasting shame of this land, till the injured man thus despoiled and robbed by the adulterer, be made, by a kind of national custom, the only infamous person, and the Barabbas that robbed him punished only with that curse in the Gospel, of having all men speak well of him. O what is this, but as the Psalmist saith, "to bless them whom God abhors," or as the prophet, "And now we call the proud, happy; and they that work wickedness, are set up!" Believe it, one or two such ponderous guilts as these, are able to keep the justest cause from buoying up itself, and our ferventest prayers from their *πολὴ ἰσχύει*, from working any saving miracles upon a land.

S E R M.
VII.

[Luke vi.
26.]
[Ps. x. 3.]
Mal. iii. 15.

I wish there were now no more Barabbas's amongst us, a canvassing against Christ, but I must not flatter you with so short a catalogue; look on your indevotion, that heartless, zealless behaviour in this very house of God. Your hearing, which is mostly the fairest part of you, what is it but as of a rhetor at a desk, to commend or dislike, the same which you have as well for the stage as the pulpit, a plaudit or an hiss; and for that other of prayer, though it be for those blessings of peace, of safety, the Shalom that many men have more devotion for, than that other great sense of that word, the salvation of their souls, and which ardent prayer is the only means to bring down upon us; yet what cold addresses, what wandering eyes and thoughts, what irreverent negligent motions, what yawning instead of sighing out our parts of it, what absolute indifference, if God will take our own witness, whether we be heard or no? This want of ardency in us, this no fire on our altar of incense, is certainly the thing that hath provoked God to deliver up our liturgy to Satan, to oppose and malign, to calumniate and defame as at this day; the Lord pardon us our part of this sin. This is the preferring of a Barabbas too, a robber, a devil perhaps, that steals away our hearts from Christ, even when we are in

S E R M. VII. closest converse with Him. As for fasting, what is that but an empty, formal, insignificant name? The scorn of the Pharisees twice a week, hath quite driven it out of our calendar. O consider this, and but once more consider; look on the Sermon in the Mount, the several graces and duties that there make up the Christian somewhat above the pitch of a scribe or Pharisee, and then every of the contrary vices, nay the very Jewish or heathen, the moral or natural man's virtues, that come short of that high philosophy, are every one the Barabbas in the text, directly this Jewish choice; he that cannot forgive an enemy, bless him, pray for him, heap all the hot burning coals of charity upon his head, and melt him by that artifice, rather than break him, ruin him, damn him by any other, what doth he but prefer his own revengeful lust, that hellish piece of sensuality, that food for the wolf, the vulture, the salamander, the devil in him, directly before the commands, not only counsels of Christ? and so *non hunc, sed Barabbam*, a Barabbas is still the choice, and the Christ the reprobate still; which brings me to the third particular, the choice itself, not only preferring one before the other, but 1. absolutely rejecting of one: and then 2. *ad evitandum vacuum*, to fill up the vacuity, pitching upon the other, *non, sed*, "not this, but," &c.

And 1. absolutely not this, a downright reiterated *nolumus hunc*, most vehement dislikes to Christ as soon as ever He is mentioned: the Jews had particular quarrels to Him, ἐσκανδαλίζοντο, they were many times "scandalized at Him," but not they only, but it seems, we Gentiles too, the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit, whether the graces or the promises, οὐ δέχεται, "he receives them not," not only that he cannot attain to them, for that is said in the latter words, "neither can he know them," but οὐ δέχεται, "he receives them not," will not accept them when they are offered, for they are foolishness to him, not worth taking up in the streets, he cannot stoop to such trifles; and in another place, the same Apostle saith it of Christ crucified, "To the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Gentiles foolishness;" the things of the Spirit are foolishness, and the Christ foolishness too, we not only not choose Him, when any other comes in competition with Him, but not take Him, when none; an

[1 Cor. ii.
14.]

[1 Cor. i.
23.]

antipathy to Christ as Christ, an absolute aversation, rejection of such merchandise, though there were no price to be paid for them. This is a mystery of hell, let us view it awhile, and to that end consider Christ, in the two main parts of Him, in which He shines most illustrious towards us, His graces and His promises, the diet all the year long for His servants, and the wages at the end of His service; the *viaticum* He affords in the voyage, and the reward in the haven.

S E R M.
VII.

For the former of these, for grace, the bridegroom's feast, Luke xiv. which so many were bid to, see there what difficulty there is to bring men to it, not one comes on the first invitation, though it seems all were really expected, and the entertainment provided; when all is ready, the servants are again sent out to tell them they are stayed for, and the issue is, "they all with one consent began to make excuses;" the feast was ready, grace ready to be spoiled for want of guests, and yet neither civility, nor pity, nor common gratitude can work upon them, or extort the acceptance of such a donative; the field, the oxen, the wife, are like the Barabbas here, not the reasons but excuses of their contempt, pretences only and opportunities of getting off more cleanly, more handsomely from Christ; and if you mark it, so it is. There is nothing that we have learned so perfect from Adam as that art of excuses; and withal, nothing that we so vehemently desire to be excused from, as the power of grace, when it makes toward our souls, when by the preaching of the word powerfully applied, with an "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead," and "O consider this, ye that forget God, lest He tear you in pieces," and "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish:" when [Eph. v. 14.] [Ps. l. 22.] [Acts xiii. 41.] by the message of that angel come up close to us, the Holy Ghost begins to overshadow and beget Christ in us, that procreative light of heaven darting its beams, and those attended with some conceptions of holiness in a carnal breast, O how uneasy we are, how encumbered, till we can get rid of this burden, like so many harlots that live by the trade of not conceiving, or when that will not be done, force an abortion if it be possible; we must be excused from that austerity, we are impatient of being so attenuated, and spiritualized, wrecked, though it be but from our lees; the last flash of

- S E R M. VI. the candle, pangs of the expiring soul, are time enough for this bearing fruit unto God. Lord, make us chaste, make us sober, make us humble then, "let me die the death of the righteous, and my last end be like his," let me have a shower of sanctity, a clinic's baptism, some good wholesome wishes or ejaculations to bathe me before my last journey, an Elias' fiery chariot of zeal then to hurry me to heaven, *sed noti modo*, Lord, none of this purity yet, the *κινδυνεύει εἶναι ὀληψυχῆ*, in Eunapius, the danger of being all soul, all holiness, all heavenly-mindedness so early, is a sad frightful thing for a young courtier, a young soldier, a young academic, for any that are under the age, or not come to the infirmities of the *clinici* in the primitive Church,—those that would not be baptized till they were ready to die, and so were literally
- [1 Cor. xv. 29.] *βαπτίζομενοι ὑπὲρ νεκρῶν*, baptized for dead, then and not till then desired to be baptized. Holiness is a dull melancholy thing, fit only for a hypochondriac to be entertained with. Thus when the crest-fallen Israelites were to be redeemed from an Egypt to a Canaan, they cry out upon
- Exod. v. 21. Moses and Aaron, chide with their saviours, abominate their deliverers; thus the harassed degenerate emasculate slave is offended with a jubilee, a manumission, servitude is his
- Exod. xxi. [2—6.] sensuality, he will not go out free, brings his ear to his master and desires to be bored through it, that he may be a slave for ever. Once more, thus the man possessed with no
- [Mark ix. 20, 22; Luke ix. 39.] less than a legion of devils, casting him sometime into the fire, sometime into the water, tearing him till he foameth again, is passionately fallen in love with that legion, hath not the patience to be rid of these devils; when Christ comes to cast them out, he is most out of charity with that Christ, *τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοὶ*, "what have I to do with Thee?" not thou
- [Mark v. 7; Luke viii. 28.] devil, that hast tormented me all this while, but "Thou Jesus the eternal Son," or Thou piety the precious grace "of God, art Thou come to torment," i. e. to sanctify or dispossess, "me before my time?" torment me by delivering me from the tormentor, disease by curing, poison me by Thy balm or balsam, wound me by Thy mollifying plasters, condemn me to hell by bringing me into a sight of heaven? thus when the beloved comes and knocks at the door of the espoused soul,
- [Cant. v. 2, 3.] "Open to me my sister, my love," and there waits without doors

most unseasonably and beyond all patience, "till his head be filled with the dew, and his locks with the drops of the night," all the answer that is to be had is no more but this, "I have put off my coat, how can I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?" I have put off righteousness like a garment, denudated myself of all that looks like holiness, and all the wooings of the true-beloved cannot give me patience to put it on again, I have washed my feet in mire or ink, doused my carnal affections in all the vileness of the world, and how shall I defile them with grace, pollute them with chastity, defame or profane them with any thoughts of holiness? thus doth the swine wash herself in the mire, and he that comes to cleanse, defiles her; the sinner never so well pleased as when he is given up to all vile affections, the offers of Christ, the importunities of grace, go for the only oppression, and usurpation, and tyranny in the world, and so *non hunc*, not this man, not Christ, as Christ signifies grace, that inchoation of sanctity that He came to bring among us.

SERM.
VII.
[Cant. v.
2, 3.]

[Rom. i.
26.]

And *non hunc* again, as that signifies the promises which Christ brought with Him, though those promises be of all that is valuable to immortal souls, of nothing but heaven and bliss, *non hunc*, none of Christ, when He comes but a herald of these. For even against this, we have two dislikes.

1. This bliss is of a new spiritual making,—and that is one reason why we despise the promises,—consists in the vision of God, contemplation of heavenly excellencies, nothing of the Turkish carnal paradise in it, nothing that this flesh and blood, the habitual sinner can tell what to make of. I remember Philoponus' conceit^d, that "to have a right apprehension of God, it was necessary to study the mathematics;" men naturally cannot understand any thing but by phantasms, and those still mixing in the contemplation of God, make men fancy God $\mu\epsilon\theta'$ $\upsilon\lambda\eta\varsigma$, with matter and corpulency; and the mathematics are a necessary means to help us to abstract from that. I would to God we had some such engine, or crane, or pulley to elevate our fancies, to make it possible to think any thing pleasure which is not corpulent and carnal. A madness, believe it, that we wrong

^d Præfat. in lib. de an. [Joan. Philoponus in Arist. lib. de Anima Procæm., p. 2. Venet. 1535, quoting Plotinus.]

SERM. VII. the Epicureans to think any of that ancient sect was ever guilty of it; no, they could please themselves with spiritual beauty, as far as they apprehended there was any; witness Epicurus himself, who though he were under those pains of strangury and dysentery that were not capable of increase, of which, it seems by Laertius^e, he died, yet, saith he, in his will, ἀντιπαρετάττετο πᾶσι τούτοις τὸ κατὰ ψυχὴν χαῖρον, “the joy of his soul was able to hold out against all these:” only the Mahometan, and the carnal Christian, is the true Epicurean swine that Horace^f prophesied of, that can find no pleasure but in the mire and dunghill, and that is one main reason of the *non hunc*, as he refers to promises; because they are celestial invisible felicities, that he cannot find any juice or taste in.

But besides that, there is another reason of it, another objection the carnal Jew-Christian hath to those promises, because indeed they are but promises, because of the futurity of them; he is a man of sense, and not of faith, *filius hujus sæculi*, all for present possessions, nothing for advowsons and reversions. [Hos. xii.] “Ephraim is like the heifer,” saith the Prophet, “that loveth to tread out the corn,” the reason of that love was, because of that law, that the mouth of the ox or heifer must not be muzzled at that time; she is allowed to eat at the instant that she doth the work, is not put off to so long a date, so tedious an expectation of sweating here, and being fed and rewarded in another life, and that made Ephraim love to toil so well. [Deut. xxv. 4.] A little present payment will go further with her, than the richest most glorious futurity. Poor short-sighted creatures! who cannot see a hand-breadth before us, like Socinus, huge enemies of prescience, will not allow it possible for God Himself to see any future, further than He hath decreed and determined it. For God to know, or us to believe any thing but what is before us, is a prodigy that carnal reason cannot consent to; and so you see the grounds of the *non hunc*, the no Christ absolutely at a venture, because there is nothing in Him to be esteemed, neither “form, nor comeliness, no” carnal or present “beauty, that we should desire Him,” and therefore it follows, [Isa. liii. 2.] “He is despised, and rejected of men:” *non hunc*, “not this man.”

^e Diog. Laert., lib. x. p. 721. [c. 10. tom. ii. p. 459. ed. Huebner. Lips. 1831.]

^f [Horat. Epist., lib. i. iv. 16.]

But then this is not all; the disaffection to Christ is so great, that rather than have Him, the Barabbas shall be released: this, you are mistaken, if you think any large expression to Barabbas, they could value their own lives better than to desire impunity for murderers. The short is, they are so bent against Christ, that seeing there is a necessity of choosing one for release, of sacrificing some part of their malice and revenge to their present festivity, they will part with any the most reasonable part of it, rather than that was pitched on Christ. Barabbas was a notorious prisoner, one that had troubled the whole city, and every man's appetite was up to have Barabbas crucified; and yet, rather than Jesus shall live, Barabbas shall not be crucified; more insurrections, more blood, more seditions, more any thing, rather than be in danger to have Christ for their King. You may see it in St. Peter's meditation upon that part of the story, "But ye denied the Holy One, and the Just, and desired a murderer to be given unto you, and killed the Prince of life:" the Holy One, the Just, the Prince of life, holiness, justice, life itself, are things not to be endured, to be hunted, pursued, driven out of the world, and in comparison with them, the murderer turns saint, the most abhorred sins shall pass for most desirable rarities, Apollyon the only friend, and hell itself the vastest preferment. Acts iii. 14.

You see from hence that we may draw toward a conclusion; what hath helped Barabbas to his favour, what it is that hath brought most of the sins of the world into fashion among men: not any things estcemable or desirable in themselves, no not so much as to flesh and blood, till a habit and custom hath smoothed them to our throats, sweetened them to our palates, disguised their horror, and given us some tolerable pleasure in them. Believe it, there are few sins but ingenuous nature, when once the fury of youth is over, hath sufficient dislikes unto, that *σύμφυτος λόγος*, the light of natural conscience, that *ὄρκος ἐνουσιούμενος τοῖς λογικοῖς γένεσι*, in Hierocles^g, *ἐπαγγελία ἀνθρώπου*, in Arrian's style^h, that oath or promise, that sacrament in the mother's womb

^g [τοιούτος μὲν οὖν ὁ τοῖς λογικοῖς γένεσιν ἐνουσιούμενος ὄρκος, ἔχεσθαι τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῶν καὶ ποιητοῦ, καὶ μὴ παραβαίνειν μηδαμῇ τοὺς ὑπ' ἐκείνου

διορισθέντας νόμους.—Hierocles in Pythag. v. 2.]

^h [Epicteti Dissert. ab Arriano digest., lib. ii. c. 9. § 1.]

S E R M.
VII.[Eccles.
xii. 1.]

that every man takes to God, when he hath first leave to become a man, can help us to hate them perfectly. *Exemplo¹ quodcunque malum committitur, ipsi displicet*: that one auxiliary in our breasts is abundantly able to fortify against them, so far, that the man shall say really and in sobriety, he hath no pleasure in them; but then, in many others, there is a keen tooth, a stinging tail over and above the no pleasure, many *tormina* and twinges superadded; the drunkard that follows that trade of bestiality most close, finds it a very painful joyless calling; I will reveal this secret of his confession, though he fall into it oft, he hath no pleasure in it, no joy in those daily vomits, were they not physic against something else, against that burden of time that lies so insupportable upon his hands, against melancholy, against pangs and twinges of conscience, like Cain's building of cities, and his children's inventing of music, that the noise of the hammers and the melody of the instruments might out-sound the din within him, or at least to take up quarter before Christ, to help stop the ear from that *ἡρέμα σάλπιγγε*, that still whispering trumpet in Appian, fit for the secret invasion of the soul, to keep him from the pain, or perhaps the reproach of being too precise: and most other sins are of the like making, we fly to them as to our refuge to save us from Christ, as the horns of our altar to keep us from that goal which we dread, as the revenger of blood, our only enemy and persecutor in the world. It is not any prime quality, any special excellence we find in our carnal entertainments,—those not only vanities but vexations, not only unsatisfying, but wounding acquisitions, those gainless torments, those painted flies with barbed hooks under them,—that makes us so passionately dote upon them,—the Jews were not in love with Barabbas,—but only our prejudices to Christ, our vehement dislikes to holiness, our impatience of any thing that may do us good, our league with perdition, our covenant with death, our zeal to hell, and absolute resolvedness to be miserable eternally.

Such malice hath every sinner to his own soul, such hating to be reformed, that the painfulest uneasiest sin, the most prodigal expensful lust, a very Sodom of filth and

i [Juv. xiii. 1.]

burning, not only the sins of Sodom, but the fire and brimstone rained down and mixed with the sins, gotten into their composition, shall be abundant pleasure and epicurism to him that hath found no other to stay his appetite. I appeal to your own consciences, whether many of you have not suffered more hardship in Satan's service, than any man hath in God's? whether your very sins have not cost you dearer, than ever any martyr paid to get to heaven? Tell me, hath not your lust had martyrs of you, many passed through the fire to Moloch? hath not your ambition had martyrs of you, many a base submission, a toilsome pluck, a climbing or crawling up that hill of honour? Believe it, the poet jeered you in that not truth but irony, that sarcasm and bitter taunt against you, *facilis descensus Averni*^j, the descent to hell is an easy passage; if he spake what he thought, I am confident you can give him the lie, produce yourselves so many visible demonstrations of the contrary truth, that you can shew him by your scars as it were by the half moon in your breasts, what a tyrannical, Turkish task-master, Satan hath been to you. It is an ordinary passage in the story of Julian, that when he received his death's wound, he fell a railing at Christ; but Philostorgius seems to rectify the story, tells us^k, it was his own gods, i. e. devils, that he railed at, that he took his blood in his hand out of his wound, and cast it against the sun, his deified idol, with a *κορέσθητι*, "be thou satisfied;" yea, and called the rest of his many gods, saith he, *κακούς τε καὶ ὀλιτήρας*,—so the manuscript hath it,—evil and execrable persons, *τοὺς αὐτοῦ θεοὺς κακολογῶν*, cursing and declaiming at his own gods, and not at Christ: the application is plain, the devil he is the bloody master, his is the coarse service, and sad wages, not Christ's; none is so fit to be cursed by his own clients as that prince of darkness, *ἄρχων αἰῶνος τούτου*, the monarch ruler of this age of ours. I have reason to believe there are no fitter judges to appeal to in this particular than my present auditory. It was a

^j [Virgil. *Æn.* vi. v. 126.]

^k [ἄλλ' ὃ γε δειλάιος Ἰουλιανὸς τοῦ τραύματος ταῖς χερσὶν ὑποδεχόμενος τὸ αἷμα πρὸς τὸν ἥλιον ἀπέρριψε διαρρήδη πρὸς αὐτὸν λέγων κορέσθητι· καὶ δὴ καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους θεοὺς κακοῦς τε καὶ ὀλιτήρας ἐκάλεε — καὶ οὗτος μὲν εἰς τὸν

ἥλιον ἀπορραίνει τὸ αἷμα καὶ τοὺς αὐτοῦ θεοὺς κακολογεῖν, οἱ δὲ πλείστοι τῶν ἱστορούντων, εἰς τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν τὸν ἀληθινὸν Θεὸν ἐκάτερον γράφουσιν ἐναπορρίψαι. — Philostorg. Hist. Eccles., lib. vii. cap. 15. Eccl. Hist., tom. iii. p. 520.]

S E R M.
VII.

French friar's conceit, that courtiers were of all men the likeliest to bear him company to his convent, not only fittest, but likeliest to forsake the world, and turn penitentiaries. He judged it, because such an one of all others had most reason to be displeas'd with the pleasures of the world, he hath seen to the bottom of sensual delights, found the emptiness and torments of those things, which the distance and ignorance that other men are kept at, makes them behold with reverence and appetite; the courtier hath made the experiment, and sees how strangely the world is mistaken in its admired delights, and with Solomon, after a glut of vexatious nothings, is now fit to turn Ecclesiastes, or Preacher. I wish you would be but at so much leisure, as to think of the friar's meditation, that you would try what mortifying sermons you could make out of your own observations, concerning the vanity of sensual miscalled pleasures. I am confident you would be very eloquent, able to out-preach all the orators you ever heard from the pulpit, to write more pathetic descriptions of the madness of a carnal life, than from any more innocent speculator could be hop'd for. That you may begin that useful, edifying, lasting sermon, I shall close up mine, having at length run through the particulars of my text, shew'd you yourselves in the Jewish glass, if it were possible to put you out of countenance, to shake you out of all tolerable good opinion of yourselves. And now let every man go home with a *tu es homo*, he is the very Jew I have preach'd of all this while.

[2 Sam.
xiii. 7.]

O that he would think fit to hate that Jew, humble him, labour his conversion, bring him down into the dust, if so be there may yet be hope. And that God that can bring from the dust of death again, open this door to us, a forlorn destitute people! so shall we see and praise the power and seasonable bounty of our deliverer, and ascribe unto Him, —as our only tribute,—the honour, the glory, the power, the praise, the might, the majesty, the dominion, which through all ages of the world have been given to Him that sitteth on the throne, to the Holy Spirit and to the Lamb for evermore. Amen.

SERMON VIII.

BEING A LENT SERMON AT OXFORD, A.D. 1645.

ST. PAUL'S SERMON TO FELIX.

ACTS xxiv. 25.

And as he reasoned of righteousness, and temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled.

THE words are the notes taken from a sermon of St. Paul's ; and the success it met with among the auditors, the trembling of one heathen officer that was at it, is entirely the consideration that commended it to me at this time, in hope it might help to perform that strange work, beget a spiritual palsy or soul-quake in the Christian sinner, that worser kind of heathen, at the repetition. SERM. VIII.

There is matter enough, God knows, of trembling abroad, —though there were never a judgment to come,—to put us all into Belshazzar's paralytic posture,—the countenance changed, the thoughts troubled, the joints or the loins loosed, and the knees smiting against one another,—and we bear it with a strange constancy, continue still in as perfect an unconcerned tranquillity, as if it were but a scene, a romance, a news from Germany all this while ; the Jonas that is gone down to sleep in the sides of the ship, and is the cause of all this tempest, must not be awaked after all these billows, our lethargic habits of sin not disturbed, only a few cowardly mariners may be allowed to pray "every man to his God," and that is the utmost that all these prodigies of vengeance can extort from us. [Dan. v. 6.]

You will therefore give me leave to count it a prize, that I

SER M. have here found a clap of thunder, that could awake some-
 VIII. body, a sermon that set one Felix a trembling; I should be too happy, if the repeating of it might have the same effect on any here present. "And as he reasoned of," &c.

In the words I shall but observe,

1. The matter of St. Paul's sermon, "righteousness, and temperance, and judgment to come."

And 2. The form of it by way of reasoning. As for the trembling, that must be God's work on you, while I treat of these.

The matter I must consider, 1. absolutely; then as it is here clothed in a double relation, 1. to the text on which it was preached, and that you shall see in the verse precedent, to be the faith of Christ; 2. in relation to the prime auditor, Felix, whether as an officer of Caesar's, or as a heathen, or as one peculiarly guilty of these sins to which the discourse is accommodated.

I begin first with the matter, considered absolutely, "righteousness," &c.

Three grand particulars, which though they are common places and vulgar themes, may yet have leave to give you divertisements awhile.

The *δικαιοσύνη*, whether justice, or righteousness in the front,—if you had the fathers' wish, to see and hear St. Paul in the pulpit, a pressing at large what you have here only in brachygraphy,—would look very sternly upon the most unrighteous oppressions of the many; that trade of subtlety and intricacy, that hath gotten the inclosure of all, not only the wealth and greatness of the world, but of the credit also, the reputation of wisdom, yea and of virtue too, the only honourable handsome quality, that all our respects and estimations are paid to; that new body of morality, that instead of the old out-dated despised rules of justice and uprightness, hath set up that one beloved law of self-preservation,—that other Antipheron in the Rhetorics that always seeth his own picture before him, and if health or security may be acquired, can say to himself, as Paracelsus to his scrupulous patient, if the cure be wrought, what matter is it whether it be by God, or the devil?—instead of the comfort of a pure immaculate conscience, the pleasure of satisfaction of having out-witted

and overreached our brethren ; the joy and ravishment, the high taste and sensuality, as it were, of an indirect action, being to him far above the advantage and gain of it ; and either of them able to outweigh the mystery of godliness, the (whether conscience, or) reward of blameless souls. S E R M.
VIII.

O ! it is a fatal character of an accursed rebellious people, when in the prophet's style, " he that abstaineth from evil [Is.lix.15.] maketh himself a prey," when all those generous Christian virtues of meekness, and innocence, and charity, and not retaliating to enemies, shall become both undoing and scandalous qualities, a lawful prize for every harpy to seize on, and *ex abundanti*, over and above, matter of contumely and reproach to any that shall have so learned to be fools of Christ.

And it were a glorious and a royal design, worthy the gallantry of this congregation, and that which would bring Christianity into some credit in the heathen world, would give us more hope of proselytes from thence, than the apostle of the Indies,—Xaverius with his double gospel ; one of Christ, the other of St. Peter,—ever brought back his masters ; if sincerity, and uprightness, and dove-like innocence,—those good-natured rarities that our Saviour could Mark x. 21. not behold without loving the owner of them, although he were no Christian,—might be brought in fashion in a court, or kingdom ; if oppression and the grosser acts of piracy might be driven out like wolves, and bears, and beasts of prey ; and disguises, and crafts, and cheats, and all kind of artifices and stratagems, have as many names of vermin allotted to them, and all in one herd pursued, and hounded out of the world ; if the examples of a Jacob, a David, a Nathaniel, a Christ, might be permitted to rescue the guileless heart and lips, at least, from reproach, and scorn, if not from the vulture's talons, if it might be esteemed but as infamous and vile to act, as it is to suffer injuries, as ungentlemanly a thing to thrive by fraud, as to perish by good conscience. And till this be set afoot among us,—this that an heathen Socrates would, if he were alive again, venture another martyrdom to replant among his Athenians,—may this first point of St. Paul's sermon be for ever ringing in your ears, *περὶ δικαιοσύνης*, " of righteousness," and a thundering

SE R. M. "judgment to come," for all those that are not edified by that
VIII. doctrine.

2. For temperance, or, as the word *ἐγκράτεια*, both here and elsewhere^a more properly signifies "contenance," and command of passions and lusts, the *τὸ ἐν κρᾷτει ἔχειν*, "the mastery over a man's self." One cannot, in charity to Christendom, but stay upon it awhile, and recommend it to men's favour, so far at the least, that it may find the ordinary justice, to be preferred,—in their judgments, if not their passions,—before bestiality and villainy, before the *ἄτιμα πάθη*, the infamous affections which nature itself hath reproached and branded, that the preserving our bodies the
[1 Cor. vi. 19.] temples of the Holy Ghost, may be but as creditable a thing as any of those *μεσήμβρινα δαιμόνια*, "noon-day devils," in Gregentius' phrase^b, those impudencies that have put off the veil, that are become so daring and confident, fornication, adultery, uncleanness, i. e. in the New Testament dialect,
[1 Pet. iv. 3.] *ἀθέμιτοι εἰδωλολατρῆλαι*, outlared abominable idolatries; that chastity may be kept in some countenance, not pass either for such a strange or such a ridiculous, such an impossible or such a scandalous rarity.

Beloved, there was once a piece of discipline in the Church of God, of sending the devil into such swine, of delivering up the incontinent to Satan's smart, his real corporeal stripes, and inflictions in the Apostles' age; and after this smart was commuted for shame, casting them out of the Church, out of the society of all civil men, *ἵνα ἐντραπῶσι*, "that they might be ashamed."

It seems it was then a more fashionable creditable thing to be a praying in the Church, than a dallying in the chamber. Contenance was recommended to Christians, not only among the *σεμνὰ* and *ἀγνὰ*, "the venerable and the pure," but the
[2 Thess. iii. 14.] *προσφιλή* and *εὐφημα*, "lovely and commendable." Embraced by men of quality upon the same motives, on which
Phil. iv. [8.] now all the contrary vices are taken up, in adoration to that great idol, civility and reputation; virtue was then the

^a 1 Cor. ix. 25, et Ignat. ad Philip., *ἐπίς ἀγνεύει ἢ ἐγκρατεύεται*, speaking of men and women.] S. Ignat. ascript. Epist. ad Philipp., c. 13. ap. Patr. Apost. ii. 119.]

^b [Gregentii Episc. Tephrensensis Disput. cum Herban. Jud. ap. Gallandii Biblioth. Patr., tom. x. p. 624. See Ps. xc, (xci.) 6. LXX.]

more splendid title, the more courtly name; and it is none of the meanest sins and plagues, provocations and vengeanceS E R M.
VIII. of this kingdom, that the measure of honour and gallantry among us is taken from fools and madmen, and by that means shame so prodigiously transplanted; the chaste man is the only leper to be separated and thrust out from the camp, modesty the only scandalous thing; the three degrees of the new-fashioned excommunication are denounced and executed, like the Athenian ostracism, upon the several gradations of that virtue; the purity of the body, the tongue, the eye, have a kind of Nidui, Cherem and Scamatha,^c proportioned to them, no man is civil enough for ordinary converse, till he hath renounced such pusillanimous innocencies, and brought forth fruits worthy of that repentance, a whole knight-errantry in that sin, confession with the mouth, glorying of their masculine enterprises,—[Rom. x.
10.] enough to fill a romance,—and even martyrdom itself, and many sad encounters, and real hellish sufferings in that service, and all this penance, of the least to expiate the crime of bashfulness, to reconcile the modest puny, to make him fit for society with men.

I remember a conceit of Herodotus^d, when the Greeks besieged Troy, he believes Helena was in Egypt, because otherwise had she been in the city, they would certainly have delivered her up, and saved themselves: so strange did it seem to him and irrational, that men should choose rather to die, than part with a lust. And yet to the shame of us Christians, when God's judgments make such direful approaches to us on this great quarrel, for our vile and reproachful lusts, when a black grim cloud hangs just over our heads, gathered from the vapours, which this one dunglill hath exhaled,—as Rome, they say, and others as well as that, is enabled to oppress countries by the pensions it receives from them,—when the voice is come flashing out of that cloud, and the business driven to a close issue, repent or perish irreversibly,—the kingdom used by God at this time, as Antiochus of old by the Roman ambassadors,

^c [The three kinds of excommunication according to the Rabbins. See Buxtorf, *Lexicon Rabbinicum* ad verb.

שמתא, חרם, נדוי
^d [Herod. *Euterp.* 120.]

S E R M.
VIII.

put into a circle, as it were, and not suffered to come out till we shall give our answer,—we desert and renounce estates and lives, honours, and souls and all, rather than retrench or abate aught of this accursed superfluity.

And to this unsavoury humour and custom of the world, one use may be brought home from St. Paul's sermon, though taken in cypher, *περὶ ἐγκρατείας*, "of continence," I beseech you save me the pains, resume and enlarge it to yourselves.

3. For judgment to come, 1. that there is such a thing, 2. that it descends to such mean particulars as justice, and continence, I cannot but in passing be your remembrancer.

1. That there is such a thing.

1 Tim. vi.
[9.]

Injustice and incontinence are two main supplanters of all belief of the judgment to come; when a man hath once set up that infamous trade of the *βουλόμενοι πλουτεῖν*, of "resolving to be rich," in spite of all those objections, and stops, and incumbrances of honesty and direct dealing, when he is come to a contemning that pedantry of justice, of observation of oaths, that shall interpose so uncivilly to resist his thrift and advancement in the world, believe it, the *mine vatum*, the news of the judgment to come, in the preacher's mouth, will be under a heavy suspicion of fraud and cheat, and in fine pass, but for fictions and mormos, too weak to outlook a brave glittering temptation. The taxes on the ecclesiastics in Florence, which nobody else dare collect for fear of the pope's thunderbolts, the Jews will exact undauntedly. Now the covetous worldling is that Jew, whose soul being gone down into the bowels of the earth, *πρὸς τὴν τοῦ χρυσοῦ μεταλλείαν*, in Diodorus' phrase^e, to an eternal drudgery in the gold mineral, is out of the reach of sounds from heaven, out of the awe, or noise, of thunderbolts. The mammonist is in your danger, at your mercy to turn atheist, whensoever you bid him, whensoever the lure of gold shall be at leisure to tempt him, ready to renounce all hope, all fear of another world, whensoever your goods are so put within his reach, that an easy perjury will bring them into his inventory.

And for the lusts of the flesh, it was Aristotle's^f observa-

^e [Diodor. Sicul. Bibl. Hist., lib. iii. c. 12.] ^f [Aristot. Eth. Nic., lib. vi. c. 5.]

tion, that they are φθαρτικαὶ τῶν ἀρχῶν, they debauch and corrupt our principles, they send up more heathen fumes into the brain, than any other distemper can do. St. Cyril^s tells us of some idolaters, that would have only a day God, because the night was a time for revelling, and to have a God then would destroy their game, and therefore they pitched upon the sun; ἵνα κατὰ τὸν νυκτὸς καιρὸν ἄθειοί μὲν ὦσι, that they might be atheists all night, and then they take it out to purpose, ἀμυνόμενοι τὴν ἡμέραν,—as St. Basil^h saith of the glutton's fasts,—revenging themselves on their day-devotions by their night-revels, never acknowledge a God, when a lust is to be lost by it: and Athenagorasⁱ hath given it for a rule, that the denying of the resurrection, the resolved concluding the world with this life, and believing nothing of another, is the κοινὸν δόγμα, καὶ νόμος εἰς ἀκολάστοις καὶ λάγνοις φίλος, the only-beloved doctrine of the voluptuous. He that hath once transformed himself into that swine, hath his optic nerves so changed in his forehead, that,—as Plut. observes of that creature,—he never sees heaven again, till he be laid on his back. And I fear the race of such heathen swine, is likely within a while to prove the prime staple commodity of the land.

We are fallen into peevish times, wherein all God's methods are quite perverted; the powerfulest means that were ever afforded for the casting such devils out of a kingdom, are debauched into matter of improvement and heightening of the humour, and even dethroning God, if He will not comply with it; the very angels that came to Sodom to visit for villainy, are once more assaulted and violated by our lusts; I mean, those judgments from heaven upon a vicious generation, that would have inspired a colony of Scythians with some piety, by a strange kind of *antiperistasis*, or contrary working, have made men more profane, and godless, than ever they were before; the storm so close over our heads, that in other kingdoms they say sets them a ringing bells, shooting guns, lifting up voices to break and dissolve the cloud that threatens them, hath set us upon the same design

^s [S. Cyril. Hieros. Catech. iv. 6. p. 54, B.]

Op., tom. ii. p. 9, D.]

ⁱ [Athenag. de Mort. Resurr. 19.]

^h [S. Basil. de jejunio Homil. i. § 10.]

apud Galland., tom. ii. p. 53.]

SERM.
VIII.

by oaths and blasphemies, and those accursed *κελεύσματα*, the shouts of our soldiers, have broke the cloud indeed, brought down (not the dove flying over our heads, as historians tells us a shout in an army once did, and an army of united prayers may do so again, but) the eagle to a carcase, the night raven to the funeral of a consumptive Church and monarchy; an hell from heaven upon an abominable people.

'*Αναίσθητος ὅστις πολλά παθὼν οὐ σωφρονίζεται*, could the tyrant Phalaris say, "He that is not made sober by many sufferings, is absolutely insensate." And yet God knows, out of this rock the greatest part of this age seems to be hewed: the thunder about our ears that could teach the most barbarous nations to believe and tremble, the breaking in of the lions that disciplined the Assyrians in Samaria to seek out instruction in the "manner of the God of the land," God's using us as the physician in the epigram did the lethargic patient, putting a lunatic into the same room with him, to dry-beat us, if possible, into sense and life again; His proceeding to that great cure of the *λύειν ἔξιιν*, dissolving the habit of the body politic, and to that end, letting blood to a *deliquium*, which Hippocrates^k resolves so necessary to abate the *ἡ ἐπ' ἄκρον ἐνέξια*, the high, full, athletic health, that is so dangerous in his Aphorisms; the driving out into the field with Nebuchadnezzar, which infused reason into that *λυκάνθρωπος*, which untransformed him again, and raised up his eyes to an acknowledgment of Him that "liveth for ever," have, God knows, wrought the quite contrary on us, wasted the seeds of natural piety within us, erected academies of atheism, endowed them with schools and professors, where the art of it may be learned at a reasonable rate; a young sinner of an ordinary capacity may within a few months' observation set up atheist for himself, profane, scoff at the clergy, be very keen and witty upon Scripture, have exceptions against the service of the Church, and all with as good grace as if he had served an apprenticeship in Italy; or at the feet of that great master, that martyr of atheism, Vanninus.

He that at the breaking in of this torrent of misery upon

^k [Hippocrat. Aphorism. i. 3 et 23.]

2 Kings
xvii. [25,
26, 27.]

Dan. iv.
[34.]

the land, had but walked in the counsel of the ungodly, was but upon probation and deliberation whether he should be wicked or no; that after some months, when the waters began to turn into blood, was yet advanced to a moderate proficiency, a standing in the way of sinners, and found it but an uneasy wearisome posture, a standing upon thorns or flints; is now fairly sat down in the chair of the scorner, or profane atheist, *in cathedra*, as a place of ease or repose, can blaspheme without any regrets of a petulant conscience; *in cathedra*, as a seat of state, profanes with a better grace than he can do any thing else, is become a considerable person upon that one account, is valued among lookers on by that only excellency; and *in cathedra* again, as a professor's chair, a doctor of that black faculty, ready to entertain clients, to gather disciples, to set up an independent church of rational blasphemers, and,—being: himself a complete convert, sufficiently approved to Satan,—to confirm and strengthen those puny brethren, that are not arrived to the accursed measure of that fulness, fit them with Machiavel's capacity for vast undertakings, by that excellent quality of being wicked enough, the want of which, saith he, hath been the undoing of the world. “And shall not God visit for this, shall He not be avenged on such a nation as this? A wonderful and horrible thing is wrought in the land,” the judgments that were sent to awake, have numbed and petrified us, the fire in the bowels of this earth of ours hath turned us into perfect quarry and mine, and, as Diodorus¹ tells us, in Arabia the ice and crystal is congealed *ὑπὸ θείου πυρός δυνάμεως, οὐκ ἀπὸ ψύχους*, “by the power of divine fire, and not by cold:” so are these icy crystal hearts of ours frozen by that fire from heaven, that shall one day set the whole universe a melting.

But besides these atheists of the first magnitude, other inferior pretenders there are, that cannot shake off all apprehensions of all judgment to come, but yet upon distant tamer

SERM.
VIII.
[Ps. i. 1.]

[Jer. v. 29,
30.]

¹ [Οὐ μόνον δ' ἐν ταύταις ταῖς χώραις ζῶα γεννᾶται ταῖς ιδέαις ἐξηλλαγμένα διὰ τὴν ἀφ' ἡλίου συνεργίαν καὶ δύναμιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ λίθων παντοίων ἐκφύσει διαφοροὶ ταῖς χροαῖς καὶ ταῖς λαμπρότησι διαφανείσ' τοὺς γὰρ κρυστάλλους λίθους

ἔχειν τὴν σύστασιν ἐξ ὕδατος καθαροῦ παγέντος, οὐχ ὑπὸ ψύχους ἀλλ' ὑπὸ θείου πυρός δυνάμεων, δι' ἣν ἀσήπτους μὲν αὐτοὺς διαμένειν, βαφῆναι δὲ πολυμόρφως ἀναθυμιάσει πνεύματος.—Diodor. Sicul. Bibl. Hist., lib. ii. c. 52.]

SERM.
VIII.

principles, can do Satan's business as well; for such trifles as this text takes notice of, the contraries to justice and continence, they have an ἀπολύτρωσις, like Marcus in Irenæus^m; that charmed shield from the mother of the gods, which shall render them ἀόρατοι τῷ κριτῇ, invisible to the judge; the judicature erected by Christ, takes not cognizance of such moral breaches as these, there nothing but infidelity proves capital, or if the breaches of the first table may be brought in collaterally under that head, yet for these venial defaultances against the second, this toy of circumventing our brethren, of defiling the flesh,—as its consequent in St. Jude, [ver. 8.] “speaking evil of dignities,”—Christ came to make expiation for such, not to receive bills of indictment against them, to be their priest, but not their judge. I remember a saying of Picus Mirandula, that a speculative atheist is the greatest monster but one, and that is the practical atheist. And yet this is the darling of the carnal fiduciaries, that can help him to reconcile his grossest sins, his anything with faith; how well, you will have leisure to see, if you please to descend with me from the absolute to the relative view of the matter of St. Paul's sermon, and consider first the relation which it hath to the text on which he preached it, and that you shall see in the former verse, *περὶ τῆς εἰς Χριστὸν πίστεως*, concerning the faith on Christ, and that is my next stage.

[Acts xxiv.
24.]

‘*Ἡ εἰς Χριστὸν πίστις*, “the faith on Christ,” the phrase that some nice observers have laid such weight on, to denote the special act of justifying faith, as it is an affiance on Christ; of a far higher pitch than either the believing Christ, or believing in Christ; and yet it seems, those so despicable moral

^m [Διὸ καὶ ἐλευθέρως πάντα πράσσειν μηδένα ἐν μηδενὶ φόβον ἔχοντας διὰ γὰρ τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν ἀκρατήτους καὶ ἀοράτους γίνεσθαι τῷ κριτῇ. Εἰ δὲ καὶ ἐπιλάβοιτο αὐτῶν, παραστάντες αὐτῷ μετὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως τάδε εἶποιεν· ὦ πάρεδρε θεοῦ, καὶ μυστικῆς πρὸ αἰῶνος Σιγῆς, ἣν τὰ μεγέθη διαπαντὸς βλέποντα τὸ πρόσωπον τοῦ πατρὸς, ὡδήγησόν σοι καὶ προσαγωγεῖ χρώμεθα ἀνασπῶσιν ἕνωτας αὐτῶν μορφᾶς, ἃς ἡ μεγαλότολμος ἐκείνη, φαντασιθεῖσα, διὰ τὸ ἀγαθὸν τοῦ προπάτορος προεβάλετο ἡμᾶς τὰς

εἰκόνας, τὸ τε ἐνθύμιον τῶν ἕνω ὡς ἐνύπνιον ἔχουσα· ἰδοὺ ὁ κριτῆς ἐγγύς, καὶ ὁ κῆρύξ με κελεύει ἀπολογεῖσθαι· σὺ δὲ ὡς ἐπισταμένη τὰ ἀμφοτέρων, τὸν ὑπὲρ ἀμφοτέρων ἡμῶν λόγον, ὡς ἕνα ὄντα, τῷ κριτῇ παράστησον· ἡ δὲ μήτηρ ταχέως ἀκούσασα τούτων τὴν Ὀμηρικὴν· Ἄϊδος κυνέην αὐτοῖς περιέθηκε, πρὸς τὸ ἀοράτως ἐκφυγεῖν τὸν κριτὴν· καὶ παραχρῆμα ἀνασπᾶσασα αὐτοῖς, εἰς τὸν νυμφῶνα εἰσήγαγε, καὶ ἀπέδωκε τοῖς ἑαυτῶν νυμφίοις.—S. Iren. adv. Hæc., lib. i. c. 9.]

• [Hom. II. E. v. 844.]

virtues,—those that so few think necessary, and some have affirmed destructive and pernicious to salvation,—are here brought in by St. Paul,—I hope not impertinently,—under this head, “justice, and continence, and judgment to come,” parts of a sermon of the faith on Christ.

So 1 Cor., where St. Paul had fastened his determination, ch. ii. [2.], “to know nothing among them but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified;” in the very next chapter [iii. 3.] he charges them with sins of carnality, “strife, envyings, factions;” in the fifth [ver. 1.] with fornication or incest; in the sixth [ver. 1.] with “going to law before infidels:” all these, it seems, the prime contraricties to the faith or knowledge of the crucified Saviour. Thus in St. James, you may mark that works of charity and mercy are called *θρησκεία*, “religion,” and being authorized from such great Apostles, I shall not fear to tell you, that the prime part of the knowledge, and faith, and religion of Christ, the life and power of Christianity, is the setting up and reigning of these virtues in our hearts: you may see it, Tit. ii. 11, “The grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared,” *χάρις σωτήριος πᾶσι*, the Catholic salvific grace, be it Christ Himself, or the Gospel of Christ; and the end of this Epiphany follows, *παιδεύουσα*, to discipline, or to teach us, [ver. 12.] “that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously,” the very virtues in this text, with the addition of one transcendent one, “and godly, in this present world:” a strange catalogue of fundamentals, one would think, for Christ to ascend the cross to preach unto us; we expect other manner of doctrines from Him, doctrines of liberty, jubilee and manumission,—as the merit and acquisition of His sufferings,—of security and protection from sin, that a little carnality shall not hurt us, of freeing us from this bondage to obediences, at least, from any judgment to come, for such errors as these, that flesh and blood makes so necessary and incorrigible: we have generally a smoother scheme of Christianity than Salvianⁿ dreamed of,

ⁿ [Sed videamus tamen quid sit Deum fideliter credi. Qui enim tam magnam credulitatis et fidei mercedem in hoc sæculo esse volumus, qualis credulitas aut fides ipsa esse debeat,

considerare debemus. Quid est igitur credulitas aut fides? opinor hominem fideliter Christo credere, id est, fideliter Dei mandata servare.—Salvian. de Gubern. Dei, lib. iii. c. 2. apud Gal-

SERM.
VIII.

in his *quid est fides, nisi præceptis Christi obedire?* "what is faith, but obedience to the commands of Christ?" The necessity of purifying, or mortifying of lusts, goes for an heresy of this nicer age, which must superadd works to faith, our own obedience to the righteousness of Christ, and so in Simon Magus his phrase, *homines in servitutem redigere*, make slaves of free-born men, have them live as well, as if Christ had never died for them.

The truth is, the doctrine we have now in hand, if believed and obeyed, is so certainly destructive of the devil's kingdom,—and none other so certain but this,—that you cannot blame Satan and his instruments to cry it down as the vilest heresy in the world.

He may hope for some tolerable quarter from any other principles, especially from those of the Solifidian and fiduciary, brave, delicate, inoffensive doctrines, that have nothing in them contrary to passions, and that gets them such zealous advocates, for by this divinity they have their lusts. And though it pleases God, by the power of His grace to preserve some men, that have imbibed these principles, from those *ἀσφαλτώδη ρεύματα*, in Epiphanius' phrase, those streams of brimstone, that naturally flow from such mines as these, I mean from the pernicious and poisonous effects of them, though some that conceive obedience unnecessary to justification, live very strict and gracious lives in spite of all those advantages and encouragements to the contrary, yet now, God knows, the truth is too grossly discovered; the Gnostics' divinity begins to revive a great deal of carnal, I am sure of spiritual filthiness, yea all the profaneness and villainy in the world, is now the most natural spawn of those infusions; and to look no further than the glass, and those foul selves which that reflects unto us, "The cause of God, and the faith of Christ," of which we are seriously such champions, is, I fear, as much dishonoured and renounced by our faithless, apostate, atheistical actions, by our hellish

land., tom. x. p. 14.

Nam cum ut diximus, hoc sit hominis Christiani fides, fideliter Christum credere, et hoc sit Christum fideliter credere, Christi mandata servare, fit absque dubio ut nec fidem habeat qui infidelis est, nec Christum credat, qui

Christi mandata conculcat, ac per hoc totum in id revolvitur, ut qui Christiani nominis opus non agit, Christianus non esse videatur.—Salvian. de Gubern. Dei, lib. iv. c. 1. apud Galand., tom. x. p. 18.]

oaths and imprecations,—that poltroon sin, that second part of Egyptian plague of frogs, and lice, and locusts, the basest that ever had the honour to blast a royal army, that casts us into such epileptic fits, such impure foamings at the mouth, and will not be bound, no not with chains,—in a word, by our going on in such sins, against which the denunciation is most punctual, that “they which do these things shall never enter into the kingdom of heaven,” and yet flattering ourselves, that we shall not fail to enter, as by all the species of infidelity, all the Judaism and Mahometism, and barbarism in the world. And therefore as it is the mercy of the Apostle thus to disabuse his besotted Corinthians, “know ye not,” and “be not deceived, neither fornicators,” nor any of that bestial crew, “shall inherit the kingdom of heaven,” *in these*, so is it the justice of his charity to make it a prime ingredient in an apostolic sermon; scarce any other article so necessary to be preached, especially to a Felix, whether as a commander, or as a heathen, or as one peculiarly guilty of those sins: and that is the second part of the relative aspect of these words, as they refer to the auditory, my next particular.

S E R M.
VIII.[Gal. v.
21.][1 Cor. vi.
9, 10.]

And 1. as Felix was an *equus Romanus*, procurator of Judæa, whose power gave him opportunities to be unjust, and his splendid life temptations to incontinence, no part of Christian religion, no article of the Creed is so proper for his turn, as the doctrine of “the judgment to come,” for such sins as these; that palliate vulgar cure of healing and not searching of wounds, of preaching assurance of present pardon, before reformation is wrought, of solacing but not amending of sinners, is not the method in St. Paul's, in Christ's dispensatory; it is the scandal rather and reproach of Christianity in Julian^o, *ὅστις φθορεὺς, ὅστις μαιφόνος εἰσὶ τῶ θαρρῶν*, security, and protection, and place of confidence from Christ to the most polluted villain, the defamation of Constantine in Zosimus^p, that he turned Christian, because

^o [Juliani Cæsares ad fin. Op. p. 336, A. Lips. 1696.]

^p [ταῦτα συνεπιστάμενος ἑαυτῷ, καὶ προσέτι γε ὄρκων καταφρονήσεις, προσήμι τοῖς ἱερεῦσι καθάρσια τῶν ἡμαρτημένων αἰτῶν εἰπόντων δὲ, ὡς οὐ παρα-

δέδοται καθαρμοῦ τρόπος δυσσεβήματα τηλικαῦτα καθῆραι δυνάμενος, Αἰγυπτίως τις ἐξ Ἰβηρίας εἰς τὴν Ῥώμην ἐλθὼν, καὶ ταῖς εἰς τὰ βασίλεια γυναιξὶ συνήθους γενόμενος, ἐντυχὼν τῷ Κωνσταντίνῳ πάσης ἁμαρτάδος ἀνααιρετικὴν εἶναι τὴν

SERM.
VIII.[2 Cor. v.
11; Heb.
xii. 29.][2 Kings
iv. 29;
Luke x. 4.][Mark ix.
43—48.][Heb. x.
31.]
[Mat. xxi.
44; Luke
xx. 18.]
[Is. xxxiii.
14.]

he was guilty of such sins, for which no other religion allowed expiation; no, the only safe medicinal course is, to apply corrosives and caustics, the "terrors of the Lord," and "the consuming fire of the Lord, the judgment to come," when any mortified flesh is to be gotten out; and to accept the face of a Felix in this kind, to withhold those saving medicines in civility to the person to whom they are to be administered, and so suffer that sin upon my splendid neighbour, that my charity requires me to rebuke in any meaner person, this is the unjustest rudeness in the world, the most treacherous senseless compliance, the most barbarous civility, cruel mercy, the telling him in effect that he is too great to be cured; this, saith Procopius^a, is the saluting by the way, which Elisha forbids Gehazi, and Christ the disciples, the one when he went to cure, the other to preach: and it is his observation there, that such civilities *θανματουργίαν κωλύουσι*, keep preachers from working any miracles, the gentle handling of the great man's sins, is many times the damning of him, and debauching all the neighbourhood; the Lord be merciful to our whole tribe, for our uncharitable omissions in this matter.

And for once I may chance to deserve your pardon, if I do not conceive the flatteringest addresses to you, to be always the friendliest: if in mere charity to some auditors I imitate my Saviour, and tell you of woes even under a Saviour, of "casting into utter darkness, where the worm never dieth, and the fire is not quenched," with all the variations and exchange of accents, three times repeated by our Saviour, within four verses; of an *horrendum est*, what a fearful thing it is to fall into God's hands, and be ground to powder by that fall; if I bring out all those topics of so true, and withal such amazing rhetoric, with "who can dwell with everlasting burnings?" and all little enough to rouse you out of that dead prodigious sleep of sin, to retrench the fury of one riotous lust.

τῶν Χριστιανῶν διεβαιώσατο δόξαν καὶ τοῦτο ἔχειν ἐπάγγελμα, τὸ τοὺς ἀσεβεῖς μεταλαμβάνοντας αὐτῆς, πάσης ἁμαρτίας ἔξω παραχρῆμα καθίστασθαι. δεξαμένου δὲ ῥάστα Κωνσταντίνου τὸν λόγον, καὶ ἀφεμένου μὲν τῶν πατρίων, μετασχόντος δὲ ὡν ὁ Αἰγύπτιος αὐτῷ μετεδί-

δου, τῆς ἀσεβείας τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐποίησατο, τὴν μαντικὴν ἔχειν ἐν ὑποψίᾳ.—Zosim. Hist., lib. ii. c. 29.]

^a [ἴδει αὐτοῦ τὸ φιλότιμον. ἡ δὲ κενοδοξία τὴν θανματουργίαν κωλύει.—Procop. Schol. in Reg., lib. iv. 4. 29.]

I beseech you tell me, is there ever a judgment to come, S E R M.
VIII.
 ever an account to be given for moral virtues? Do you so much as fear, that for every unclean embrace, or dalliance, every shameless loud riot, for every boisterous rage or execration, that I may not add, for every contumelious rude address to the throne of grace, every base contempt of that majesty that fills this place, God shall one day call you into judgment? if you do, and yet go on in these, believe me, you are the valiantest, daringest persons in the world: and if death be not more formidable to you than hell, you are fit for a reserve, or forlorn hope, for the cannon's mouth, for cuirassiers, for fiends to duel with: and let me for once set up an infamous trade, read you a lecture of cowardice, and assure you that a judgment to come may be allowed to set you a trembling; that it may be reconcilable with gallantry to "fear Him that can cast both body and soul into hell," [Mat. x.
28; Luke
xii. 5.] and put you in mind of that which perhaps you have not considered, that you are not atheists enough to stand out those terrors when they begin to come close up to you, in a death-bed clap of thunder: Cain that was the first of this order, was not able to bear that near approach, "he went [Gen. iv.
16.] out from the presence of the Lord;" and the Rabbins^r have a fancy of Absalom, that when he was hanged by his hair in the midst of his rebellion, he durst not cut it, because he saw hell below him, but chose to die, rather than adventure to fall into that place of horror, that his attached conscience had prepared for him; they are, believe it, such unreformed atheistical lights as these, that have made it so indifferent a choice, whether the kingdom be destroyed, or no; whether it be peopled with satyrs, or with wilder men, become all desert, or all bedlam.

This heaviest judgment that ever fell upon a nation, extreme misery, and extreme fury is, I confess, a most direful sight, but withal a more inauspicious prognostic, a sound of a trumpet to that last more fatal day, with an Arise thou dementate sinner and come to judgment; when all our most bloody sufferings, and more bloody sins, got together into one Akeldama or Tophet, shall prove but an adumbration of that heavier future doom, after which we shall do that

^r [Vid. Jarchi Comment. in 2 Sam. xviii. 9. apud Buxtorf. Bib. Heb.]

SERM. VIII. to some purpose, which we do now but like beginners, by way of essay, "curse God and die," suffer and blaspheme, blaspheme and suffer for ever.
[Job ii. 9.]

But then secondly, this doctrine of justice, and continence, and judgment to come, is most necessary, as to awake the courtly governor Felix, so in the next place to convert the unbelieving heathen Felix.

Will you see the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, when they are to be infused into such an one, or as the original hath it, *λόγον ἀρχῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ*, "the doctrine of the beginning of Christ," the laws of the *μύησις*, or initiation of a heathen convert, the elements of his catechism they are in that place, 1. "Repentance from dead works;" and 2. "Faith towards God;" 3. "Resurrection;" and 4. "Eternal judgment:—" and believe me, for him that thus comes unto God out of his animal, heathen unregenerate life, *τὰ ἀναγκαῖα σύντομα*, the catalogue of the *necessario credenda* is not over large; "he must believe that God is, and that He is a rewarder;" this, and it seems no more but this, is the *minimum quod sic*, the sum of the faith without which it is impossible to please Him: and therefore perhaps it was that Ammianus Marcellinus^a expresses his wonder, that Constantius should call so many councils, whereas before, Christian religion was *res simplicissima*, a plain religion without contentions or intricacies, and Epiphanius^t of the primitive times, that *ἀσέβεια* and *εὐσέβεια*, divided the Church into its true and erroneous members, impiety the only heretic, good life the orthodox professor.

Next the acknowledgment of the one God, and His eternal Son, the crucified Messiah of the world, and the Holy Ghost, those one and three authors of our religion, into which we are baptized,—and those few other branches of that faith,—the judgment to come, and the practice of Christian virtues in the elevated Christian pitch, is the prime, if not only ne-

^a [Christianam religionem absolutam et simplicem anili superstitione confundens; in qua scrutanda perplexius, quam componenda gravius, excitavit discidia plurima, quæ progressa fusius aluit concertatione verborum: ut catervis Antistitum jumentis publicis ultra citroque discurrer-

tibus per synodos quas appellant, dum ritum omnem ad suum trahere conantur arbitrium, rei vehiculariæ succideret nervos.—Ammian. Marcell., lib. xxi. c. 16.]

^t [S. Epiphani. adv. Hær., lib. i. c. 5.]

cessary. And though there be more to be known, fit to exercise his industry, or his curiosity, that hath treasured up these fundamentals in an honest heart, yet sure not to serve his carnal mind, to purge his spleen, to provoke his choler, to break communions, to dilapidate that peace, that charity, that Christ, beyond all other inheritances, bequeathed to His disciples. Let us but join in that unity of spirit in those things which we all know to be articles of faith, and the precise conscientious practice of what we cannot choose but know to be branches of our duty, and I shall never lead you into any confounding depths or mazes, divert you one minute by a walk in the gallery from that more Christian employment and task in the workhouse: and that will be the improvement of the second particular.

Lastly, as the Felix was guilty of those sins which those virtues did reproach to him.

This Felix is to be met with in our books presented to us on a double view of Tacitus and Josephus; Tacitus^u renders him an *equus Romanus* that Claudius had sent procurator of Judæa, to manage it for a time, and saith, he did it *per omnem sævitiam et libidinem*, "in the most cruel arbitrary manner;" and then see the difference of an apostolic preacher, from Tertullus the rhetor, the one at his humble address and acknowledgment of the obligations that the whole nation had received from this "most excellent Felix," [Acts xxiv. 2, 3.] but St. Paul, in a pricking close discourse, "of justice, and (upon neglect of it) judgment to come."

Josephus^x he looks nearer into his actions, and finds him a tyrannical usurper of another man's wife; Drusilla, seduced to his bed from her husband Azys the king of the Emeseni. And then the sermon of the faith on Christ presently lets loose at this adulterous couple, and so you have the seasonableness of the *περὶ ἐγκρατείας* too, of chastity to the unchaste Felix, and of judgment to come on such wasting sins.

This will certainly teach the preacher, the combatant of the Lord, the *νομίμως ἀθλεῖν*, the regular manner of his duelling with sin, not the *ἀέρα δέρειν*, wounding the empty air, lashing those sins or sinners, that are out of reach of his stripes, [2 Tim. ii. 5.] [1 Cor. ix. 26.]

^u [Tac. Hist. v. c. 9.]

^x [Joseph. Ant. Jud., lib. xx. c. 7.]

SERM.
VIII.

but the closer, nearer encounter, the directing his blows at those crimes that are present to him, most culpable and visible in his auditory; and thus grasping with the Goliath of Gath, the tallest Philistine in the company.

There is a wide distance betwixt reproaching of present and absent sinners, the same that betwixt reproof and back-biting, the boldness and courage of a champion, and the detractions and whispers of a villain; the first is an indication of spirit; the second, of gall; the first, that a man dares attempt the loving and saving of his brother, when he shall endanger being cursed and hated for it; sacrifice your opinion to your health, your kindness to your souls; the second is a character of a solicitor fee'd on none but Satan's errand, an orator to set you a railing, but not a trembling, one that can write satires on condition they shall do you no good; incense, but not reform, that if it shall be possible for hell to lose by his sermon, will never preach more; the one meaneth to transform his auditory into converts and saints, the other into broilers and devils; the one hath all the charity, the other all the mean malice and treachery in his design.

And having such a copy before our eyes, suppose a man should divert a little to transcribe it, and instead of prudence, and tempering, and reviling of those that are out of our reach, reason a while of one branch of justice, yea, and of the faith of Christ, in which it is possible we may some of us be concerned; and enquire, whether there be not a piece of Turkish divinity stole out of their Alcoran into our creed; that of *prosperum et felix scelus virtus vocatur*, whether the great laws of virtue and vice be not by some *politici* taken out of the Ephemerides, nothing decreed honest but what we can prognosticate successful, the *victa Catoni*, the liking that cause which the heavens do not smile on, is a piece of philosophical sullenness, which we have not yet learned of Christ; what is this, but as St. Bernard^y complains in his time, that those images had the most hearty adorations performed to them, which had most of the gold and gems about them; the god obliged to the image, and the image to the dress for all the votaries it met with; have the Roman-

^y [Vid. S. Bernard. Apol. ad Gul. Abbat., c. xii.]

ists' marks of the Church so convinced us, that we must presently forsake our Saviour, because we see Him in danger of crucifying, tear our Gospels, and run out with horror as soon as we come to the twenty-sixth of Matthew, "the multitude with swords and staves for to take Him?" Was the cause of God worth the charge and pains of killing men formerly, and is it not worth the patience and constancy of suffering now? Is there any condition in the world so hugely desirable, as that of suffering for, or with Christ. Ἴδού, μακαρίζομεν τοὺς ὑπομένοντας, "behold, we count them happy that suffer," was gospel in St. James his days,—the μακαρίζειν denotes the state of the οἱ μάκαρες, the dead saints in their country of vision, as you know St. Stephen at the minute of his sufferings "saw the glory of God, and Jesus sitting,"—the state of suffering is a state of bliss, I may add a superior degree of a glorified state, a more than ἰσαγγελία, a dignity above that orb that the angels move in; for they for want of bodies are deprived of the honour of suffering, all that they aspire to is but to be our seconds, our assistants in this combat; only Christ and we have the enclosure of that vast preferment. And if there be any need to heighten it yet further, is there any prize more worthy that masculine valour, than that venerable sacred name, "Jerusalem the mother of us all," that brought us forth unto Christ, begot us to all our hope of bliss, and now, for no other crime but that, is a struggling under the pangs and agonies of a bitter combat with the ungratefulest children under heaven? The Church of England, I mean, which whosoever hath learning and temper enough to understand, knows to be the brightest image of primitive purity, the most perfect conjuncture of the most ancient and most holy faith that for these twelve hundred years any man ever had the honour of defending, or suffering for. And should the provocations of an ungracious people, the not valuing or not walking worthy of the treasures here reserved, the rude continued iniquities of our holy things, tempt God to deliver it up, as He did once His ark to the Philistines, His Christ to the Pharisees and the soldiers, the zeal of the one, and the fury of the other; yet sure this would not be the confuting of what now I say, it would not, I must hope, be an argument of God's renouncing

SERM.
VIII.[Mat. xxvi.
47.]

Jas. v. 11.

[Acts vii.
55.][Luke xx.
36.][Gal. iv.
26.]

SERM.
VIII.

that ark, and that Christ, which He did not thus deliver. The Turks having conquered and torn out of the Christians' hands the places of the birth and passion of Christ, did after this way of logic infer that God had judged the cause for Mahomet against Christ; and Trajan could ask the primitive martyr Ignatius*, *Et nos non tibi videmur θεοφόροι*, &c., Have not we as much of God in us as you, who prosper by the help of our deities against our enemies? Let me purloin or borrow this heathen piece out of your hands, and I shall be able to give you an ancients piece in exchange for it, a thorough Christian resolution of abiding by God, of approving ourselves to Heaven, and to our own breasts, whatsoever it costs us, of venturing the ermine's fate,—the very hunter's hand, rather than foul her body,—the *patri, et mori posse*, the passive as well as the active courage, which will bear us up through all difficulties, bring us days of refreshment here, or else provide us anthems in the midst of flames, a paradise of comfort here, and of joys hereafter: and let this serve for the exemplifying the point in hand, the fitness of our Apostle's discourse to Felix's state.

[Is. lvi. 7;
Jonah iii.
8.]

I might do it again by telling you of the dreadful majesty that dwells in this house, the designation of it to be a house of prayer to all people, a place of crying mightily to the Lord at such times as these; should I let loose a whole hour on this theme in this place, it would be but too perfect a parallel of St. Paul's discourse of chastity before Felix, which in any reason ought to set many of my auditors a trembling, but it seems we have not yet sufferings enough to do so: and there is one particular behind that will rescue you from this uneasy subject, the manner of St. Paul's handling this theme, by way of reasoning. "And when he reasoned," &c.

The importance of this reasoning I shall but name to you, which I conceive to be, 1. The proposing to a very heathen's consideration the equity and reasonableness that there should be a judgment to come to recompense the unjust and

* [Τραϊανὸς εἶπεν· καὶ τίς ἐστὶν Θεοφόρος; Ἰγνάτιος ἀπεκρίνατο ὁ Χριστὸν ἔχων ἐν στέρνοισι. Τραϊανὸς εἶπεν ἡμεῖς οὐκ οὐκ δοκοῦμεν κατὰ νοῦν μὴ ἔχειν Θεοῦς, οἷς καὶ χρώμεθα συμμάχοις πρὸς τοὺς πολεμίους; Ἰγνάτιος εἶπεν· τὰ δαιμόνια τῶν ἔθνῶν Θεοῦς προσαγορεύεις

πλανώμενος· εἰς γὰρ ἐστὶν Θεὸς, ὁ ποιήσας τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν, καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς· καὶ εἰς Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ ὁ μονογενὴς, οὗ τῆς βασιλείας ὀνάμη. — S. Ignat. Martyr., c. ii.]

incontinent person. And 2. The charging home to each sinner's heart, the extreme unreasonableness, that for so poor advantages as either of those sins bring in to any man, he should think fit to venture that dismal payment in another world. SERM.
VIII.

And now my brethren, to conclude this reasoning, and your task of patience together, when you are likely to have so little excuse in perishing, so no colour of reason for so wild an option, of choosing death in the error of your ways, when you must be so out of countenance when you come to that place of darkness, so unable to give an account to any fiend that meets you, why you should cast away all the treasures in the world for that so sad a purchase, and act that really which the Rabbins^a feign of the child Moses, prefer the coal of fire before the ingot of gold, chop it into your mouths, and so singe your tongue, not to make you stammer with him, but howl with Dives for ever after, and not get one drop to quench the tip of that tongue, which is so sadly tormented in those flames; when, I say, you are likely to come so excuseless to your torments, so unpitied, and so scorned, so without all honour in your sufferings, as having but your petitions granted you, advanced to your vengeance as to your preferment, *optantibus ipsis*, whilst heaven was looked on as a troublesome impertinent suitor, and you would not be happy, only because you would not; O remember then the disciples' farewell, when they gave over the Jews and turned to the Gentiles, "Behold, you despisers, and wonder, and perish;" but before you do so, if it be possible give one vital spring, and if but for Pythagoras's^b *αἰσχύνειο σαυτὸν*, for the reverence, if not the charity, for the honour and awe you owe to your own souls, if not to save them, yet to save your credits in the world, to manifest that you are not such abject fools, retract your choice, call back

* [Quelques Rabbins enseignent que cette difficulté de parler étoit venue à Moïse, de ce qu' à l'âge de trois ans, été présenté au Roi d' Egypte, et les Devins s' écriant que la vie de cet enfant seroit fatale au pays, on convint qu' on éprouveroit son esprit, en lui présentant une pierre précieuse, et un charbon; que s' il choisissoit la pierre précieuse, on le feroit mourir; que s' il

prenoit le charbon, on le laisseroit vivre. On en fit sur le champ l'essai. Le jeune Moïse vouloit porter la main à la pierre; mais un Ange la conduisit au charbon, et le lui fit mettre à sa bouche; ensuite que sa langue en fut brûlée, et qu' il demeura bégue toute sa vie.—Fable.—Calmet. in Exod. iv. 10.]

^b [Pythag. Carm. Aur. v. 12.]

S E R M. the hostages you have given to Satan, and set out on a more
VIII. rational, more justifiable voyage. You have heard of the rich Spaniard that had put all his estate into jewels, how he was ready to run mad with the fancy of thinking what a condition he should be in, if all men next morning should awake wise, that he should become not only the arrantest beggar, but the most ridiculous fool. And believe it, that last trump when it begins to sound, will have the faculty thus to make all men wise, to disabuse, and inspire the whole world with a new sense: those that are in the flames before you, will reproach your madness, count you but bedlams to come thither; poor Dives, if he had but a messenger, would long since have sent you a hideous report and admonition, that whatever it cost you, you should not venture coming to that place of torments; O let St. Paul's reasoning do it to us here, that we make not such piteous bargains, pay not so sad a price for so pure a nothing. Let us be wise now, that we may be happy eternally; which wisdom, the only way to that happiness, God of His infinite mercy grant us all: to whom, &c.

SERMON IX.

BEING AN EASTER SERMON AT ST. MARY'S IN OXFORD, A.D. 1644.

THE BLESSING INFLUENCE OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

ACTS iii. 26.

God having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

IT were but a cold, unequal oblation to so blessed, so glorious a festivity, to entertain you with the story of the day, to fetch out the napkin and the grave-clothes, to give you that now for news, that every seventh day for sixteen hundred years hath so constantly preached unto you. It is true indeed what Aristotle^a observes in his *μηχανικά*, that the every-day wonders are the greatest, the perfectest miracles those that by their commonness have lost all their veneration; he speaks it of a circle which is of all things most common, and yet of all things most strange, made up of all contraries, and so the mother of all prodigies in art, of all the engines and machines in the world. And the same might be resolved of this yearly, this weekly revolution, the greatest, but commonest festival in the Christian's calendar, *βασιλισσα ἡμέρα*, "the queen-day," as St. Chrysostom calls it^b, aye, and that "queen all glorious within," a many saving miracles inclosed in it, and yet this queen of most familiar condescendings is content to be our every week's prospect, and after all this as glorious still as ever, no gluts, no satieties in such beholdings.

SERM.
IX.

^a [Aristot. Mechan. Prolog. § 5, ad init.]
^b [See S. Greg. Naz. Orat. xviii. c. 28, ἡ βασιλισσα τῶν ἡμερῶν ἡμέρα. Op.,

tom. i. p. 348, E. The expression does not appear to be used by St. Chry:ostom.]

SERM.
IX.

But supposing this, I must yet tell you one precious gem there is in this jewel, one part of the great business of this day, which is not so commonly taken notice of, and that is the blessing, saving office of the day to us, the benign aspect, the special influence of the rising of Christ on the poor sinner's soul, the use, the benefit of the resurrection; and to discover this unto you, let me with confidence assure you, there is not a vein in this whole mine, a beam in this whole treasure of light, a plume of those "healing wings" of the "Sun of righteousness," a text in this whole book of God, able to stand you in more stead, than this close of St. Peter's sermon: that our justification is more dependent on His resurrection, than His death itself, is sometimes clearly affirmed by St. Paul, [Mal. iv. 2.] Rom. iv. 25. "He was delivered up for our offences, and raised again for our justification." Rom. viii. [33,] 34. "It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again." Heb. v. 9. "And being made perfect, He became the Author of eternal salvation," *τελειωθεις*, being consummate and crowned,—as *τελειωσις ἀθλητοῦ* is the crowning of martyrs,—or *τελειωθεις*, being consecrated to His great Melchisedech-priestly office,—as the context enforceth, and *τελειοῦσθαι* in the Septuagint imports,—in either sense a denotation of the resurrection of Christ peculiarly; and in this capacity considered, He became the *αἴτιος σωτηρίας*, "the Author of our salvation:" but for all this compacted together, and the distinct explication of the manner how all this is wrought by Christ's resurrection, this is a felicity reserved, the peculiar prerogative of this text, brought out now and prepared for you, if you can but have patience till you see it opened. "God having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless," &c.

In these words one fundamental difficulty there is, the clearing of which will be the first part of my task, and ground-work of my future discourse; and that is to enquire what is meant by sending Christ to bless, which when we have opened, there will remain but two particulars behind, the time of this sending, and the interpretation of this blessing; the time of this sending after His resurrection, God having raised up, sent Him. The interpretation of this blessing, or wherein it consists, "In turning every one," &c.

I begin with the first of these, to clear the fundamental difficulty, or explain what is meant by sending to bless. S E R M.
IX.

All sorts of arts and sciences have their *τεχνολογήματα*, their peculiar phrases and words of art, which cannot be interpreted fully but by the critical observing their importance among those artists. Casaubon^c, I remember, observes it among the Deipnosophists, that they had their *ἐπικυλίκια τεχνολογήματα*, that none but Athenæus can interpret to us: and certainly the book of God and Christ that “spake as never man spake,” must not be denied this privilege; among the many that might be referred to this head, two here we are fallen on together, the matter of our present enquiry, sending and blessing. The word *ἔπεμψ*, to “send,” and the Greek parallel to it, if we look it in common dictionaries, and in many places of the Scripture itself, is a word of most vulgar obvious notion, but if you will ask the Scripture-critic, you shall find in it sometimes a rich, weighty, precious importance; to design, or destine, to instal, or consecrate, to give commission for some great office, “How shall they preach unless they be sent?” and a hundred the like. Thus we hear of the sending of kings, judges, prophets; but especially of our spiritual rulers under the gospel: no other title assigned them, but that of *ἄποστολοι* or *ἀπόστολοι*, the *missi*, the sent, or the messengers of Christ,—the more shame for those that contemn this mission, lay violent hands on that sacred function, the meanest and lowest of the people,—to make one parallel more betwixt Jeroboam’s kingdom, and ours, those *παραχάργματα*, in Ignatius’ phrase^d, “brass coins” of their own impressing, so contrary to the royal prerogative of heaven, *ιδίαις ἐπιλύσεως*, in St. Peter’s agonistical style, that run without any watch-word of God’s to start them; yea, and run like Ahimaaz, outrun all others that were truly sent. The defect in our tongue for the expressing of this, is a little repaired by the use of the word “commission,” which if you will here exchange for the word “sent,” and so read it thus, “God having raised up His Son Jesus, gave Him commission to bless us,” you will somewhat discern and remember the importance of this first phrase.

^c [Is. Casauboni animadv. in Athenæi Deipnosophistas, see c. ii. p. 7.]

^d [S. Ignat. Epist. interpol. ad Magn. c. 5. Patr. Apost. ii. 55.]

S E R M.
IX.

And so again בָּרַךְ, to "bless," and the *εὐλογεῖν* in the text, so fully answerable to it, though it be a vulgar style in all authors, yet a propriety it hath in this place, and in some others of Scripture, noting the office of a priest, to whom it peculiarly belongs to pronounce and pray for blessings, i. e. in this eminent sense, to bless others.

For there being two sorts of priests in the Pentateuch, or if you will, two acts of the same divine function, the one of blessing, the other of sacrificing, the one observable in the fathers of every family, in Genesis,—who therefore use solemnly to bless their children,—and after the enlarging of families into kingdoms, belonging to kings, and eminently and signally notified in Melchisedech; the other more conspicuous in Aaron, and his successors in the Jewish priesthood: both these are most eminently remarkable in our Christ, the one in His death, the other ever since His resurrection. The sacrificing part most clearly a shadow of that one great oblation on the altar of the cross for us, and in spite of Socinus, such a priest once was Christ, though but once, in spite of the Papists. Once, when He offered that one precious oblation of Himself, the same person both priest and sacrifice; and but once, no longer priest thus, than He was thus a sacrificing; this is His *παραβατός ἱερωσύνη*, or *μὴ παραμένουσα*, a priesthood not suffered to continue, the same minute determined His mortal life and mortal priesthood, buried the Aaronical rites and the Priest together. But for the Melchisedech priesthood, that of blessing in my text, that of intercession, powerful intercession, i. e. giving of grace sufficient to turn us; this is the office that now still belongs unto Christ, the peculiar grand office, to which that notion of *Χριστός* (to which Christ's durable unction) belongs, by which He was *τετελειωμένος εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα*, "consecrate for evermore," parallel to that so frequent style of his, "a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedech;" not that Melchisedech was a priest for ever, and Christ like him in that, but that Christ was to continue for ever such a priest as Melchisedech, in Genesis, was; or that His Aaronical priesthood had an end, one sacrifice, and no more; but His other Melchisedech priesthood was to last for ever; which you will more discern if you proceed to the

Heb. vii.
ult. [Ps.
cx. 5; Heb.
v. 6, 10; vi.
20; vii.
3, 11, 17,
21.]

second particular, the date of this sending, the time of His instalment into His priesthood, after His resurrection: "God having raised up, sent,"

SERM.
IX.

That the resurrection raised Christ to His eternal priestly office,—or to that part of it which was to endure for ever,—is a truth that nothing but inadvertence hath made men question; there is nothing more frequently insinuated in the Scripture; were not my text demonstrative enough, first "raised up," and then thus "sent" or installed, the fifth and seventh to the Hebrews would more than prove it: so in that fundamental grand prophecy, to which all that is said there refers, that in the one hundred and tenth Psalm, the priesthood of Christ is ushered in with a "Sit thou at My right hand," verse 1, ruling in the midst of enemies, verse 2, the day of His power, verse 3; all these certain evidences of His resurrection, and then, and not till then, verse 4, "the Lord hath sworn, &c. Thou art a priest for ever:" a mortal dying determinable priest He was before in His death, but now after His resurrection from that death, "a priest for ever." Once more, perhaps there may be some emphasis in the *ἀνίσταται*, 'aristh,' "there ariseth another priest," or He ariseth another, an Aaronical priest in His death, but *ἕτερος ἱερεὺς*, a Melchisedech (i. e. another kind of) priest in His resurrection. Add to this that the Melchisedech priest must be like the type, a king as well as a priest,—which Christ as man was not till after His resurrection,—and so that other famous type of our Jesus, "Joshua the son of Josedek the high-priest, he shall be a priest upon the throne, and the counsel of peace,"—that grand consultation of reconciling sinners to God,—"shall be betwixt them both," in the union of that sceptre and that ephod, that mitre and that crown, the *Χριστὸς βασιλεὺς*, and *ἱερεὺς*, the regal and sacerdotal office of Christ; and as one, so the other, both dated alike from after the resurrection; *ὅπερ ἔδει δεῖξαι*, the thing that by this accumulation of Scripture testimonies, it was necessary to demonstrate. For the clearing of which truth, and reconciling or preventing all difficulties about it, please you to take it in these few propositions.

Heb. vii. 15.

Zech. vi.
[11,] 13.

1. That the crucifixion of Christ was a sacrifice truly pro-

S E R M. pitiatory, and satisfactory for the sins of the whole world,—
IX. and there is nothing further from this text or our present ex-
plication of it, than to derogate from the legality, the ampli-
tude, extent, or precious value of this sacrifice.

Yea, and 2. that Christ Himself thus willingly offering, delivering up Himself for us, may in this be said a priest, or to have exercised in His death a grand act of priesthood.

But then, 3, this is an act of Aaronical priesthood which
Heb.vii.27. Christ was never to exercise again, having done it once, and so far distant from His “eternal priesthood.” Or, to speak more clearly, an act of Christ this, as of a “second Adam,” a
[Is. liii. 5.] common person, ordered by the wisdom of God to “bear the chastisement of our peace,” the “scape-goat” to carry all our
[Lev.] xvi. sins on His head into the “wilderness, into a land not in-
22. habited,” the ἄδης, in our Creed, to which He went; and so though it were typified by all the sacrifices of the priests, and though in it that whole body of rites were determined,—no more Aaronical priests seasonable after this “one sacrifice,”—yet still this is no part of the “eternal regal Melchisedech priesthood,” that of powerful intercession, that of blessing us in the text; for though the death of Christ tend mightily toward the blessing of us, though there were a wonderful act of intercession on the cross, “Father, forgive them,” yet that powerful intercession, that for grace to make us capable of mercy, that blessing in this text, the power of conferring what He prays for, this it was to which the resurrection installed Him.

4. If all this will not satisfy, why then one way of clearing this truth further, I shall be able to allow you, that the death of Christ considered as a sacrifice, may under that notion pass not for an act of a priest *in facto esse*, but for a ceremony of His inauguration *in fieri*; thus in the eighth of Leviticus at the consecrating of Aaron and his sons, you shall find sacrifices used, “the ram, the ram of consecration,” verse 22nd, and apportioned to that, this “Lamb of God” that by dying “taketh away the sins of the world,” may pass for a lamb of consecration, the true critical im-
Heb. ii. 10. portance of the τελειῶσαι διὰ παθημάτων, that the Captain of our salvation was to be consecrated by sufferings. This

death of His, that looks so like an act of Aaronical priesthood, S E R M. IX. is the preparative rite of consecrating Him to that great eternal priesthood, "after the order of Melchisedech," and this preparative most absolutely necessary both in respect of Christ and us, of Christ who was to "drink of the brook of the way" before "His head" should be "lifted up," "humbled to death," &c.; "wherefore God hath also highly exalted Him," [Ps. cx. 7.] Phil. ii. for that suffering crowned Him; yea, and in respect of us too, who were to be ransomed by His death, before we could Heb. ii. 9. be blessed by His resurrection, delivered from the captivity of hell, before capable of that grace which must help us to heaven, which seems to me to be the descant of that plain song, "Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made Heb. ii. 17, 18. like unto His brethren," i. e. as the eighteenth verse explains it, to "suffer being tempted," to undergo the infirmities and mortality of our flesh, "that He might be a merciful and faithful high-priest;" &c.; His infirmities and effusion of His blood are not this priesthood of itself, but the qualifying of the second Person in the Trinity to become a high-priest, and that a merciful and faithful one, merciful to pardon slips, and faithful to uphold from falling, and so a priest such as it is most for our interest to have. And so once more the dream is out that Artemidorus^e mentions of one; he dreamed he was crucified, and the consequent was, *ιερεὺς ἀνελήφθη*, "he was taken up to be a priest of Diospolis;" and by the way, let me tell my clergy brethren, if that shall prove the consequent of our priesthood, which was the presage of Christ's, the pains, the contumelies, yea and death of that cross, what is this but a blessed lot that hath brought us so near our Christ, and a means to consecrate us too to our *βασιλείου ιεράτευμα*, "to be kings and priests for ever" in [1Pet.ii.9.] heaven.

I have thus far laboured to clear this doctrine, calculated the time of Christ's instalment to His eternal priesthood, and found it exactly the same with the era here in this text, not till after the resurrection, to which I shall only add one final grand proof of all, which will sum up all that hath

* [*Μένανδρος ἐν Ἑλλάδι ἔδοξεν ἐσταυρωθῆναι ἔμπροσθεν ἱεροῦ Διὸς Πολιέως, καὶ ἱερεὺς ἀποδείχθεις ἐκείνου τοῦ θεοῦ, λαμπρότερος ἐγένετο καὶ εὐπορότερος.* Artemidor. Onirocrit., lib. iv. c. 49.]

S E R M. IX. — been hitherto said, that parting speech of Christ's, "All power is given unto Me both in heaven and earth," that you know was after the resurrection, and so from thence that power was dated, and that commission of blessing that here we speak of,—the act of His eternal priesthood,—is His intercession, that His powerful intercession, that His giving of that grace which He intercedes for, that the blessing in this text; and so the commission of blessing was given Him, not till after the resurrection. And believe it, though it look all this while like a rough sapless speculation, there is yet somewhat in it, that may prove very useful and ordinarable to practice, a hint if not a means of removing one of the harmfulest scandals and impediments of good life that is to be met with. We are Christians all, and by that claim, *τεταγμένοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον*, on rank, and on march toward eternal life; and yet many of us live like so many Mahometans or China infidels, quite out of all form of obedience to the commands of Christ, we do not reverence Him so much as to pretend toward serving Him, not advance so far as but to be hypocrites in that matter, live in all the sensuality and vileness in the world, and yet live confidently, resolve we have done what is required of us by Christ, can justify our state for such as God is pleased with; and if we be called to account, the anchor of all this unreasonable false hope of ours is most constantly this, that Christ our Priest hath propitiated for us, we fly to our city of refuge till our Priest be dead, and then we are quit by proclamation, out of the reach of the avenger of blood. It is the death of Christ we depend on to do all our task for us; His priestly, not regal office, we are resolved to be beholden to, in that we have Christ the Sacrificer, Christ the Reconciler, Christ the Satisfier, and these are Christs enough to keep us safe, without the aid of Christ the King, that judaical unedifying notion of a reigning Messiah, and then, *quis separabit?* what sin, what devils, what legion, what act, what habit, what custom, what indulgence in sin, i. e. what Tophet, what hell "shall be able to separate us from the love," the favour, the heaven "of God?"

He that hath Christ the Priest, hath all; he that believes in the sufferings, hath Christ the Priest, though not the

King; hath the faith, though not the works, i. e. the righteousness, though not the heathenish morality; the protestant, orthodox part, though not the popery; the anti-christianism of a Christian, and so, is but the richer for that want; hath the greater portion in the sufferings of Christ, by the abundance of those sins He suffered for; the more of the priest is ours, by how much the less of the king is discernible in us. Having driven our unchristian lives to this principle, this solemn conceit of ours, that the priestly office of Christ,—to which, if rightly understood, we owe all our salvation,—is nothing but the death of that Christ, methinks it were now possible to convince the secure fiduciary of the error and sophistry of his former way, to rob him of his beloved cheat, now that we have proved so clear, that Christ commenced His eternal priesthood,—that on which all our blessedness depends,—from the *ἀναστήσας*, not till after His resurrection. For “Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth,” [Cant. i. 7.] and mourneth and bleedeth for in secret, thou carnal confident, that hast wearied thyself in the greatness of thy way, thy profane wild-goose chase of sin, and yet hast not said, there is no hope, thou that wilt profane and be saved too, riot and be saved too, reconcile faction, rebellion, sacrilege, oppression, oaths, carnality, all the unchristian practices in the world,—the confutation of the whole gospel,—with salvation: tell me, I say, what Christ it is, thou wilt be tried or saved by; by Christ the King? I am confident thou wert never so impudent to venture thy rebellions to that cognizance: well, it is Christ the Priest thou so dependest on; and why Christ the Priest? Why? because He hath sacrificed Himself for thee. Now let me tell thee, 1. That some have guessed shrewdly, that though Christ died for all the sinners and sins in the world, yet His sufferings being but finite in duration, though infinite in respect of the person of the sufferer, will not prove a *λύτρον ἰσόρροπον*, a proportionable ransom for thy sins; I mean, the impenitent sinner's sins, in duration infinite, being, as they are, undetermined, uncut off by repentance. Thou must return, reform, confess and forsake, or else thou hast outsinned the very sufferings of Christ, outspent that vast ransom, outdamned salvation itself: that may be a conviction *ad hominem* perhaps, and

[Is. lvii.
10.]

SERM. therefore I mentioned it in the first place. But then, 2.
 IX. thou art, it seems, all this while mistaken in thy priest,
 thou art, it seems, all for the Aaronical, and hast not yet
 thought of the Melchisedech priest; thou art all for the
 sacrificer, and never drest of the blesser. Thou layest
 all thy weight on the cross of Christ, and art ready to press
 it down to hell with thee, with leaning only, but not cruci-
 fying one lust on it; never thinkest of being risen with
 Christ, the condition so indispensably necessary to give us
 claim to the benefit of His death, and so in effect thou
 leavest Christ in the grave, and thyself in that mournful
 case of the despairing disciples, *speraveramus*, "we had
 [Luke xxiv. 21.] hoped," but never lookest after a resurrection. It was St.
 [1 Cor. xv. 14—19.] Paul's saying, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ,
 we were of all men most miserable." I suppose it is in
 this life only, not of Christ on this earth, for it is
 brought to prove Christ's resurrection there, and it follows
 ver. 20. immediately, "but now is Christ raised," and if that be the
 sense of the $\zeta\omega\eta$ $\tau\acute{\alpha}\upsilon\tau\eta$ there, the "this life of Christ" con-
 tains also His death under it, for both those together it is,
 that must make up the opposite to the resurrection. And
 then I shall enlarge the Apostle's words, though not sense,
 If in the earthly life and death of Christ we had hope only,
 a sad life, and a contumelious death, if there were no such
 thing as a resurrection to help bless us, "we were of all
 men the most miserable;" hadst thou no other priest, but
 the sacrificer, the mortal finite Aaronical priest, nothing but
 the ransom of Christ's death,—which though it be never so
 high a price, is yet finally unavailable to many for whom
 2 Pet. ii. 1. it was paid, He bought them that are damned for denying
 Heb. x. 29. Him, the wilful sinner "treads under foot the Son of God,
 profanes the blood of the covenant by which he is sanctified,"
 and so there is destruction enough still behind for the impe-
 nitent wretch, after all that Christ hath suffered for thee,—
 what forms of ejulation and lamentation were enough for
 thee, "alas my brother! ah Lord! or ah his glory!" what
 [Jer. xxii. 18.] mourning or wailing were thy portion? Tell me, wilt thou
 be content to leave thy father before he hath blessed thee?
 [Gen. xxxii. 26.] Jacob would not do so with the angel, but would wrestle his
 thigh out of joint, rather than thus part with him, and even

the profane Esau will run and weep bitterly for it ; and then SERM. IX.
 art thou more nice and tender than that smooth Jacob, wretchless than that profane Esau, if thou contentest thyself [Gen. xxvii. 30, 34.]
 only to have brought Christ to the grave, that state of curse, and never lookest out for the blessing provided for thee in the resurrection : mistake me not, I would not drive you from this cross of Christ, discourage you from that most necessary act of faith, the apprehending the crucified Saviour ; no, if my lot had fallen on a Good-Friday, I would have spent my whole hour on that one theme, and "known [1 Cor. ii. 2.]
 nothing among you but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified :"
 only my desire is, that you will not allow one act of faith to turn projector, to get all the custom from the rest, that you will permit Christ to live in you as well as to die for you, to bless as well as to satisfy, to "rise again for your justification," [Rom. iv. 25.]
 as well as "to be delivered up for your offences ;" that you will attend Him at Galilee as well as at Golgotha, think of the triumphant as well as the crucified Saviour, the Melchisedech, as well as the mortal Aaron, priest. And not only to think of His rising, I must tell you, but count of a work, a mighty important necessary work, that of turning, in this text, to be wrought on us, and in us by that resurrection now, after the pardon impetrated by His passion ; I say, not only to think of and believe Him risen, the devil hath as much of that thought, as frequent repeated acts of that belief as you, and there is not such magic in that faith, or fancy, as to bear you to heaven by meditating on His journey thither, to elevate you by gazing on His ascension. No, that faith must be in our hearts too, that principle of action, and practice, they must open to him as the tulip to the rising sun, or as the "everlasting doors" to that "King of glory," give Him an alacrious hospitable reception, as the friend to the friend ; as the discased to the physician ; deliver themselves up most willing patients to all His blessing warming influences, to all His medicinable saving methods, that He may sanctify, and reform, bless and turn, "live and [Eph. iii. 17.]
 reign in our hearts by faith," and prove a Shiloh in the critics' notion of the word, from *שלה* *fortunatus est*, "the [Is. liii. 10.]
 work of the Lord," for which He raised him, thrive and "prosper in His hands." We must rise with Christ as well

SERM. as die with Him, do as "the bodies of the saints that
 IX. slept," arise and come out of our graves of sin, go into
 Matt. the holy city and appear to many. Our *resurgere* must
 xxviii. be attended with an *ire*,—an *ire* of obedience. "Go, and he
 [52.] 53. goeth;" an *ire* of motion too, an active stirring vital life, not
 [Ps. cxix. sit only or creep, but go and walk, and "run the way of God's
 32.] commandments,"—and then 2. we must have a term for
 that motion, a matter for that obedience, an *ubi* for that *ire*,
 and that *civitatem sanctam*, 1. the city, and then the holy;
 the life of the man, the citizen, the common-wealth's man,
 "risen with Christ," in every of these capacities; and then
 the *sanctam*, a superaddition of all sanctity, of all that is
 Christian, and in all these notions we must *ire* and *præire*,
 go before as a *δαδούχος*, and so do that great act of charity,
 attract others after us by exemplary lightsome actions, *appa-*
rere multis, conduct the stray multitude to heaven. That
 this is the benefit of Christ's resurrection, and that there is
 no faith or belief in this article to be counted of, but that
 that is thus improved, thus evidenced, is the special thing
 that I meant to persuade you from these words, which I
 shall endeavour to do by reserving the remainder of the
 time for the third and last particular, the interpretation
 of this priestly office of Christ, to which the resurrection
 installed Him, or wherein this blessing consists, "in turn-
 ing," &c.

For the equal dealing with which, I conceive myself obliged
 to shew you these three things.

1. What is meant by "turning away every one from his
 iniquities."

2. What the dependence is betwixt this and the resurrec-
 tion of Christ.

3. How this turning is an interpretation of blessing,
 "God having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless us,
 in turning," &c.

For the first, every syllable will be a hint of direction for
 this matter, 1. "Turn," that one syllable is the best descrip-
 tion of the great saving grace of repentance, *μετάθεσις τοῦ νοῦ*
 in Athanasius' phrase, the inverting, the transposing, or the

¹ [μετανοία δὲ ἐστὶν οὐχ ἡ τῶν γονά- τὸ πονεῖν, καὶ θρηνεῖν, καὶ δέεσθαι τοῦ
 των κλίσις, ἀλλ' ἡ ἀποχὴ τοῦ κακοῦ, καὶ Θεοῦ ὑπὲρ τῆς τῶν προημαρτηκότων ἀφέ-

turning of the soul, and less than that will not prove sufficient; humbling, and confessing, and grieving, and hating will not serve the turn, these are but initial preparatives to that last hand, but dull lines, but lifeless monograms, which that vital pencil in this text, that of turning, must fill up; the want of this one accomplishment is the ruining of all, makes that vast chasm as wide as that betwixt Dives and Abraham's bosom; the sorrowing, confessing, self-hating (if unreformed) sinner may fry in hell, when none but the returning prodigal can find admission to heaven: and that for the "turning." The manner of which will be worth the observing also; the word *ἀποστρέφω* here is common to Christ and us, but in a different power and sense, He by way of efficiency, we of non-resistance, active in Christ, and but neutral in us, He to turn us, and then we to turn, not to resist that power of His grace, not to go on when He turns: so in other phrases of Scripture, He to draw, and then we to run after Him; God to work in us "both to will and to do," and then we to "work out our own salvation;" He to knock, and we open; He to rouse the sleeper, and we to "awake," and "rise from the dead;" we to obey His grace, but His grace most necessary thus to turn us: or yet more plainly, Christ to use all the means of turning us, that can belong to God, dealing with reasonable creatures, and such as He means to crown, or punish; His call, His promise, His threats, His grace, preventing, exciting, assisting, in a word, all but violence and coercion,—which is destructive of all judgment to come,—and we not to resist, to grieve, to quench those blessing methods, to turn when He will have us turn. Then "every one of you," the extent of that grace, consequent to that resurrection, "He is gone up on high, hath led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men," men indefinitely there, and all flesh in the other prophecy,—"I will pour out My spirit on all flesh,"—and here every one of you, i.e. primarily every one of you Jews, "unto you first," in the beginning of the verse, but then from them diffusively to all others; the *σωτήριος χάρις*, "hath appeared unto all men," *παιδεύουσα*, Tit. ii. 11.
[ver. 12.]

[Phil. ii.
12, 13.][Eph. v.
14.][Eph. iv.
7.]
[ver. 8.][Acts ii.
17.]

σεως διὰ γὰρ τοῦτο λέγεται μετανοία, ὅτι μετατίθησι τὸν νοῦν ἀπὸ τοῦ κακοῦ πρὸς τὸ ἀγαθόν.—S. Athanas. Quæst.

cxxx. in Script., inter spuria Ed. Ben., tom. ii. p. 335.]

S E R M. &c., taking them all into the school of discipline, teaching
 IX. them to live soberly, and justly, and piously in this world ;
 and again "every one," this turning is indispensably neces-
 [1 Cor. vi. sary, and therefore to every self-flatterer, "O be not deceiv-
 9; Matt. ed," &c., and "bring forth fruit," &c., and "think not to say
 iii. 8, 9.] within yourselves, We have Abraham," &c. There is no dis-
 pensation for Abraham's children, for the elect, for men of
 such and such persuasions, no special privilege for favourites,
 no postern gate, or back stairs for some choice *privados*, all
 their prerogative is the *ὑμῶν πρῶτον*, earlier grace, or more
 grace, and consequently so much the more obligation, but
 [Luke xiii. then "except you repent," and return, "you shall all
 3.] perish." Thirdly, "from his iniquities." Iniquities, first,
 and then "his" iniquities ; not the *παραπτώματα*, every legal
 breach, or declination, the resurrection and grace of Christ
 will not thus return us to a paradise on earth, will not thus
 [2 Cor. v. sublime us quite out of our frail sinner-state, "till our mor-
 4, 5.] tality be swallowed up with life," but the *πονηρίαι*, villanies
 and wickednesses of the carnal man, the wasting acts and
 noisome habits of an unsanctified life, from these, Christ died
 and rose, that He might turn us. There is not a more
 noxious mistake, a more fatal piece of stoicism amongst Chris-
 tians, than not to observe the different degrees and eleva-
 tions of sin, one of the first, another of the second magni-
 [1 Cor. xv. tude, one *ignis fatuus*, or false "star differing from another,"
 41.] in dishonour, though not "in glory," some spots that are spots
 of sons, that by a general repentance, without particular vic-
 tory over them, by an habitual resolution to amend all that
 is amiss, without actual getting out of these frailties, are
 capable of God's mercy in Christ, reconcilable with a regene-
 rate estate, such are our *ἀσθενείαι*, our weaknesses, ignor-
 ances, and the like ; and some that are not the spots of sons,
 they which "do them, shall not," without actual reformation,
 [Gal. v. and victory, and forsaking, enter, or "inherit the kingdom
 21.] of God," after all that Christ hath done and suffered for
 them ; such our deliberate acts and habits against light,
 against grace, the *πονηρίαι* in the text ; and let me tell you,
 the not pondering these differences, not observing the grains
 and scruples of sin, how far the *ἀσθενείαι* extend, and when
 they are overgrown into *πονηρίαι*, is the ground (that I say

no more) of a deal of desperate profaneness; we cannot keep from all sin,⁶ and therefore count it lost labour to endeavour to abstain from any: having demonstrated ourselves men by the ἀσθενεῖαι, we make no scruple to evidence ourselves devils too by the πονηρίαι; the desperation of perfect sinlessness makes us secure in all vileness, and being engaged in weakness, we advance to madness; either hope to be saved with our greatest sins, or fear to be damned for our least; and having resolved it impossible to do all, resolve securely to do none; our infirmities may damn us, and our rebellions can do no more; our prayers, our alms have sin in them, and our murders and sacrileges can be but sinful: and so if the devil or our interests will take the pains to solicit it, the deadliest sin shall pass for as innocent a creature, as tame a stingless serpent, as the fairest Christian virtue, and all this upon the not observing the weight of the πονηρίαι here, which Christ rose from the grave on purpose to turn us from, and from which whosoever is not turned, shall never rise unto life. Add unto this the αὐτοῦ, the "his" iniquities, as it refers to the author of them, and this is the bill of challenge and claim to those accursed possessions of ours; nothing is so truly, so peculiarly ours as our sins; and of those, as our πονηρίαι; our frailties, our lapses, our ignorances, the diseases and infelicities of our nature, which may insensibly fall from us, *vix ea nostra voco*; but our wasting, wilful acts, and indulged habits, those great vultures and tigers of the soul, they are most perfectly our own, the naturalst brats, and cruelest progeny, that ever came from our loins; nor Ζεὺς, nor μοῖρα, nor ἐριννύς, in Agamemnon's⁶ phrase, nor God, nor fate, nor fiend, are any way chargeable with them: the first were blasphemy, the second stoicism and folly to boot, the third a bearing false witness against the devil himself, robbing him of his great fundamental title of διάβολος, calumniator, and proving those that thus charge him the greatest devils of the twain; and all this is but one part of the αὐτοῦ here, the "his" &c. as it refers to the author. And αὐτοῦ again, the "his" as it is a note of eminence, his peculiar, prime, reigning sins, that all others like the ὁ δῆμος, or communality are fain to be subject to, some-

SERM.
IX.

⁶ [Hom. II. T. 87.]

S E R M. times a monarch-dictator-single sin, "the plague in his own
IX. heart," a principality of ambition, of pride, of lust, of covet-
[1 Kings
viii. 38.] ousness, that all others at their distance administer unto ;
sometimes an optimacy of a few, all prime coequal in their
power ; and sometimes a democracy, or popular state, a whole
Egypt full of locusts in one breast, a Gad, a troop or shoal of
sins, all leading us captive to their shambles ; and thus our
sovereign sins, as different as our tempers, and every one the
αὐτοῦ here, every man from his iniquities. The sum of this
first prospect is briefly this, "the turning every one from his
iniquities," wherein Christ's blessing us consists, is His giv-
ing of grace sufficient to work an universal, sincere, impar-
tial, thorough change of every sinner, from all his reigning,
wilful sins. The sincerity, though not perfection of the new
creature, and the dependence betwixt this and the resurrec-
tion of Christ, is the second, or next enquiry.

The resurrection of Christ in the Scripture style signifies
not always the act of rising from the dead, but the conse-
quent state after that rising, by the same proportion that
[2 Cor. v.
17.] *καινή κτίσις*, "the new creation," and the being regenerate
or born of God, signify the state of sonship, and not the act
of begetting only ; so that in brief, the *ἀναστήσας* here, the
raising up of Jesus, signifies the new state, to which Christ
was inaugurate at His resurrection, and contains under it all
the severals of ascension, of sitting at the right hand of
power, of the mission of the Holy Ghost, and His powerful
intercession for us in heaven ever since, and to the end of
the world ; and this is the notion of the resurrection of
Christ, which is the blessing, which hath that influence on our
turning ; it will not be amiss to shew you how.

And here I shall not mention that moral influence of
His resurrection upon ours, by the example of His powerful
raising out of the grave, to preach to us the necessity of our
shaking off the grave-clothes, that cadaverous, chill, noisome
estate of sin, *καὶ συνεγείρεσθαι τῷ Χριστῷ*, to "rise again
with Him ;" this is the blessing in the text ; but this, the ex-
ample of Christ might preach long enough to dead souls, be-
fore it would be hearkened unto, although the truth is, the
ancient Church by their setting apart these holy days for the
baptizing of all that were baptized, and the whole space be-

[Coloss.
iii. 1.]

twixt this and Pentecost, and every Dominical in the year, for the gesture of standing in all their services, that no man might come near the earth, at the time that Christ rose from it, did certainly desire to enforce this moral on us, that our souls might now turn, and be blessed, rise and be conformed to the image of Christ's resurrection. Blessed Lord! that it might be thus exemplary to us at this time. But to omit this, the special particulars wherein the resurrection of Christ, as our blesser, hath its influence on our turning, are briefly these three:

S E R M.
IX.

1. The bestowing on us some part of that Spirit by which Christ was raised out of the grave. Consider Rom. viii. 11, and it is all that I shall say to you of that first particular. "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Christ from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you," that Spirit of power by which Christ was raised out of the grave, is the very efficient of our turning, our new birth, the author of our present blessedness, and the pledge of our future immortality; God having raised His Son by His Spirit, anointed Him with that Spirit to work the like miracles daily on our souls, in "blessing, in turning every one," &c.; and that is the first thing.

2. Christ's resurrection hath a hand in blessing, in turning from iniquity, in respect to that solemn mission of the Holy Ghost promised before, and performed immediately after His ascension. This not person, I mean, but office of the Holy Ghost, in settling a pastorage in the Church, and to it the consequent power and necessity of preaching, administering Sacraments, governing, censuring, all which were the effects of the Holy Ghost's descending, and the direct interpretation of the *λάβετε πνεῦμα*, then, and ever since then. To which if you please to add the promise of the annexion of the Spirit, and the invisible grace of God to the orderly use of these, so far that the preaching of the gospel,—not only that manner of preaching among us, that hath gotten the monopoly of all the service of God into its patent, the only thing that many of us pay all our devotion to; but any other way of making known the gospel of Christ, the doctrine of the second covenant,—is called *διακονία πνεύματος*, the ad- 2 Cor. iii. 8.

[John xx.
22.]

SERM. IX.
 [1 Cor. x.
 16.]
 2 Cor. x. 4. ministrations, or means of dispensing the Spirit to us, and the Sacrament *κοινωνία αἵματος*, the communication of the blood of Christ, yea and the censures, no carnal, weak, blunt “weapons of our warfare,” but “mighty through God,” &c.; you have then a second energy of His resurrection toward our turning, so great, that He that holds out against this method of power and grace, and will not turn nor understand after all this, shall never be capable of any other means of blessing, of working that great work for him: and so you see the second ground of dependence between the resurrection, and blessing, or turning. O that it might work its design upon us, that “to-day we would hear the voice,” that cries so loud to us out of heaven, the last perhaps numerically, I am sure the last in specie or kind, the last artifice, this of the Word, and Sacraments, that is ever to be hoped for to this end, “to bless us, to turn us every one from our,” &c.

[Ps. xcv.
 8; Hab.
 iii. 7, 15.]

3. The resurrection hath to do in blessing, and turning, in respect of Christ’s intercession, that prime act of His Melchisedech priesthood, His powerful intercession, i. e. in effect conferring of grace on us; thus Rom. viii. 34, where that weighty business of justifying is laid more on the resurrection than death of Christ, “It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again.” It is thus enlarged in the next words, “who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us;” His intercession, powerful intercession “at the right hand of God,”—a consequent of God’s “raising up His Son Jesus,”—hath a main influence on turning first, and then justifying the ungodly: and so Heb. vii. 25, “Wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost,” *σώζειν εἰς τὸ παντελές*, to save them for good and all, deliver them from all kind of assailants, from sin, from themselves, from wrath, from hell, though not absolutely all, yet those that come unto God by Him, those that turn when He will have them turn, “seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.” Will you see this more clearly? why then thus. There are three degrees of grace, preventing, exciting, assisting: the first for conversion, the second for sanctifying, the third for perseverance. And two acts of turning, being already premised, for the beginning of that blessing work,

1. by the power of that Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead; S E R M.
 then, 2. by the descent of the Holy Ghost,—the first as IX.
 the seed sown, the second as the rain and sunshine to bring
 it up,—there is yet a third required for the earing and
 hardening of the corn, that of God's giving increase, for the
 consummating this weighty affair, for the confirming and
 establishing those that are initially blest and turned into a
 kind of angelical state of perseverance: and to this it is that
 Christ's continual intercession belongs, for that is peculiarly
 for disciples, for those that are believers, Christians already,
 that they may be preserved and kept in that state,—as for
 St. Peter in the time of shock, of tempest, when Satan is
 at his *expetivit*,—that if we be permitted to be tempted, yet
 our "faith may not fail." Another copy of this intercession
 you have John xvii.; the whole chapter is a prescript form of
 it, a platform of what He now daily performs in heaven.
 Look in the eleventh verse, "Holy Father, keep through
 Thine own Name," own power, "those whom Thou hast given
 Me," those that are believers already: and in the fifteenth,
 "I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world,
 but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil one;" not
 for immunity from temptations, for an impeccable state, but
 for a sufficiency of grace to keep, to sustain them in time
 of temptation, that they may be able to stand. So that this
 intercession of Christ is apportioned and adequate to the
προκόπτοντες, "proficients," those that are believers already,
 disciples,—or others to come that shall be such, and when
 they are prayed for are considered under that notion, as it is
 clear, ver. 20, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them
 also that shall believe on Me through their word,"—a direct
 notation who they are that this daily intercession for keeping,
 for perseverance, belongs to, the believers, faithful disciples,
 and none others, "I pray for them, I pray not for the world,"
 ver. 9. Other prayers He can allow for the world, the veriest
 incarnate devils in it, the very crucifiers, "Father, forgive [Luke
 them;" but this prayer for perseverance, for keeping, is only xxiii. 34.]
 for the "them," the believers there: the impenitent unbe-
 liever cannot have his portion in that, unless he would have
 Christ pray to damn him irreversibly, to keep him in his
 impenitence, "to seal him up unto the day of perdition." [2 Pet. iii.
7.]

SERM.
IX.

You see from hence by way of result or corollary, what it is that our perseverance in the faith and favour of God is imputable to, not any fatal contrivance for some special confidants, that their sins shall not be able to separate them, not any such ἀπολύτρωσις, as Marcus his scholars in Irenæus^b pretended to, that by it they were φύσει πνευματικοὶ, “naturally spiritual,” that all the debaucheries in the world could no more vitiate them, than the sun-beams are profaned by the dunghill which they shine on, or the gold by the sluttery it may be mixed with, that by the shield of the mother of heaven, whatever they did, they were ἀόρατοι τῷ κριτῇ, “invisible to the judge.” No such comforts and hopes as these, of perseverance in sin, and favour with God at once, of making good our union with God, when we are in the gall of bitterness, of being justified, when we are not sanctified; that magical spell, that fastens us in a circle,—and then whatever we do there, the devil cannot approach us,—is the very hope of the hypocrite in Job, and that hope as hypocritical as himself, perisheth, and vanisheth, when he hath most rest to set upon it. Νεότης ἐλπίδος πλήρης, saith Aristotle^c, the debauched young man can entertain himself with such daring courageous hopes as these, γῆρας δὲ δύσελπι, but old age and death-beds are not of so good assurance. There is but one principle, I say, of our perseverance to be depended on, that of Christ’s daily intercession for the true humble disciple, that his faith may not fail, and that intercession, an act of power in Christ, to give what He thus prays for, “all power is given unto Me,” and so in effect, a doing and giving whatever is required on God’s part to the working of this blessed work upon our souls, a concurrence, an actual donation of minutely assistance to them that humbly wait and beg for it, and that, secondly, receive it, and make use of it when it is given. That double condition is indispensably required on our parts to the obtaining of this grace, as you may see it in the *habenti dabitur*, the parable of the talent: and Heb. vii. 25, “He is able to save them that come unto God by Him,

[Job xxvii.
8—10.]

^b [S. Iren. adv. Hær. i. 9. vid. note in p. 160.]

^c [καὶ διὰ τοῦτο πρὸς τὸ πίνειν εἰς μέθην πάντες ἔχουσι προθύμως, ὅτι πάντας ὁ οἶνος ὁ πολλὸς εὐέλπιδας ποιεῖ,

καθάπερ ἡ νεότης τοὺς παῖδας· τὸ μὲν γὰρ γῆρας δύσελπι ἐστίν, ἡ δὲ νεότης ἐλπίδος πλήρης.—Aristot. Probl. xxx. 1. 27.]

seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them :” the ability to save and deliver out of the tempter’s hand, to give perseverance, is explained by His continual intercession, but that only to those that “come unto God by Him,” the pious disciple, and true Christian, the worshipper of God that doth His will, that first begs, and then doth not resist and grieve that Spirit of His,—as Heb. v. 9, He is “author of salvation;” to whom? “to all those that obey Him,”—He is “able to save them;” as if Christ were not able to save any others, to give any other perseverance,—as He could not do miracles in His own country, because of their unbelief. The truth is, His decree and oath hath manacled Him, not to work such miracles of mercies, prodigies of perseverance for the profane impenitent, the either spiritual or carnal presumer. You see now the dependence betwixt the *ἀναστήσας*, on one side, and the *εὐλογεῖν* and *ἀποστρέφειν*, on the other; the rising, on one side, and the blessing and turning, on the other. I proceed to my last particular, that the turning is but a periphrasis of blessing, “to bless us in turning,” &c.

[Matt. xi.
57; Mark
vi. 5.]

And I would it were in my power instead of demonstrating to your brain to preach this home to your affections, to persuade you and convince you of this great truth, the belief of which your felicity here, and eternity hereafter, so much depends on; could you but acknowledge the *ὅτι*, that there is any such thing as blessedness in a regenerate life, discern this mystery of godliness, the present joyous estate, that lies folded up in the new creature, it is impossible you should be any longer in love with perishing. There may be perhaps some smooth, pleasant parts in sin that the beast about you may delight in, some entertainment for that carnal brute; but what a poor acquisition is that delight, to tempt thee out of blessedness, to rob thee of such inestimable treasures! A piteous exchange this, make the best of it: but when that momentary joy is not to be had neither, when there is so little, so nothing even of transitory carnal pleasure in it, then, “Return, O Shulamite, return,” let not the prodigal outwit thee, out-thrive thee, rise up in judgment against thee, and condemn thee; he, after the exhausting not only of his patrimony, but of his flesh, a crest-fallen degenerate prodigal, a kind of Lycanthropos Nebuchadnezzar,—but in worse com-

[Cant. vi.
13.]

[Dan. iv.
33.]

S E R M. pany,—driven from men to swine, which of all other crea-
 IX. tures are unfittest to preach returning,—their ocular nerves,
 saith Plutarch, are so placed, that they can never come to
 see heaven, till they are laid upon their backs,—yet even
 this (guest of swine) prodigal can at last think fit to re-
 turn to his father ; O let this prodigal turn preacher,—as
 such sometimes, when they have run out of all, are wont to
 do,—I shall give him the text on which I shall be confident
 [Ps. cxvi. he will be very rhetorical, “Return unto thy rest, O my
 7.] soul.”

Again consider the $\tau\acute{\iota}$, what blessedness is, and that may
 possibly work upon you ; other excellencies there are, that
 may set you out in the eyes of men, generosity, obligingness,
 wisdom, learning, courage, &c., and every of these can be
 thought fit to be some sober man’s idol. And yet the utmost
 that can belong to these, is to be praiseworthy : and then
 what proportion is there betwixt all these, and one such
 heroic excellency, of which the philosopher can say^j, “praise
 is too poor a reward for them, we count them blessed.”

[Phil. ii. 1 ; O then if there be any consolation in Christ, any virtue,
 iv. 8.] any praise, if any so noble a quality as ambition be left in
 you, if any spark of that vestal flame, any aspiring to that
 which will ennoble and sublime your natures, any design on
 blessedness, behold and remember the turning in this text,
 nay, if you are but so well-natured as to wish a poor piteous
 accursed kingdom out of the jaws of so many hells, and
 [Phil. ii. 2.] capable of some return toward blessedness again, “fulfil you
 my joy.” Away with those objections and prejudices we have
 to repentance, that it is a rugged, thorny, galling way, a
 dull, melancholy, joyless state ; whatever you can miss, what-
 ever quarrel in it, it will be abundantly repaired and satisfied
 in this one of blessedness ; send me all the torments and
 miseries of this malicious age, the inventions of wit, and
 cruelty, all the diseases, that the heathens’ fear had deified,
 and in the midst of these a present, instant blessedness, and
 I shall certainly defy them all ; give me blessedness upon the
 rack, upon the wheel, and if you will suppose it possible, in
 hell itself, and I will never ask father Abraham’s favour or
 allay to those flames, I shall not doubt but to enjoy that any

^j [Aristot. Eth. Nic., lib. i. cap. 12.]

thing, that hath blessedness in it. The very heathens, saith S E R M.
 St. Austin^k, had a great design upon one treasure that they IX.
 found they had lost, used all means they could think would
 contribute toward the recovery of it; and in that quest went
 at last, saith he, and gave their souls to the devil, to get
 purity for those souls. It were then but reason that you
 would give your souls unto God to purchase it, that you
 would set a turning, a purifying, when the same compen-
 dium renders you pure and blest together, when the being
 happier than you were before, is all that you pay to be so
 for ever.

I have tired you with preaching that, that would have
 been more seasonable to have prayed for you, that God
 having, as on this day, "raised up His Son Jesus," will
 vouchsafe to send Him into every of our hearts, to bless us,
 to bless this accursed, miserable kingdom, this shaking,
 palsy Church, this broken state, this unhappy nation, this
 every poor sinner soul, by "turning" all, and "every one
 from his iniquities," by giving us all that only matter of
 our peace and serenity here, and pledge of our eternal feli-
 city hereafter; which God of His infinite mercy grant us all,
 for His Son Jesus' sake, whom He hath thus raised. To
 whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed, as
 our only tribute, the honour, &c.

^k [S. August. de Civ. Dei, lib. x. c. 10. Op., tom. vii. p. 217, C.]

SERMON X.

PREPARED AT CARISBROOK CASTLE, BUT NOT PREACHED.

GOD'S COMPLAINT AGAINST REVOLTERS.

ISAIAH i. 5.

Why should you be stricken any more? you will revolt more and more.

SERM. X. It is a heavy complaint of God's, and though expressed without much noise, yet in a deep melting hearty passion, not only in the verse next before my text, with heaven and earth called to be witnesses of the complaint, but with a little varying of the expression, every where else throughout the Prophets, that "Israel doth not know, God's people doth not consider." All the arts of discipline and pedagogy had been used to teach them knowledge and consideration, i. e., to bring them to a sight and sense of their estate; lectures, warnings, chidings, blows, shaking and rousing, and hastening them, if it were possible, to awake them out of that lethargic, senseless condition. The whole people used like that proud king of Babylon, driven from men, set to live and converse with the beasts of the field,—such were the Chaldeans, whither they were carried captive,—if so be as it fared with him, so it might possibly succeed with them; the field be a more gainful school than the palace had been, that by that means at least they might "lift up their eyes to heaven, and their understanding return to them;" turned from men into beasts, that that stranger metamorphosis might be wrought on them, a transformation from men into men, from ignorant, brutish, into prudent, considering men; nay, delivered up even unto Satan by way of discipline, that Satan might teach them sense; the plagues of Egypt, of Sodom, of hell let loose upon them, to try whether like the rubbing and the smarting of the fish's gall, it might restore these blind Tobits to their eyes and souls again. To work the same work, if it be possible, upon us, is, I profess, my

Dan. iv.
[34.]

[1 Cor. v.
5.]

business and only errand at this time. There hath been a great deal of pains taken by God to this purpose ; doctrine and discipline, instructions and corrections, and all utterly cast away upon us hitherto, the "whole head sick, and the whole heart faint," in the words next after my text ; which you must not understand as ordinarily men do of the sins of that people, that those were the "wounds, and bruises, and putrified sores,"—give me leave to tell you that is a mistake for want of considering the context,—but of judgments, heavy judgments, diseases, piteous diseases, both on head and heart, epilepsies, racking pains in the head ; the whole kingdom may complain in the language of the Shunamite's child, "O my head, my head ;" nay, in the prophet's, "the crown is fallen from our head," the crown of our head torn and fallen from our head, and the heart in terrible fainting fits, every foot ready to overcome ; from the "sole of the foot to the crown of the head," from one extreme part of the nation to another, nothing but distress or oppression, suffering or acting direful tragedies, misery or impiety,—the latter the more fatal symptom, the greater distress of the two,—and yet "no man layeth it to heart," England "will not know, will not consider."

The truth is, the deformities which are in ourselves, we are such partial self-parasites that there is no seeing in a direct line, no coming to that prospect but by reflection ; shall we therefore bring the elephant to the water, and there shew him and amaze him with the sight and ugliness of his proboscis ? The state of the Jews is that water where we may see the image of this present kingdom most perfectly delineated in every limb and feature ; its prosperity, its pride, its warnings, its provocations, its captivities, its contumelious using of the prophets, scorning the messengers from God that came to relieve them ; at length its fatal presages, the deadly feuds, *ζηλωται* and *σικάριοι*, zealots and brothers of the sword, ploughing it up to be sowed with salt and brimstone, and all this chargeable culture and discipline cast away upon them utterly, mortifying—instead of sins and impieties—nothing but the relics of piety, and civility, and ingenuous nature ; a strange pestilential fever, seizing upon their very spirits and souls ; and now nothing but a Roman eagle or

SERM.
X.

[Is. i. 6.]

[2 Kings
iv. 19.]

[Is. i. 3.]

SERM.
X.

a hell, a Titus or a fiend left behind to work any reformation on them. Thus all God's thunderbolts being exhausted, His methods of discipline posed, and non-plused, and frustrated, there is nothing behind but calling in and retracting those rods, the no longer vouchsafing those thunderbolts, a news that perhaps you would be glad to hear of, a respite of punishments, but that the most ominous direful of all others, the most formidable of all God's denouncings, the last and worst kind of desertion, "Why should you be," not embraced and dandled, but "scourged and smitten any more? You will revolt more and more."

These words will afford you these four fields of plain and useful meditation :

1. God's custom of striking sinners, and increasing stripes on them, in order to their reformation.

2. The prime proper seasons for such striking : 1. in case of revolt : 2. in case of revolting more.

3. The one only case in which striking becomes uncharitable, when the more and the more God smites, the more and the more the sinner revolts.

4. And lastly, the pitiful estate of the sinner when he comes to this, when in this case God removes smiting, for though it be an act of mercy in God, yet it is that which bodes very ill, it is an indication of the most desperate estate of the patient ; "Why should you be stricken any more?"

I begin first with the first,—which lies not so visible and distinguishable in the text, but is the foundation that is supposed under it, and on which all that is visible is super-structed,—and that is, God's pious and charitable design in smiting sinners, and increasing stripes on them ; though now, on more prudential considerations, they shall not be any more smitten.

[Ps. lxxxix.
30, 32.]

"If My children forsake My law, &c., I will visit their offences with the rod, and their sins with scourges," saith God by the Psalmist. God hath His visits for distempered

[1 Cor. iv.
21.]

children, not only like that of St. Paul's, "in the spirit of meekness," but also *ἐν ῥάβδῳ*, "with the rod ;" and if that single engine of discipline will not do it, there are sharper and more behind, the *flagella*, or "scourges," in the plural.

And this by the way of prudent medicinal process, of solemn S E R M. deliberate dispensation, according to rules of art: you will X. presently discern it, if you but look into the nature, and causes, and process of the disease. I shall give you but one way of judging of these, by remembering you that all sin is founded in *bono jucundo*, in the pleasing or delighting of the carnal faculty: "every man is tempted when he is drawn [Jas. i. 14.] away of his own lust, and enticed," when his carnal pleasurable faculty, *ἐξέλκει καὶ δελεάζει*, draws him out of his road of piety by an amiable pleasurable lure or bait. Of this kind, if you will look into the retail, you shall find every sin in the world to be,—some law of the members, some dictate of the flesh, which is all for sensitive pleasure, a warring, a contending, arguing and pleading before the will against the adversary law of the mind, against the dictates of the honest or virtuous, of the rational or Christian, which is a pretending and contending on the other side. Three representations there were of the apple in the first sin, and every of those under this notion of pleasure. The woman saw, 1. "that it was good for food," pleasurable to the taste: 2. "a desire," (as it is in the Hebrew,) {which we render again "pleasant to the eyes:"} and 3. "that it was to be desired to make one wise;" i. e., according to the same Hebrew notion, pleasurable in this, that it would make them know more than they did before, a kind of satisfaction, and so pleasure to the understanding, as you know knowledge, though it be but of trifles and news, is a most pleasurable thing. And so generally, every sin is begotten after the image and likeness of that first; the pleasures of lust, the pleasures of revenge, that huge high epicurism; the pleasures of pride, the greatest that Aristotle, or the author *περὶ κόσμου*, conceived that the old heathen gods could pretend to in their recesses^a, their not vouchsafing to see or hear any thing but by perspectives and otacoustics; or again, the pleasures of heresy, of schism, which he that is guilty of, saith the Apostle, "is he not carnal?" [1 Cor. iii. 3.] the pleasures of singularity, and being head of a faction, they say the hugest sensuality and voluptuousness, the most

^a [Aristot. De Mundo, vi. 9. Hammond has misapprehended the meaning of the passage, which is a description of the palace of Ecbatana, where there

were buildings so constructed with guards called *ὑτάκουσται*, *ὡς ἐν ὀ βασιλεὺς αὐτὸς δεσπότης καὶ θεὸς ὀνομαζόμενος πάντα μὲν βλέπει, πάντα δ' ἀκούει.*]

S E R M.
X.

bewitching ravishment of any; and even covetousness and ambition, the sins which seem to be particularly fastened on two other notions of the forbidden fruit, the profit and honour, the wealth and greatness, the baits of the world, and not of the flesh,—and may have smittings of God proportioned to them on our estates and honours, as well as on our flesh,—yet, I say, even these would certainly never be able to work upon us, if there were not a notion of pleasure in them; and therefore one of them is called “the lust of the eye,” and the worldly pomp and greatness the object of the other—as that in Moses, of the “honour of being called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter,”—is distinctly styled the “pleasures of sin,” in the plural. And indeed the matter is clear and demonstrable, there being but two contrary faculties about us, the rational and the carnal principle, the inward and the outward man, as every virtuous and Christian thought and action is a *συνήδεσθαι τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ*, a “complacency” and delight of the upper nobler spiritual faculty in the law of God, the object apportioned to that; so is every sin that is ever committed, a *συνήδεσθαι τῷ νόμῳ [ἐν τοῖς] μέλεσι*, a “complacency,” or conjunction in liking, a being pleased with the law of the members, a choosing of that which may be most agreeable and proportionable to the designs of the flesh, i. e., most desirable and pleasurable to that.

Rom. vii.
22.

Having given you the character of the disease, the distinct nature of sin, the propriety of the distemper, that some either true or false sensual pleasure, something that is really delectable to the flesh, or that either by a false glass of passion or custom, or else by an imperfect half light, appears to be pleasurable, is the foundation and matter of every sin, (never any revolts from God but when we hope to enjoy ourselves better in some other company, some revenue or income of *ἀπόλαυσις*, or “joy” to the flesh expected, and aimed at in every extravagancè or out-lying,) you cannot now choose but acknowledge the propriety of the physic which we have here before us, the usefulness of the strokes, or smittings, for this recovery. When a man is in the pursuit of a mere pleasurable object, which he confesses to value for nothing else but that it is sweet to taste, could he but discern or espy the whole sweetness and pleasurableness of it

secretly let out, or spilt upon the ground, or evaporate before his eyes, or but a scourge held over his head, or a vial of gall or wormwood imbibed, that for every dram of pleasure shall give him a terrible proportion of bitterness at the present, of instant pain and smart : it is not imaginable that any man in his senses should advance one step further in this pursuit ; the more sensual and carnal man he is, the more he must abhor such marches as these, which are so treacherous and malicious to the very flesh ; he that can satisfy himself with the empty name of sin, though it taste never so sour or loathsome ; that will not in this case compromise and compound with innocence, take purity on Christ's terms, rather than venture on present racks and torments, had need be a sublime, aërial, spiritual sinner indeed ; like Lucifer himself, who, we know, is all spirit, he must have nothing left of sense or flesh about him. Were but the thousandth part of that hell which expects the indulgent sinner in another world mixed in the very cup of his pleasurablest sin here, the least present whip, instead of all those future scorpions, it would be almost impossible for the most magnanimous sinner to venture so deep for that empty honour, the bare opinion, or fancy, or credit of having assaulted and rebelled against heaven and gained nothing by it ; to pay so dear for that " which is not bread," hath nothing of substance or satisfaction in it. And therefore this is the design of God's rod, His smittings, His punishments, to give us a little of that hell beforehand,—which our infidel senses apprehend nothing of as long as it is future,—to help us to some disrelish to sin at the present, to give us some part of its portion, of the odiousness and bitterness of it, in the very mouth, that we may not have any joy in chewing or swallowing down so abhorred a mixture, which hath such a certain arrear of horror and bitterness in the stomach ; to rain down some fire and brimstone into our throats whensoever we are gaping after that forbidden tree ; thus to discourage, if not to allay our hydropic thirst, to encumber and trash us in our violent furious marches, to pluck off the wheels of our Egyptian chariots that they may drive more heavily ; that finding the most pleasurable sin such a sad *γλυκύπικρον*, a compost of more bitter than sweet at the very instant, we should

S E R M.
X.

[Is. lv. 2.]

[Exod.
xiv. 25.]

S E R M. never be such blind obedient votaries of Satan, never so perfectly
 X. renounce and deny ourselves, our own ease, our own all kind of interests and advantages, never be such professed enemies and tyrants against our own flesh, as to go on in such chargeable ways of sin, when we see and feel so sadly, how without and before the certain cures of a chilled old age, by this charitable anticipation of God's smiting hand, the days are come upon sin, that we can truly say "that we have no pleasure in it." And so you see the grounds of this medicinal method, the charity and piety of God's design in smiting, my first observable. I proceed briefly to the prime, proper seasons of this charity, this smiting: 1. in case of revolt, 2. of revolting more; my second particular.

[Eccles.
xii. 1.]

God's first season of punishing is instantly upon revolt, at the first breaking off, or aversion, or departure from God; and sure he that is not suffered by God to enjoy one easy or comfortable hour in sin, that is presently called to discipline, taught what a jealous God he hath provoked, that is roused and awaked at the first nod, watched over by the most vigilant monitor,—that he cannot move out of his posture of piety, but presently God in heaven is a calling out to him, to reduce him to his rank again,—cannot choose but acknowledge himself a prime part of God's care and solicitude. The first day of going out into the field, as in God's, so in Satan's service, is generally a nice and a critical day; according to the successes or discouragements we meet with then, we have more or less mind to the trade for ever after; should but our beginnings of revolt from God, our first treacherous intentions against Him, prove lucky, and smooth, and prosperous, it were easy and prone, and not at all improbable, for us to glide insensibly into all rebellions and impieties, to swear fealty to Satan, that hath entertained us so hospitably, and suddenly to engage so deep under his colours, that there would be no retiring with honour, no returning to God without being infamous, without undergoing the brand of apostates from Satan, of a kind of *fædifragi*, covenant-breakers and deserters; our repentance would go for the more scandalous thing, our reduction to our allegiance to heaven would be the forfeiting of a trust, and within a while appear the more ill-favoured reproachful revolt of the two.

S E R M.
X.

Whereas if we meet with some checks and discouragements betimes, some rousing brushes at the first entrance into the service, it is possible we may discern our error, especially if it were the flesh that helped to seduce us, if the hope of advantage that brought us into it, "because the wicked goes unpunished, therefore the heart of man is wholly set to do evil," saith Solomon; and therefore that God may not be thought to desert them presently at the first revolt, to deliver up that heart of theirs to that hell upon earth upon this first single provocation, God is concerned "in faithfulness to cause them to be troubled," not to lead them into this temptation, to profane continuance in sin, but to give them this grace, this gift of punishment, to reduce and recall them presently as soon as they are revolted, to let Satan or his instruments loose, to disease and awake this drowsy servant of his, who therefore to such purposes, though he be cast out of heaven, from being God's menial servant, is still *ὑπηρέτης θεοῦ*, God's officer and minister, retains so much of his old angelical title of being a ministering spirit, and that, if we be not wanting to ourselves, to the greatest advantage of our souls, *εἰς οἰκοδομὴν*, not *εἰς φθορὰν*, a piece of edifying, not sanguinary discipline. And let me tell you my opinion, that for that which is called punitive justice, severity or revenge on sin, that part of the magistrate's office among men, to be *ἔκδικος εἰς ὀργήν*, "an avenger for wrath," were it not in mere necessary charity to them that are punished, or to them that are warned by others' punishment, there were no reason for any man to inflict it upon another, it were wholly to be left to God's tribunal.

[Eccles. viii. 11.]

[Ps. cxix. 75.]

[Rom. xiii. 4. διάκονος.]

[2 Cor. xiii. 10. καθάρρεσιν.]

[Rom. xiii. 4.]

From this hint two things I desire to commend to my auditory, by way of application.

1. The care that they are to have, to take special notice of every the softest degree of smiting that ever befalls them in their lives; be it a sickness, or a miscarriage, a thousand to one it is an application of God's to some special distemper of thine, to some degree of revolt from Him. This I will not say is perpetually true, because I know there be other uses of smittings, for the exercisc of many Christian virtues,—which would rust and sully and come to little, and so Christ lose all the glory and renown, and we all the reward of them, if

S E R M. we had not such occasions to exercise them,—but I say the
 X.

odds is so great, when the rod of God comes, that it comes for some such revolt of thine, that certainly it is thy duty so far to distrust thine own excellencies, as to doubt that it comes not to thee merely as to an *athleta*, or combatant, or perfect Christian, *πρὸς δοκιμασίαν*, “by way of trial” only, but as to one guilty of some kind of revolt, and so *εἰς κόλασιν*, for punishment and reformation. And though I cannot be confident it is so, yet believe me, thou hast so much reason to suspect thyself, that it will be worth thy pains to examine, upon every stroke on thy body, thy estate, nay on thy reputation,

[2Sam. xvi.
5, &c.]

every cursing of a Shimei, every approach or terror, brandishing the rod or sword against thee, that it is some present sin of thine, some degree of instant revolt that hath

[Jas. v. 14.]

brought this stroke upon thee. *Εἴ τις ἀσθενεῖ*, saith St. James, “if any man be sick,” &c. The whole text supposeth it strongly probable that he that is thus visited hath committed some act of revolt, either of greater or lesser moment, either against God or his brother, to which that sickness hath some relation; and there is a notable place, Ecclesiasticus xviii. 21, “Humble thyself before thou be sick, and in the time of sins shew repentance,” supposing the time of sins to be the forerunner of sickness, and he that would but thus examine himself, whensoever he hath any such bitter portion sent him from God, ask his own conscience, his best adviser, the question, to what former disease it is to which God, *ὡς ἰατρὸς*, not as an enemy, but a physician, hath accommodated this application, he might perhaps forty years hence thank me for this admonition, and be able to tell me that from this day to that he hath experimented the truth of the observation, never received a corrosive plaster from God, but upon enquiry he found a piece of dead flesh in himself to which it clearly belonged. I doubt not but a few good memories might presently bring me in a catalogue of proofs to my observation; I desire you will be your own confessors, and do it to yourselves; and then do the duty that in such case belongs to you. And that is, in the second place, not only to acknowledge the disease before God most freely, and apply His physic and our diligence to the cure of it, but withal to look upon these strokes as the sovereignest mercies,

so many beams of mere grace, sermons from heaven, the very "Bath Col," the voice from heaven of old, that seldom came but with a clap of thunder along with it, methods of God's restraining and exciting Spirit; and thank God as heartily for them as for the richest boons, the warmest sunshines that you ever received from the Sun of righteousness, and being once "made whole," rescued, upon thy return, from one such first smiting, it concerns thee nearly for ever after, to "go, sin no more, lest a far worse thing happen unto thee." [John v. 14.]

For so I told you, there is a second season of smiting, and that of doubling the blows; viz., upon our revolting more. God doth not presently upon the first recidivation or relapse, give up the sinner for desperate; He concludes indeed most justly and deliberately, that the *κακοχυμία*, or disaffection, is the stronger when it breaks forth again; the leprosy more dangerous that it spreads in the flesh after it hath been looked on by the priest; that the former physic, if it were sufficient to set him on his legs again, was not yet able to make him a hale, sound man; some venomous humour was left behind, and in all probability a stronger physic is now necessary, perhaps a whole course of steel: a physic, God knows, that this kingdom hath been under five or six years; I would I could say the patient prospered under it; nay, that it had not grown far worse, gone backward in all auspicious symptoms ever since, as if that steel, not sufficiently prepared, were turned into the habit of the body, and now wanted some higher chemical preparations to work it out again. If this be the case, as God knows it is too suspicious it is, I am then fallen on my third general, the only case whercin this sharp physic becomes unseasonable, when the more and the more God strikes, the more and more the sinner revolts, and to that I must now hasten. "Why," &c. [Lev. xiii. 5, &c.]

A nice subtle question and dispute there hath been among divines, which may in part have its decision from hence, concerning a peculiar middle third kind of knowledge in God, as whether, on supposition that such a thing should come to pass, which never shall, God knows what will follow by way of consequence. To this purpose many notable passages of

S E R M. X. Scripture there are: the oracle that David received about the men of Keilah, the assurance that they would deliver him up if he entrusted himself to them; though the truth is he never made the trial of their sincerity, but believed God the searcher of their hearts, without that more costly experiment. So when Christ affirms of Tyre and Sidon, that if the miracles done in Bethsaida, had been done among them, they had infallibly repented. And so St. Paul, in his voyage by sea, that told the mariners how certainly they should be cast away if any went out of the ship, though they neither went out nor lost one life. And so here, where God by the prophet foretells that in case He now should "smite them any more, they would revolt more and more," and therefore resolves to give over smiting. To enter into any part of that subtle debate is not my design, as remembering that of Gregory Nazianzen that the Ammonites and the Moabites were not permitted to enter into the Church of God; i. e., saith he^b, *διαλεκτικοὶ, καὶ κακοπράγμονες λόγοι*, "curious and subtle discourses," which are not very apt to minister grace or edification to the hearers. The utmost that will be of use or profit to us, is to observe this positive aphorism of God's methods of discipline, of His gracious economies; seldom or never to send punishments on any, but when they are probable to do some good, to work reformatations on them. Two cases there are in physic, when the physician in all reason withdraws his hand and his drugs, 1. when the patient is desperate, and the physic of a high nature; for then such costly drugs should neither be poured out nor defamed, neither lose their virtue nor adventure their reputation on the desperate patient; as long as there is hope they must be plied, be it never so chargeable or painful, even to cupping and scarifying, even "skin after skin,"—as those words in Job would be rendered, those things that are nearest to us one after another,—"and all that he hath will he give for his life:" and when there is no hope, some easy physic, some indifferent, tame cordials may be allowed till the last gasp, but the nobler drugs must not be thus riotously dealt with; and so in like manner to the desperate revolter; the sun may shine, and the rain may fall on him, as well as on

^b [S. Greg. Naz., Orat. xlii. § 18. Op., tom. i. p. 760, C.]

the most hopeful ; some indifferent ordinary ways of cure, such are prosperity, affluence of fortune, and the like, but for the magistrals of nature and art—such are God's smitings and punishments, which cost God dear, as it were; He is fain to fetch them from far, to go out of His place for them, in the prophets' style—God will not be so prodigal of these, but when there is hope that they may prove successful.

SERM.
X.

[Is. xxvi.
21; Jer. iv.
7; Micah
i. 3.]

And so again, secondly, when the condition is more hopeful, yet in case the kind of physic is become too familiar with the body, when it ceases to be physic and proves diet, turns into nourishment and increase of the disease, it is then more than time to change the bills, to set the patient to some new course ; and this is the case in the text again ; and I heartily wish to God it were not the very case of the kingdom ; I will not say it is a desperate patient, that no method of God's could possibly work good on us,—no, I will hope and pray yet against our wickedness, and do it on this very score ; for although some part of the nation have had, for a long time, little of this bitter physic administered to them by God ; yet sure some of us are still under this cure of the rod, have not all our caustic plasters torn off from us, from whence I think I may conclude that God is still a wrestling with our disease, hath not yet given us quite over unto death,—but this I am afraid I may too truly say, that of those that are still under this sharp and sovereign course of physic, this of punishments, it is become too familiar with most of us ; we look not on our afflictions as on medicines sent us immediately out of the special dispensatory of heaven, but as the ordinary diet and portion of mortal mutable men ; I wish I could not add that our malady hath most highly thrived and prospered under our physic, more new kinds and varieties of sinning, from all the nations about us, nay from hell itself, taken in, incorporate and naturalized among us, in a few years of God's sword being drawn, His thunderbolts scattered among us, a greater progress towards atheism made generally in this nation under this preaching of the rod, than in many ages before had been observable among us ; let it be considered with some sadness, and it will certainly appear to the eternal shame of a provoking people, that to every degree of oppression and injustice that

[Ps. cxli.
6.]

S E R M. X. this nation was formerly guilty of, the thousand-fold were now a very moderate proportion; to every oath that was formerly darted against heaven, there are now whole volleys of perjuries; never did so coarse and sturdy, so plain and boisterous a sin, so perfect a camel go down so glib, and go over so easily. To omit that prodigy of lying and slandering,—a vapour that comes visibly out of hell, as soon as it was there resolved that innocence must suffer,—some sins as wasting as any in the whole inventory have of late grown so frequent and fashionable in the world, that they have quite put off the nature of sin by being our daily food, digested and converted into other shapes; as if swallowed by a pious man,—who, God knows, must answer the dearest for his revolts,—they should turn into his substance, become acts of piety of the highest size; one such metamorphosed, transfigured sin is become able to commute and expiate for a hundred more, that have not had the luck of that disguise: and in a word, our revolts are so prodigiously increased, improved into such a mountainous vastness, such a colony of none but giantly shapes, that though I cannot undertake to foretell our fate, or affirm that we are those very men come to that very crisis, upon which God by the purport of the doom in my text will soon give over smiting any more,—which perhaps some might be so mad as to think a happy news, if they could but hear of it, and would be content to venture any hazard that this could bring on them,—yet this I shall from hence be able to pronounce dogmatically, that should such a fate befall us, either the nation in general or any of us in particular, should there be a respite of the rod, before any laying down of the sins that called for it, a cessation of arms betwixt heaven and earth, before a cessation of hostilities between earth and heaven, this were, as the last, so the worst of evils, a calm to be dreaded beyond all the loudest tempests, which will be the better evidenced and demonstrated to you, if we proceed to the fourth and last particular, the pitiful estate of the sinner, when in this case God removes smiting. “Why,” &c.

To discern the sadness, and deplorableness of this estate, I shall need give you no sharper character of it than only this, that it is a condition that forceth God to forsake us in

mere mercy, to give over all thoughts of kindness to us, and that the only degree of kindness left whereof we are capable. In plain terms, to that man or people that is the worse for stripes, these two most unreconcilable contraries are most sadly true : SERM.
X.

(1.) The removing of these stripes is the greatest judgment imaginable.

And yet (2.) secondly, the greatest judgment is the only remaining mercy also.

Consider these two apart, you will see the truth of them.

1. The removing the physic before it hath done the work is the greatest judgment, even subtraction of all grace, downright desertion, and nothing more fatal than that to him that cannot recover, or repent himself, without the assistance of that physic ; strokes are not sent by God but as a last and necessary reserve, when a long peace and prosperity have been tried, and not been able to make any impression on sin ; nay, perhaps, have gone over to the enemies' side, taken part with sin, proved its prime friend, furnished it with weapons and ammunition, enabled it to riot, and grow luxurious, and to think of being final conqueror over the Spirit of God, which had it been kept low it could not have done ; and in this case the weight and fortune of the whole battle lies on stripes, and if those be commanded away by God, if called upon a first or second repulse, if all God's thunderbolts, the only remaining hope, have the retreat sounded to them, what a destitute, routed, forlorn estate is the soul then left in ! Had sin been wounded or worsted in the fight, brought to some visible declination, yet this withdrawing of those forces that gave this lusty assault would presently restore it to some heart and courage again, would give it space to rally and recover strength ; and so oft it falls out, that when afflictions have done their work, mortified our excesses, and so march home again to God, in triumph over the enemy, yet within a while, after the smart is forgotten, the very vanquished lust returns, and gets strength again, and, as it is oft in Thucydides' story^c, by that time the trophies are set up, the baffled enemy regains the field and victory. But when on the other side sin, after the combat with

^c [e. g. lib. i. 105.]

S E R M.
X.

[Luke x.
30.]

God's rod, comes off unwounded and hale, and the bruised and battered rod is seen to have retired also, then this is the greatest fleshing of sin imaginable, a perfect bloodless victory over grace, over God's merciful Spirit striving with us; and nothing but haughtiness, and triumph, and obduration is to be looked for after such successes. And this is that sad state of desertion I told you of, a leaving the poor soul, like him that had fallen among thieves, "wounded and half dead;" and not so much as one good Samaritan near to bind up, or pour in the least drop of oil into the wounds; for it is not imaginable that ease, or peace—so calm, so soft, so pusillanimous a creature as affluence or prosperity is—should ever come in to the rescue, should do such valiant acts, when so much stouter, sterner instruments have been so utterly repulsed. And yet in this sad case, the matter is not yet at the highest, but—which was the second part of the true but doleful paradox—this very desertion is the only tolerable mercy now behind. Should God continue stripes, and they still make the sinner more atheistical, this, I say, would but increase the load in hell; every improsperous stroke on the steeled anvil heart will but add to the tale of oppositions and affronts, and resistances, and so to the catalogue of guilts and woes, that sad arrear which another world will see paid distinctly; and so the calling off, or intercepting of these strokes, i. e., these our unhappy advantages and opportunities of enhancing our score, or reckoning, is a kind of mercy still, though but a pitiful one; and if God do not think fit to afford us this mercy, if God do not give over smiting in this case, this is then His greater severity yet.

And so I conceive the impenitent's state brought to an extraordinary issue, that whatsoever God deal out to us, the consequent is of a nature most exquisitely miserable. If He take off His punishments we are in a desperate estate, there is nothing left in any degree probable to do any good on us; and if He do not take them off they do but accumulate and heighten our future torments; the mercy is a cruel mercy, and the severity a cruel severity; the first leaves us in a palsy or lethargy, a dead, stupid, mortified state, and the second increases the fever, adds fuel to the flames. If He strike not, we lie dead in sin, as so many trunks and car-

cases before Him ; if He strike on, He awakes us into oaths and blasphemies, and so still more direful provocations. SERM.
X.

And so, as we are wont to say of an erroneous conscience, in case the commands are lawful which that thinks unlawful, it sins which way soever it moves, by disobedience against the duty of the fifth commandment, and by obedience, against the dictate of conscience ; a sad exigence, no way in the world to be avoided, but by getting out of the prime fundamental infelicity, getting the erroneous conscience informed and rectified. So is it, in a manner, with God towards this unhappy creature of His, that hath not, nor is like to edify under stripes, He wounds it mortally, whatsoever He designeth toward it ; His desertion is cruel, and His not deserting is cruel too. Lay but the scene of this kingdom at this time,—of which I may say it is a stubborn un-nurtured scholar of God's, a very ill proficient under stripes, far worse, and more hopeless now than when first it came under this discipline,—and I shall challenge the prudentest diviner under heaven to tell me rationally what it were but tolerably charitable to wish or pray for it, in respect of the removal of God's judgments. Should we be respited before we be in any degree reformed, thrust out of God's school now we are at the wildest ? This were a woeful change, removing of Canaanites, and delivering us up to the beasts of the field, breaking down the inclosure and letting us into the wilderness, rescuing us out of purgatory and casting us into hell ; and never any *orate pro anima*, prayer for deliverance out of those poetic flames, was so impious, so unkind as this. And whilst I have this prospect before me, methinks I am obliged in very charity to pray, “ Lord keep us in this limbo still, these but transitory afflictions of this life, which in comparison with spiritual desertion, or delivering up to ourselves, is a very cheerful and comfortable condition.” And yet should God thus hearken to that prayer, continue us under this discipline longer, provide a new stock of artillery, and empty another heaven, another magazine and armoury upon us, and all prove but *bruta fulmina* still, another seven years of judgments thrive no better with us than the last sad apprenticeship hath done : O what an enhancement would this

S E R M.
X.

be of our reckoning! What a sad score of aggravations,—that is, of so many mercies and graces, so many wrestlings of His Spirit with sin, all grieved and repelled by us,—and consequently what a pile of guilts toward the accumulating of our flames. What is the natural and the only *salvo* to this intricacy, I suppose it is prone to any man to divine; why, to reform the fundamental error, which can no otherwise be repaired after; to begin, if it be but now, to edify, and to be the better for stripes; to set every man to this one late, but necessary resolution, and not to be content to have done somewhat at home in private, every man in mending one, as they say,—though if that were done uniformly it would serve the turn,—but every man, “whose heart the Lord hath stricken” to be a convert-humble-mourner for the iniquity of his people, for the provocations of this Church and kingdom, and for the “plague of his own heart,”—to go out, and call all the idle by-standers in the field, to draw as many more as it is possible into that engagement, and in this sense to bring into the service a whole army of covenanters and reformers, every man vowing hostility against those wasting sins of his that have thus long kept a tortured, broken kingdom and Church upon the wheel, which can never get off, till we come whole shoals of suppliant and auxiliaries to its rescue; nay, till the sins that first brought it to this execution become the *ἀντίψυχοι*, be delivered up cheerfully to suffer in the stead. That this work be at length begun in some earnest, you will surely give God and His angels, and your friends leave to expect with some impatience; and it were even pity they should any longer be frustrated. If they may at last be so favoured by us, our state will be as great a riddle of mercy and of bliss as it was even now of sadness and horror. Let God do what He please to us for the turning or for the continuing our captivity, it will be matter of infinite advantage and joy to us. If He continue us still upon the cross, after the *consummatum est*, after the work is done, after it is a reformed, purified nation, O that is a super-angelical state, a laying a foundation in that deep, for the higher and more glorious superstructure of joy and bliss in another world; nay, if He should sweep us away in one *akeldama*, this were to the true penitent but the richer

[1 Kings
viii. 38.]

boon, a transplantation only, a sending us out a triumphant, S E R M.
not captive colony to heaven. Or if we be then taken X.
down from the cross, and put into the quiet chambers or
dormitories, if there be seasons of rest and peace yet behind
upon this earth in these our days, O they will be rich sea-
sons of opportunity to bring forth glorious proportionable
fruits of such repentance, a whole harvest of affiance and
faithful dependance upon heaven, a daily continual growth
in grace, in all that is truly Christian; in a word, of ren-
dering us a kingdom of angelical Christians here, and of
saints hereafter; which, whether it be by the way of the
wilderness, or of the Red sea, by all the sufferings that a
villainous world can design, or a gracious Father permit
and convert to our greatest good, God of His infinite
mercy grant us all, even for His Son Jesus Christ His sake,
to whom with the Father, &c.

SOME
PROFITABLE DIRECTIONS
BOTH
FOR PRIEST AND PEOPLE,
IN
TWO SERMONS,
PREACHED BEFORE THESE EVIL TIMES:
THE ONE TO THE CLERGY,
THE OTHER TO THE CITIZENS OF LONDON.
BY
HENRY HAMMOND, D.D.

These two following Sermons were subjoined by the Author to the review of his Annotations on the New Testament, published 1657, with this Advertisement.

TO THE READER.

My fear that these additional notes may fall into some hands, which for want of sufficient acquaintance with the larger volume, may miss receiving the desired fruit from them, hath suggested the affixing this Auctarium of two plain, intelligible discourses; the one prepared for an auditory of the clergy, the other of citizens or laity, and so containing somewhat of useful advice for either sort of readers, to whose hands this volume shall come. That it may be to both proportionably profitable, shall be the prayer of

Your Servant in the Lord,

J. HAMMOND.

SERMON XI.

A SERMON PREACHED TO THE CLERGY OF THE DEANERY OF SHORHAM IN KENT,
AT THE VISITATION BETWEEN EASTER AND WHITSUNTIDE, A.D. 1639, HELD
AT ST. MARY-CRAY.

THE PASTOR'S MOTTO.

2 COR. xii. 14.

For I seek not yours, but you.

THIS text hath somewhat in it seasonable both for the assembly and the times I speak in; for the first, it is the word or motto of an Apostle, *non vestra sed vos*, “not yours but you,” transmitted to us with his apostleship, to be transcribed not into our rings or seals of orders, but our hearts, there, if you please, to be engraven with a diamond, set as the stones in our ephod, the jewels in our breast-plate, gloriously legible to all that behold us. And for the second, consider but the occasion that extorted from our humble saint this so magnificent elogy of himself; you shall find it that which is no small part of the infelicity of his successors at this time, the contempt and vileness of his ministry, a sad joyless subject of an epistle, which would have been all spent in superstruction of heavenly doctrine upon that precious foundation formerly laid, in dressing of those noble plants, that generous vine, that had cost him so much care to plant, but is fain to divert from that to a comfortless parenthesis of two or three chapters long, to vindicate himself from present danger of being despised, and that even by his own children, whom he had begotten in the Gospel, but other *pseudos*, made up all of lying and depraving, had debauched out of all respect to his doctrine, or estimation to his person. I should have given a St. Paul leave to have hoped

SERM.
XI.

Is. v. [2.]

S E R M.
XI.

for better returns from his Corinthians, and now he finds it otherwise, to have expressed that sense in a sharper strain of passion and indignation than Tully could do against Antony^a, when on the same exacerbation he brake out into that stout piece of eloquence, *Quid putem? contemptumne me? non video quid sit in moribus aut vita mea, quod despiciere possit Antonius*. But there was another consideration, which, as it composes our Apostle's style, so it enlarges it with arguments, all that he can invent to ingratiate himself unto them, because this contempt of their Apostle was a most heinous, provoking sin, and withal that which was sure to make his apostleship successless among them. And then, though he can contemn reputation, respect, any thing that is his own, yet he cannot the *quæro vos*, "seeking of them," that office that is intrusted him by Christ, of bringing Corinthians to heaven. Though he can absolutely expose his credit to all the eagles and vultures on the mountains, yet can he not so harden his bowels against his converts, their pining, gasping souls, as to see them with patience posting down this precipice; by despising of him, prostituting their own salvation. And therefore in this ecstatic fit of love and jealousy in the beginning of chap. xi. you may see him resolve to do that that was most contrary to his disposition, boast, and vaunt, and play the fool, give them the whole tragedy of his love, what he had done and suffered for them, by this means to raise them out of that pit, force them out of that hell, that the contempt of his ministry had almost engulfed them in. And among the many topics that he had provided to this purpose, this is one he thought most fit to insist on, his no design on any thing of theirs, but only their souls; their wealth was petty inconsiderable pillage and spoil for an Apostle in his warfare; too poor, inferior gain for him to stoop to; a flock, an army, a whole Church full of ransomed souls, fetched out of the jaws of the lion and the bear, was the only honourable reward for him to pitch design on, *non quæro vestra sed vos*, "I seek not yours, but you."

[1 Sam.
xvii. 34.]

In handling which words, should I allow myself licence to

* [*Quod putem? contemptumne me? non video nec in vita, nec in gratia, nec in rebus gestis nec in hac mea mediocritate ingenii quid despiciere possit Antonius. Cic. Orat. Phil. ii. 1.*]

observe and mention to you the many changes that are rung upon them in the world, my sermon would turn all into satire, my discourse divide itself not into so many parts, but into so many declamations: 1. against them that are neither for the *vos* nor *vestra*, the "you," nor "yours;" 2. those that are for the *vestra*, but not *vos*, the "yours" but "not you;" 3. those that are for the *vos*, "you," but in subordination to the *vestra*, "yours," and at last perhaps meet with a handful of gleanings of pastors that are either for the *vestra*, "yours," in subordination to the *vos*, "you;" or the *vos*, "you," but not *vestra*, "yours." Instead of this looser variety I shall set my discourse these strict limits, which will be just the doctrine and use of this text; 1. consider the τὸ ῥητὸν, the truth of the words in St. Paul's practice; 2. the τὸ λογικόν, the end for which they are here mentioned by him; 3. the τὸ ἠθικόν, how far that practice and that end will be imitable to us that here are now assembled; and then I shall have no more to tempt or importune your patience.

First of the first, St. Paul's practice in seeking of the *vos*, "you." That his earnest pursuit of the good of his auditors' souls, though it have one very competent testimony from this place, ἡδιστα δαπανήσω καὶ ἐκδαπανηθήσομαι ὑπὲρ τῶν ψυχῶν ὑμῶν, "most willingly will I spend and be spent for your souls," even sacrifice my soul for the saving of yours, yet many other places there are which are as punctual and exact for that as this in this text; nay, it is but a ζητῶ, "seek," here, but you shall find it an ἀγωνίζομαι, "contend," in many other places; all the agonistical phrases in use among the ancient Grecians culled out and scattered among his epistles, fetched from Olympus to Sion, from Athens to Jerusalem, and all little enough to express the earnest holy violence of his soul in this καλὸς ἀγὼν, "good fight;" as he calls his ministry, running and wrestling with all the difficulties in the world, and no βραβεῖον or ἀθλον, "price" or "reward" of all that industry and that patience, but only the ὑμᾶς, "you," gaining so many colonies to heaven. But then for the *non vestra*, "not yours," his absolute disclaiming of all pay for this his service; this text and the verses about it are more punctual than any that are to be met with. In other places he can think fit the soldier, i. e. minister, "should not war

ver. 15.

[1 Cor. ix. 25; Phil. i. 30; Col. ii. 1; 1 Thess. ii. 2; Heb. xii. 4.]

[1 Tim. vi. 12; 2 Tim. iv. 7.]

[1 Cor. ix. 7, 9; 1 Tim. v. 17, 18.]

S E R M. at his own charges," that the "ox's mouth should not be
 XI. muzzled," and that the "labourer should be thought worthy
 of his reward," and a "double honour for some of those
 [Heb. xii. labourers," the *πρωτοτόκια*, "elder brother's portion," the
 16.] privilege of primogeniture for some, and that consisting not
 1Tim.v.17. only in a *προστασία*, "precedence," but *διπλῆ τιμῆ*, "double
 honour," and that of maintenance too, as well as dignity.
 But in this chapter to these Corinthians the Apostle re-
 nounces receiving, or looking after any such revenue, or en-
 couragement to his apostleship; what he saith here *οὐ ζητῶ*,
 "I seek not," for the present, he specifies both for time past
 ver. 13. and to come, *οὐ κατενάρκησα*, "I have not," and *οὐ καταναρ-*
 ver. 14. *κήσω*, "I will not;" i. e., saith Hesychius^b, that best under-
 stood the Hellenists' dialect, *κατενάρκησα*, *ἐβάρυνα*, it signi-
 ver. 16. fies to lay burdens on others, and the Apostle in that very
 ver. 17. word *οὐ κατεβάρησα ὑμᾶς*, "I have not laid weights on you;"
 and yet further, *οὐκ ἐπλεονέκτησα*^c, "I have not coveted," all
 to this same purpose, that St. Paul, on some special consi-
 derations, would never finger one penny of the Corinthians'
 wealth, but still used some other means to sustain himself,
 that he might be sure not to be burdensome to them. What
 these means were will not be easy to say exactly, yet I think
 one may collect them to be one or more of these three:
 1. "Labouring with his own hands," earning his maintenance
 on the week-days by his trade of making tents, as we read, and
 Acts xviii. that particularly at Corinth; 2. receiving pensions of other
 3. Churches, which furnished him with a subsistence, though he
 ver. 1. had none from Corinth; and that is more than a conjecture,
 he mentions it himself, and calls it the "robbing of other
 [2 Cor. Churches, taking wages of them to do your service;" and per-
 xi. 8.] haps, 3. being relieved by some Christians that accompanied
 and ministered to his necessities; for that was the practice of
 other Apostles, whatever it was of St. Paul; and that I con-
 1 Cor. ix. 5. ceive the meaning of that mistaken phrase, "Have we not
 power," *ἀδελφὴν γυναῖκα περιάγειν*, "to carry about a be-
 lieving or a sister woman," or matron, (for so *ἀδελφός*, "a
 brother," is every where a believer, and *ἀδελφὴ*, "sister," is
 but the varying the gender or sex,) as many others did, to

^b [Hesych. Lex. in verb. p. 508.]

^c [μή τινα ὦν ἀπέσταλκα πρὸς ὑμᾶς, δι' αὐτοῦ ἐπλεονέκτησα ὑμᾶς;]

maintain and defray the charge of their journey, that so they might *μὴ ἐργάζεσθαι*, "forbear working, and yet eat and drink," not starve themselves by preaching the Gospel. Such an one was Phœbe, who therefore is called *διάκονος*, "a servant of the Church of Cenchrea," i. e., one that out of "her wealth," *διηκόνει*, "ministered to the Apostles," and sustained them, and particularly St. Paul at Corinth, as will appear if you put together that second verse of Rom. xvi. and the date or subscription in the conclusion of the epistle. In ver. 2. she is called *προστάτις πολλῶν καὶ αὐτοῦ ἐμοῦ, προστάτις*, i. e., *πρόξενος*, "entertainer" and "succourer of many," and of St. Paul himself, and this it seems at Corinth, for there she was with him, and from thence she went on St. Paul's errand to carry this epistle to the Romans, as it is in the subscription. The same he affirms distinctly of the brethren, i. e., the "faithful that came from Macedonia," *ὑστέρημά μου προσανεπλήρωσαν*, "they supplied my wants." And so still the Corinthians had the Gospel for nothing. By these three means the Apostle kept himself from being burdensome to them. But you will wonder, perhaps, why St. Paul was so favourable to these Corinthians, so strictly and almost superstitiously careful not to be burdensome or chargeable to them. This I confess was a receding from a right of his apostleship, and more than will be obligatory or exemplary to us; nay, more than he would yield to, as matter of prescription to himself, in other Churches, for there, it is apparent, he made use of that privilege; but then it is still the more strange he did it not at Corinth. The reason I can but guess at to be this; the Church of Christ in other parts at that time, particularly in Jerusalem, was in some distress, and it was committed to St. Paul's trust to get a contribution out of all other parts for them; this contribution is called by an unusual phrase, *χάρις*, "grace," I know not how many times in chap. viii. of this epistle, which I conceive the very word which in Latin and English is called charity, *caritas*, ἀπὸ τῆς χάριτος, in a sense that Aristotle uses *χάρις*^d; and as it is all one with *κοινωνία*, "communication," "distribution," "ministering to the saints," and as in the benediction *χάρις*, "grace," and *κοινωνία*, "communion," are words of the like importance.

S E R M.
 XI.
 ver. 6.
 ver. 4.

Rom. xvi. 1.

[2 Cor.
 xi. 9.]

[ver. 1, 4,
 6, 7, 9, 19.]

ver. 4.

[2 Cor.
 xiii. 13.]

^d καθ' ἣν ὁ ἔχων λέγεται χάριν ὑπουργεῖν τῷ δεομένῳ. Rhet. ii. 7.

SERM.
XI.

Where by the way let me put you in mind of one special part of the minister's charge, wherever he officiates by doctrine and by cheerful example, by preaching the duty and the benefits and setting them lively copies of it, to raise up the charity of his people, and from that to see to the liberal provision of all that are in want in that place; yea, and if need be, that it overflow its own banks (if they be narrow) and extend to the watering of others also. In the primitive times the offertory was the constant means of doing this, no man of ability ever coming to the Sacrament without remembering the Corban, and out of that treasury the *προεστὰς*, or "priest," being enabled^c, *πᾶσιν ἁπλῶς ἐν χρείᾳ οἷσι κηδεμὸν γίνεται*, "became the common guardian of all that were in want;" the weight of which task was so great in the Apostles' times that they were fain to erect a new order in the Church to assist them particularly in this, *διακονεῖν τραπέζας*, "to furnish tables," i. e., distribute maintenance out of that bank to all that were in need. I wish heartily our care and our practice may not fall too short from such a venerable example. Well, there being need more than ordinary at that time for our Apostle to quicken his Corinthians' liberality to the poor brethren of other Churches, was the reason, I conceive, of his renouncing all part of their liberality to himself, inflaming their charity by that means, shewing them first in himself a pattern and example of bounty, bestowing the diviner food of their very souls upon them, as freely as the sun extends his beams or the stars their influence, pouring down heaven upon them in a shower, and yet to exceed the clouds in their bounty, never thinking of any means to draw from them to his own sphere any the least tribute out of their fatness, abundantly satisfied if those clouds that have been so enriched by him will melt or sweat out some of their charity to others, give poor Christians leave to be the better for their fulness. Having given you an account of the Apostle's practice in this *non vestra*, renouncing, disclaiming any profit or gain from his labours among the Corinthians, I proceed to enquire why he boasts of it in this place, and keeps it not secret betwixt himself and God, but in several phrases mentions it over and over again, οὐ

[2 Cor. xii. 14, 16, 17.]

^c Just. Mart. Apol. [i. c. 65. p. 83, A.]

κατενάρκησα, οὐ κατεβάρησα, οὐκ ἐπλεονέκτησα, "I have not overcharged you, I have not burdened you, I have not coveted" any thing from you, and οὐ ζητῶ, "I seek not yours."

SERM.
XI.

The plain truth is, the Apostle is fain to boast, to recite, and rehearse his merits towards them, to demonstrate how, above what strict duty exacted, he hath obliged them, and all little enough to vindicate his ministry, to bring them into any tolerable opinion of him. He had been reproached by them, counted weak, a fool, in the former chapter, and by that means he is compelled thus to glory. The thing that I would have you make matter of meditation from hence, is the constancy of the devil, and his indefatigable perseverance in this grand *μεθοδεία τῆς πλάνης*, "artifice of deceit," in stealing away men's hearts from their Apostles and pastors, and the mighty successfulness that this meets with, debauching whole nations and Churches at once, particularly all Corinth, —a most numerous populous city of forward Christians, and metropolis of Achaia,—from all love, respect and estimation of their spiritual father, and that within few years after their spiritual birth, by that very Paul begotten in the Gospel. Thus is the present ministry of this kingdom, that very same subordination of bishops, presbyters, and deacons, that so near the Apostles as in Ignatius's time could not be violated without profaneness, and even disclaiming of Christianity, —by him most clearly and distinctly set down almost in every of those epistles, which Vedelius^f at Geneva, a severe Aristarchus, could not doubt but they were his,—that ministry of ours, the very same that planted the protestant religion among us, watered it with their blood, our Pauls and our Apollos's too, to whom God by that prolific teeming mar-

ver. 11.

[Eph. iv.
14.]

^f [The book referred to is entitled 'Apologia pro Ignatio, et Versio ac Notæ ad opera ejus,' Genève, 1623. Pearson in his *Vindiciæ Ignatianæ* (Præem. c. 3,) says of it, 'Nicolaus Vedelius Professor Genevensis rem totam ad examen revocavit, Apologiam pro Ignatio scripsit, novam editionem adornavit, exercitationibus et appendice epistolas illustravit. Tres igitur ille Latinas omnino rejecit quod nimis aperta ipsarum suppositio ei videretur. Reliquas duo-

decim in duos libros distinxit, quorum prior continet epistolas genuinas, posterior supposititias. Genuinas tantum agnoscit septem illas ab Eusebio memoratas; reliquas quinque aut perperam inscriptas aut plane supposititias esse statuit. Præterea in ipsas septem genuinas non pauca irrepsisse stellerum audacissimorum vestigia testatur, quæ notulis quibusdam in margine positis jugulavit.—Patr. Apost., ad calc., tom. ii. p. 267.]

SER M. tyrdom of theirs hath since raised up a most numerous,
 XI. learned, orthodox seed, ready, I doubt not, in defence of our
 religion, to fill up the sufferings of their fathers; to dye their
 garments in the same winepress; to run, if occasion should
 be, and crowd into that fiery chariot, and there like the
 ancient ἀποβάται in Athenæus^s, fight, and shoot out of those
 [Jude 3.] warm seats, καὶ ἀγωνίζεσθαι, “and contend earnestly for that
 faith that was once delivered to the saints” in this kingdom:
 this so learned, puissant, orthodox ministry of ours;—yet how
 is it by the sons and daughters of their love, their sweat, their
 prayers, their tears, their lungs, their bowels, sorry am I to
 say, by some sons of the very prophets, defamed and vilified?
 I speak not this either to raise or envenom any passion in my
 fellow brethren, but, God knows, out of two other more useful
 designs; 1. from the common fate of others, and even this
 Apostle before us, to leave off wondering at this act of God’s
 providence in permitting, and Satan’s malice in attempting
 [1 Pet. iv. 12.] it. “Think it not strange,” saith the Apostle, “concerning
 the fiery trial;” this I cannot call by that title, it is rather
 the airy trial, a blast of poisonous vapour, that Satan in a
 kind of hypochondriacal fit hath belched out against the
 Church, yet are we to think as little strange of it; it is as
 familiar for that mouth of hell to breathe out smoke as fire,
 [Mat. xi. 19; Luke vii. 35; John vii. 20; viii. 48, 52; x. 20.] slanders as slaughters against the Church; Christ was de-
 famed for a glutton, and one that had a devil, crowned with
 reproaches as well as thorns, first wounded with the sword
 of the tongue, and then after with nails and spears, made
 viler than Barabbas by the people’s cry before condemned
 [Mat. x. 25.] to the cross by Pilate; and when the Master of the house
 hath been patient to be called Beelzebub, well may a disciple
 of His retinue digest the title; and therefore methinks St.
 [1 Cor. iv. 13.] Paul can write it calmly, “we are become,” ὡς περικαθάρ-
 ματα, “as the off-scouring,” and πάντων περίψημα, it is a
 phrase of mighty intimation, like a man that in a plague-
 time is chosen out, the vilest, unsavouriest in the city, carried
 about in the guise of nastiness, then whipt, then burnt in a
 ditch, or cast into the sea, every man giving him a γένου
 περίψημα, and γένου κάθαρμα, “Let the curse of the whole
 city light on thee.” And thus, saith the Apostle, are we

^s [Athenæi Deipnos., lib. xiv. p. 638, C.; et annot. p. 801. ed. Casaubon.]

become, we Apostles, we ministers; yea, and *θέατρον τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ ἀγγέλοις καὶ ἀνθρώποις*, "a spectacle to the world, and angels, and men," *θέατρον*, "the theatre" for all [1 Cor. iv. 9.] the *θηριομαχίαι κατ' ἀνθρώπων*, as some, I say not how well, have lightly changed the phrase, "combating with men as with lions and bears," or else *θέατρον*, the stage and scene for the whole world of fiends and men to act their tragedies upon, and no manner of news in all this. Even among the heathen, the grammarians^h tell us, that never any comedy of Aristophanes took so well as his *Clouds*, that was spent all in reproaching of Socrates, and under that title involved the whole condition of learning; though through Alcibiades' faction, *excidit*, it miscarried, missed its applause once or twice, yet when men were left to their own humours it was cried up extremely. And therefore not to think it strange, that is the first thing; yea, and secondly, to make it matter of rejoicing and triumphing, of a *χαίρετε καὶ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε*, a plain shouting for joy, Mat. v. 12. or, as we render it, exceeding gladness, that they are worthy of this degree of Christian preferment, to suffer shame for Christ's name; that woe of Christ's we have been generally secure and safe from, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you," we have had in all ages friends, good store, that will not let this curse light on us; and blessed be God, if it prove *ἡμεῖς ἔσχατοι*, "we of the last age" peculiarly, that that great blessing is reserved for. *Μακίριοι ὅταν ὀνειδίσωσιν καὶ διώξωσι, καὶ εἴπωσι πᾶν πονηρὸν ῥῆμα*, "blessed are ye when men shall revile and persecute and say every evil word against you;" but withal let us be sure to take along with us the *ψευδόμενοι*, "falsely," that follows, that it be our innocence that is thus reviled. The devil is most ready to do it then, being *κατήγορος τῶν ἀδελφῶν*, "accuser of the brethren," the best Christians, that he may exercise two of his attributes at once, accuser and liar both. If he do not so, I am sure it will be small matter of rejoicing to us, small comfort in "suffering as a thief," saith the Apostle, though all joy in suffering "as a Christian;" and so small comfort in the *ὀνειδίσωσιν*, being reproached, unless the *ψευδόμενοι*, "falsely," be joined with it. And therefore you must add that caution

^h [Grammat. Aristoph. *ὑπόθεσις δ. τῆς ὅλης ποιήσεως κάλλιστον εἶναι φησι ad Nub. ed. Dind. τὸ δὲ δρᾶμα τοῦτο καὶ τεχνικώτατον.*]

S E R M. XI. to your comfort, that they be your good, at least your justifiable deeds, that be evil spoken of, or else it will not be a *sic prophetas*, the prophets were used like you. The clergyman that in such a time as this, when the mouth of hell is open against us, shall think fit to open any other mouth to join in the cry against the Church, to give life or tongue to any scandalous sin, and set that to its *clamans de terra*, "crying from the ground;" that shall with any one real crime give authority to all the false pretended ones that are laid to the charge of our calling; that by drunkenness or incontinence, by luxury or sloth, by covetousness or griping, by insolence or pride, by oaths or uncomely jesting, by contention or intemperate language, by "repaying evil for evil, or railing for defamations;" shall exasperate this raging humour, and give it true nourishment to feed on; what doth he but turn broiler and *boutefeu*, make new libels against the Church, and by that means persuade credulous, seducible spectators, that all are true that have been made already. I know not what climax or aggravation of woes is heavy enough for that man; all the lamentations and *θρηνηδίαι* in the Bible, "Alas my brother," will not reach unto it; that of the "millstone about the neck," or the *Melius si nunquam natus esset*, "it had been better if he had never been born," are the fittest expressions for him. St. Paul for the vindicating his ministry from vile-ness, was fain to mention all the good deeds he had ever done among them. O let not us bring our evil to remembrance by acting them over afresh, but think it most abundantly sufficient that we have already thus contributed to the defaming of our calling. He that hath done so formerly, that by the guilt of any one scandalous sin (and it need not be of the first magnitude to deserve that title in a minister) hath contributed aught to the vilifying of the whole order, it is now time for him to see what he hath done, been a troubler of Israel, set the whole kingdom in an animosity against the clergy; and when will he be able to weep enough in secret to wash out this stain, incorporate into the very woof of our robe? I shall no further aggravate the sin upon him than to prepare him to seek out for some remedy, and to that end to bear me company to my last particular, how far we are concerned in the transcribing St. Paul's pattern, how far that

[Mat. v.
12.]

[Gen. iv.
10.]

[1 Pet. iv.
9.]

[1 Kings
xiii. 30;
Mat. xviii.
6.]

[Mat. xxvi.
24.]

[1 Kings
xviii. 17.]

practice and that end is imitable by us that are here assembled. SERM.
XI.

This practice consists of two parts, a positive and a negative. The positive part of this practice, the *ἀλλὰ ὑμᾶς*, "but you," hath no case of scruple or difficulty in it; the "you" are the Corinthians' souls. As in other places the souls signify the persons, so "many souls went out of Egypt¹," i. e., so many men; so here, by way of exchange or quittance on the other side, "you," i. e., your souls, according to that of Pythagoras^j of old, *ἡ ψυχὴ σὺ*, "thy soul is thou." And then add the *ζητῶ*, "I seek," to it, and it gives you the uncontradicted duty of a minister, to be a seeker of souls, the spiritual Nimrod, the "hunter before the Lord," hunter of men, hunter of souls: and that indeed as wild and untameable, subtle a game, as any wilderness can yield; so unwilling to come into our toils, so wise in their generation to escape our snares, so cunning to delude all our stratagems of bringing them to heaven, that a man may commonly labour a whole night and catch nothing. "He that winneth," or taketh "souls, is wise," saith the Wise Man. A piece of wisdom it is not suddenly learned, a game wherein all the wisdom of the world, the *φρόνησις σαρκὸς*, the "prudence of the flesh," and the cunning of hell, are all combined in the party against us, for this *ἀμφισβήτημα θεοῦ καὶ δαιμόνων*, as Synesius^k calls the soul, "this stake betwixt God and devils." And the game must be very carefully played, and dexterously managed on our side, if we think ever to win it out of their hands. The manner of pastors, as of shepherds among us, is much changed from what it was in the eastern parts of the world, in Greece and in Jewry. The sheep, saith the philosopher in his time, would be led by a green bough^l, and follow whithersoever you would have them; and so in the Scripture is still mention of leading of sheep, and of the people like sheep; but now they must be driven and followed, yea, and sometime by worrying brought into the fold, or else there is no getting them into the fairest loveliest pasture. The sheep

[Gen. x. 9.]

[Luke v.
5.]
Prov. xi. 30.Ps. lxxvii.
[20.]

¹ [Gen. xxvi. 46; the words are, "came into Egypt."]

^j [Hierocl. in Aur. Carm. Pythag., in ver. 24.]

^k [*καὶ προσέθηκεν, ὡς ἠμφισβήτησαν ἡμῖν πρὸς θεὸν δαίμονες.* Synesii Epist. 57. adv. Andronicum.]

^l [Platon. Phædr., p. 238, C.]

SER M. XI.
 were then a hearing and a discerning sort of creatures, could hear the shepherd, and know his voice from all others, and when the thief and robber came, the sheep did not hear them; but now it is quite contrary, either not hearing at all, profaneness and dissoluteness hath possessed our souls with the

[John x. [3,] 8.]

[Rom. xi. 8.] *πνεῦμα κατανύξεως*, "spirit of slumber," torpor, absolute deafness, that all our hearing of sermons is but a slumber of such a continuance; or else having no ears for any but the thief and robber, if any come on that errand to rob us of our charity, of our obedience, of our meek and quiet spirits, and infuse calumnies, animosities, railings, qualities that *ipso facto* work metamorphoses in us, change sheep into wolves; his voice shall be heard, and admired, and deified, like Herod's, "the voice of God and not of man," though nothing be so contrary to God or godliness as that voice. In this and many other considerations it is that the *ζητῶ*, "I seek," here is so necessary. All our pains and industry, diligence and sagacity, are little enough to bring men into the true way to heaven, so many bye ways on every side inviting and flattering us out of it, so much good company persuading, nay, so many false leaders directing us into error, that a minister had need fasten himself into the ground, like a Mercury's post in this division of ways, and never leave holloaing, and calling, and disabusing of passengers with a "This is the way, walk in it;" or in the Apostle's words, "Follow peace with all men,"—*διώκετε*, "pursue" and follow it,—"and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord;" peace and holiness, two such strangers, such prodigies in the world,—having taken their leaves so solemnly with Astræa for heaven,—that unless they be followed with a *διώκετε*, "full speed," as in a hue and cry, there is small hope of overtaking or bringing them back again to the earth. And yet without them heaven must be fain to turn an uninhabitable part of the world, *pars globi incognita*, as empty of saints as it is full of glory; without them *nemo Deum*, "no man shall see God." Could I imagine it possible for me to be instrumental to you in this work, to advise or direct you in this course, this method of seeking your people's souls, so that God might one day find them in this temper, *in pace et sanctitate*, "in peace and holiness," I should put off all the reverence that I bear to this assembly, all considera-

[Acts xii. 22.]

[Heb. xii. 14.]

tion of the business of this day, and venture to be unseasonable that I might be useful to you in this point. But I know there be no general rules that can promise themselves such a successfulness; the variety of tempers must have different accommodations, and well if after using of all means we can be able to save any. The way most probable in my conceit is the bringing men acquainted with the difference betwixt the first and second covenant; then pitching on the second, as that that belongs to us Christians, to shew them the condition of this covenant in the gross, the *νόμος πίστεως*, "law of faith," made up of commands as well as promises, all the gospel precepts that join together to complete that codex, that law of repentance, self-denial, charity, the new creature, which St. Paul interprets *πίστις ἐνεργουμένη δι' ἀγάπης*, "faith consummate by love," or, as St. James, *τελειουμένη δι' ἔργων*, "perfected by works," sincere, impartial, constant, though not un sinning, perfect obedience. And then, if you will have it in the retail, the sermon in the mount will give it you completely. Were men but possessed that those duties there mentioned, with the *ego autem*, "but I say to you," were duties indeed, not only phrases and forms of speech, that they are not only by grace made possible to a Christian,—an easy yoke, light burden, and a command nigh unto thee, i. e. *οὐχ ὑπέρογκος*, as the LXXII render that place of Deuteronomy from whence it is cited,—but also most indispensably necessary, without which *nemo Deum*, "none shall see God," God's oath being gone out against all others, with a *nunquam introibunt*, "they shall never enter into His rest;" it would, I conceive, within a while be found necessary either to give over pretending toward heaven, or else to observe those gesses^m, that alone of all others can bring us thither; and so the world of Christians be once more divided, as Epiphaniusⁿ saith it was in the first ages, not into orthodox and heretical,—for those are titles that every man will apply as he lists, the one to himself and his adherents, the other to all others that he disfavours,—nor again into spiritual and carnal,—for those were abused too in Tertullian's time, as soon as ever he turned Montanist, then straight *nos spiri-*

S E R M.
X I.[Rom. iii.
27.][Gal. v. 6;
Jas. ii. 22.]

Mat. v., vi.

[Mat. xi.
30.][Rom. x. 8.
[Deut. xxx.
14.][Heb. iii.
11.]^m [See above, p. 30, note.]ⁿ [S. Epiphani. adv. Hær., lib. i. c. 5. See above, p. 166.]

S E R M. *tuales*, "we spiritual," and all others *animales psychici*^o, mere
 XI. "animal men,"—but into *εὐσεβεῖς καὶ ἀσεβεῖς*, "godly and ungodly livers," and so impiety, injustice, and uncharitableness be the grand heresies to be anathematized, and peace and holiness the most orthodox Christian tenets in our religion. But then for the achieving this aim, let me tell you that men must have more than sermons to lead them; the visible preachings of your lives must *συνεργεῖν*, "co-operate," and join in the work of drawing sinners to God, or else it will hardly prove successful. You know the story in Gellius, when that excellent counsel was given at Lacedæmon by one that was *vita defamatissimus*, "infamous for a very ill life," they were to take the counsel out of his mouth, and appoint a good man to deliver it, though a worse oratorⁿ. Two things the gospel was first planted by, teaching and miracles, and those miracles in Scripture phrase are called "works," and "mighty works." Now though the miracles be outdated, yet the *ἔργα*, "works," in the other sense, must never be antiquated, it is they that the *δύναμις*, "power," belongs to, the efficacy, and force, and mightiness of our preaching, which if it be not added to our sermons, our threats will be taken for mormos, our promises for delusions, our exhortations out of Scripture for acts of tyranny and oppression, laying those burdens on other men's shoulders which we will not touch with our own fingers. But if our lives bear witness to our doctrine, by letting them see us write those copies with our own hands which we require them to transcribe, then, as Polybius^a saith of Philopœmen, that good orator and good man, (and the goodness of the man was the special piece of his oratory,) *οὐ μόνον ἀποτρέπει, ἀλλὰ καὶ παρορμᾷ*, "we shall not only persuade but enforce our auditors;" this is the only honest way of insinuating ourselves into our people's affections, by letting them see how hearty our exhortations are, by our zeal to observing them ourselves; by shewing what miracles of reformation the Gospel is able to work on them, by an essay of its efficacy on our own breasts. And if this positive part of St. Paul's practice be perfectly conned, the negative will fol-

[Mat.xxiii.
4.]

^o [Vid. Tertull. de Monogamia, p. 255, passim.]

ⁿ [Aul. Gell. Noct. Att., lib. xviii. 3.]

^a [Polyb. xi. 10.]

S E R M.
XI.

low, the *non vestra*, "not yours." He that heartily and affectionately seeks the souls of his auditors, will never pitch design on any thing else that is theirs; the crown that belongs to him that converteth many to righteousness, is too rich to receive lustre or commendation from any inferior accession, or acquisition from any thing that the *vestra*, "yours," can signify. He that hath any consideration of the *vestra*, "yours," in this work of a pastor, is the *μισθωτὸς*, the "mercenary hireling," that Christ so prejudiceth with the *φεύγει* and *οὐ μέλει προβάτων*, "he flies, and he cares not for the sheep," from no other topic of proof, but only *ὅτι μισθωτὸς*, "because he is an hireling." And of what ill consequence it was foreseen this would be in the Church, you may conjecture by that one act of the administration of God's providence in this behalf, constantly observable through all ages. That no minister of God's might be forced to such viler submissions, driven out of that apostolical, generous ingenuity, ("freely have you received, freely give,") into Gehazi's meanness and mercenariness, selling and bartering that sacred function, the gifts of the Holy Ghost, or the exercise of those gifts—it is, no doubt, that God's providence hath in all ages so liberally provided for endowing of the Church. Among that people where He Himself so immediately presided, that, saith Josephus^r, it could not be called by the style of any other nation, monarchy, aristocracy, but *θεοκρατεία*, neither administered by kings or senates, but immediately by God Himself; there the Levites, without any of their own arts or pursuits, were much the richest tribe of the twelve, lost nothing by having no portion among their brethren: not to mention their parts in sacrifices and offerings, and their forty-eight cities with suburbs, made over to them, the Lord's being their inheritance, i. e., the instating the tithes upon them was demonstratively as large a revenue to them, as, supposing an equal division, the remainder could be to any other tribe, yea, and larger too, as much as the twelve tenth parts which they received exceeded the nine that remained to each tribe after the decimation; i. e., by one third part of what was left to any tribe. And among Christians in the infancy of the Church, before the ministry was endowed with any certain portion,

[Dan. xii.
3.]

John x. 13.

[Mat. x. 8.]

Num.
xxxv. [7.]^r [Joseph. contr. Apion., lib. ii. c. 16.]

- S E R M. XI. yet sure the *κοινωνία τῶν ἁγίων*, "the Christians selling their lands, and bringing the price of them to the Apostles' feet," though not for them to inclose, yet for them to partake of, as well as to distribute, kept them from any necessity of the *quæro vestra*, seeking that which was other men's. Nay, where that provision was not to be expected, as in their travels and journeyings, yet the staff and the scrip are interdicted the Apostles, and under those two phrases, the *quæro vestra*, the making any gain by the Gospel, the staff in that place was, according to the custom of the Jews, *baculus paupertatis*, "the staff of poverty," which Jacob intimates when he saith, "with my staff I went over Jordan," i. e., in another phrase, a poor Syrian ready to perish, particularly *ῥάβδος πτωχείας*, the sign of a mendicant,—which the Germans call at this day, *battelstab*, from the Greek *αἰτεῖν*, this begging or craving staff,—and this, with the scrip, was forbidden the Apostles in St. Matthew, though in Mark's relation, another kind of staff, the staff for travel, be permitted them. To shew God's absolute dislike of *quæro vestra* in Apostles, even before any certain provision was made for their maintenance, God, that "feeds the young ravens," sustains the destitute,—and believe it, His exchequer is no contemptible bank, His table in the wilderness is served with quails and manna,—undertaking to provide for them sufficiently by some other means. And since by that same providence the Church is now endowed again in most parts of Christendom, and God's severe denunciations against sacrilege set as an hedge of thorns about Levi's portion, sure to prick, and fester, and rankle in his flesh that shall dare to break in upon it, what is this but still a continued expression of God's dislike of the *quæro vestra*, who hath therefore made over His own portion on us, that therewith we might be contented, and provided for, without the *πλεονεκτεῖν*, without letting loose our hands or our appetites on other men's possessions? You see then, by the way, the error of those, that from this practice of the Apostle are ready to prescribe us absolute poverty, that will have all the lawful proper revenues of the Church prohibited, under the *vestra*, and then claiming of tithes or any other ecclesiastic endowment shall get under that style, and the Apostle's *non quæro* urged for a precedent against us; with
- [Acts ii. 42; iv. 32 —37.]
- Mat. x. 10.
- [Gen. xxxii. 10; Deut. xxvi. 5.]
- [Mark vi. 8.]
- [Ps. cxlvii. 9.]
- [2 Cor. xiii.] 17.

how little law or logic you will perceive, when you remember that the tithe, or what else is consecrated, is by the very laws of this kingdom (to derive the pedigree no further) as much the minister's own, held by the same tenure of donation first, then of parliamentary confirmation, that any man's inheritance descends unto him, and therefore to demand therein is no more a *quæro vestra* than to demand a rent of a tenant; in a word, a direct *mea*, not *vestra*, a "right," and not a "gratuity." Nay, the learned Jews have gone further²³; that if the tithe be not paid the whole heap becomes God's portion, and cite it as a speech of God's, that if "thou pay the tithe it is thy corn, if not, it is God's corn," and therefore, saith he, it is said, "therefore I will return and take away My corn in the time thereof, and My wine in the season thereof;" like that land that is held *in capite*, with a rent reserved, the non-payment of the rent or homage is the forfeiting of the tenure. But I desire not to follow this Jew in his meditation, but rather to come home to ourselves, and not only to interdict ourselves, the *quæro vestra*, but even regulate us in the *quæro nostra*, purge out of this assembly whatever may savour of the Jew, all griping, or rigour, or sourness, or *summum jus*, even in the *quæro nostra*, "seeking that that is our own." To this purpose in the first place, not to seek all that is our own; though it were not a fault in the lay Pharisee, (*ἀποδεκατοῦτε ἡδύοσμον*), "to pay tithe of cummin," and the smallest herb, yet perhaps it may be in the priest to require it; a fault not of injustice, or the *quæro vestra*, but of sordidness and meanness in the *quæro mea*. Aristotle¹ I am sure would condemn it under that style of *φειδωλοὶ, γλισχροὶ, κίμβικες*, too much poorness and tenuity of mind, *τῇ δόσει ἐλλείπειν, τῶν δὲ ἀλλοτρίων οὐκ ἐφίεσθαι*, "though not in desiring other men's," the *quæro vestra* in the text, yet in want or defect of that liberality, ingenuity, that is required of the moral man, which he there specifies by the *κυμνοπρίστης*, "exactness" even to the partition of a cummin seed, a fault, if observable in a heathen, then sure censurable in a Christian, and in a minister vile and scandalous. When this is resolved against in the first place, as illiberal, degenerate, and beggarly, contrary to that generosity and superiority of

²³ R. Bechai on Deut. xiv. [comment. in Legem.]

¹ Eth. iv. l. [39.]

S E R M. mind that our profession should be thought to infuse into us ;
 XI. the next thing I must require of you in the *quæro mea* is a

[1 Cor. vii.
31.]

general unconcernedness in the things of this world, "using the world as if we used it not," possessing the wealth we have, but not being possessed by it,—for then it turns our devil or familiar,—as able to part with it at God's call as to receive it at His gift, pouring it out upon every His intimation, seeking and projecting for advantages to be the better for this false mammon by being "rich in good works," and when we see it a parting from us of its own accord, taking a cheerful unconcerned leave of it, retaining so much of the sceptic as the *ἀταραξία* amounts to, an untroubledness with these inferior events, and of the stoic or wise man in Antoninus', as *οὐ ποιεῖν τραγῳδίας*, "to act no passionate, lugubrious, tragical" part, whatever secular provocation cross us on the stage. Then thirdly, an entire contentedness with our lot, that duty of the last commandment, which is absolutely required to the *non quæro vestra*, or as our Apostle interprets himself, the *οὐκ ἐπλεονέκτησα*, not, as we render it, "not making a gain," but not desiring, coveting any thing that is another's. To this purpose excellently Epictetus^x of old, that he that tastes and carves to himself of those dishes only that are set before him, reaches not after those that are out of his distance, *αὐτὸς ὄντως θεῶν συμπότης*, is fit for a guest at God's table ; which you may make, if you please, a periphrasis of a minister. Did I not fear that this were a duty of too great perfection for some of my auditors, an *unusquisque non potest capere*, "every one cannot receive it," I should go on with that divine philosopher, that he that abstains from that which is set before him, contemns that riches that comes knocking at his door, *οὐ μόνον συμπότης τῶν θεῶν, ἀλλὰ καὶ συνάρχων*, "is not only a guest at His board, but a companion in His throne," and that is the pitch that I would commend unto you, if I might hope you would endeavour after it. But then fourthly, and lastly, the *minimum quod sic*,—that that I must not leave you till you have promised me, wrestle till break of day, except you will thus bless me,—the

[Mat. xix.
11.]

[Gen.
xxxii. 26.]

^u [ὡς μὴ καταχρόμενοι. E. V. "as not abusing it." Hammond's version is now generally adopted.]

^v [Vide Antonini ad Seipsum, iii. 7.]
^x [Epicteti Enchiridion, cap. 21.]

lowest degree that can be reconcilable or compatible with an Apostle, is the not suffering your *quæro vestra*, "your hope" or design of secular advantages, gaining of gratuities, gaining of applause, to have any the least influence on your preaching, to intermix never so little in your seeking of souls. This is the *καπηλεύειν τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ*, "dashing" or "embasing the word of God," corrupting it with our unworthy mixtures, making it instrumental to our gain or popularity, the meanest office, the vilest submission in the world. I remember a note of Procopius^y on 2 Kings, that Elisha sending his servant to cure the Shunamite's child, forbids him to pass any compliment with any by the way; I had thought it had been for speed, but he saith, ἦδει τὸ φιλότιμον ἢ δὲ φιλοδοξία τὴν θαυματουργίαν κωλύει, "he knew his popular humour, and that popularity hinders working of miracles;" and then by the same reason we may conclude that that must needs enervate the word of God, and make it heartless and lifeless in our hands, and the minister that is given to it will hardly ever work wonders in the curing or recovering of souls. But that servant you know had another fault, *φιλαργυρία*, "desire of money," ἢ τῆς *κακίας μητρόπολις*, "the mother city whence all wickedness comes forth," said Bion^z of old; and Timon^a puts them both together, *ἀπληστία καὶ φιλοδοξία τῶν κακῶν στοιχεῖα*, "insatiate love of wealth and honour are the elements of evil;" and it is strange to see how truly those wise men were called *vates*, what prophets they were, what direct satires those words of theirs are against the times we live in. Our *ἀπληστία* and *φιλοδοξία*, "covetousness and popularity," are the elements of all the ruin, the seeds of all the desolation that is threatened against this Church; some of us by the notorious scandalous guilt of those two crimes, tempting rash uncharitable spectators to resolve that those sins are the *formalis ratio* of a clergyman, accidents of the essence, and inseparable from the order; and it is not the illogicalness of the inference that will excuse them that have joined with Satan in temptation to make that conclusion, nor de-

SERM.
XI.[2 Cor. ii.
17.][2 Kings
iv. 29.][1 Tim. vi.
10.]

^y [Procopii Schol. in libb. Reg. et Paralip. ad loc., p. 285. ed. Meursius.] tom. i. p. 293. ed. Gaisford.]
^z [Ibid., n. 54. p. 296.]
^a [Apud Stobæum, tit. 10. n. 38.]

S E R M.
XI.

liver us from the destruction that follows it. Others of us on the contrary side, but from the same principles, decrying all due either of maintenance or respect to the clergy, divesting themselves of all but contempt and drudgery, hoping—we have just reason to suspect—by flying both to be courted by them both, to have them more sure at the rebound than they can at the fall, to run from them here most violently, that they may have them alone to themselves when they meet at the antipodes. What imprudent bargains such men are likely to make if they should be taken at their words; what skittish things popular benevolence and popular applause have been always found to be, experience hath taught others. I desire even they that make that choice may never pay so dear for that knowledge; but whatever the error prove in the transitory commodities of this world, it matters little, for wealth and honour are, sure, things that we may go to heaven without, and so, for as much as concerns our individuals, are not necessary to us as Christians; yet can I not assure you, but that they are necessary to us in some degree as ministers; wealth in a competence to rescue us from contempt; and respect, at least so far as a *ne quis te* [Tit. ii. 15.] *despiciat*, “let no man despise thee,” to keep us from being utterly unprofitable; some revenue of our own, to keep us from the *quæro vestra*, and some authority of our own, to enable us for the *quæro vos*, somewhat of either from the character of our office, that we be not tempted to seek either by unlawful means to purchase the *vestra* by the sale of *vos*, to acquire the favour of our auditors by the exposing of their souls. Think but how probable a fear this may be, when things come to such a complication that he that hath a sin to be preached against hath a benevolence to be preached for; he that hath a wound to be cured, is able to be thankful if he may be kindly used, yea, and to mulct the chirurgeon if he be too rough; when he that hath somewhat to mend, hath also somewhat to give, a commutation to escape his penance; whether this may not prove a temptation to him that hath no other livelihood to depend on, and consequently whether rankling and gangrening may not be looked for as an ordinary title in our weekly bills, when the skinning of wounds is become the gainful craft, and compliance and

popularity the great Diana, that trade by which men have their wealth. But perhaps the most of this is an extravagance, I wish and pray it may prove an unnecessary one. SERM.
XI.

There is yet one branch of the application behind; the end why St. Paul delivered this text of mine, that I told you was the vindicating his ministry from contempt, the gaining some authority with the Corinthians. And let that be our method also, to come to that end by the *non vestra sed vos*, not to acquire that thin blast of air that chameleons are wont to feed on, but that solid substantial estimation that dwells only in the account of God and the hearts of true Corinthians; that that may disperse those fumes of prejudices that Satan is wont to blast the minister with when any saving effect is to be wrought by his ministry, that unblemished reputation here, that when it is to be had is a precious blessing, very instrumental to the edifying of others, and is a kind of coronet here in this life, preparatory to that crown hereafter. And sure there is no work of ours that we can justly hope God will think fit to reward with such a crown, but the sincere labouring in the word and doctrine, filling our souls with the earnest desire of saving others, espousing it as the sole felicity of our lives, the one promotion that we aspire to, to people heaven with saints, to send whole colonies of inhabitants thither. It was the excellence and pride of the ancient Jews, yea, and the craft peculiar to them, saith Josephus, *τεκνοποιητικῆ*, "getting of children, propagating miraculously," and the barren was the most infamous person among them, "Behold I go childless, the saddest lamentation," and "Give me children or else I die," and "Take away our reproach," most pathological Scripture expressions; yea, and among the Romans the *jus trium liberorum*, "the right of three children," you know what a prerogative it was. This is our trade, my brethren, to beget children to heaven, and according to the law of the Goel in Deuteronomy, now our elder Brother (Christ) is dead, we are the men, who by right of propinquity are obliged to raise up seed to our elder Brother. O let it not be our reproach to go thus childless to our graves, at least our guilt and just accusation to bereave our Saviour of that seed He expects from us; you know what a sin it was to repine at that duty; [Gen. xv.
2; xxxi.
23; Luke
i. 25.]
[Deut. xxv.
5.]

S E R M. let not us be wanting to Christ in this so charitable a ser-
— XI. — vice; charitable to Christ, that His blood may not have been
shed in vain; charitable to others, whom we may by God's
blessing convert unto righteousness, and the charity will at
last devolve on ourselves, who by this means shall "shine as
[Dan. xii. the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever
3.] and ever."

SERMON XII.

PREACHED IN ST. PAUL'S CHURCH BEFORE THE LORD MAYOR AND ALDERMEN
OF THE CITY OF LONDON, ON APRIL 12, A.D. 1610.

THE POOR MAN'S TITHING.

DEUT. xxvi. 12, 13.

*When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine
increase the third year . . . Then thou shalt say before the Lord
thy God . . .*

THAT the first sound of this text may not possess you with SERM.
XII. an expectation of a vicar's plea, a discourse of tithes, and querulous invective against sacrilege; and consequently by this prejudice your ears and hearts be fortified, impenetrable and impregnable against the speaker and the sermon; that I may reconcile the choice of this text with the imploring and hoping for your patience; I shall immediately deliver you from your fears, by assuring you that the main of this text is, and the total of my discourse shall be, bent quite toward another coast, that which in the sincerity of my heart I conceive may best comply with your designs, either as Christians, or as men, most tend to your serving of Christ, and enriching of yourselves with the increase of your wealth here and glory hereafter. And when I have told you this, I cannot choose but say that I am your friend, and for that may claim not as an act of favour, but justice, the payment of this debt, the return of your patience in receiving, and care in practising what shall be delivered.

There was a double tithing among the Jews, the every year's tithing and the third year's tithing; the every year's tithing you know whose patrimony it was; but after that was set apart and presented unto the owners every third year, there was another to be raised, over and above, for the stranger,

S E R M. XII. the fatherless, and the widow, as you may see it enacted. This
 chap. xiv. 29. was called by the rabbins the second tithing, and in another
 Deut. xiv. 23. respect the third by some of them,—the tithe for feasts going
 for the second, and the tithe of the tithes, which the Levites
 paid the high-priest, going for the fourth, in that account,—
 but most significantly מעשר עני “the tithe for the poor,” πτωχο-
 δεκατη^a in Josephus, the “poor man’s tithing,” or in the words
 of the text, the *compleveris decimare anno tertio*, “the making
 an end of tithing the third year.” Till this were done there
 wanted a *compleveris*; whatever other dues were paid the work
 was incomplete, and upon the performance of that, here is a
 stock of confidence toward God for him that hath done it, a
 right invested on him to all the abundance of Canaan, a justifi-
 cable pretension to all temporal blessings, which he may de-
 pend on and challenge at God’s hand; it were but a cold ex-
 pression to say he might expect by petition, I will add, he
 may require by claim, and produce his patent for it here in
 my text, *Cum compleveris, &c.*, “When thou hast made an
 end,” &c.

[Deut.
xxvi.] 15.

This text I have upon advice resolved not to divide into parts, but my discourse upon it I shall, by setting it these bounds and limits; 1. That it presents unto you the duty of almsgiving by occasion of these words, *Cum compleveris decimare anno tertio*, “when thou hast made an end of tithing . . . the third year.” 2. The benefit arising from the performance of this duty from the rest, *Dicas coram Domino*, “then thou shalt” or mayest “say,” i. e., hast right and power to say, “before the Lord thy God.” In our progress through the first of these we shall observe these gesses^b; 1. We shall begin with the *ὅτι*, consider alms-giving simply, deducing the practice of the Jews down to us Christians, and so in a manner give you the history of alms-giving. 2. We shall look into the *πόσον*, what portion ought to issue out of every man’s revenues, taking our rise from the practice of the Jews, “a tithe of all increase every third year.” 3. We shall proceed to the *ὅτι δεῖ*, consider it as a duty, and then we shall have done with the first general.

^a [This word is used by St. Jerome, Comm. in Ezek., lib. xiv. c. 45. Op., tom. v. col. 565, C; the reference to

Josephus seems to be a mistake.]

^b [See note at p. 30.]

In the second general we shall shew you, 1. *In thesi*, that confidence or claiming any thing at God's hands, must take its rise from duty in performance, "Then thou mayest say;" then, but not before. 2. *In hypothesi*, shew you the connection between this confidence and this performance, claiming of temporal plenty, upon giving of alms. These are the several posts and stages of my future discourse, the monogram drawn in coal, as it were, wherein you may discern the lines and lineaments of the whole body; I must now descend to the filling them up, and giving you them a little more to the life, taking them in the order proposed, very loosely, and very plainly, making provision for your hearts, not your ears, for your future gain and not your present sensuality, and begin with the first general, and in that, the *ἔτι*, or alms-giving, simply considered, deducing the practice of the Jews down to us Christians, and so give you in a manner the history of alms-giving.

Though we assert not an equality of worldly riches from any decree either of God or nature, find not any statute of *πάντα κοινὰ*, any "law of community" in any but Plato's institutions, and those never reduced to practice in any one city in the world,—attempted once by Plotinus, through his favour with Gallienus, who promised to reside in his Platonopolis, but soon altered his purpose again, as Porphyry^c tells us,—yet I may suppose it for a granted maxim, that the extreme inequality that is now so illustriously visible in the world, is not any act of nature's primary intention, or God's first and general providence; Aristotle^d may tell us of some *φύσει δοῦλοι*, some that nature hath bored through the ear to be slaves for ever, and we may believe him if we can find any ground for it, but of any *φύσει πτωχοὶ*, "colonies of men," sent into the world without any claim or right to any part of the world's goods, he hath not left us any thing upon record. Nor hath the book of creation in the Scripture, the Beresith, or natural philosophy of the Bible, given us any hint for such a resolution, that some should be born to riot, and others to famish, some to be glutted, and others to starve, that mankind should be thus dichotomized into such extreme distant fates, some to reign in paradise for ever, others to be thrown over the

^c Porph. in Vit. Plotin., [cap. 12.]

^d [Arist. Polit., lib. i. c. 5.]

S E R M.
XII.

wall, as out of the Adamites' stove, to pine and freeze among thorns and briars. This were an absolute degree of election and reprobation, improved further than predestinarians have ordinarily extended it. As we are wont to say of sin, that it is not to be found in God's Hexameron, no fruit of His six days' labour, but a production of a later date, engendered betwixt the serpent and the woman, that *incubus* and *succuba*, the devil and the lower soul; so may we say of extreme want and poverty, that its nativity is of the land of Canaan, its father an Amorite, and its mother an Hittite: Satan and covetousness brought it into the world, and then God finding it there—whose glorious attribute it is to extract good out of evil—as He did once a *σωτήρ* out of an *ἀπολλύων*, “redemption” of mankind out of the fall of Adam, and so made the devil an instrument of bringing the Messiah into the world; so hath He in like manner by His particular providence ordered and continued this effect of some men's covetousness to become matter of others' bounty, exercise of that one piece of man's divinity, as Pythagoras called liberality, and so *ex his lapidibus*, “out of these stones,” out of the extreme want and necessity of our brethren, to raise trophies and monuments of virtue to us, of charity, liberality, and magnificence, of mercy, and bowels of compassion, that most beautiful composition of graces, that most heroic renowned habit of the soul. So that now we may define it an act of God's infinite goodness to permit, though before we could scarce allow it reconcilable with His infinite justice, to decree the extreme inequality of earthly portions, the poor man gasping for food, that the rich may have a storehouse or magazine where to lay up his treasures; the careful labourer, full of children, suffered to wrestle with two extremities at once; hunger on the one side, and natural compassion to the helpless creatures he hath begotten on the other; that thou by thy wealth mayest be that Elijah sent from heaven to the famishing forlorn widow, that godlike man dropped out of the clouds to his relief, and by the omnipotent reviving power of thy charity usurp that attribute of God's given Him by the Psalmist, that “feeds the young ravens” exposed by the old ones, sustain that destitute sort of creatures that call upon thee. Admirable therefore was that contrivance of God's mercy and wisdom, mentioned to the

[Ezek. xvi.
3, 45.]

[Mat. iii.
9.]

[1 Kings
xvii.]

[Ps. cxlvii.
9.]

Jews, not as a threatening, but a promise of grace, one of the privileges and blessings of Canaan, "the poor shall never cease out of the land," that thou mayest always have somewhat to do with thy wealth, some sluice to exhaust thy plenty, some hungry leech to open a vein, and prevent the access of thy fever, and withal, that thy wealth may ennoble thee, as Xenocrates told his benefactor's children, that he had abundantly requited their father, "for all men spake well of him for his liberality to Xenocrates," or as benefactors among the heathen were adored and deified, that thus thy faithless, fading false-hearted riches,—which the Evangelist therefore styles "mammon of unrighteousness," only as *ἄδικον* is opposed to *ἀληθινόν*, to true durable wealth,—may yield thee more profit by the profusion than by the possession,—as silver doth by melting than by continuing in the wedge or bullion, according to that of Clemens^d, *οὐκ ὁ ἔχων καὶ φυλάττων, ἀλλὰ ὁ μεταδίδους πλούσιος*, "the rich is he that distributes, not he which hath and possesseth;" and Lactantius^e, *Divites sunt non qui divitias habent, sed qui utuntur illis ad opera justitiæ*, "the rich are they, not which have riches, but use them to works of righteousness,"—purchase thee by being thus providently laid out, a revenue of renown here and glory hereafter. You see then the pedigree and genealogy of alms-giving, how it came into the world; covetousness, and oppression, and rapine, brought in emptiness, and beggary, and want; then God's providence and goodness, finding it in the world, resolves to continue it there to employ the treasures and exercise the charity of others.

Now for the practice of the world in this great affair, we cannot begin our survey more properly than from the text, there to behold God's judgment, in this point, by the rules He hath given to be observed in the city of God, His own people of the Jews, whilst they were managed by God Himself. The priesthood was the peculiar lot of God, and therefore may well be allowed the *πρωτοκλισία*, "feeding

^d [S. Clem. Alex. Prædag., lib. 3. ch. 6. p. 275 (Potter). *ὡστε οὐχ ὁ ἔχων καὶ φυλάττων, ἀλλ' ὁ μεταδίδους πλούσιος, καὶ ἡ μετάδοσις τὸ μακάριον, οὐχ ἡ κτήσις δείκνυσσι.*]

^e [Lactantius, Divin. Instit., lib. v. ch. 16. *Divitiæ quoque non faciunt in-*

signes, nisi quod possunt bonis operibus facere clariores. Divites sunt enim, non quia divitias habent, sed quia utuntur illis ad opera justitiæ. Et qui pauperes videntur, eo tamen divites sunt, quia et non egent et non concupiscunt.]

SERM. first at God's feast ;" and the poor next after them were taken
 XII. care of by God Himself, Lazarus, as it were, in Aaron's, as
 [Luke xvi. once in Abraham's bosom, next to the priest in the temple as
 23.] to the patriarch in heaven ; a tithing for the priest, and when
 this was done, every third year, a tithing for the poor. The
 withholding of the former was sacrilege, and of the latter,
furtum interpretativum, say the schools, "interpretative theft,"
 and the casuists to the same purpose, that though our goods
 be our own, *jure proprietatis*, "by right of propriety," yet they
 are other men's *jure caritatis*, "by right of charity;" the rich
 man's barn is the poor man's granary, nay murder too, as we
 may conclude from the words of the Wise Man, "the poor
 man's bread is his life,"—and that is sometimes thy dole, on
 [Eccles. which his life depends,—and then, as there it follows, he that
 xxxiv. 21.] deprives him of it—so doth the unmerciful, as well as the thief
 —is a murderer. Nay further, that murder one of the deepest
 dye, a *fratricidium*, like Cain's of Abel his brother, and there-
 fore as that is a *clamans de terra*, "crying for judgment from
 [Gen. iv. the ground," so hath this a *clamet ad Deum contra te*, "cry
 10.] to God against thee." I will add, at least so long as the state
 Deut. xv. 9. of the Jews lasted, it was sacrilege too. Shall we proceed then
 and ask when the state of the Jews expired did alms-giving
 expire with it? was charity abrogated with sacrifice? turned
 out of the world for an antiquated, abolished rite, for a piece
 of Judaism? The practice of some Christians would persuade
 men so, that the sword that Christ brought into the world
 had wounded charity to the heart, that He had left no such
 custom behind Him to the Churches of God, that Christianity
 had clutched men's hands, and frozen their hearts into an
ἀπολίθωσις, as Arrian^f calls it, inverted that miracle of
 Christ's, returned the children of Abraham into stones. Phy-
 sicians tell us of a disease converting the womb into a firm
 stone, and the story in Crollius of a *λιθοπαίδιον*, "a child of
 a perfect stony substance," is asserted by many others. Now
 the unhappiness of it is, that the Hebrew רחם that signifies a
 "womb," by a little varying of the punctuation, signifies "mercy"
 also, and "bowels of compassion," whereupon the Septuagint
 [Mat. x. instead of ἔλεος have put μητρὰ, instead of "mercy," a "womb;"
 34.] and alas the same disease hath fallen upon the רחם in that

Amos i. 11.

^f [Epicetet. Enchirid., lib. i. c. 5. § 3.]

other sense, the bowels of mercy in many Christians are petrified, transubstantiate into stones, pure mine and quarry, and so we ministers, *damnati ad metalla* (that old Roman punishment^s) condemned to dig in those mines, and by all the daily pains of preaching and exhortation, able to bring forth nothing but such *λιθοπαϊδιά*, stones instead of bread.

S E R M.
XII.

But I hope, my brethren, the practice of those some shall not be accepted as authentic evidence against Christ, to defame and dishonour our most glorious profession, whose very style is "brethren," whose livery "charity," and character that "they love one another." I know not how unmerciful and hardhearted the Christian world is now grown in its declination, as covetousness is generally the vice of old age, I am sure it was open-handed enough in its youth, witness that most ancient primitive apostolical institution of the offertory in the Sacrament, that which was so considerable a part of that holy rite that it gave denomination to the whole, the Eucharist styled *κοινωνία*, "communion," distinctly from this custom of bringing every man out of his store, and communicating to the necessities of the saints, as it is 2 Cor. viii. 4, *κοινωνία τῆς διακονίας εἰς τοὺς ἁγίους*, "the communion," or "fellowship" as we render it, more fully "the communicativeness," or "liberality of administering to the saints," and is therefore by us rendered "liberality." Many excellent observations might be presented to you on this occasion, necessary for the understanding many places in St. Paul, especially of chap. xi. of 1 Cor., but you will easily forgive me the sparing this pains in this place. Let it suffice that we find in that chapter, that at those holy meetings there was always a table furnished out of the bounty of communicants for a common feast unto all the faithful; the rich might have leave to bring more than his poorer brother, but not to take place by that bounty, not to pretend any propriety to what he had brought, which is the meaning of the *ἴδιον δεῖπνον*, "every man his own supper," and the *προλαμβάνειν ἐν τῷ φαγεῖν*, "taking precedence of others in eating," the rich to eat all and the poor none, one to be hungry and the other drunken, the fault which he there found with the Corinthians. Nor did the custom of liberality,

[Mat. vii.
9.]

[Col. i. 2;
iii. 14;
John xiii.
35.]

1 Cor. xvi. 3.

[1 Cor. xi.
21.]

^s [Sueton. Calig. i. 27, et Digest., lib. 48. tit. 19. leg. 8. ap. Corp. Jur. Civ.]

SERM.
XII.

Heb. xiii.
16.

annexed to the Sacrament in those days, expire or vanish with the Apostles; the practice rather increased than abated among their successors; witness that *προσφορά*^b or “oblation,” first of all the fruits of the season, as an offering of first-fruits; afterwards only *ἄρτου καὶ κράματος*¹, “of bread and wine mingled with water,” which the brethren or faithful, i. e., in the ancient style, the communicants, are said to bring, and present at the altar or table of the Lord, for the furnishing of the table with part, and refreshing the poor with what was left. These are the *εἰσφοραὶ*, “oblations” in the Constitutions^k, at least one sort of them, one being for the priest, the other for the poor, and again, *αἱ εἰς τοὺς δεομένους εὐποιῖαι*^l, “the doing good to them that want,” the very word in St. Paul *εὐποιῖας καὶ κοινωνίας*, “to do good and communicate,” and *τὰ εἰσφερόμενα ἐπὶ προφάσει πενήτων ἐκούσια*, “voluntary oblations for the poor.” These are contained under his general head of *καρποφορίαί*, “bringing of fruits,” of which he hath a chapter^m, and *κυριακαὶ συνεισφορίαί*ⁿ, “the Lord’s offerings,” and *ἐλεημοσύνη*, “alms,” and otherwhere *ἐκούσια τοῖς πένησι χορηγούμενα*, “voluntary gifts distributed to the poor;” and observable it is from those and other ancient constitutions, that it was a punishment for some men, used in the Church, not to receive them to the offertory who yet were not so great malefactors as to be kept from some other privileges of Christians. This was called *κοινωνία χωρὶς προσφορᾶς*^o, “communicating without the offertory,” frequently in the Ancyran and Nicene councils; and therefore Epiphanius^p, having mentioned the faults for which offenders were excommunicated, as *πορνεία, μοιχεία*, “fornication, adultery,” &c., he adds, *προσφορὰς λαμβάνει παρὰ τῶν οὐκ ἀδι-*

^b [Canon. Apost. iii., iv. Concil., tom. i. col. 25, B, C. See Concil. Trull. can. 28; *ibid.*, tom. vi. col. 115 f., 1155.]

¹ [See S. Justin M., *Apol.* i. c. 65. p. 82, D, and Conc. Carth. iii. can. 25. Concil., tom. ii. col. 1181, A.]

^k [κύριος . . . οὐ δῆπου καὶ τῶν εἰσφορῶν ὑμᾶς ἐλευθέρωσεν, ὧν ὀφείλετε τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν, καὶ τῶν εἰς τοὺς δεομένους εὐποιῶν. Apost. Const., lib. ii. c. 35. Concilia, tom. i. col. 272.]

^l [*Ibid.*, c. 25. col. 260.]

^m [περὶ καρποφοριῶν διατάξεις. *Ibid.*, lib. vii. c. 30. col. 431.]

ⁿ [μετὰ ποίου φόβου χρῆ τῶν κυρια-

κῶν μετέχειν συνεισφορῶν. *Ibid.*, lib. iv. c. 4. col. 117.]

^o [χωρὶς προσφορᾶς κοινωνησάτωσαν. Concil. Ancyran., can. viii., ix., &c. Concilia, tom. i. col. 1460; χωρὶς προσφορᾶς κοινωνήσουσι τῷ λαφ τῶν προσευχῶν. Conc. Nic., can. xi. Concilia, tom. ii. col. 33, D. Hammond misapprehended the sense of *προσφορᾶς*, which evidently means the Eucharistic Oblation; the penitents spoken of were allowed to take part in the prayers, but excluded from the Holy Communion.]

^p [S. Epiphanius. *adv. Hæer.*, lib. iii. t. 2. Op., tom. i. p. 1107, B.]

κούντων οὐδὲ παρανομούντων, ἀλλὰ δικαίως βιοούντων, “the Church receives not offerings from the injurious,” &c., but from just livers, noting that all but the *δικαίως βιοούντες*, “those that live justly,” were interdicted the privilege of offering or giving to the Corban. Thus in Clemens was not the oblation received from the “unjust publican who exacted” *παρὰ τὸ διατεταγμένον*, “above what was appointed,” and so for executioners, whose oblation being the price of blood was not suffered to come into the Corban, no more than the thirty pieces of silver that Judas took to betray Christ. An excellent consideration for us to meditate on, that the being excluded from the offertory, being denied the privilege of giving alms or being bountiful to the poor, went for a very great punishment; and so sure the duty, a special part of piety and public service of God. And therefore the custom being either neglected or intermitted at Constantinople, St. Chrysostom^q took care for the restoring it again, and thereupon made that excellent oration upon that subject, where from antiquity he proves the use of the offertory on the Lord’s day, and mentions the Corban or treasury, where it was wont to be put.

I have been the more large on this particular, because it hath in all ages been accounted a prime piece of Christianity,—a special part of divine worship, saith Aquinas^r,—the observation of which is yet, thanks be to God, alive among us, especially if that be true which Pamelius^s cites out of Honorius, that instead of the ancient oblation of bread and wine, the offering of money was by consent received into the Church, in memory of the pence in Judas’ sale. Only it were well if we were a little more alacrious and exact in the performance of the duty, and more care taken in the distribution, especially that that notorious abuse of this most Christian custom, which they say—I hope unjustly—some part of this city is guilty of,

^q [S. Chrys. Homilia de Eleemosyna, Op., tom. ii. p. 248. The circumstances referred to occurred at Antioch, not Constantinople. See Montfauc. in Homil. ed. Bened. ibid.]

^r [Ad secundum dicendum, quod triplex est hominis bonum . . . Tertium est bonum exteriorum rerum, de quo sacrificium offertur Deo, &c.—S. Thom. Aquin. Summa Theol. Secunda Secundæ, Quæst. lxxxv. art. 3. ad 2.]

^s [Statutum est . . . ut populus pro

oblacione farinae denarios offerrent, pro quibus traditum Dominum recognoscerent, qui tamen denarii in usum pauperum, qui membra sunt Christi, cederent, vel in aliquid quod ad hoc sacrificium pertineret.—Honorius Augustodunensis, Gemma Animæ, de antiquo ritu Missæ, lib. i. c. 66. ap. Bibl. Magn. Patrum, tom. xii. par. i. p. 1026, D, E, Colon. 1618, quoted by Pamelius in S. Cyprian. de Op. et Eleemos., c. 14. not. 33. p. 360. ed. Par. 1593.]

S E R M.
XII.

in converting this inheritance of the poor into a feast of entertainment for the officers of the Church, may be branded and banished out of ken. It is yet but a sin, which, like some in Aristotle^t, hath never a name, had never yet the honour to be forbidden, if it should chance to live to that age, thrive and prove fit for an *ὀνομαθεσία*, the imposition of a name, let me have the favour to christen it, a new-found sacrilege, a most inhuman at once, and unchristian profanation; and if you want an emblem for it, that ancient piece of Nathan's designing will serve the turn, the rich man feasting on the poor man's ewe lamb, his luxury maintained by the other's blood. It were an admirable work of ecclesiastic discipline, some way or other to bring the Corban in such favour with us that it might prove a bank or storehouse in every parish, able to supply the wants of all; but much better, if we would fall in love with it ourselves, as a way of binding up both the tables of the law into one volume, of ministering both to God and man, by this one mixed act of charity and piety, of mercy and of sacrifice, and so, in the Wise Man's phrase, "to lay up our riches in God's storehouse," without a metaphor. But if it please you not that anybody—though in the resolution it be Christ Himself—should have the disposal of your alms, as charity now-a-days is a pettish wearish^u thing, ready to startle and pick a quarrel with any thing that comes to meddle with it, then shall I not pursue this design any further. So thou art really and sincerely affected to the setting out of the third year's tithing, thou shalt have my leave to be thine own almoner, have the choice of the particular way of disposing and ordering it thyself. And yet three things there are that I cannot choose but be so pragmatical as to interpose in this business; 1. For the *quando*, "when," this tithe should be set out; let it not be deferred till the will be a making, till death forces it out of our hands, and makes it a *non dat sed projicit*, only a casting over the lading, when the ship is ready to sink, nor yet till our coffers be ready to run over, till a full, abundant provision be made for all that belong to us, for that is to feed the poor like the dogs, only with the orts^v of the children's table; but as other tithes are paid just

[2Sam. xii.
3, 4.]

[Mat. vi.
20.]

[Mat. xv.
27.]

^t [Aristot. Eth. Nic., lib. ii. c. 7.]

malicious, evil, shrewish.]

^u Wearish; weak. John. on. But Richardson more to the point here.

^v [Orts; refuse, things thrown away. Johnson.]

as the increase comes in, presently after the whole field is reaped, so must the poor man's tithing also; set out, I say then, dedicated to that use, that we may have it by us at hand, told out ready, when the owner calls for it. It was a thing that Antoninus recounts as matter of special joy, and that which he numbers amongst the felicities for which he was beholden to the gods, that he was never asked of any that he thought fit to give to, that he was answered by his almoner, *ὅτι οὐκ ἔστι χρήματα ὄθεν γένηται*^x, "that there was not store at hand to perform his will." A most joyous, comfortable thing, in that heathen emperor's opinion, and yet that that will hardly be attained to, unless we take some such course as this, mentioned *in terminis* by St. Paul, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him, that there be no gathering when I come;" a weekly provision laid in, and ready *in numerato* for this purpose, that you be never surprised on a sudden, and so disabled to perform this duty. 2. For the *quibus*, I would answer, to all whom Christ hath made our neighbours and brethren, and I know not that any are excluded from this title. But you would then think I were set to solicit against the laws of this realm, and plead the cause of the idle wandering beggar, that most savage, barbarous, unchristian trade among us, set, a man would think, in the streets by the devil, on purpose to pose, and tire, and noplus men's charity, to disharten, and weary them out of this Christian duty. No, we have a countermand from the Apostle against these *ἀτακτίσαντες*, "disorderly walkers," that if any "would not labour, neither should he eat," the best alms for them, the seasonablest provision, and charity to such, is the careful execution of laws upon them, to set them every one single in an orb to move in, by that means perhaps to teach them the skill in time to be alms-givers themselves, at least to become fit to be receivers; for such, of all others, is the fixed, stationary, diligent, labouring poor man, whose motion is like that of the trembling sphere, not able to advance any considerable matter in a whole age, be they never so restless, whose hands, with

1Cor.xvi.2.

2 Thess.
iii. 7.
ver. 10.

^x [τὸ δόσκις ἐβουλήθη ἐπικουρῆσαι τινι πενομένῳ ἢ εἰς ἄλλο τι χρῆζοντι μὴδέποτε ἀκούσαι με, ὅτι οὐκ ἔστι μοι χρήματα ὄθεν γένηται.—Antoninus ad Seipsum, lib. i. cap. 17.]

S E R M.
XII.[Mat. vii.
9.][Gal. vi.
10.]

all their diligence, cannot give content to the mouth, or yield any thing but stones many times to the poor child that calls for bread. All that I shall interpose for the *quibus* shall be this, that seeing a "do good to all," is now sent into the world by Christ, and that but little restrained in any Christian kingdom, by an "especially to the household of saints,"—all Christians being such,—and seeing again, no man hath hands or store to feed every mouth that gapes in a kingdom, or particularly in this populous city, we may do well to take that course that we use in composing other difficulties, *referatur ad sortem*, let the lot decide the main of the controversy, and reserving somewhat for the public, somewhat for the stranger, somewhat for common calamities, somewhat as it were for the universal motion of the whole body, somewhat for eccentrics; let the place whereon our lot hath cast us be the principal orb for our charity to move in, the special diocese for our visitation. And when that is done, and yet, as it is in the parable, there be still room, store left for others also, then to enlarge as far as we can round about us, as motion beginning at the centre diffuses itself uniformly, sends out its influence and shakes every part to the circumference; and happy that man who hath the longest arm, whose charity can thus reach farthest. The third thing is that my text obliges me to, the how much out of every man's revenues may go for the poor man's due, which brings me to the second particular, the *πόσον* here mentioned in these words, "tithing all the tithes of thy increase the third year."

[Luke xiv.
22.]

That there was a *πόσον* defined by God to the Jews' charity, a proportion for every man, not which they might not exceed,—for there were other ways of vent for their charity mentioned, beside this,—but which no man was to go under, is manifest by the text, and chap. xiv. of this book; the proportion, you see, a tithe, or tenth part of all the increase, not yearly, but only every third year, to raise a bank, as it were, for the maintenance of the poor, till that year came about again. This if we would dissolve into a yearly rate, and so discern the Jewish *πόσον* more perfectly, it is equivalent to a thirtieth part every year; the Jew whose yearly revenue amounted to thirty shekels, was every third year to pay three of them to the use of the poor, that is, in effect, one for every year,

the triennial tenth being all one with an annual thirtieth : the account is clear, and no man but hath arithmetic enough to conclude, that a thirtieth part is the third part of a tenth, and so a tenth every third year is all one with a thirtieth every year. I shall insist on this no further than to tell you that God's judgment in this affair is worth observing, that alms-giving or mercifulness being a dictate of nature, but that like other such laws, given only in general terms, for the $\sigma\tau\iota$, but not so as to descend to particular cases. It pleased God to His people the Jews, to express His judgment at that time, in that state, for the $\pi\acute{o}\sigma\sigma\omicron\nu$, how much was by law to be laid aside for use out of every one's increase.

Now* if I should press this practice of the Jews as matter of obligation or prescription to Christians, that you are not in conscience to do less than the Jews were bound to do, every man to set apart a thirtieth of his yearly revenue or increase, for the use of the poor brethren, I know not how you would take it ; many would startle at the news of the doctrine, many more when they came to the practice of it, many quarrels you would have against it ; he that were merciful already would think his gift would become a debt, his bounty duty, and so be wronged and robbed of the renown of his charity by this doctrine ; and the covetous, that were not inclined to giving at all, would complain that this were a new kind of ghostly stealth, a way of robbing him out of the pulpit, of burdening his conscience and lightening his bags, and both join in the indictment of it for a Judaical, antiquated doctrine, that hath nothing to do with Christians. And therefore to do no more than I shall justify from the principles of the Gospel, I shall confess unto you that this precept, as it was given to the Jews, is not obliging unto Christians, and therefore I have not told you it was, but only gave you to consider what God's judgment was for the $\pi\acute{o}\sigma\sigma\omicron\nu$ to His own people. Only by way of application to ourselves, give me leave to add these four things, which I shall deliver in as many propositions ; 1. That mercifulness, or charity, or giving alms, is no part of the ceremonial law, which is pro-

* [See this further enlarged on in the author's Practical Catechism, lib. iii. sect. 1.]

SERM.
XII.

[Mat. v.
17.]

perly Judaism, but of the eternal law of reason and nature, part of the oath or Sacrament that is given us when the *fiat homo* is first pronounced to us, a ray of God's mercifulness infused into us with our human nature; in a word, that mercifulness is all one with humanity, a precept of the nature, the God, the soul we carry about with us. 2. That being so, it comes within the compass of those laws, that Christ came *οὐ καταλύσαι, ἀλλὰ πληρῶσαι*, "not to destroy but to fulfil," i. e., as the fathers before St. Augustine^y generally interpreted it, to improve it, set it higher than it was before, require more of Christians than ever was exacted of the Jews or heathens by the law of Moses or of nature. Thus Irenæus^z, mentioning Christ's improvement of the law, *pro eo quod est, Non mæchaberis, nec concupiscere præcepit*, "for, Thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not look to lust," he adds, *pro eo quod est decumare, omnia quæ sunt pauperibus dividere*, "instead of tithing"—this third year's tithing—"thou shalt divide all thou hast to the poor," give them some plentiful part of it. And this, saith he, an act of Christ, *non solventis, sed adimplentis, extendentis, dilatantis legem*, "not loosing, but filling up, extending, dilating the law." And St. Hierome^a, on 2 Cor. viii. 20, "avoiding this that no man should blame us," explains it thus, "lest any should say, how did Christ fill up or fulfil the Law," *cum videamus Christianos non tantam eleemosynam facere quantam fieri in lege præceptum est*, "when we see Christians not give so much alms as was by the law of Moses prescribed to be given." 3. That there were among the Jews two sorts of mercifulness, the first called literally righteousness, and by the Septuagint, when it belongs to works of mercy, is rendered sometimes *δικαιοσύνη*, "righteousness," sometimes *ἐλεημοσύνη*, "mercy," and this is that mercifulness that Moses' law required of the Jews, and so was part of their righteous-

^y [See note c in the Practical Catechism, p. 110.]

^z [Et hoc autem quod præcepit, non solum vetitis a lege sed etiam a concupiscentiis eorum abstinere, non contrarium est, quemadmodum prædiximus, neque solventis legem, sed] adimplentis et extendentis et dilatantis. . . Et propter hoc Dominus pro eo quod est *Non mæchaberis, nec concupiscere*

præcepit, et pro eo quod est, Non occides, neque irasci quidem, et pro eo quod est decimare, omnia quæ sunt pauperibus dividere. S. Iren.] lib. iv. cap. 27. [p. 313.]

^a [Ne quis dicat, quomodo Christus legem implevit, &c. Comment. Pelagii (S. Hieron. ascript.) in Epist. ii. ad Cor. viii. 20. inter Op. S. Hieron., tom. ix. col. 969.]

ness, he was a breaker of the law that did neglect it, and so *opera justitiæ* in Lactantius^b, "the works of righteousness," meaning works of charity, by that phrase. The second was mercy, i. e., a higher degree of charity, rather benignity, mercifulness, being full of good works, and this was more than their law exacted, and was therefore styled goodness, as that was more than righteousness. 4. That by force of the second proposition, and by the tenure of evangelical perfection that Christ commended to His disciples, this highest degree of mercifulness among the Jews is now the Christian's task, and that to him that will be perfect, yet in a higher degree, not only that degree which the law required of the Jew, a little raised and improved by us, for that will be but the Christian's righteousness, but even the benignity of the Jews, "abundance of mercy," improved and enlarged by us also. And from these premises if I may in the name of God take boldness to infer my conclusion, it can be no other than this; that the proportion to be observed by the Christian alms-giver, to speak at the least, must be more in any reason than the thirtieth part of his revenue or increase; the thirtieth is but equivalent to the third year's tithing of the Jews, which was their righteousness, that which they were bound to do by the law; the Pharisee did as much, and Christ tells us, "that except our righteousness," *δικαιοσύνη ὑμῶν*, the very word that signifies the legal alms-giving many times in the Bible, and who knows but it may do so here—of this there is no doubt, but it belongs to charity, or duty towards men in its latitude, of which alms-giving is one most special part, and—"except our righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees we shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven," the text on which that heavenly gospel-sermon was preached upon the mount. If we have any design toward evangelical perfection, toward the Christian pitch, the abundance of goodness and mercifulness, as that is improved by Christianity, then this third year's tithing will prove but a beggarly, thin proportion, that that a Jew, if he were a religious one, would have been ashamed of. But be our alms never so moderate, if a door-keeper's place will serve our turn, to be one of the *nethinim*,

S E R M.
XII.[Mat. v.
20.]^b [See above, p. 243, note e.]

S E R M. of the meanest rank in the kingdom of heaven, yet still we
 XII. must exceed that proportion of the Jews' righteousness, their third year's tithic, that they were bound to, or else we are strangely mistaken in Christianity. I am unwilling to descend to the arraiguing, or indicting, or so much as examining any man here for the omissions of his former life in this kind; my humble lowliest request is, that you will do it yourselves, and if either through ignorance you have not reckoned of it as a duty, or through desire to thrive in the world you have omitted to practise it heretofore, you will now at last at this instance, take it into your consideration, and remember that there is such a thing as charity—a pale, wan, despised creature—commended to Christians by Christ; not to suffer it any longer to go for one of those magicians' serpents, which faith, like Moses' rod, is appointed to devour; if it do, know that this rod is the verier serpent of the two; and for the quickening that resolution in you, I shall proceed unto the third particular, the *ὅτι δεῖ*, to consider it as a duty, and so to make an end of my first general.

In this slothful but confident age of the world, it were admirably worth one's pains to instruct men what duty is, now under the gospel, what the very word signifies in a Christian nomenclature. There are so many descants of fantastical brains on that plain song of the Apostles, "We are not under law but under grace," that it is scarce agreed on among Christians what it is to be a Christian, nothing more unresolved than what it is that is now required under the second covenant, as necessary to salvation. One thinks that the believing all fundamentals is the *ἐν ἀναγκαίον*, the "only qualification" for a Christian, and what hath duty to do with that? Another makes the gospel consist all of promises of what shall be wrought in us and on us by Christ, and so gives an absolute *supersedeas* for duty, as a legal out-dated thing, that is utterly antiquated by grace. Another contents himself with purposes and resolutions, thin, airy inclinations to duty, and is utterly indifferent for any performance, doubts not but to pass for a Christian, as regenerate as St. Paul, when he wrote to the Romans, though he never do the good that he resolves, live and die carnal and captived

[Rom. vi.
14.]

Rom. vii.
14, seq.

and sold under sin. A fourth dissolves all to a new-found faith. A full persuasion, an absolute assurance, that he is one of God's elect, is abundantly sufficient to estate himself in that number, a piece of magic or conjuring, that will help any man to heaven that will but fancy it, enrol their names in the book of life, in those sacred eternal diptychs, by dreaming only that they are there already. Others there are that seem kinder unto duty, are content to allow Christ some return of performances for all His sufferings, yet you see in the gospel, it is in one but the patience of hearing Him preach, a "Lord, Thou hast taught in our streets;" "we have heard so many sermons" passes for a sufficient pretension to heaven; in another, the communicating at His table, "We have eaten and drank in Thy presence," a sufficient *viaticum* for that long journey, a charm or amulet against fear or danger; in a third, the diligence of a bended knee, or solemn look of formal, outside worship, must be taken in commutation for all other duty, and all this while religion is brought up in the gentleman's trade, good clothes and idleness, or of the lilies of the field, *vestiri, et non laborare*, "to be clothed, and not labour;" duty is too mechanical a thing, the shop or the plough, the work of faith or labour of love, are things too vile, too sordid for them to stoop to; heaven will be had without such solicitors. Shall I instance in one particular more? that Satan may be sure that duty shall never rescue any prey out of his hands, one thing you may observe, that most men never come to treat with it, to look after, to consider any such thing, till indeed the "time comes that no man worketh," till the "tokens be out upon them," till the "cry comes, that the bridegroom is ready to enter," that "judgment is at the door," and then there is such a running about for oil, as if it were for extreme unction, and that a sacrament to confer all grace *ex opere operato* on him that hath scarce life enough to discern that he received it; the soul sleeps in its tenement as long as its lease lasteth, and when it is expired, then it rouseth, and makes as if it would get to work; the Christian thinks not of action, of duty, of good works, of any thing whilst life and health lasteth, but then the summons of death wakes him, and the prayers which he can repeat while his clothes are putting off shall charm him, like opium, for a quiet sleep.

S E R M.
XII.[Luke xiii.
26.]

[Ibid.]

[Luke xii.
27.]

SERM. Thus doth a death-bed repentance, a death-bed charity, a
 XII. parting with sins and wealth, when we can hold them no

[Mat.xxiii.
23.]

solemnly and demurely in our diptychs as judgment and mercy and faith, that have "borne the heat and burden of the day;" our hearts are hardened, while it is to-day, against all the invasion of law or gospel, judgments or mercies, threats or promises, all Christ's methods and stratagems of grace, and just at the close of the evening, the shutting in of night, we give out that the thunderbolt hath converted us, the fever came with its fiery chariot, and hurried us up to heaven; *surdus et mutus testamentum facit*, quite against Justinian's rule^c; he that hath sent out most of his senses before him, and retains but the last glimmering of life, is allowed to make his will and reverse all former acts by that one final. Satan hath all the man hath to give, under hand and seal, all his life-time, the spring especially and verdure of his

[Jer. xxxii.
35.]

age, the "children pass through the fire to Moloch," and just as he is a dropping out of the world, he makes signs of cancelling that will, and by a dumb act of revocation bequeaths his soul to God, and his executor must see it paid among other legacies; and all this passes for legal in the court, and none of the canons against the ancient *clinici* can be heard against them; the greatest wound to duty, that ever yet it met with among Christians. Thus do our vain fancies and vainer hopes join to supplant duty and good works, and dismiss them out of the Church; and if all or any of this be orthodox divinity, then sure the duty of alms-giving will prove a suspected phrase, *hæretici characteris*, of an heretical stamp, and then I am fallen on a thankless argument, which yet I must not retract or repent of, but in the name of God and

[Acts xxiv.
14.]

St. Paul, "in this way that these men call heresy," beseech and conjure you to "worship the God of your fathers." For this purpose shall I make my address to you in Daniel's words,

Dan. iv. 27. "Break off your sins by righteousness, and your iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor," righteousness and mercy, the two degrees of alms-giving that I told you of; I hope that will not be suspected, when he speaks it. Shall I tell you what duty is, what is now required of a Christian, and that

^c [Digest., lib. 28. tit. i. leg. 6; ap. Corp. Jur. Civ.]

in the prophet Micah's phrase, "And now what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God," justice and mercy, the two degrees of alms-giving again that I told you of, and I hope it will not prove offensive when he speaks it. Shall I tell you of a new religion, and yet that a pure one, and the same an old religion, and yet that an undefiled,—for so the beloved disciple calls this duty of charity, a "new commandment," and an "old commandment,"—it shall be in St. James his words, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widow in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Shall I tell you in one word, that though heaven be given us freely, yet alms-giving is the consideration mentioned in the conveyance, that men are acknowledged the blessed of God, and called to heaven, upon the performance of this duty; that although it pretend not to any merit, either *ex congruo* or *condigno*, yet it is a duty most acceptable in the sight of God, that alms-giving is mentioned when assurance is left out, charity crowned when confidence is rejected? I love not to be either magisterial or quarrelsome, but to speak the "words of truth and sobriety," to learn, and if it be possible to "have peace with all men;" only give me leave to read you a few words that St. Matthew transcribed from the mouth of Christ, "Then shall the King say to them on His right hand"—who should the King be but Christ Himself?—"Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungred and ye gave Me meat." Tell me in the name of truth and peace, who now were they for whom the kingdom was prepared from the foundation of the world; who were there the objects of that great doomsday election, His *Venite benedicti*? If Christ do not tell you neither do I, the text is of age, let it speak for itself; "For I was an hungred and ye gave Me meat." If all this will justify the doctrine and make this text Christian, persuade your judgments that charity may be the queen of heaven—*maxima autem harum caritas*, "the greatest of these is charity"—without affront or injury done to any other grace. I hope it will be seasonable for your practice also, as it hath

S E R M.
XII.

Micah vi. 8.

1 John ii.
[7, 8.]

Jas. i. 27.

Mat. xxv.
[34,] 35.[1 Cor. xiii.
ult.]

S E R M. been for your meditation, become your hands as well as it
 XII. doth now your ears.

And to infuse some life, some alacrity into you for that purpose, I shall descend to the more sensitive, quickening, enlivening part of this text, the benefit arising from the performance of this duty, *dicas coram Domino*, "then thou shalt" or mayest "say before the Lord thy God." And in that I promised you two things; 1. to shew you *in thesi*, that confidence or claiming any thing at God's hands, must take its rise from duty in performance; 2. *in hypothesi*, to give you the connection betwixt this confidence and this performance, claiming of temporal plenty upon giving of alms.

1. *In thesi*; that confidence or claiming any thing at God's hands must take its rise from duty in performance.

If there be any doubt of the truth of this, I shall give you but one ground of proof, which I think will be demonstrative, and it is that that will easily be understood, I am sure, I hope as easily consented to; that all the promises of God, even of Christ in the gospel, are conditional promises, not personal, for the law descends not to particular persons,—and in this [Rom. iii. 27.] the gospel is a law too, *νόμος πίστεως*, "the law of faith,"—nor absolute, as that signifies irrespective or exclusive of qualifications or demeanour, for that is all one with personal, and if either of those were true, then would Christ be what [Acts x. 34.] He renounces, a *προσωπολήπτης*, "an accepter" of persons and individual entities, and so the mercies of heaven belong to Saul the persecutor as truly as Paul the Apostle, Saul the injurious as Paul the abundant labourer, Saul the blasphemer as Paul the martyr. It remains then that they be conditional promises, and so they are explicitly, for the most part, the condition named and specified, "Come out and be you separate, and touch not the unholy thing;" a condition you see set foremost in the indenture, and then, "I will receive you," and therefore most logically infers the Apostle in the next word, the beginning of chap. vii., "Having therefore these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Had the promises been of any other sort but the *ἐπαγγελίας ταύτας*, these i. e. conditional promises, the Apostle's illation of so much duty, cleansing and perfecting, had been utterly

2Cor.vi.17.

unconclusive, if not impertinent. So Rom. viii. 28, "All things work together for good;" to whom? "to them that love God," *κατὰ πρόθεσιν κλητοῖς οὖσι*, "to them that are called according to purpose;" the word "called" a noun in that place, not a participle, noting a real, not only intentional passion, those that are wrought upon by God's call, and are now in the catalogue of the *ἀγαπῶντες τὸν Θεόν*, "the lovers of God," and that is the condition in the subject; and then to them that are thus qualified belongs that chain of mercies, predestination, vocation to a conformity with Christ, justification, glorification, immediately ensuing. You see the proof of my ground by a taste or two. Now what condition this is that is thus prefixed to gospel promises, that is not obscure neither. Not absolute, exact, never sinning, perfect obedience, that was the condition of the first covenant made in paradise, when there was ability to perform it, but a condition proportioned to our state, sincerity in lieu of perfection, repentance in exchange for innocence, evangelical instead of legal righteousness, believing in the heart, i. e., cordial obedience to the whole law of Christ, impartial without hypocrisy or indulgence in any known sin, persevering and constant without apostacy or final defection, and at last humble without boasting. If you will come yet nearer to a full sight of it, sometimes regeneration or new life is said to be the condition, "Except you be born again you can in no wise enter." "Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." Sometimes "holiness, without which *nemo Deum*, no man shall see the Lord:" sometimes repentance in gross, "nay, but except you repent;" sometimes in the retail, repentance divided into its parts, "he that confesseth and forsaketh shall have mercy;" sometimes repentance alone, "but now commands all men every where to repent," as if all duty were contained in that; sometimes in conjunction with faith, "repent you and believe the gospel;" sometimes faith, sometimes love, sometimes self-denial, sometimes mercifulness, sometimes hope, but that an *ἐλπίδα ταύτην*, a "this hope" that sets us a purifying; every one of these, when you meet them single, goes for the only necessary, the adequate condition of the gospel, to teach you to take them up all as you find them, leave never an one neglected or despised,

S E R M.
XII.[Jas. iii.
17.][John iii.
3, 5.][Gal. vi.
16.][Heb. xii.
34.][Luke xiii.
3, 5.][Prov.
xxviii. 13.][Acts xvii.
30.][Mark i.
15.][John iii.
35; xiii.
35; Mat.
xvi. 24;

Luke x. 37;

Rom. viii.
24.][1 John iii.
3.]

S E R M.
XII.

lest that be the betraying of all the rest, but make up one jewel of these so many lesser gems, one body of these so many limbs, one recipe compounded of so many ingredients, which you may superscribe *παμφάρμακον*, *catholicum*, or the whole duty of man. From this general proposition, without the aid of any assumption, we may conclude demonstratively enough, promises of the gospel are conditional promises, therefore all confidence must take rise from duty. Duty is the performance of that condition, and to be confident without that is to conclude without premises, and consequently to claim justification or pardon of sins, before sanctification be begun in the heart, to challenge right to heaven before repentance be rooted on earth, to make faith the first grace and yet define that assurance of salvation, to apply the merits of Christ to ourselves the first thing we do, and reckon of charity, good works, duty, as fruits and effects, to be produced at leisure when that faith comes to virility and strength of fructifying. What is all or any of this but to charge God of perjury, to tell Him that impenitents have right to heaven, which He swears have not, or to forge a new lease of heaven, and put it upon Christ? the calmest style I can speak in is, that it is the believing of a lie, and so not faith but folly, an easy cheat-ableness of heart, and not confidence, but presumption. Hope a man may, without actual performance of duty, because he may amend hereafter, though he do not now, and so that possibility and that futurity may be ground of hope; but then this hope must set us presently upon performance, "He that hath this hope purifies himself," or else it is not that grace of hope, but an *ἀνθάδεια* a "youthful daringness" of soul, a tumor, a disease, a tympany of hope, and if it swell further than it purge, if it put on confidence before holiness, this hope may be interpreted desperation, a hope that maketh ashamed, an utter destitution of that hope which must bestead a Christian. O let us be sure then, our confidence, our claims to heaven, improve not above their proportion, that we preserve this symmetry of the parts of grace; that our hope be but commensurate to our sincerity, our daringness to our duty. A double confidence there is *pro statu*, and absolute; *pro statu* when upon survey of my present constitution of soul I claim right in Christ's promises for the present, and doubt not but

I shall be blessed if I be found so doing: absolute, when at the end of life and shutting in of the day, I am able to make up my reckonings with St. Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness," a crown of felicity. I have done what I had to do, and now *λοιπὸν ἀποκείται*, there is nothing behind but to receive my pay. S E R M.
XII.
[2 Tim. iv.
7, 8.]

I have been too long upon the general consideration of the connection between confidence and duty; if it were an extravagance, I hope it was a pardonable one; I descend with speed to the hypothesis, the connection betwixt this confidence and this performance, claiming of temporal plenty upon giving of alms, my last particular. And that I shall give you clearly in this one proposition; that alms-giving or mercifulness was never the wasting or lessening of any man's estate to himself or his posterity, but rather the increasing of it. If I have delivered a new doctrine that will not presently be believed, an *unusquisque non potest capere*, such as every auditor will not consent to, I doubt not but there be plain texts of Scripture, more than one, which will assure any Christian of the truth of it. Consider them at your leisure, Psalm xli. 1, 2; Psalm cxii., all to this purpose, Prov. xi. 25, and xii. 9, and xix. 17, and xxviii. 27. Add to these the words of Christ, Mark x. 30, which though more generally delivered of any kind of parting with possessions for Christ's sake, are applied by St. Hierome^d to the words of Solomon, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth," *quia centuplum accipient in hoc tempore*, "because," saith he, "they receive an hundred-fold in this world." And that no man may have any scruple to interpose, it is set in as large and comprehensive a style as the art, or covetous, scrupulous wit of man could contrive for his own security; "there is no man who shall not. . ."

All which being put together must, to my understanding, make it as clear to any that acknowledges these for Scripture, as if the *בת קול* "daughter of voice" were come back into the world again, and God should call to a man out of heaven by name, bid him relieve that poor man, and he

^d [Comment. in Prov. S. Hieron. ascript. lib. ii. ad loc. Op., tom. v. col. 547, ed. Ben.]

SERM.
XII.

should never be the poorer for it. It is not now to be expected of me in conscience, having produced this kind of proof, the express texts of Scripture, to add any second to it; I might else further evidence it from examples, not such as Moschus's^c *λειμωνάριον* will furnish you with, for I know not of what authority they are; nor yet from St. Hierome's observation, who is said to have turned over histories on purpose, and never found any merciful man which met not with some signal blessing in this world as the reward of that virtue; but even by appealing to yourselves, and challenging any man here present to bring but one instance of a prudent alms-giver, that hath yearly or weekly consecrated some considerable part of his revenue or increase to that use, and can say that he ever found any real miss of that, any more than of the blood let out in a pleurisy; nay, if he have done it constantly and sincerely from the one true principle, compliance with the command and example of God, let him speak his conscience, if he do not think that all the rest hath thrived better than that, as phlebotomy hath saved many men's lives, letting out some ounces of blood been the securing of the whole mass, that it hath a secret blessing influence, a vital auspicious infection upon the remainder, by this art of consecrating our estates, entitling God to the fence and safeguard of them, as of His temples and altars, that thieves, and oppressors, and devils conceive a reverence due to them, and a kind of sacrilege to approach or purloin from them, as they that put the crown into their entail do thereby secure it to the right heir, that it can never be cut off. The poor widow of Sarepta, what a strange trial she made of this truth! when the last of her store was fetched out to make the funeral feast for herself and family, that they might eat and die, that very last cake, that all that was left, she gives to Elijah in his distress, and this is so far from ruining her, that it brought a blessing on her barrel and her cruse, that she and all hers were not able to exhaust; I might add the poor widow in the Gospel, that, if we may believe Christ, "cast in all that she had into the corban, even her whole substance;" the Christians that "sold all and laid

[1 Kings
xvii.]

[Mark xii.
41.]

^c [Joan. Moschi Ebirati Pratum Spirituale ap. Bibl. Patr. Græc., tom. ii. p. 1055, &c. Par. 1624.]

it at the Apostles' feet," and yet we never read of any of these that brought himself to distress by this means. But these are *ex abundantia*, more than is required for the vouching of my present proposition, and of a higher strain than what I design for your imitation. S E R M.
XII.

It is time that I begin to retire, and wind up with some application which you cannot imagine should be any other, after all this preparation, but a "go and do thou likewise." And if you can but believe this one thing, that I have brought many witnesses from heaven to testify that your goodness shall not impair your plenty, that your store shall never be lessened by so giving, I doubt not but you will be as forward to go as any man to have you. The only hold-back is the affection and passionate love that we bear to our wealth, that lust or sensuality of the eye, as the Apostle calls it. It is ordinarily observed of young men and dissolute, that they have many times a great aptness and ingeniousness, and withal patience, to any speculative knowledge, the mathematics^f or any such the abstrusest studies, but for moral precepts, rules of good life, they will not be digested; and, my brethren, give me leave to tell you in the spirit of meekness, that the like in another respect is observed of this auditory, any thing wherein their wealth is not concerned is most readily entertained, none more attentive ingenious auditors; but when their profit is entrenched on, their beloved golden idol, of which I may say with Moses, "Oh, this people have committed a great sin, made them gods of gold," when this, I say, begins to be in danger, as the silver shrines at St. Paul's preaching, then, as it follows in that place, the whole city is filled with confusion: like that young man in the Gospel that would do any thing that Christ would require, "Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" So far as that Jesus loved him, when He beheld him; yet when Christ proceeds to the *ἐν σοὶ ὑστερεῖ*, "one thing is wanting to thee, go sell, give to the poor;" then follows the *στυγνύσας* and *λυπούμενος*, "he went away sad and sorrowful," sighing and groaning, as if he had been to part with blood and bowels; and this is the ground of Christ's most considerable observation, *πὼς δύσκολον*, "how hard," and

^f [Arist. Eth. Nic., lib. vi. c. 8.]

S E R M.
XII.

πὼς ἀδύνατον, "how impossible, is it for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven," for a worldly-minded man to be a Christian. Could you but reduce into order this one mighty exorbitant humour, purge out this *χολή τῆς πικρίας*, as St. Peter calls it, this "overflowing of the gall," this cholera and bitterness, that lies caked upon the soul, that *σύνδεσμος ἀδικίας*, as he goes on in the aggravating of covetousness, we english it "band of iniquity," but it signifies a complication of wickedness bound up all in one volume, mingled into one *hypostasis*, this legion of earthly devils that come out of the tombs to enter into thee, and there continue crying and cutting thee with stones; I should then proceed with some heart and spirit, and tell you that, that every man knows but such demoniacs, that alms-giving is in itself a thing that any man living, if he have but the relics of unregenerate nature, and the notion of a deity about him, would take pleasure in it were he but satisfied of this one scruple, that it would not hinder his thriving in the world. "It is more blessed to give than to receive," is the apophthegm of St. Paul quoted from Christ, though it be not rehearsed in the Gospel; and Clemens^a hath turned it into a maxim, *μετίδοσις μακίριον, οὐ κτήσις δείκνυσι*, "it is giving, not possessing, that signifies a man to be happy," and this happiness the highest and most divine sort of happiness, "it is a blessed thing to give." And of the same inclination in the worst of you I will no more doubt than I do of your being men, of your having human souls about you, could you be but fortified against this one terror, were but this one trembling spirit exorcised and cast out, this apprehension of impairing your estates by that means. Now of this an ordinary Jew makes so little doubt, merely upon authority of the places of the Old Testament which I cited, that he may read thee a lecture of faith in this particular. Paulus Fagius^b assures me of the modern Jews, who have not been observed to be over liberal, that they still observe the payment of the poor man's tithe, merely out of design to enrich themselves by that means, and tells us of a proverb of Rabbi Akiba^c, *מעשרות סיג לעושר*, "tithes are the hedges to our

[Acts viii.
23.]

[Acts xx.
35.]

^a [See note p. 39.]

^b [Fagius in Deut. xiv. 23, apud Crit. Sacr. p. 94. (tom. ii.)]

^c Perk Avot. *מעשרות סיג לעושר* Capitula

Patrum in Lat. ver., et scholiisque illustrat. per Paulum Fagium, c. 3. p. 56. Isac. 1511.]

riches," and on the contrary, that^k there be seven kinds of judgments that come upon the world for seven prevarications, and the first is famine upon not tithing; and the second again, another kind of famine upon another not tithing, and that second plainly belongs to the poor man's tithing, when, as it follows^l, "some are full and others are famished;" and the third is a plague upon "not obeying the law concerning the fruits of the Sabbatical year," which you know were to be left to the poor. And again, that there are four seasons wherein the plague was wont to rage especially, in the fourth year upon the non-payment of the poor man's tithe the third year, or the seventh upon the like default in the sixth, in the end of the seventh upon default concerning the seventh year's fruits that were to be free and common, and the last yearly, in the close of the feast of tabernacles, upon the "robbing of the poor of those gifts that at that time were left unto them," the gleanings of the harvest and vintage^m, the corners of the field, the fallings, &c. Add to this one place more of Rabbi Bechaiⁿ; "Though," saith he, "it be unlawful to prove or tempt the Lord, for a man must not say 'I will perform such a commandment to the end I may prosper in riches,' yet there is an exception for payment of tithes and works of mercy," intimating that on the performance of this duty we may expect even miracles to make us rich, and set to that performance on contemplation and confidence of that promise. And it is strange that we Christians should find more difficulty in believing this than the griping reprobated Jews; strange, that all those books of Scripture should be grown apocryphal just since the minute that I cited those testimonies out of them. This I am resolved on, it is want of belief and nothing else that keeps men from the practice of this duty, whatsoever it is in other sins we may believe aright and yet do contrary,—our understanding hath not such a controlling power over the will as some imagine,—yet in this particular this cannot be pretended; could this one mountain be removed, the lessening of our wealth that alms-giving is accused of, could this one scandal to flesh and blood be kicked out of the way, there is no other devil would take the unmerciful man's part, no other

^k Ibid., c. 5. [p. 104.]^l Ibid., p. 105.^m Ibid., p. 109, 110.ⁿ In Deuter. xxvi.Mal. iii. 10;
Prov. iii.
[9.] 10.

S E R M.
XII.

temptation molest the alms-giver. And how unjust a thing this is, how quite contrary to the practice at all other sermons, I appeal to yourselves. At other times the doctrine raised from any Scripture is easily digested, but all the demur is about the practical inference; but here when all is done, the truth of the doctrine still, "that we shall not be the poorer for alms-giving," is that that can never go down with us, lies still crude unconcocted in our stomachs; a strange prepossession of worldly hearts, a *petitio principii* that no artist would endure for us. I must not be so unchristian, whatsoever you mean to be, as to think there is need of any further demonstration of it, after so many plain places of Scripture have been produced; let me only tell you that you have no more evidence for the truth of Christ's coming into the world, for all the fundamentals of your faith, on which you are content your salvation should depend, than such as I have given you for your security in this point. Do not now make a mockery at this doctrine, and either with the Jew in Cedrenus^o, or the Christian in Palladius, throw away all you have at one largess to see whether God will gather it up for you again, but set soberly and solemnly about the duty, in the fear of God and compliance with His will, and in bowels of compassion to thy

^o [ἐπι τούτου δὲ ἀνθρώπος τις ἐγγω-
ρίζετο ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ, πλούσιος καὶ ἀνε-
λεήμων, ὃς ἐλθὼν πρὸς τινα τῶν διδα-
σκάλων καὶ ἀναπτύξας τὴν σοφίαν Σολο-
μῶντος, εὗρεν εὐθύς· ὁ ἐλεῶν πτωχῶν,
δανεῖζει Θεῶν· καὶ εἰς ἐαυτὸν γενόμενος,
καὶ κατανυγείς, ἀπελθὼν πέπρακε πάντα,
καὶ διένειμε πτωχοῖς, μηδὲν ἐαυτῷ κατα-
λείψας πλὴν νομισμάτων δύο· καὶ πτω-
χεύσας πάντων, καὶ ὑπὸ μηδενὸς ἐκ θέλας
δοκιμασίας ἐλευόμενος, ὕστερον ἐν ἐαυτῷ
λέγει μικροψυχήσας· ἀπελεύσομαι ἐν
Ἱερουσαλὴμ καὶ διακρινοῦμαι τῷ Θεῷ
μου ὅτι ἐπλάμησέ με διασκορπίσαι τὰ
ὑπάρχοντά μου· πορευομένου δὲ αὐτοῦ,
εἶδεν ἄνδρας δύο μαχομένους πρὸς ἀλλή-
λους εὐρόντας λίθον τρίμιον· καὶ φησὶ
πρὸς αὐτοὺς, ἴνα τι, ἀδελφοί, μάχεσθε;
δοτέ μοι αὐτὸν, καὶ λάβετε νομίματα
δύο· τῶν δὲ μετὰ χαρᾶς τούτων παρα-
σχόντων, οὐ γὰρ ᾔδεσαν τοῦ λίθου τὸ
ὑπερτίμιον, ἀπῆλθεν εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ, τὸν
λίθον ἐπιφορόμενος· καὶ δεῖξας αὐτὸν
χρυσόχρῳ παραχρήμα τὸν λίθον ἐκείνου
ιδῶν, ἀναστὰς προσεκίνησε· καὶ ἔκθαμβος
γενόμενος ἐπυνθάνετο ποῦ τὸν πολῦτι-
μον, λέγων, καὶ θεῖον λίθον τοῦτον εὗρες;

ιδου γὰρ ἔτη τρία σήμερον Ἱερουσαλὴμ
δονεῖται καὶ ἀκαταστατεῖ διὰ τὸν περι-
βύητον λίθον τοῦτον· παλ ἀπελθὼν, ὃς
αὐτὸν τῷ ἀρχιερεὶ καὶ σφόδρα πλουτή-
σεις· τοῦ δὲ ἀπερχομένου, ἄγγελος Κυρίου
εἶπε πρὸς τὸν ἀρχιερέα· νῦν ἐλεύσεται
ἄνθρωπος πρὸς σε τὸν ἀπολεσθέντα
πολυθρύλλητον λίθον ἐκ τῆς διπλοῖδος
Ἰααρὼν τοῦ ἀρχιερέως ἔξω· λαβὼν
αὐτὸν, ὃς τῷ ἐνέγκαντι αὐτὸν, χρυσίον
πολὸν καὶ ἀργύριον· ἅμα δὲ καὶ βῆσις
μετρίως, εἰπέ· μὴ δισταξέ ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ
σου, μηδὲ ἀπίστει τῷ διὰ τῆς γραφῆς
λέγοντι· ὁ ἐλεῶν πτωχῶν, δανεῖζει Θεῷ·
ιδου γὰρ ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι ἐξεπλήρωσά
σοι πολλαπλασίασα ὑπὲρ ὧν ἐδάνεισάς
μοι· καὶ εἰ πιστεῖεις λήθη καὶ ἐν τῷ
μέλλοντι πλοῦτον ἀνυπέμβλητον· καὶ ὁ
μὲν ἀρχιερεὺς τὰ διατεταγμένα πάντα
πεποιήκε πρὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον καὶ λελά-
ληκεν· ὁ δὲ ἀκούστας καὶ ἔντρομος γενό-
μενος, πάντα ἕσας ἐν τῷ ναφῷ ἐξῆλθεν,
εὐχαριστῶν, καὶ πιστεύων Κυρίῳ, καὶ
πάντα τὰ ἐν τῇ θεῖᾳ γραφῇ διηγορευμένα.
—Cedrenus Hist. Compend., tom. i. p.
109.]

poor brethren that stand in need of thy comfort, those emeralds and jacinths that Macarius^p persuaded the rich virgin to lay out her wealth upon; and this out of no other insidious or vain-glorious, but the one pure Christian fore-mentioned design, and put it to the venture, if God ever suffer thee to want what thou hast thus bestowed. Dorotheus^q hath excellently stated this, διδασκαλ. ιδ. "There are," saith he, "that give alms," διὰ τὸ εὐλογηθῆναι τὸ χωρίον, "that their farms may prosper," καὶ ὁ Θεὸς εὐλογεῖ τὸ χωρίον, "and God blesseth and prospers their farms; there be that do it for the good success of their voyage, and God prospers their voyage; some for their children, and God preserves their children; yea, and some to get praise, and God affords them that, and frustrates none in the merchandise he designed to traffic for, but gives every one that which he aimed at in his liberality." But then "all these traffickers must not be so unconscionable as to look for any arrear of further reward; when they are thus paid at present, they must remember οὐδὲν ἐαυτοῖς παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ, they have no *depositum* behind laid up with God for them;" and therefore it is necessary for a Christian to propose to himself more ingenious designs, to do what he doth in obedience to, and out of a pure love of God, and then there is more than all these, even "a kingdom prepared for him." Mat. xxv.
[34.]

I must draw to a conclusion, and I cannot do it more seasonably, more to recapitulate and enforce all that hath been said, than in the words of Malachi, "Bring you all the tithes into the storehouse,"—no doubt but this comprehends the duty in the text, the *compleveris anno tertio*, the poor man's tithing,—"that there may be meat in My house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." If this will not open the miser's hand, unshrivel the worldling's heart, I cannot Mal. iii. 10.

^p Palladii Historia Lausiaca, cap. 5. [Bibl. Patr. Græc., tom. ii. p. 907. Par. 1624.]

^q [ἔστι γὰρ τις ποιῶν ἐλεημοσύνην, διὰ τὸ εὐλογηθῆναι τὸ χωρίον αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὁ Θεὸς εὐλογεῖ τὸ χωρίον αὐτοῦ· ἄλλος ποιεῖ ἐλεημοσύνην, διὰ τὸ πλοῖον αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁ Θεὸς σώζει τὸ πλοῖον αὐτοῦ· ἄλλος ποιεῖ διὰ τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὁ

Θεὸς σώζει καὶ φυλάττει τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ· ἄλλος ποιεῖ διὰ τὸ δοξασθῆναι, καὶ ὁ Θεὸς δοξάζει αὐτὸν, καὶ οὐκ ἀθετεῖ ὁ Θεὸς τινα. ἀλλὰ ὁ θέλει ἕκαστος παρέχει αὐτῷ, . . . ἀλλ' οὗτοι πάντες ἀπέχουσι τὸν μισθὸν αὐτῶν, οὐδὲν γὰρ ἀπέθεντο ἑαυτοῖς παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ. B. Dorothei Abb. Doctrin. xiv., ibid., tom. i. p. 837.]

S E R M.
XII.

[Mat. iv.
9.]

[Luke xvi.
9.]

invent an engine cunning or strong enough to do it. Thou that hast tired and harassed out thy spirits in an improsperous successless pursuit of riches, digged and drudged in the mines, thy soul as well as thou, and all the production of thy patience and industry crumbled and mouldered away betwixt thy fingers; thou that wouldest fain be rich, and canst not get Plutus to be so kind to thee, art willing to give Satan his own asking, thy *prostraveris* for his *totum hoc*, to go down to hell for that merchandise, and yet art not able to compass it, let me direct thee to a more probable course of obtaining thy designs, to a more thriving trade, a more successful voyage; not all the devotions thou daily numberest to the devil or good fortune, not all the inventions, and engines, and stratagems of covetousness managed by the most practised worldling, can ever tend so much to the securing thee of abundance in this life, as this one *complereris* of the text, the payment of the poor man's tithing. And then suffer thyself for once to be disabused, give over the worldling's way, with a *hac non successit*, reform this error of good husbandry, this mistake of frugality, this heresy of the worldling, and come to this new insurer's office, erected by God Himself, "prove and try if God do not open thee the windows of heaven." Shall I add for the conclusion of all, the mention of that poor, unconsidered merchandise, the treasures of heaven, after all this wealth is at an end, the riches of the celestial paradise, which like that other of Eden is the posing of geographers, *pars globi incognita*, undiscovered yet to the worldling's heart. Methinks there should be no hurt in that, if such friends may be made of this mammon of unrighteousness, this false-hearted unfaithful wealth of yours, that "when you fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations;" sure this may be allowed to join with other motives to the performance of a well-tasted wholesome duty. In a word, if earth and heaven combined together be worth considering, the possession of the one, and reversion of the other, abundance and affluence here, the yearly wages of alms-giving, and joys and eternity hereafter, the final reward of alms-giving, a present coronet and a future crown, a Canaan below and a Jerusalem above; if the conjunction of these two may have so much influence on your hearts, as in contemplation of them to set you about

the motion that nature itself inclines you to, and neither world nor flesh have any manner of quarrel to feign against it, then may I hope that I have not preached in vain, that what I have now only, as a precentor, begun to you, the whole chorus will answer in the counterpart; what hath been now proclaimed to your ears be echoed back again by your hearts and lives, and the veriest stone in the temple take up its part, the hardest, impenetrablest, unmercifulest heart join in the *ἀμοιβαῖον*.

And this shall be the sum not only of my exhortation but my prayer, that that God of mercies will open your eyes first, and then your hearts, to the acknowledgment and practice of this duty, direct your hands in the husbanding that treasure intrusted to them, that mercy being added to your zeal, charity to your devotion, your goodness may shine as well as burn, that men may see and taste your good works, glorify God for you here, and you receive your crown of glory from God hereafter.

SERM.
XII.

N I N E T E E N S E R M O N S

P R E A C H E D

O N S E V E R A L O C C A S I O N S ,

B Y T H E R E V E R E N D A N D L E A R N E D

H E N R Y H A M M O N D , D . D .

SERMON XIII.

EZEK. xvi. 30.

The work of an imperious whorish woman.

NOT to chill your ears by keeping you long at the doors; not to detain you one minute with a cold unprofitable preface; this chapter is the exactest history of the spiritual estate of the Jews, i. e. "the elect of God," and the powerfulest exprobration of their sins, that all the writings under heaven can present to our eyes. From the first time I could think I understood any part of it, I have been confident that never any thing was set down more rhetorically, never more *πάθος* and *ὑψος*, more "affection" and "sublimity of speech," ever concurred in any one writing of this quantity, either sacred or profane. It were a work for the solidest artist to observe distinctly every part of logic and rhetoric that lies concealed in this one chapter, and yet there is enough in the surface and outward dress of it, to affect the meanest understanding that will but read it. For our present purpose it will suffice to have observed, 1. That the natural sinful estate of the Jews, being premised in the five first verses; 2. The calling of them in this condition, in their pollutions, in their blood, and bestowing all manner of spiritual ornaments upon them, following in the next ten verses; the remainder is mostwath spent in the upbraiding and aggravating their sins to them in a most elevated strain of reproof; and the *ἀκμὴ* or "highest pitch" of it, is in the words of my text, "the work of an imperious whorish woman."

For the handling of which words, I first beg two *postulata* to be granted and supposed, before my discourse, because I would not trouble you to hear them proved.

I. That the elect chosen people of God, the Jews, were degenerate into heathen, desperate, devilish sinners.

II. That what is literally spoken in aggravation of the Jews' sin, is as fully applicable to any other sinful people, with whom God hath entered covenant as He did with the Jews.

And then the subject of my present discourse shall be this ; that indulgence to sin in a Christian is the "work of an imperious whorish woman." And that, 1. Of "a woman," noting a great deal of weakness ; and that not simple natural weakness, through a privation of all strength, but an acquired, sluggish weakness, by effeminate neglecting to make use of it. 2. Of "a whore," noting unfaithfulness and falseness to the husband. 3. Of "an imperious whore," noting insolency and an high pitch of contempt.

And of these briefly and plainly ; not to increase your knowledge, but to enliven and inflame the practical part of your souls ; not to enrich your brains with new store, but to sink that which you have already down into your hearts.

And first of the first, that indulgence to sin in a Christian is the work of "a woman ;" an effect and argument of an infinite deal of weakness, together with the nature and grounds of that weakness : "the work," &c.

And this very thing, that it may be the more heeded, is emphatically noted three several times in this one verse. 1. "The work of a woman," in my text, a poor, cowardly, pusillanimous part that any body else, any one that had but the least spark of valour or manhood in him, would scorn to be guilty of, an argument of one that hath suffered all his parts and gifts to lie sluggish and unprofitable, and at last even quite perished by disusing. As the weakness of women, below men, proceeds not only from their constitution and temper, but from their course of life ; not from want of natural strength, but of civil manlike exercise, which might stir up and discipline, and ripen that strength they have : for if their education were as warlike, and their strength by valiant undertaking so set out, viragos and amazons would be well-nigh as ordinary as soldiers. And so will the comparison hold of those womanish, sluggish, abusers of God's graces. Then in the first words of this verse, "How weak is thy heart !" noting it to be a degree of weakness below ordinary,

as we call one a weak man that hath done any thing rashly or unadvisedly, which, if he had but thought on, he could never have been so sottish, his ordinary reason would have prompted him to safer counsels. In brief; any frequent, indiscreet actions, argue a weak fellow: not that he wants strength of discretion to do better, but that he makes no use of it in his actions. Thirdly, "How weak is thy heart!" thy heart, i. e. the principal part of the man,—as the brain is the speculative,—the fountain of good and evil actions, and performances. Now the word לב in the original, signifying "the heart," being naturally of the masculine gender, is here set in the feminine, out of order, perhaps emphatically, to note an unmanlike, impotent, effeminate heart; all its actions are mixed with so much passion and weakness, they are so raw and womanish, that it would grieve one to behold a fair, comely, manlike Christian in show, betraying so much impotency in his behaviour,—even like the emperor a spinning,—one who had undertaken to be a champion for Christ, led away and abused and baffled by every pelting paltry lust. It is lamentable to observe what a poor, cowardly, degenerate spirit is in most Christians; with how slender assaults and petty stratagems they are either taken captive or put to flight; how easily in their most resolute undertakings of piety or virtue they are either vanquished or caught. The ordinary, coarsest, hard-favouredst temptation that they can see, affects and smites them suddenly; they are entangled before they are wooed, and the least appearance of any difficulty, the vizard or picture of the easiest danger, is enough to fright them for ever from any thought of religion or hope of heaven.

For a mere natural man that hath nothing but original sin, or worse in him, that hath received nothing from God and his parents but a talent in a broken vessel, a soul infected by a crazy body, diseased as soon as born; for a heathen that hath nothing to subsist on but a poor pittance of natural reason, but one eye to see by, and that a dim one; for a mere barbarian or gentile to be thus triumphed over by every devil,—as an owl by the smallest bird in the air,—might be matter of pity rather than wonder. And yet few of them were such cowards; those very weapons that nature had furnished them with, being rightly put on and fitted to them,

stood many of them in very good stead. There were few passions, few sins of an ordinary size, but a philosopher and mere stoic would be able to meet and vanquish. And therefore it is not so much natural, as affected weakness; not so much want of strength, as sluggishness and want of care; not so much impotency, as numbness and stupidity of our parts, which hath so extremely disabled those that take themselves to be the weakest of us.

The truth is, we are willing to conceive that our natural abilities are quite perished and annihilate, and that God hath no ways repaired them by Christ, because we will not be put to the trouble of making use of them. We would spare our pains, and therefore would fain count ourselves impotent, as sluggards that personate and act diseases because they would not work; or the old tragedians which could call a god down upon the stage^a at any time, to consummate the impossiblest plot, and therefore would not put their brains to the toil of concluding it fairly.

Certainly the decrepitest man under heaven, if he be but a degree above a carcase, is able to defend himself from an ordinary fly. It is one of the devil's titles to be Beelzebub, the prince of flies; and such are many of his temptations; he that hath but life in him may keep himself from any harm of one of them; but the matter is, they come in flocks, and being driven once away they return again. *Musca est animal insolens*, and the devil is frequent in these temptations, and though you could repel them as fast as they come, yet it would be a troublesome piece of work; it will be more for your ease to lie still under them, to let them work their will. So in time fly-blows beget noisomeness and vermin in the soul; and then the life and death of that man becomes like that of the Egyptians, or Herod, and no plague more finally desperate than those two of flies and lice. I am resolved there be many temptations which foil many jolly Christians, which yet a mere natural man that never dreamt of Scripture, or God's Spirit, might, if he did but bethink himself, resist, and many times overcome. Many acts of uncleanness, of intemperance, of contempt of superiors, of murder, of false dealing, of swear-

[Exod. viii.
24; Acts
xii. 23.]

^a [θεός ἀπὸ μηχανῆς. Prov. cf. Plat. Cratylus, p. 425, D. Erasm. Adag. 591. Cic. de Nat. D. i. 20.]

ing and profaning, that cheap, unprofitable, that untempting, and therefore unreasonable sin; many acts, I say, of these open abominable sins, which either custom or human laws make men ashamed of, and the like; the very law of reason within us is able to affront, and check, and conquer. That *ἔμφυτος καὶ φυσικὸς νόμος*, as Methodius^b calls it, “that law born with us;” *naturale judicatorium*, saith Austin against Pelagius^c; *lux nostri intellectus*, say the schoolmen out of Damascen^d; nay, *ἐπαγγελία ἀνθρώπου*, saith the stoic^e, the promise that every one makes to nature, the obligation that he is bound in when he hath first leave to be a man, or as Hierocles on the Pythagorean verses^f, “*Ὁρκος ἐνονσωμένους τοῖς λογικοῖς γένεσιν*,” “That oath that is co-æternous, and co-essential to all reasonable natures,” and engages them *μὴ παραβαίνειν, κ.τ.λ.*, “not to transgress the laws that are set them.” This is, I say, enough to keep us in some terms or compass, to swathe and bind us in, to make us look somewhat like men, and defeat the devil in many a skirmish. But how much more for a Christian, who, if it were by nothing but his baptism, hath certainly some advantages of other men. For one that, if he acknowledge any, worships the true God, never went a fooling after idols, which was the original of the heathens “being given up to vile affections;” for one that lives in a civil country, among people that have the faces and hearts of men and Christians, made as it were “to upbraid his ways, and reprove his thoughts;” for one that is within the sound of God’s law and light of His gospel, by which he may edify more than ever heathen did by thunder and lightning; for one that cannot choose but fear and believe, and love, and hope in God, in some measure or kind, be he never so unre-

Rom. i. 26.

Wisd. ii. 14.

^b In Phot., p. 91, b. [Methodius de Resurrectione ap. Photii Bibl. n. 234. et ad calc. op. S. Amphiloehii, p. 316. ed. Par. 1644.]

^c [Wiggers (In primam secundæ D. Thomæ, quæst. 19. art. 6. v. 19) says, “Ita nomine conscientie utitur D. Hieronymus in cap. i. Ezechielis, et D. Basilius in Comment. de Proverb. circa initium, quando conscientiam vocat *naturale judicatorium*, item Damascenus, quando eam dicit esse *lux nostri intellectus*.” The passage in S. Basil is (Homil. in Princip. Proverb. § 91. Op., tom. ii. p. 106, B), *ἐπειδὴ τι ἔχομεν παρ’ ἑαυτοῖς κριτή-*

ριον φυσικόν, δι’ οὗ τὰ κατὰ τῶν ποιητῶν διακρίνομεν, κ.τ.λ. The reference to S. Austin seems to be a mistake.]

^d [γνώσις φῶς ἐστὶ ψυχῆς λογικῆς. S. Joan. Damasc. Dialect. cap. 1. Op., tom. i. p. 7, B.]

^e [Epicteti Dissert. ab Arriano digest., lib. i. c. 9. § 7.]

^f [Hierocles in aur. carm. Pyth. ver. 2. p. 34. ed. 1742.]

^g *νόμος ἄγραφος καὶ θεῖος*. Porphyrius de abstinentia, lib. i. p. 10. [c. 28, p. 46; ed. Rhoer.] *θελαί παραγγελία*, ibid. lib. ii. p. 26, [c. 61. p. 212.] *ἱεροὶ νόμοι*, lib. iv. p. 50. [c. 21. p. 266.]

generate; for him, I say, that hath all these outward restraints, and perhaps some inward twinges of conscience, to curb and moderate him, to be yet so stupid under all these helps as never to be able to raise up one thought toward heaven, to have yet not the least atom of soul to move in the ways of godliness, but to fall prostrate like a carcase, or a statue, or that idol Dagon, with his feet stricken off, not able to stand before the slightest motion of sin; or if a lust, or a fancy, or a devil, be he the ugliest in hell, any thing but God, appear to him, presently to fall down and worship. This is such a sottish condition, such an either lethargy or consumption of the soul, such an extreme degree of weakness, that neither original sin, that serpent that despoiled Adam, nor any one single devil, can be believed to have wrought in us; but that *ὁ δῆμος*,—as the Platonics call it^b,—“a popular government of sin,” under a multitude of tyrants, which have for so long a while wasted and harassed the soul, so that now it is quite crest-fallen, as that legion of devils which dwelt among the tombs in a liveless, cadaverous, noisome soul; or more truly that “evil spirit,” that made the man disclaim and renounce Christ and His mercies when He came to cure; “Let us alone, what have we to do with Thee?” By which is noted, that contentedness and acquiescence in sin; that even stubborn wilfulness and resolvedness to die, that a long sluggish custom in sin will bring us to; and that you may resolve on, as the main discernible cause of this weakness of the heart, a habit, and long service and drudgery in sin. But then, as a ground of that, you may take notice of another, a fancy that hath crept into most men’s hearts,—and suffers them not to think of resisting any temptation to sin,—that all their actions, as well evil as good, were long ago determined and set down by God; and now nothing left to them but a necessity of performing what was then determined. I would fain believe that that old heresy of the stoics, revived indeed among the Turks, concerning the inevitable production of all things, that fatal necessity, even of sins, should yet never have gotten any footing or entertainment among Christians; but that by a little experience in the practice of the world, I find it among many a main piece of their faith, and the only point that can yield

[1 Sam.
v. 3, 4.]

Mark v.
3, 9.

Mark i. 23,
24.

^a [Cf. Maximus Tyr. Dissertat. xxxiii. § 6. p. 397. ed. Davis.]

them any comfort; that their sins, be they never so many and outrageous, are but the effects, or at least the consequents, of God's decree; that all their care and solicitude, and most wary endeavours, could not have cut off any one sin from the catalogue; that unless God be pleased *ἀπὸ μηχανῆς* to come down upon the stage by the irresistible power of His constraining Spirit, as with a thunderbolt from heaven, to shake and shiver to pieces the carnal man within them, to strike them into a swoon as He did Saul, that so He may convert them; and in a word, to force and ravish them to heaven; unless He will even drive and carry them¹, they are never likely to be able to stir; to perform any the least work of reason, but fall minutely into the most irrational, unnatural sins in the world, nay, even into the bottom of that pit of hell, without any stop, or delay, or power of deliberating in this their precipice. This is an heresy that in some philosopher-Christians hath sprouted above ground, hath shewed itself in their brains and tongues: and that more openly in some bolder wits; but the seeds of it are sown thick in most of our hearts, I fear in every habitual sinner amongst us, if we were but at leisure to look into ourselves. The Lord give us a heart to be forewarned in this behalf.

To return into the road: our natural inclinations and propensions to sin are no doubt active and prurient enough within us; somewhat of Jehu's constitution and temper, they drive very furiously. But then to persuade ourselves that there is no means on earth besides the very hand of God, and that out of our reach, able to trash or overflow this furious driver; that all the ordinary clogs that God hath provided us, our reason and natural conscience as men, our knowledge as Christians; nay, His restraining, though not sanctifying graces, together with the lungs and bowels of His ministers, and that energetical powerful instrument, the "gospel of Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation, even to every Jew," nay, and heathen; to resolve that all these are not able to keep us in any compass, to quell any the least sin we are inclined to; that unless God will by force make saints of us, we must needs presently be devils, and so leave all to God's omnipotent working, and never

¹ *θεοφορούμενοι.*

make use of those powers with which He hath already furnished us. This is a monstrous piece of unchristian divinity, a way, by advancing the grace of God, to destroy it, and by depending on the Holy Ghost, to grieve, if not to sin against Him; to make the corruption of our nature equal to, nay, surpassing the punishment of the devils; a necessary and irreversible obduration in all kinds and measures of sin.

This one practical heresy will bring us through all the prodigies of the old philosophical sects, from stoics to epicurism, and all sensual libertinism, and from thence to the *μετεμψύχωσις* of the Pythagoreans. For unless the soul that is now in one of us had been transplanted from a swine, or some other the most stupid, sottish, degenerate sort of beasts, it is impossible that it should thus naturally, and necessarily, and perpetually, and irrecoverably, delight and wallow in every kind of sensuality, without any check or contradiction, either of reason or Christianity. If I should tell you that none of you that hath understood and pondered the will of God wants abilities in some measure to perform it, if he would muster up all his forces at time of need; that every Christian hath grace enough to smother lusts in the womb, and keep them, at least, from bringing forth; to quell a temptation before it break out into an actual sin, you would think perhaps that I flattered you, and deceived myself in too good an opinion of your strength. Only thus much then; it would be somewhat for your edification to try what you could do: certainly there is much more in a Christian's power,—if he be not engaged in a habit of sin,—than we imagine; though not for the performing of good, yet for the inhibiting of evil. And therefore bethinking ourselves, *ὅτι Διὸς υἱοὶ ἔσμεν*, saith Arrian^j, “that we are the sons of God,” *μηδὲν ταπεινὸν καὶ ἀγεννὲς*, “let us not have too low and degenerate an opinion of ourselves.” Do but endeavour resolutely and courageously to repel temptations as often as they solicit thee, make use of all thy ordinary restraints, improve thy natural fear and shamefacedness, thy Christian education, tender disposition to the highest pitch; do but

^j [γεγόναμεν ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ πάντες προηγουμένως, καὶ ὁ θεὸς πατὴρ ἐστὶ τῶν τ' ἀνθρώπων καὶ τῶν θεῶν ὀλμαιο]

ὅτι οὐδὲν ἀγεννὲς οὐδὲ ταπεινὸν ἐνθυμηθήσεται περὶ ἐαυτοῦ. Epict. Dissert. ab Arriano digest., lib. i. c. 3. § 1.]

hold sincerely as long as thou art able, and though I will not say that all thy sins shall be confined to those two heads of original (a branch of which are evil motions) and of omission; yet I will undertake that thou shalt have an easier burden of actual commissions upon thy soul, and that will prove a good ease for thee. Those are they that weigh it down into the deep, that sink it desperateliest into that double Tophet of obduration and despair. Final obduration being a just judgment of God, on one that hath filled up the measure of his iniquities, that hath told over all the hairs of his head, and sands of the sea in actual sins; and a necessary consummation of that, despair; the first part, the prologue and harbinger to that worm in hell.

It were easy to shew how faith might afford a Christian sufficient guard and defence against the keenest weapon in the devil's armoury, and retort every stroke upon himself. But because this is the faith only of a wife, not as we now consider as a woman at large, but in a nearer obligation, as a spouse, we shall more opportunely handle that in the next part, where we shall consider indulgence in sin as the work of a "whorish woman;" where whoredom, noting adultery, presupposes wedlock, and consists in unfaithfulness to the husband, the thing in the next place to be discovered: "the work," &c.

That Christ is offered by His Father to all the Church for an husband; that He waits, and begs, and sends presents to us all to accept of the proposal, the whole book of Canticles, that song of spiritual love, that affectionate wooing sonnet will demonstrate. That every Christian accepts of this match, and is sacramentally espoused to Christ at his baptism; his being called by the husband's name imports: for that is the meaning of the phrase, "Let us be called by Thy name," Is. iv. 1. i. e., marry us. That faith is the only thing that makes up the match, and entitles us to His name and estate, is observable both from many places of Scripture, and by the opposition which is set betwixt a Christian and all others, Jews and infidels, betwixt the spouse and either the destitute widow or barren virgin; the ground of which is only faith.

So then, every Christian at his baptism being supposed a believer, and thereby espoused sacramentally to Christ, and

so obliged to all the observances, as partaker of all the privileges of a wife; doth at every unchaste thought, or adulterous motion, offend against the fidelity promised in marriage, by every actual breach of this faith, is for the present guilty of adultery, but by indulgence in it, is downright a whore; i. e., either one that came to Christ with an unchaste adulterous love to gain somewhat, not for any sincere affection to His person, but insidious to His estate; and having got that, is soon weary of His person: or else one that came to Him with pure virgin thoughts, resolving herself a perpetual captive to His love, and never to be tired with those beloved fetters of His embraces; but in time meets with a more flattering amiable piece of beauty, and is soon hurried after that, and so forgetteth both her vows and love.

Thus shall you see a handsome, modest, maidenly Christian, espoused to Christ at the font, and fully wedded by His ring at confirmation: nay, come nearer yet to Him, and upon many solemn expressions of fidelity and obedience, vouchsafed the seal of His very heart in the sacrament of His blood. Another that hath lived with Him a long while in uniform, constant loyalty, noted by all the neighbourhood for an absolute wife; a grave, solemn, matronly Christian; yet either upon the allurements of some fresh sprightly sin, or the solicitations of an old-acquaintance lust, the insinuations of some wily intruder, or a specious show of a glorious glittering temptation; or when these are all wanting, upon the breaking out of “an evil heart of unbelief,”—which some outward restraints formerly kept in,—“departing from the living God,” profess open neglect and despite against the husband which before they so wooed, and flattered, and made love to. It were long to number out to you, and give you by tale a catalogue of those defections and adulterous practices which Christians are ordinarily observed to be guilty of,—which whether they go so far as to make a divorce betwixt the soul and Christ, or whether only to provoke Him to jealousy, whether by an intercision of grace and faith, or by an interruption and suspension of the acts, I will not now examine,—I will go no further than the text, which censures it here as a piece of spiritual whoredom, of treacherous unfaithful dealing, to be light, unconstant, and false to Christ,

[Heb. iii.
12.]

whose spouse they are esteemed, whose name they bear, and estate they pretend title to. And so indeed it is, for what greater degree of unfaithfulness can be imagined? What fouler breach of matrimonial covenants, than to value every ordinary prostitute sin before the precious chastest embraces of an husband and a Saviour? to be caught and captivate with the meanest vanity upon earth, when it appears in competition with all the treasures in heaven? Besides, that spiritual armour which faith bestows on a Christian, sufficient to “quench all the fiery darts of the wicked,” or, as the Greek Eph. vi. 16. hath it, *τοῦ πονηροῦ*, that “wicked one,” the devil, methinks there is a kind of moral influence from faith on any wise and prudent heart, enough to enliven, and animate, and give it spirit, against the force or threatenings of any the strongest temptation, and to encourage him in the most crabbed, uncouth, disconsolate undertakings of godly obedience. For what sin didst thou ever look upon with the fullest delight of all thy senses, in the enjoying of which thy most covetous, troublesome, importunate lusts would all rest satisfied, but one minute of heaven, truly represented to thy heart, would infinitely outweigh? A Turk is so affected with the expectation of his carnal paradise, those catholic everlasting stews, which he fancies to himself for heaven, that he will scarce taste any wine all his life-time for fear of disabling and depriving him of his lust; he will be very staunch from sin, that he may merit and be sure to have his fill of it. And then certainly one clear single apprehension of that infinite bliss which the eye of faith represents to us, were enough to ravish a world of souls, to preponderate all other delights, which the most poetical fancy of man or devil could possess us with. Were but the love of Christ to us ever suffered to come into our hearts,—as species to the eye by intromission,—had we but come to the least taste and relish of it, what would we not do to recompense, and answer, and entertain that love? what difficulty would it not ingratiate to us? what exquisite pleasure, or carnal rival, would not be cheap and contemptible in its presence? If thou hadst but faith to the size of “a grain of mustard-seed,” speak to this mountain, and it shall be removed, the tallest, cumbersome, unwieldy temptation which all the giants in hell can mould together,—as once they are

[Mat. xvii.
20.]

feigned to do the hills to get up to heaven, *Pelion Ossæ*^k, &c., —if thou dost but live, or breathe by faith, shall vanish at the least blast of thy nostrils. The clear representation of more valuable pleasures and more horrid dangers than any the flesh can propose, certainly attending the performances or breach of our vow of wedlock, is enough to charm and force us to perpetual chastity, to fright or scoff all other wooers out of our sights, to reprobate and damn them as soon as they appear: there is in this husband of ours a confluence of all infinite imaginable delights, which whosoever hath but once tasted, but from a kiss of his mouth, he is not unconstant but sottish, if he ever be brought to any new embraces. But then openly to contemn, to profess neglects, to go a wooing again, to tempt and solicit even temptations, to

Ezek. xvi.
33. “give gifts to all thy lovers, to hire them that they may come unto thee on every side for thy whoredoms;” this is a degree of stupidity and insolence, of insatiable pride and lust, that neither the iniquity of Sodom, nor stubbornness of Capernaum, nor the rhetoricallest phrase almost in the very Scripture can express, but only this in my text, which comes in the last place with a marvellous emphasis, “imperious.” “The work,” &c.

In which one epithet many of the highest degrees of sin are contained. 1. Confidence and shamelessness in sinning, “an imperious whore,” *mulier impudicæ libidinis*, one that is better acquainted with lust than to blush when she meets with it; modesty and coyness are but infirmities rather than good qualities of youth; effects of ignorance and tenderness and unexperience in sin, a little more conversation in the world will season men to a bolder temper, and in time instruct them that this modesty is the only thing they ought to be ashamed of. It is not ingenuity but cowardice, a poor degenerate pusillanimous humour, to go fearfully about a vice, to sin tremblingly and with regrets: this country disposition, or soft temper, when we come abroad into the world amongst men, it is quite out-dated. Thus is impudence and a forehead of steel grown not the armour only, but even the complexion of every manlike spirit. He is not fit for the devil’s war, that is so poorly appointed either with courage or munition,

^k [Virg. Georg. i. 281.]

as to be discomfited by a look ; it is part of his honour not to fear disgrace, and his reputation not to stand upon so poor a thing as reputation.

2. "Imperious," taking all authority into her own hands, scorning to be afraid either of God or devil, *quæ regno posita neminem timeat*, having fancied herself in a throne, never thinks either of enemy to endanger, or of superior to quell her ; but sins confidently, *et in cathedra*, in state, in security, Ps. i. 1. and at ease, and never doubts or fears to be removed.

And this is most primarily observable in the Jews, depending on their carnal prerogatives, as being of Abraham's seed ; and yet thus also may we suspect do many among us, some tying God's decree of election to their persons and individual entities, without any reference to their qualifications or demeanours ; others by a premature persuasion that they are in Christ, and so in such an irreversible estate, that all the temptations, all the devils, nay, all the sins in hell, shall never dispossess them. Others resolved that God can see no sin in His children, in imitation of Marcus in Irenæus¹, whose heresy, or rather fancy it was *ἑαυτὸν δι' ἀπολύτρωσιν ἀόρατον γίνεσθαι τῷ κριτῇ*, "that by the redemption they were become invisible." Upon these I say, and other grounds—how true, I will not now examine—do many rash presumers abuse the grace of God unto wantonness ; never fear to sin, because they need not fear to be punished ; never cease to provoke God, because they are sure He is their friend ; and being resolved of Him as a Saviour, contemn Him as a Judge. *Multi ad sapientiam pervenissent, &c.*, saith he, "Many had come to learning enough, had they not believed too soon they had attained it." No such hindrance to proficiency as too timely a conceit of knowledge. Thus might we ordinarily guess some men to have been in good towardly estates, had they not made too much haste to conceive so ; and having once possessed themselves of heaven on such slight grounds, such as not a solemn examination of themselves, but some gleams of their fancy had bestowed upon them ; it is no wonder if all the effects of their assurance be spiritual security, and supine confidence in sinning : they have hid their heads in heaven by their vain specula-

¹ [S. Iren. adv. Hær., lib. i. c. 13. p. 60 ; quoted above, p. 160.]

tion, and then think their whole body must needs be safe, be it never so open, and naked, and bare to all temptations. Nay, be they up to the shoulders in carnality, nay, earth, nay, hell, yet seeing, *caput inter nubila*^m, "their head is in the clouds," there is no danger or fear of drowning, be it never so deep or miry. This was Laodicea's estate; she fancied herself great store of spiritual riches, and brought in an inventory of a very fair estate, "I am rich and am increased in goods, and have need of nothing:" any more accession, even of the graces of God, would be but superfluous and burdensome, not knowing all this while, "that she was wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." There is not a blessing upon earth that can any way hope or seem to parallel a sober well-grounded assurance here, that in time we shall be saints in heaven; it is such a paradise upon earth, that heaven itself seems but a second part of it, differing from it rather in degrees and external accomplishments, than in any distinct specific kind of happiness:—the Lord of heaven by His mighty working, when it shall please Him, begin and consummate it in us! But then to make use of this patent of heaven to engage us further in the deep, to keep us not from the devil's works, but from his attachments; only as a protection to secure our misdemeanours, not to defend our innocence: for a man thus appointed to venture on a precipice, as the Turks, saith Busbequiusⁿ, are wont to try the goodness of a horse by riding him post down the steepest hill; to outdare the devil in his own territories, —as Christ is said to descend thither to triumph over him,— to besiege and set upon hell, presuming of our interest in heaven as of a magical charm, and ἀλεξίκακον to keep us safe from death or maims in the midst of enemies, nay, of friends; this is a piece of spiritual pride of Lucifer's own inscribing, an imperious majestic garb of impiety, a triumphant or processional pomp, an affected stately gait in sin, that nothing but a violent rending power of the Spirit, or a boisterous tempestuous judgment, can force us out of. Such a profane fiduciary as this, which hath even defiled heaven by

[Eph. iv.
8, 9.]

^m [Virg. *Æn.* iv. 177.]

ⁿ [Busbequius, *Epist.* iii. p. 113. ed. Oxon. 1640. *Bonitatis periculum fit ex*

arduo monte per præceptis inoffenso pede decursu.]

possessing it, such an hellish saint is like to be torn out of the third heaven into which his speculation hath rapt him, and after a long dream of paradise, find himself awake in hell. And from this degree of religious profaneness, this confidence in sinning on presumption that we are under grace; from this premature resolution, that no sin, no devil, can endanger us; from this imperious whoredom, as from the danger of hell, "Good Lord deliver us."

3. "Imperious" signifies more distinctly a tyrannical lording behaviour, usurping and exercising authority over all. And this the apostate Jew and Christian libertine doth:

1. by tyrannizing over himself, i. e., his faculties and estate:
2. over all that come near him. Over himself, by urging and driving on in a carnal course; not patient of any regrets and resistances that a tender disposition, motions of God's Spirit, or gripes of conscience, can make against it, goading and spurring on any of his faculties, as being too dull and unactive, and slothful in the ways of death, even forcing them—if they be any time foreslowed and trashed by either outward or inward restraints—to sin even in spite of them, and hastening them to a kind of unvoluntary disobedience. Thus will a stone when it is kept violently from the ground, being held in a man's hand, or the like, press and weigh towards the earth incessantly, as if it were naturally resolved to be revenged on any one; to tire him out that thus detained it from its place; nay, when it is let down, you may see it yet press lower, make its print in the earth, as if it would never be satisfied till it could rest in hell. The sinner is never at quiet with himself, *instat et imperat*; "he is urgent and importunate upon himself to satisfy every craving lust." Not the beggarliest affection, or laziest, unworthiest desire of the flesh, but shall have its alms and dole, rather than starve, though it be an atom of his very soul, to the utter undoing and bankrupting of him that gives it.

And for his tyranny over his estate, whether temporal or spiritual, his goods of fortune or gifts of grace, they must all do homage to this carnal idol. All his treasures on earth are richly sold, if they can but yield him the fruition of one beloved sin. And for spiritual illuminations, or any seeds of grace, he will lose them all; and even shut himself for ever

into the darkness of hell, rather than ever be directed by their light, out of those pleasing paths of death.

A restraining grace was but a burdensome, needless encumbrance; and a gleam of the Spirit but a means to set conscience a working, to actuate her malice and execution on sin; and it were a happy exchange, to get but one loving delight or companion for them both. Let but a sin be coy and staunch, not to be gained at the first wooing, and all these together, like Jacob's present out of all his goods, shall be all little enough for a sacrifice or bribe, to solicit or hire it. And this the prophet notes here distinctly, "Thou art contrary to all the whores in the world." In other places "Men give gifts to all whores, but thou givest gifts to all thy lovers." None follow or bribe thee to commit whoredoms: "Thou givest a reward, and no reward is given to thee; therefore thou art contrary."

[Gen.
xxxii.
xxxiii.]
Ezek. xvi.
33, 34.

The sinner in my text scorns to set so low a value on sin, as that profit or advantage should ingratiate it to him; it is so amiable in his eyes of itself, he will prize it so high, that any other treasure shall not be considerable in respect of it: it is part of his loyalty and expression of his special service to the devil, to become a bankrupt in his cause, to "sell all that he hath," both God and fortunes to "follow him." It is the art and cunning of common whores to raise men's desires of them by being coy, *difficultate augere libidinis pretium*, to hold off, that they may be followed. But this sin is not so artificial, her affections are boisterous and impatient of delay; she is not at so much leisure as to windlace, or use craft to satisfy them; she goes downright a wooing, and if there be any difficulty in compassing, all that she hath is ready for a dowry, and prostitute before her idol, lust.

Ezek. xvi.
34.

Lastly, "imperious" over all that come near him, either men or sins: every man must serve him, either as his pander or companion, to further or associate him. I told you he sinned *in cathedra*, that is, also doctorally and magisterially; every spectator must learn of him, it is his profession, he sets up school for it, his practices are so commandingly exemplary that they do even force and ravish the most maidenly tender conscience. And then, for all inferiors, they are required to provide him means and opportunities of sinning, to find him

Ps. i. 1.

out some game; and no such injury can be done as to rouse or spring a sin that would otherwise have lodged in his walk. It was part of the heathenish Romans' quarrel against the primitive Christians, saith Tertullian^o, that they drove away their devils. These exorcist Christians had banished all their old familiars out of the kingdom, which they were impatient to be deprived of. And thus careful and chary are men of their helps of opportunities to sin; it is all the joy they have in the world, sometimes to have a temptation, and to be able to make use of it; to have the devil continue strong with them, in an old courtier's phrase, "it is their very life," and he that deprives them of it is a murderer.

And for the sins themselves, Lord, how they tyrannize over them; how they will rack, and torture, and stretch every limb of a sin, that they may multiply it into infinites, and sin as often at once as is possible! Adam in the bare eating of an apple committed a multitude of sins. Leo in his eighty-sixth Epistle, Augustine *de Civit. Dei*^p, and other fathers, will number them out to you.

And thus far this tyrant over impiety and lust will be a Pelagian, as to order all his deviation by imitation of Adam's. Every breach of one single law shall contain a brood or nest, into which it may be subdivided; and every circumstance in the action shall furnish him with fresh matter for variety of sin.

Again, how "imperious" is he in triumphing over a sin which he hath once achieved! If he have once got the better of good nature and religion; broke in upon a stubborn, sullen vice, that was formerly too hard for him; how often doth he reiterate and repeat, that he may perfect his conquest, that it may lie prostrate and tame before him, never daring to resist him! And if there be any virgin modest sins, which are ashamed of the light, either of the sun or nature, not coming abroad but under a veil,—as some sins being too horrid and abominable, are fain to ap-

^o [See Tertull. Apol., c. 23, and 43.]

^p In illo uno peccato possunt intelligi plura peccata, &c.—S. Leo, Epist. 86. [ed. Par. 1618. (Ep. 1. ed. Venet. 1753.) The passage from which these words are taken is omitted in later editions, having been inserted into the Epis-

tle from S. Aug. Enchir. c. 13. (al. 45.) See Quesnel's note, Op. S. Leon., tom. ii. 803. ed. Par. 1675. And this appears to be the passage of S. Augustine referred to by Hammond; it has not been found in the De Civitate Dei. See S. Aug. Op., tom. vi. p. 212.]

pear in other shapes, and so keep us company under the name of amiable or innocent qualities,—then will this violent imperious sinner call them out into the court or market-place; tear away the veil, that he may commit them openly; and, as if the devil were too modest for him, bring him upon the stage against his will, and even take hell by violence and force.

Thus are men come at last to a glorying in the highest impieties, and expect some renown and credit as a reward for the pains they take about it; and then certainly honour is grown very cheap when it is bestowed upon sins, and the man very tyrannical over his spectators' thoughts, that requires to be worshipped for them. This was a piece of the devil's old tyranny in the times of heathenism,—which I would fain Christianity hath out-dated,—to build temples and offer sacrifice to sins under the name of Venus, Priapus, and the like; that men that were naturally *δεισιδαίμονες*, superstitious adorers of devils, or any thing that was called God, might account incontinence religion, and all impieties in the world a kind of adoration. Thus to profess whoredoms, and set up trophies in our eyes, "to build their eminent place in the head of every way," in the verse next to my text, was then the imputation of the Jews,—and pray God it prove not the guilt of Christians,—from whence the whole Church of them is here styled, "an imperious," &c.

Thus hath the apostate Jew represented to you, in his picture and resemblance, the libertine Christian, and Ezekiel become an historian as well as prophet. Thus hath indulgence in vice among professors of Christianity been aggravated against you, 1. by the weak womanish condition of it; nature itself, and ordinary man-like reason, is ashamed of it; 2. by the adulterous unfaithfulness, 1. want of faith, 2. of fidelity betrayed in it; 3. by the imperiousness of the behaviour, 1. in shamelessness, 2. in confidence and spiritual security, 3. in tyrannizing over himself and faculties, by force compelling, and then insulting over his goods and graces, prodigally misspending them in the prosecution of his lusts, and lording over all that come near him, men or sins; first pressing, then leading the one, and both ravishing and tormenting the other, to perform him the better service.

Now that this discourse may not have been sent into the air unprofitably; that all these prophetic censures of sin may not be like Xerxes' stripes on the sea⁹, on inanimate senseless bodies; it is now time that every tender open guilty heart begin to retire into itself; every one consider whether he be not the man that the parable aims at, that you be not content to have your ears affected, or the suburbs of the soul filled with the sound, unless also the heart of the city be taken with its efficacy. Think and consider whether, 1. this effeminacy and womanishness of heart, and not weakness, but torpor and stupidity, 2. this unfaithfulness and falseness unto Christ expressed by the spiritual incontinence and whoredoms of our souls and actions, 3. that confidence and magnanimous stately garb in sin, arising in some from spiritual pride, in others from carnal security; whether any or all of these may not be inscribed on our pillars, and remain as a *στηλιτευτικὸν* against us, to upbraid and aggravate the nature and measure of our sins also. I cannot put on so solemn a person as to act a Cato or Aristarchus amongst an assembly that are all *judices critici*, to reprehend the learned and the aged, and to chide my teachers: you shall promise to spare that thankless task, and to do it to yourselves. It will be more civility perhaps, and sink down deeper into ingenuous natures, fairly to bespeak and exhort you; and from the first part of my text only,—because it would be too long to bring down all,—from the weakness and womanish condition of indulgent sinners, to put you in mind of your strength, and the use you are to make of it, in a word and close of application.

We have already taken notice of the double inheritance and patrimony of strength and graces, which we all enjoy, first, as men; secondly, as Christians; and ought not we, beloved, that have spent the liveliest and sprightfullest of our age and parts in the pursuit of learning, to set some value on that estate we have purchased so dear, and account ourselves somewhat the more men for being scholars? Shall not this deserve to be esteemed some advantage to us, and a rise, that being luckily taken, may further us something in

⁹ [Herod. vii. 45.]

our stage towards heaven? That famous division of rational animals in Jamblichus out of Aristotle^r, into three different species, that some were men, others gods, others such as Pythagoras, will argue some greater privileges of scholars above other men: that indeed the deep learned sort, and especially those that had attained some insight *περὶ θείων*, “in divine affairs,” were in a kind of a more venerable species than ordinary ignaros.

And for the benefits and helps that these excellencies afford us in our way to heaven, do but consider what a great part of the world overshadowed in barbarism, brought up in blind idolatry, do thereby but live in a perpetual hell, and at last pass not into another kind, but degree of darkness; death being but an officer to remove them from one Tophet to another; or at most, but as from a dungeon to a grave. Think on this, and then think and count what a blessing divine knowledge is to be esteemed; even such a one as seems, not only the way, but the entrance; not only a preparation, but even a part of that vision which shall be for ever beatifical. And therefore it will nearly concern us to observe what a talent is committed to our husbanding,

[Mat. xxv.
24.]

and what increase that “hard” master will exact at His coming. For as Dicæarchus^s, in his description of Greece, saith of the Chalcidians, “that they were *μαθημάτων ἐντὸς οὐ μόνον φύσει ἀλλὰ καὶ φωνῇ*, born, as it were, with one foot in learning, and both by the genius of the place and language” which they spake, being Greek, even sucked the arts from their mothers’ breasts, at least were prepared for, and initiated in them by nature; and therefore it would be a great shame for them not to be scholars. So most truly of those of us that are learned, full, illuminate Christians; the very language that we speak, and air we breathe in, doth naturally infuse some sacred instincts into us; doth somewhat enter us in this spiritual, heavenly wisdom; will be

^r [*Ἱστορεῖ δὲ καὶ Ἀριστοτέλης ἐν τοῖς περὶ τῆς Πυθαγορικῆς φιλοσοφίας, διαίρεισιν τινὰ τοιάνδε ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἐν τοῖς πάνυ ἀπορρήτοις διαφυλάττεσθαι τοῦ λογικοῦ ζώου τὸ μὲν ἐστὶ θεός, τὸ δὲ κνθρωπος, τὸ δὲ οἷον Πυθαγόρας.*—Jamblichus de vita Pythagoræ, c. 6.]

^s [The words of Dicæarchus are, Οἱ

δὲ ἐνοικοῦντες Ἕλληνες, οὐ γένει μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῇ φωνῇ, τῶν μαθημάτων ἐντὸς, φιλαπόδημοι, γραμματικοὶ, τὰ προσπίπτοντα ἐκ τῆς πατρίδος δυσχερῆ γενναίως φέροντες.—Geograph. Scriptores, ed. Hudson, Oxon. 1703. tom. ii. p. 20. Hammond has obviously misapprehended the meaning of the passage.]

some munition for us, and not suffer us to be so pitifully baffled, and befooled, and triumphed over by that old sophister. And if for all these advantages we prove dunces at last, it will be an increase, not only of our torments, but our shame; of our indignation at ourselves at the day of doom; and the reproach and infamy superadded to our sufferings will scarce afford us leisure to weep and wail, for gnashing of our teeth. And therefore, as Josephus^t of the Jews, that they prayed to God daily, *οὐχ ὅπως δῶ, κ.τ.λ.*, not that He would bestow good things on them, for He did that already on His own accord, pouring out plenty of all in the midst of them, but *ὅπως δέχεσθαι δύνωνται, καὶ λαβόντες φυλάττωσι*, “that they might be able to receive and keep what He bestowed.” So will it concern us to pray and labour mainly for the preserving, that we be the better for this great bounty of God’s: that neither our inobservance of His gifts suffer them to pass by us unprofitably and neglected, being either not laid hold on or not employed; nor the unthrifty mishusbanding of them cause the Lord to call in the talent entrusted to us already, because unworthy of any more.

It was a shrewd, though atheistical speech of Hippocrates^u, “that sure, if the gods had any good things to bestow, they would dispense them among the rich,” who would be able and ready to requite them by sacrifices: “but all evil presents, all Pandora’s box should be divided among the poor,” because they are still murmuring and repining, and never think of making any return for favours.

The eye of nature, it seems, could discern thus much of God and His gifts, that they are the most plentifully bestowed, where the greatest return may be expected: and for others, from whom all the liberality in the world can extort no retribution, but grumbling and complaints, it is not charity or alms, but prodigality and riot to bestow on them. These are to be fed, not with bread, but stripes; they are not *πένητες*,

^t [παράκλησις δὲ πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν ἔστω διὰ τῆς εὐχῆς καὶ δέσεως, οὐχ ὅπως διδῶ τὰ ἀγαθὰ· δέδωκε γὰρ αὐτὸς ἐκὼν, καὶ πάντων εἰς μέσον κατέθηκεν· ἀλλ’ ὅπως δέχεσθαι δυνάμεθα, καὶ λαβόντες φυλάττωμεν. Joseph. cont. Apionem, lib. ii. c. 23.]

^u [εἰκὸς γὰρ τοὺς μὲν πλουσίους θύειν πολλὰ τοῖς θεοῖς καὶ ἀνατιθέειν ἀναθήματα ὕντων χρημάτων καὶ τιμῶν, τοὺς δὲ πένητας ἥσσαν διὰ τὴ μὴ ἔχειν. Hippocrates, tom. i. p. 563. Medic. Græc., vol. xxi. ed. Kuhn.]

[Gen. xli. 20, 21.] but *πτωχοὶ*, rather “beggars” than “poor,” like Pharaoh’s lean kine, after the devouring of the fat ones still lank and very ill-favoured. And the judgment of these you shall find

[Mat. xxv. 29.], in the Gospel, “from them shall be taken away even that which they have.” And therefore, all which from God, at this time and for ever, I shall require and beg of you, is the exercise and the improvement of your talent; that your learning may not be for ostentation, but for traffic; not to possess, but negotiate withal; not to complain any longer of the poverty of your stock, but presently to set to work to husband it. That knowledge of God which He hath allowed you as your portion to set up with, is ample enough to be the foundation of the greatest estate in the world; and you need not despair, through an active, labouring, thriving course, at last to set heaven as a roof on that foundation: only it will cost you some pains to get the materials together for the building of the walls; it is as yet but a foundation, and the roof will not become it till the walls be raised; and therefore every faculty of your souls and bodies must turn Bezaleels and Aholiabs, spiritual artificers for the forwarding and perfecting of this work.

[Ex. xxxv. 30, 34.]

It is not enough to have gotten an abstracted mathematical scheme or diagram of this spiritual building in our brain; it is the mechanical labouring part of religion that must make up the edifice; the work, and toil, and sweat of the soul; the business, not of the designer, but the carpenter; that which takes the rough, unpolished, though excellent materials, and trims and fits them for use; which cuts and polishes the rich, but as yet deformed jewels of the soul, and makes them shine indeed, and sparkle like stars in the firmament. That ground or sum of Pythagorean philosophy, as it is set down by Hierocles in his *χρυσᾶ ἔπη*, if it were admitted into our schools or hearts, would make us scholars and divines indeed; that virtue is the way to truth, purity of affections a necessary precursory to depth of knowledge, *πρώτον ἀνθρώπων εἶναι καὶ τότε θεόν*, the only means to prepare for the uppermost form of wisdom, the speculation of God, which doth ennoble the soul unto the condition of an *ἥρωσ* or *θεός*, of an heroic, nay sacred person, is first to have been the person of a man aright, and by the practice of

virtue to have cleared the eye for that glorious vision. But the divinity and learning of these times floats and hovers too much in the brain, hath not either weight or sobriety enough in it to sink down, or settle it in the heart. We are all for the *μεθοδική*, as Clemens^v calls it; the art of sorting out, and laying in order all intellectual store in our brains, tracing the counsels of God, and observing His methods in His secrecies; but never for the *πρακτική*, the refunding and pouring out any of that store in the alms, as it were, and liberality of our actions. If Gerson's definition of theology, that it is *scientia effectiva non speculativa*^x, were taken into our consideration at the choice of our professions, we should certainly have fewer pretenders to divinity, but it is withal hoped more divines.

The Lacedæmonians and Cretians, saith Josephus^y, brought up men to the practice, but not knowledge of good, by their example only, not by precept or law. The Athenians, and generally the rest of the Grecians, used instructions of laws only, but never brought them up by practice and discipline. "But of all lawgivers," saith he, "only Moses," *ἄμφω ταῦτα συνήρμοσεν*, "dispensed and measured both these proportionably together." And this, beloved, is that for which that policy of the primitive Jews deserved to be called *θεοκρατία*, by a special name, the government of God Himself. This is it: the combination of your knowledge with your practice, your learning with your lives, which I shall, in fine, commend unto you, to take out both for yourselves and others.

1. For yourselves, that in your study of divinity you will not behold God's attributes as a sight or spectacle, but as a copy, not only to be admired, but to be transcribed into your hearts and lives; not to gaze upon the sun to the dazzling, nay, destroying of your eyes, but, as it were, in a burning-glass, contract those blessed sanctifying rays that flow from it, to the enlivening and inflaming of your hearts. And 2. in the behalf of others; so to digest and inwardly dispense every part of sacred knowledge into each several member and vein of body and soul, that it may transpire through

^v [S. Clem. Alex. Pædag., lib. i. c. 1.]

^y [Josephus cont. Apionem, lib. ii.

^x [Joann. Gerson, Op., pars i. p. 566, c. 16, 17.]

D. See Practical Catechism, p. 1.]

hands, and feet, and heart, and tongue; and so secretly insinuate itself into all about you; that both by precept and example, they may see and follow "your good works," and so "glorify here your Father which is in heaven," that we may all partake of that blessed resurrection, not of the learned and the great, but the just; and so hope and attain to be all glorified together with Him hereafter.

Now to Him, &c.

SERMON XIV.

PHIL. iv. 13.

I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me.

THOSE two contrary heresies that cost St. Austin and the fathers of his time so much pains; the one all for natural strength, the other for irrecoverable weakness, have had such unkindly influence on succeeding ages, that almost all the actions of the ordinary Christian have some tincture of one of these: scarce any sin is sent abroad into the world without either this or that inscription. And therefore parallel to these, we may observe the like division in the hearts and practical faculties between pride and sloth, opinion of absolute power, and prejudice of absolute impotence: the one undertaking all upon its own credit, the other suing, as it were, for the preferment, or rather excuse of being bankrupts upon record; that so they may come to an easy composition with God for their debt of obedience: the one so busy in contemplation of their present fortunes that they are not at leisure to make use of them, their pride helping them to ease; and if you look nearly to poverty too, the other so fastened to this sanctuary, Rev. iii. 17. this religious piece of profaneness, that leaving the whole business to God, as the undertaker and proxy of their obedience, their idleness shall be deemed devotion, and their best piety sitting still.

These two differences of men, either sacrilegious or supine, imperious or lethargical, have so dichotomized this lower sphere of the world, almost into two equal parts, that the practice of humble obedience and obeying humility, the bemoaning our wants to God, with petition to repair them, and the observing and making use of those succours which God in Christ hath dispensed to us; those two foundations of all

Christian duty, providing between them that our religion be neither *ἄθεος ἀρετὴ*, nor *ἀνέργητος εὐχὴ*, “neither the virtue of the atheist, nor the prayer of the sluggard,” are almost quite vanished out of the world: as when the body is torn asunder, the soul is without any further act of violence forced out of its place, that it takes its flight home to heaven, being thus let out at the scissure, as at the window; and only the two fragments of carcase remain behind.

[1 Kings
iii.] For the deposing of these two tyrants, that have thus usurped the soul between them, dividing the live child with that false mother, into two dead parts; for the abating this pride, and enlivening this deadness of practical faculties; for the scourging this stout beggar, and restoring this cripple to his legs; the two provisions in my text, if the order of them only be transposed, and in God’s method the last set first, will, I may hope and pray, prove sufficient. “I can do,” &c.

1. “Through Christ that strengtheneth me.” You have there, first, the assertion of the necessity of grace; and secondly, that enforced from the form of the word *ἐνδυναμοῦντα*, which imports the minutely continual supply of aids; and then, thirdly, we have not only positively, but exclusively declared the person thus assisting; *in Christo confortante*, it is by Him, not otherwise, we can do thus or thus. Three particulars, all against the natural confidence of the proud atheist.

2. The *ἰσχύω πάντα*, “I can do all things.” First, the *ἰσχύω*, and secondly, the *πάντα*; 1. the power; and 2. the extent of that power: 1. the potency; and 2. the omnipotency; and then 3. this not only originally of Christ that strengtheneth, but inherently of me, being strengthened by Christ. Three particulars again, and all against the conceived or pretended impotence, either of the false spy that brought news of the giants, Anakims, cannibals, in the way to Canaan; or of the sluggard, that is always affrighting and keeping himself at home, with the lion in the streets, some *μορμολύκειον* or other difficulty or impossibility, whensoever any work or travail of obedience is required of us.

Numb.xiii.
32.

Prov. xxvi.
13.

It will not befit the majesty of the subject to have so many particulars, by being severally handled, jointly neglected. Our best contrivance will be to shorten the retail for the increas-

ing of the gross, to make the fewer parcels, that we may carry them away the better, in these three propositions.

- I. The strength of Christ is the original and fountain of all ours; "Through Christ that," &c.
- II. The strength of a Christian, from Christ derived, is a kind of omnipotency, sufficient for the whole duty of a Christian. "Can do all things," &c.
- III. The strength and power being thus bestowed, the work is the work of a Christian, of the *suppositum*, the man strengthened by Christ. "I can do," &c.

Of these in this order, for the removing only of those prejudices out of the brain, which may trash and encumber the practice of piety in the heart. And first of the first.

The strength of Christ is the original and fountain of all ours. The strength of Christ, and that peculiarly of Christ the second Person of the Trinity, who was appointed by consent to negotiate for us in the business concerning our souls. All our tenure or plea, to grace or glory, to depend not on any absolute, respectless, though free donation, but conveyed to us in the hand of a Mediator; that privy seal of His annexed [Acts vii.] to the patent, or else of no value at that court of pleas, or that grand assizes of souls. Our natural strength is the gift of God, as God is considered in the first article of our creed, and by that title of creation we have that privilege of all created substances, to be able to perform the work of nature, or else we should be inferior to the meanest creature in this; for the least stone in the street is able to move downwards by its own principle of nature: and therefore all that we have need of in the performing of these is only God's concurrence, whether previous or simultaneous; and in acts of choice, the government and direction of our will, by His general providence and power. However, even in this work of creation, Christ must not be excluded, *בריא אלהים* "Gods," in the [Gen. i. 1.] plural, all the persons of the Deity, in the whole work, and peculiarly in the *faciamus hominem*, are adumbrated, if not [Gen. i. 26.] mentioned by Moses. And therefore God is said to have made all by His Word, that inward, eternal Word in His [John i. 3.] bosom, an articulation, and, as it were, incarnation of which, was that *fiat et factum est*, which the heathen rhetorician so

admired in Moses for a magnificent sublime expression^a. Yet in this creation, and consequently this donation of natural strength, peculiarly imputed to the first Person of the Trinity; because no personal act of Christ, either of His satisfaction or merit, of His humiliation or exaltation, did conduce to that; though the Son were consulted about it, yet was it not ἐν χειρὶ μεσίτου, “delivered to us in the hand of a Mediator.” Our natural strength we have of God, without respect to Christ incarnate, without the help of His mediation; but that

2Cor. iii. 5. utterly insufficient to bring us to heaven. “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing,” i. e., saith Parisiensis^b, any thing of moment or valour, according to the dialect of Scripture, that calls the whole man by the name of his soul,—so many souls, i. e., so many men, and so ἡ ψυχή σὺ^c, the Pythagoreans’ word, thy “soul is thou,”—counts of nothing, but what tends to the salvation of that. But then our supernatural strength, that which is called grace and Christian strength, that is of another date, of another tenure, of another allay; founded in the promise, actually exhibited in the death and exaltation of the Messias, and continually paid out to us, by the continued daily exercise of His offices. 1. The covenant sealed in His blood, after the manner of eastern nations, as a counterpart of God’s, to that which Abraham had sealed to before in his blood at his circumcision. 2. The benefits made over in that covenant were given up *in numerato*, with a kind of livery and seisin at His exaltation; which is the importance of that place, “Thou hast ascended on high.” There is the date of it upon Christ’s inauguration to His regal office^d: “Thou hast led captivity captive.” There is the evidence of conveyance unto Him, as a reward of His victory and part of His triumph: “Thou hast given gifts,” or as the Psalm, “received” “gifts for men.” Both importing the same thing in divers relations, received from His Father,—“All power is given to Me,”—that He might give, dispense, convey, and steward it out to men; and so literally still, ἐν χειρὶ μεσίτου, “in the hand of a Mediator.” And then that which is thus

[Gen. xvii. 11.]

Eph. iv. 8.
Ps. lxxviii.
[18.]

[Matt. xxviii. 18.]

^a Longinus de Sublim. [c. 9. circa med.]

^b [Gulielmus Alvernus Parisiensis de Meritis, Op., tom. i. p. 310. b. H. ed. Par. 1674.]

^c [Hierocl. in Pyth. Aur. Carm., ver. 25.]

^d As δῶρον, and ἀήμμα, βραβεῖον, and ἄθλον, in Greek.

made over to us is not only the gift of grace, the habit by which we are regenerate: but above that account, daily bubblings out of the same spring, minutely rays of this Sun of Righteousness, which differ from that gift of grace, as the propagation of life from the first act of conception, conservation from creation; that which was there done in a minute is here done every minute; and so the Christian is still *in fieri*, not *in facto esse*: or as a line which is an aggregate of infinite points, from a point *in suo indivisibili*; the first called by the schools, *auxilium gratiæ per modum principii*, the other *per modum concursus*. And this is noted by the word *δόσεις*, “givings,” neither *ἐξέεις* as the heathen^c called their virtues, as habits of their own acquiring; nor again so properly *δώρα*, “gifts,” because that proves a kind of tenure after the receipt. *Data, eo tempore quo dantur, fiunt accipientis*, saith the law: but properly and critically *δόσεις*, “givings,” Christ always a giving, confirming minutely not our title but His own gift; or else that as minutely ready again to return to the crown. All our right and title to strength and power is only from God’s minutely donation. And the *ἐνδυναμοῦντι*, in the present tense, implies all depending on the perpetual presence and assistance of His strength. Hence is it that Christ is called “the Father of eternity,” i. e., “of the life to come,” — *μέλλοντος αἰῶνος* say the LXX, “the age to come,” — the state of Christians under the gospel, and all that belongs to it; “the Father” which doth not only beget the child, but educate, provide for, put in a course to live and thrive, and deserves far more for that He doth after the birth, than for the being itself; and therefore it is Proclus’ observation of Plato, that he calls God, in respect of all creatures, *ποιητήν*, a “Maker;” but *πατέρα*, a “Father,” in respect of man. And this the peculiar title of Christ, in respect of His offices; not to be the Maker only, the architect of that age to come, of grace and glory, but peculiarly the Father, which continues His paternal relation for ever; yea, and the exercises of paternal offices by the pedagogy of the Spirit, all the time of nonage, minutely adding and improving, and building him up to the measure and pitch of His own stature and fullness.

Jam. i. 17.
[πᾶσα δό-
σις ἀγροθῆ.]

Isa. ix. 6.

^c [Arist. Eth. ii. 4.]

Mat. i. 21. And so again that sovereign title of His, "Jesus," i. e., *ἰατρὸς* and *σωτήρ*, *αὐτὸς γὰρ σώσει*. This title and office of physician is peculiar to the second Person, to repair the daily decays and ruins of the soul, and not only to implant a principle of health, but to maintain it by a *διαιτητικὸν*, and confirm it minutely [Mal.iii.2.] into an exact habit of soul: and therefore, that Sun of righteousness is said to have His healing in His wings; i. e., in those rays which it minutely sends out, by which as on wings, this fountain of all inherent and imputed righteousness, of sanctifying and justifying grace, takes its flight, and rests upon the Christian soul; and this still peculiarly, *ἐν Χριστῷ ἐνδυναμοῦντι*, not in God, *κοινῶς*, but *κύριως*, in Christ; "in Christ that strengtheneth."

The not observing, or not acknowledging of which difference between the gifts of God and the gifts of Christ, the endowments of that first and this second foundation, the hand of God and the hand of a Mediator, is, I conceive, the ground of all those perplexing controversies about the strength of nature and patrimony of grace. Pelagius, very jealous and unwilling to part with his natural power, "lest any thing in the business of his salvation should be accounted due unto God," they are his own words, if Jerome^s may be credited, *Mihi nullus auferre poterit liberi arbitrii potestatem, ne si in operibus meis Deus adjutor exstiterit, non mihi debeat merces, sed ei qui in me operatus*. Socinus again denying all merit and satisfaction of Christ, making all that but a chimera, and so evacuating or antiquating that old tenure by which we hold all our spiritual estate. The Romanists again, at least some of them, bestowing upon the blessed Virgin after conception, such jurisdiction in the temporal procession of the Holy Ghost, that no grace is to be had but by her dispensing^b; that she, the mother, gives Him that sends the Holy Ghost, and therefore gives all

^s [S. Hieron. Dial. cont. Pelag., lib. i. c. 6. Op., tom. ii. col. 686, D.]

^b [A tempore enim, a quo Virgo mater concepit in utero Verbum Dei, quandam (ut ita dicam) jurisdictionem, seu auctoritatem obtinuit in omni Spiritus Sancti processione temporali: ita quod nulla creatura aliquam a Deo obtinuit gratiam vel virtutem, nisi secundum ipsius piam dispensationem . . . In

Christo fuit plenitudo gratiæ sicut in capite, influente in Maria vero, sicut in collo transfundente. Unde Cant. vii. &c. Ideo omnia dona, virtutes, et gratiæ ipsius Spiritus Sancti, quibus vult, quando vult, quomodo vult, et quantum vult, per manus ipsius administrantur. S. Bernardini Senensis de B. M. V., Serm. v. Art. i. cap. 8. Op., tom. iv. p. 92, 93. cf. art. iii. cap. 2. p. 81.]

gifts, *quibus vult, quomodo, quando, et per manus*; that she is the neck to Christ the Head: andⁱ *Sublato Virginis patrocant. vii. 4.*
cinio, perinde ac halitu intercluso, peccator vivere diutius non potest: and store enough of such emasculate theology as this. And yet others that maintain the quite contradictory to all these, acknowledging a necessity of supernatural strength to the attaining of our supernatural end, and then ask and receive this only, as from the hands and merits of Christ, without the mediation or jurisdiction of any other, are yet had in jealousy and suspicion as back-friends to the cause of God, and enemies to grace; because they leave man any portion of that natural strength which was bestowed on him at his creation. Whereas the limits of both of these being distinctly set, there may safely be acknowledged, first a natural power,—or if you will call it natural grace, the fathers will bear you out in the phrase; *Illius est gratiæ quod creatus est*, St. Jerome^k; *Gratia Dei qua fecit nos*, St. Austin^l; and *Crearis gratia*, St. Bernard^m:—and that properly styled the strength of God, but not of Christ, enabling us for the works of nature.

And then above this, is regularly superstructed the strength of Christ, special supernatural strength made over unto us, not at our first but second birth; without which, though we are men, yet not Christians, “live,” saith Clemens, *ἔθνικὸν καὶ πρῶτον βίον*,” “a kind of embryo, imperfect heathen,” of a child in the womb, of the gentle dark uncomfortable being, a kind of first draught, or ground colours only, and monogram of life. Though we have souls, yet in relation to spiritual acts or objects, but weak consumptive cadaverous souls,—as *ψυχή*, the Old Testament word for the soul, and *ψυχὴ* in the LXXII signifies a carcase or dead body, Numb. v. 2, and elsewhere,—and then by this accession of this strength of Christ, this dead soul revives into a kind of omnipotency; the pigmy is sprung up into a giant, this languishing puling state improved into an *ἀθλητικὴ ἔξις*; he

ⁱ [Viegas Comment. Exeget. in Apocalypsin, cap. xii. de B. Virg. comment. 2. sect. 3. num. 6.]

^k [S. Hieron. Epist. cxl. (al. cxxxix.) ad Cyprianum, Op., tom. i. col. 1046, C.]

^l S. August. in Ps. xlv. [§ 10. tom.

iv. col. 1616, D.]

^m [S. Bernard. de gratia et libero arbitrio, c. xiv. § 48, 49. Op., tom. i. col. 628, A, C.]

ⁿ [S. Clem. Alex. Strom., lib. vii. p. 752, C.]

that even now was insufficient "to think any thing," is "now able to do all things;" which brings me to my second proposition.

The strength of a Christian, from Christ derived, is a kind of omnipotence sufficient for the whole duty of a Christian; *ἰσχύω πάντα*, "can do all things."

The clearing of this truth from all difficulties or prejudices, will depend mainly on the right understanding of the predicate, *τὰ πάντα*, in my text, or the whole duty of a Christian in the proposition: which two being of the same importance, the same hand will unravel them both. Now what is the whole duty of a Christian but the adequate condition of the second covenant? upon performance of which salvation shall certainly be had, and without which *salvare nequeat ipsa si cupiat salus*, the very sufferings and saving mercies of Christ will avail us nothing. As for any exercise of God's absolute will, or power, in this business of souls under Christ's kingdom, I think we may fairly omit to take it into consideration; for sure the New Testament will acknowledge no such phrase, nor I think any of the ancients that wrote in that language. Whereupon perhaps it will be worth observing, in the confession of the religion of the Greek Church, subscribed by Cyril the present patriarch of Constantinople°, where having somewhat to do with this phrase, of "God's absolute dominion" so much talked on here in the west, he is much put to it to express it in Greek, and at last fain to do it by a word coined on purpose, a mere Latinism for the turn, *ἀπολελυμένην κυριότητα*: an expression I think capable of no excuse but this, that a piece of new divinity was to be content with a barbarous phrase. Concerning this condition of the second covenant, three things will require to be premised to our present enquiry:

1. That there is a condition, and that an adequate one, of the same extent as the promises of the covenant; something exacted at our hands to be performed, if we mean to

John i. 12. be the better for the demise of that indenture, "as many as

° [Cyril Lucar is the person alluded to; Cyrilli Confessio fidei, cap. iii. apud Libros Symbolicos Ecclesiæ

Orientalis, ed. Kimmell, p. 26. εἴ τις ἐπιθῆ ἐπὶ τὴν ἀπολελυμένην τοῦ Θεοῦ αὐθεντείαν καὶ κυριότητα.]

received Him, to them He gave power," &c. To these, and to none else, positively and exclusively: "To him that over-^{Rev. ii. 7.}cometh will I give;" "I have fought a good fight," &c. "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown;" then begins^{2 Tim. iv. 7.} the title to the crown, and not before: when the fight is fought, the course finished, the faith kept, then *cælum rapiunt*, God challenged on His righteousness as a Judge, not on ground of His absolute pleasure as a Lord, which will; but upon supposition of a pact or covenant, which limits and directs the award and process, "for according unto it, God, the righteous Judge, shall give." And in Christ's farewell^{Mark xvi. 16.} speech to His disciples, where He seals their commission of embassy and preaching to every creature: "He that believeth not shall be damned;" this believing, whatever it signifies, is that condition here we speak of, and what it imports, you will best see by comparing it with the same passage set down by another amanuensis in the last verse of St. Matthew, "to observe all things whatsoever I have com-^[Mat. xxviii. 20.]manded you:" a belief, not of brain or fancy, but that of heart and practice, i. e. distinctly evangelical or Christian obedience, the *πάντα* in my text, and the whole duty of a Christian in the proposition; which if a Christian, by the help of Christ, be not able to perform, then consequently he is still incapable of salvation by the second covenant; no creature being now rescuable from hell, *stante pacto*, but those that perform the condition of it, that irreversible oath of God, which is always fulfilled in kind without relaxation, or commutation, or compensation of punishment, being already gone out against them; "I have sworn in My wrath that they^{Heb. iv. 3.} shall not enter into My rest." And therefore when the end of Christ's mission is described, "that the world through Him^{John iii. 17.} might be saved;" there is a shrewd 'but' in the next verse, "but he that believeth not, is condemned already:" this was upon agreement between God and Christ, that the impenitent infidel should be never the better for it, should die unrescued in his old condemnation. So that there is not only a logical possibility, but a moral necessity of the performing of this *τὰ πάντα*, or else no possibility of salvation. And then that reason of disannulling the old, and establishing the new covenant, because there was no justification to be had by the old,

Gal. iii. 21. rendered Gal. iii. 21, would easily be retorted upon the Apostle thus, Why, neither is any life or justification to be had by this second; the absurdity of which sequel being considered, may serve for one proof of the proposition.

The second thing to be premised of this condition is, that it is an immutable, unalterable, undispensable condition. The second covenant standing, this must also stand; that hath been proved already, because a condition adequate, and of the same latitude with the covenant.

But now secondly, this second, both covenant and condition, must needs stand an everlasting covenant. No possibility of a change, unless, upon an impossible supposition, there should remain some other fourth person of the Deity to come into the world. The tragic poets, saith Tully^p, when they had overshot themselves in a desperate plot that would never come about, *ad deum confugiunt*, they were fain to fly to a god, to lay that unruly spirit that their fancy had raised. Upon Adam's sin and breach of the condition of the first covenant, there was no possibility in the wit of man, in the sphere of the most poetical fancy, *fabulæ exitum explicare*, to come off with a fair conclusion, had not the second Person of the Trinity, that *Θεὸς ἀπὸ μηχανῆς*, come down in His tire, and personation of flesh, not in the stage clothes or livery, but substantial form of a servant upon the stage. And He again having brought things into some possibility of a happy conclusion,—though it cost Him His life in the negotiation,—leaves it at His departure in the trust of His vicegerent, the “spirit of His power,” to go through with His beginnings; to see that performed,—which only He left unperfected, as being our task, not His,—the condition of the second covenant. The Spirit then enters upon the work, dispatches officers, ambassadors to all nations in the world, *πάσῃ κτίσει*, to “every creature.” And Himself to the “end of the world,” goes along to back them in their ministry. And then the next thing the Scripture tells us of, is the coming to harvest after this seed time, and he “that believeth not, shall be damned;” and so that sacred canon is shut up.

Ezek. xvi.
60.

Mark xvi.
15.
Mat. xxviii.
20.

^p [Ut tragici poetæ cum explicare argumenti exitum non potestis, confugitis ad Deum.—Cic. de Nat. Deorum, lib. iv. c. 20.]

The issue of this second *præcognitum* is this; that if there still remain any difficulties, any impossibilities to be overcome, so they are like to remain for ever, unless there be some other person in the Godhead to be sent, to make up Pythagoras his *τετρακτύς*⁹, there is no new way imaginable to be found out; and that perhaps is the reason of those peremptory denunciations of Christ against them that sin against the Holy Ghost, against that administration of grace entrusted to Him, that there shall be never any remission ^[Mat. xii. 32.] for them, in this world or in another, i. e. either by way of justification here, or glorification at that grand manumission hereafter. And that may serve for a second proof of the proposition, that if for all, the duty of a Christian is not feasible, it must remain so for ever; an adumbration thereof you may see set down Heb. x. comparing the sixteenth with the twenty-sixth verse. In the sixteenth you have the second covenant described, and the condition of it in the verses following; and then, verse twenty-six, if after this we sin wilfully, then our estate becomes desperate, “there remains no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation;” and he that takes not then quarter, accounted an adversary for ever; the apostate, whether he renounce his faith in fact or profession, must be a cast-away.

The third thing to be premised is, wherein this condition of the second covenant consists; and that is not in any rigour of legal performance,—that was the bloody purport of that old obligation that soon concluded us all under death irreversibly,—not in any Egyptian Pharaoh’s tasks, a full tale of bricks without straw, without any materials to make them; no pharisaical burden laid on heavy, and no finger to help to bear it; but an “easy yoke,” a “light burden,” and not only light, ^[Mat. xxiii. 4.] but alleviating: he that was laden before is the lighter for this yoke, “Take My yoke, and you shall find rest.” ^[Mat. xi. 30.] And ^{ver. 29.} therefore Christ thinks reasonable not to lay the yoke upon them as an injunction,—as the worldly fashion is,—but to commend it to them as a thing that any prudent man would be glad to take up; in the beginning of the verse, “Take My yoke upon you.”

⁹ [Cf. Jamblich. vita Pythag., c.150, 162. et Carm. Aur. ver. 47. et Hierocel. in eund.]

In a word, it consists in the embracing of Christ in all His offices, the whole person of Christ; but especially as He is typically described in Zachary, a crowned Jesus, a Priest upon a throne; His sceptre joined to His ephod, to rule and receive tribute, as well as sacrifice, and satisfy, and reconcile. *Consilium pacis inter ambo ea*, those two offices of His reconciled in the same, our Priest become our King, “that being delivered, we may serve Him,”—in the other Zachary’s phrase, delivered without fear, serve Him,—“in holiness and righteousness:” the performance of that duty that Christ enables to perform; the sincerity of the honest heart; the doing what our Christian strength will reach to, and humbly setting the rest on Christ’s score. And then when that which can be done is sure to be accepted, there is no room left for pretended impossibilities. Nay, because those things which there is a logical possibility for us to do, and strength sufficient suppeditated, it is not yet morally possible to do all our lives long without any default; because, as Parisiensis* saith, even the habit of grace, in the regenerate heart, is, as long as a man carries flesh about him, as an armed man, *positus in lubrico*, set to fight in a slippery place, all his armour and valour will not secure him from a fall; or again, as the general of a factious or false-hearted army, a party of insidious flesh at home, which will betray to the weaker enemy that comes unanimous; or as a warrior on a tender-mouthed horse, impatient of discipline or check, is fetched over sometimes for all his strength and armour; because, I say, there is none but offend sometimes, even against his power; there is therefore bound up in this new volume of ordinances, an *ἐπίνομις*, a “new testament,” a codicil of repentance added to the testament; that plank for shipwrecked souls†, that city of refuge, that sanctuary for the man-slayer, after sin committed. And then, if sincere obedience be all that is required, and that exclude no Christian living, be he never so weak, but the false, faithless hypocrite; if repentance will repair the faults of that, and that exclude none but him that lives and dies indulgent in sin, the common prostitute, final impenitent infidel: if whatsoever be wanting be made over in the demise of the covenants, and whatsoever

Zach. vi.
11, 13.

Luke i. 74.

[Num.
xxxv. 6.]

* [Gulielmus Alvernus Parisiensis prope fin. Op., tom. i. p. 299.]

De tentationibus et resistentiis, cap. i.

† [See Pract. Catech., sect. v. p. 129.]

we are enabled to do accepted in the condition of it; then certainly no man that advises with these premises, and so understands what is the meaning of the duty, can ever doubt any longer of the πάντα ἰσχύω, the “omnipotence of the Christian,” his sufficiency from Christ to perform his whole duty. Which is the sum of the conclusion of the second Arausian council held against Pelagius^u, *c. ult.*^v *Secundum fidem Catholicam credimus, quod accepta per baptismum gratia omnes baptizati Christo auxiliante et cooperante quæ ad salutem pertinent possint et debeant (si fideliter laborare voluerint) adimplere.* The not observing of which is, I conceive, the fomentor of all that unkindly heat of those involved disputes, whether a regenerate man *in via*, can fulfil the law of God; of that collision concerning merits, concerning venial and mortal sin, justification by works, or faith, or both; all which upon the grounds premised, will to any intelligent sober Christian, a friend of truth and a friend of peace, be most evidently composed. To bring down this thesis to these several hypotheses, this time or place will not permit; I shall be partial to this part of my text, if I pass not with full speed to that which remains, the third proposition.

That the strength and power being thus bestowed, the work is the work of a Christian, of the *suppositum*, the man strengthened and assisted by Christ. “I can,” &c.

I, not I alone, abstracted from Christ, nor I principally, and Christ only in *subsidiis*, to facilitate that to me which I was not quite able thoroughly to perform without help,—which deceitful consideration drew on Pelagius himself, that was first only for nature, at last to take in one after another five subsidiaries more; but only as so many horses to draw together in the chariot with nature^w, being so pursued by the councils and fathers, from one hold to another, till he was at last almost deprived of all; acknowledging, saith St. Austin^x, *divine*

^u Vid. Vossii *Histor. Pelagian.*, p. 315. [lib. iii. pars 2. This council is quoted in *Epicrisis*. 7.]

^v [Concil. Arausic. II. (A.D. 528.) can. ult.; *Concilia*, tom. iv. col. 1672, B.]

^w [See Vossii *Hist. Pelag.* ubi supra, *Theses*, ii., iii., iv., where this me-

taphor is used.]

^x [‘Nos,’ inquit (Pelagius), ‘sicut tria ista distinguimus, et certum velut in ordinem digesta partimur. Primo loco posse statuimus, secundo velle, tertio esse. Posse in natura, velle in arbitrio, esse in effectu locamus. Primum illud, id est, posse, ad Deum pro-

gratiæ adjutorium ad posse; and then had not the devil stuck close to him at the exigence, and held out at the *velle et operari*, he might have been in great danger to have lost a heretic;—but I, absolutely impotent in myself to any supernatural duty, being then rapt above myself, strengthened by Christ's perpetual influence, having all my strength and ability from Him, am then by that strength able to do all things myself. As in the old oracle the god inspired and spake in the ear of the prophet, and then the Vates spoke under from thence, called *ὑποφήτης*, echoed out that voice aloud which he had received by whisper, a kind of scribe, or crier, or herald, to deliver out as he was inspired; the principal, *θεός*, a god, or oracle; the prophet *ἐνθεος, ἐνθουσιασμένος*, an inspired enthusiast, dispensing out to his credulous clients all that the oracle did dictate; or as the earth, which is cold and dry in its elementary constitution, and therefore bound up to a necessity of perpetual barrenness, having neither of those two procreative faculties, heat or moisture, in its composition; but then by the beams of the sun and neighbourhood of water, or to supply the want of that, rain from heaven to satisfy its thirst, this cold dry element begins to teem, carries many mines of treasure in the womb, many granaries of fruit in its surface, and in event, *ισχύει πάντα*, contributes all that we can crave, either to our need or luxury. Now though all this be done by those foreign aids, as principal, nay, sole efficient of this fertility in the earth to conceive, and of its strength to bring forth, yet the work of bringing forth is attributed to the earth, as to the immediate parent of all. Thus it is God's work, *καταφυτεύσαι καὶ ποτίσαι*, saith Cyril^y, to plant and water, and that He doth mediately by Apollos and Paul: yea, and to give the increase, that belongs to Him immediately; neither to man nor angel, but only *ad agricolam Trinitatem*, saith St. Austin^z; but after all this *σὸν δὲ καρποφορῆσαι*,

Heb. vi. 7.

prie pertinet, qui illud creaturæ suæ contulit: duo vero reliqua, hoc est velle et esse, ad hominem referenda sunt, quia de arbitrii fonte descendunt. Ergo in voluntate et opere bono laus hominis est: immo et hominis, et Dei, qui ipsius voluntatis et operis possibilitatem dedit, quique ipsam possibilitatem gratiæ suæ adjuvat semper auxilio.—Pelagii verba citat. ap. S. Au-

gustin., lib. de Gratia Christi, cap. 4. vid. cap. 5. Op., tom. x. col. 231, 232.]

^y [αὐτοῦ μὲν οὖν ἐστὶ τὸ καταφυτεύσαι καὶ ποτίσαι, σὸν δὲ τὸ καρποφορῆσαι.—S. Cyrilli H. Catech. i. c. 4. p. 18, B.]

^z [S. August. in S. Joan. Evang., c. xv. Tract. lxxx. § 2. Op., tom. iii. col. 703, A.]

though God give the increase, thou must bring forth the fruit. The Holy Ghost overshadowed Mary, and “she was found with child,” *εὑρέθη*, she was found; no more attributed to her; the Holy Ghost the principal, nay, sole agent in the work, and she a pure virgin still^a: and yet it is the angel’s divinity, “that Mary shall conceive and bring forth a son.”^{Mat. i. 18.} Luke i. 31. All the efficiency from the Holy Ghost, and *partus ventrem*, the work attributed, and that truly to Mary, the subject in whom it was wrought; and therefore is she called by the ancients not only *officina miraculorum*, and *ἐργαστήριον ἁγίου πνεύματος*, “the shop of miracles,” and “the work-house of the Holy Ghost,” as the rhetoric of some have set it, but by the councils^b, that were more careful in their phrases, *χριστοτόκος* and *θεοτόκος*, not only the conduit through which He passed, but the parent of whose substance He was made. And thus in the production of all spiritual actions, the principal sole efficient of all is Christ and His Spirit; all that is conceived in us is of the Holy Ghost: the holy principle, holy desire, holy action, the *posse, et velle, et operari*, all of Him. But then being so overshadowed, the soul itself conceives; being still assisted, carries in the womb, and by the same strength at fullness of time, as opportunities do midwife them out, brings forth Christian spiritual actions; and then as Mary was the mother of God, so the Christian soul is the parent of all its divine Christian performances; Christ the father, that enables with His Spirit; and the soul the mother, that actually brings forth.

And now that we may begin to draw up towards a conclusion, two things we may raise from hence by way of inference to our practice.

1. Where all the Christian’s non-proficiency is to be charged, either, 1. upon the habitual hardness, or 2. the sluggishness, or 3. the rankness of his own wretchless heart.

1. Hardness; that for all the seed that is sown, the softening dew that distils, and rain that is poured down, the en-

^a [Forma præcessit in carne Christi quam in nostra fide spiritaliter agnoscamus. Nam Christus filius Dei secundum carnem de Spiritu Sancto conceptus et natus est. Carnem autem illam nec concipere Virgo posset aliquando nec parere nisi ejusdem carnis Spiritus Sanctus operaretur exortum.]

Sic ergo in hominis corde nec concipi fides poterit nec augeri, nisi eam Spiritus Sanctus infundat et nutriat.— Fulgentius Ruspensis de Incarnatione et gratia, c. 20. ap. Bibl. Patr. Galland, tom. xi. p. 243, C.]

^b [e. g. Concil. Ephes. et Constant. II.]

livening influences that are dispensed among us, yet the *σκληρότης ὑστήρας*, “the hardness and toughness of the womb,” *ξηρὰ γῆ οὐ πᾶν ἐκτρέφουσα*, that dry unnutrifying earth in the philosopher’s, or in Christ’s dialect stony ground, resists all manner of conception, will not be hospitable, yield any entertainment, even to these angelical guests, though they

[Gen. xix.] come as to Lot’s house in Sodom only to secure the owner from most certain destruction. This is the reason that so much of God’s husbandry among us returns Him so thin, so unprofitable an harvest, *ceciderunt in petrosa*; and it is hard finding any better tillage now-a-days; the very Holy Land, the milk and honey of Canaan is degenerate, they say, into this composition; and herein is a marvellous thing, that where God hath done all that any man, if it were put to his own partial judgment, would think reasonable for Him to do for His vineyard, gathered out stones, those seeds of natural hardness, and, which deserves to be marked, built a wine-press, a

Isa. v. 2. sure token that He expected a vintage in earnest, not only manured for fashion, or to leave them without excuse; yet for all these, *labruscas*, wild, juiceless grapes, heartless faith, unseasoned devotion, intemperate zeal, blind and perverse obedience, that under that name shall disguise and excuse disobedience; *tot genera labruscarum*, so many wild unsavoury fruits is the best return He can hear of.

One thing more let me tell you; it is not the original hardness of nature to which all this can be imputed; for, for the mollifying of that, all this gardening was bestowed; digging and gathering out, and indeed nothing more ordinary, than out of such “stones to raise up children unto Abraham.” But it is the long habit and custom of sin which hath harassed out the soul, congealed that natural gravel, and improved it into a perfect quarry or mine; and it is not the preacher’s charm, the annunciation of the gospel, “that power of God unto salvation,” unto a Jew or heathen; it is not David’s harp,—that could exorcise the evil spirit upon Saul,—not the every-day eloquence, even of the Spirit of God, that can in holy Esdras’ phrase, “persuade them to salvation.”

2. Sluggishness, and inobservances of God’s seasons, and opportunities, and seed-times of grace. God may appear a thousand times, and not once find us in case to be parleyed

with: Christ comes but thrice to His disciples from His prayers in the garden, and that thrice He finds them asleep. Christ can be awake to come, and that in a more pathetic language, *sic non potuistis hora una*, as the vulgar most fully out of the Greek, “were you so unable to watch one hour?” The Pharisee can be awake to plot, Judas to betray, their joint vigils and *proparasceue* to that grand passover the slaying of the Lamb of God, and only the disciples they are asleep, “for their eyes were heavy,” saith the text; and this heaviness of eyes, and heaviness of heart—whereupon *βαρυκαρδιοι* in the LXXII is ordinarily set for sinners—is the depriving us many times, not only of Christ, but of His Spirit too. So many apologies and excuses to Him when he calls, “a little more sleep and slumber, and folding of the hands;” such drowsy-hearted slovenly usage when He comes, that no wonder if we grieve Him out of our houses; such contentedness in our present servile estate, that if a jubilee should be proclaimed from heaven, a general manumission of all servants from these galleys of sin, we would be ready with those servants for whom Moses makes a provision, to come and tell Him plainly, “we will not go out free,” be bored through the ear to be slaves for ever.

[Ps. iv. 3.]

[Prov. xxiv. 33.]

3. Rankness, and a kind of spiritual sin of Sodom; “pride and fulness of bread,” abusing the grace of God into wantonness; either to the ostentatious setting themselves out before men, or else the feeding themselves up to that high flood of spiritual pride and confidence, that it will be sure to impostumate in the soul. Some men have been fain to be permitted to sin, for the abating this humour in them by way of phlebotomy; St. Peter, I think, is an example of that. Nebuchadnezzar was turned a grazing to cure his secular pride; and St. Paul, I am sure, had a messenger sent to him to that purpose, by way of prevention, that he might not be exalted above measure; and when he thought well of it, he receives it as a present sent him from heaven, *ἔδόθη μοι σκόλοψ*, reckons of it as a gift of grace, or if you will, a medicinal dose, or recipe, but rather a plaster, or outward application, which, *per anti-peristasin*, would drive in his spiritual heat, and so help his weak digestion of grace, make him the more thriving Christian for ever after.

Ex. xxi. 6.

[Ezek. xvi. 46.]

[2 Cor. xii. 7.]

The issue of this first inference is this, that it is not God's partial or niggardly dispensing of grace; but either our unpreparedness to receive, or preposterous giddiness in making use of it, which is the cause either of consumption or aposthume in the soul, either starving or surfeiting the Christian.

The second inference, how all the Christian's diligence is to be placed; what he hath to do in this wayfare to his home. And that is the same that all travellers have, first, to be always upon his feet, advancing minutely something toward his next stage. See that we be employed, or else how can God assist; we must *ἐργάζειν*, or else He cannot *συνεργεῖν*; and see that we be employed aright, or else God must not, cannot assist. The sluggard's devotions can never get into God's presence; they want heat and spirit to lift them up, and activity to press and enforce them when they are there. It was an impression in the very heathen, Porcius Cato in the history^c, that watching, and acting, and advising aright, and not emasculate womanish supplications alone, were the means whereby God's help is obtained, *Ubi socordiae atque ignaviae tradideris, frustra Deos implores*. And Hierocles^d to the same purpose, that their sacrifices are but *πυρὸς τροφή*, "food for the fire" to devour; and their richest offerings to the temple but a spoil to the sacrilegious to prey on. And the sinner's devotions must not be entertained there; they would even profane that holy place.

John ix. 31. He that was born blind, saw thus much, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any be a worshipper of God, and doth His will, him doth God hear."

And then secondly, to get furnished, whatever it cost him, of all provision and directions for his way; and so this will conclude in a double exhortation, both combined in that of David to Solomon, when all materials were laid in, and artificers provided for the building of the temple, and wanted nothing but a cheerful leader to actuate and enliven them, "Arise therefore, and be doing, and the Lord be with thee."

1. To set about the business as thine own work, as the task that will not be required of the Spirit of God, of the Scrip-

^c [Sallust. de Catilin. Conj., c. 52.]

^d [Hierocles in Aur. Carm. Pythag., ver. 1. In the first copy of the Sermons the name in the text was Jerome, by an obvious mistake; the marginal refer-

ence was Hier. in Aur. Car. Pyth.; in Fulman's edition "f. Hierocles" was added in the margin.—The text has now been corrected.]

[Phil. ii. 12, 13.]

1 Chron. xxii. 16.

ture, of the preacher, but of thee. When it is performed thou wouldst be loth that God should impute all to Himself, crown His own graces, ordinances, instruments, and leave thee as a cypher unrewarded. And therefore, whilst it is a performing, be content to believe that somewhat belongs to thee, that thou hast some hardship to undergo, some diligence to maintain, some evidences of thy good husbandry, thy wise managing of the talent; and in a word, of faithful service to shew here, or else when the *euge bone serve* is pronounced, thou wilt not be able confidently to answer to thy name. *Οὐ τὰ ὅπλα ἰσχυρὸν ἀνδρῶν, ἀλλὰ τῶν ὅπλων οἱ ἄνδρες*, said the Milesians to Brutus^e; “All the weapons in the world will not defend the man, unless the man actuate, and fortify, and defend his weapons.” Thy strength consists all in the strength of Christ, but you will never walk, or be invulnerable in the strength of that, till you be resolved that the good use—and so the strength of that strength to thee—is a work that remains for thee. If it were not, that exhortation of the Apostle’s would never have been given in form of exhortation to the Christian, but of prayer only to Christ, “Stand fast, quit yourselves like ^{1 Cor. xvi.} men, be strong.” ^{13.}

Lastly, or indeed that which must be both first and last, commensurate to all our diligence, the *viaticum* that you must carry with you, is the prayers of humble gasping souls. Humble, in respect of what grace is received; be sure not to be exalted with that consideration. Gasping for what supply may be obtained from that eternal unexhausted fountain; and these prayers not only that God will give, but, as Josephus makes mention of the Jews’ liturgy, *ὡς δέχεσθαι δύνασθαι*, “that they may receive.” And as Porphyry^f, of one kind of sacrifice, *διὰ χρείαν ἀγαθῶν*, “that they may use;” and every of us fructify in some proportion answerable to our irrigation.

Now the God of all grace, who hath called us into His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after that you have obeyed awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

To Him, be glory and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.

^e * *Ἐπιστ. v.*

^f [Porphyrius, *De Abſtinentia*, lib. ii § 24.]

SERMON XV.

PROV. i. 22.

How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity?

THAT Christ is the best, and Satan the worst chosen master, is one of the weightiest and yet least considered aphorisms of the gospel. Were we but so just and kind to ourselves as actually to pursue what upon judgment should appear to be most for our interests, even in relation to this present life; and—without making heaven the principle of our motion—but only think never the worse of a worldly temporary bliss, not quarrel against it for being attended with an eternal; were we but patient of so much sobriety and consideration, as calmly to weigh and ponder what course, in all probability, were most likely to befriend and oblige us here, to make good its promise of helping us to the richest acquisitions, the vastest possessions and treasures of this life, I am confident our Christ might carry it from all the world besides, our Saviour from all the tempters and destroyers; and—besides so many other considerable advantages—this superlative transcendent one of giving us the only right to the reputation and title of wisdom here in these books, be acknowledged the Christian's, i. e. the disciple's monopoly and inclosure; and folly the due brand and reproach and portion of the ungodly.

The wisest man, beside Christ, that was ever in the world, you may see by the text had this notion of it, brings in wisdom by a *prosopopæia*,—i. e. either Christ Himself, or the saving doctrine of heaven, in order to the regulating of our lives, or again, wisdom in the ordinary notion of it,—libelling and reproaching the folly of all the sorts of sinners in the world,

posting from the “without in the streets” to the assemblies of [ver. 20.] the greatest renown, “the chief place of concourse,” i. e. clearly [ver. 21.] their sanhedrim, or great council, from thence to the places of judicature; for that is, “the openings of the gates,” nay, to “the city,” *κατ’ ἐξοχῆν*, the metropolis and glory of the nation; and crying out most passionately, most bitterly against all in the loudest language of contumely and satire that ever Pasquin or Marforius were taught to speak. And the short of it is, that the pious Christian is the only tolerable wise; and the world of unchristian sinners are a company of the most wretched, simple, atheistical fools, which cannot be thought on without a passion and inculcation, “How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and ye scorn-ers,” &c.

The first part of this verse, though it be the cleanest of three expressions, hath yet in it abundantly enough of rudeness, for an address to any civil auditory. I shall therefore contain my discourse within those staunchest limits, “How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity?” And in them observe only these three particulars.

1. The character of the ungodly man’s condition, contained in these two expressions, simple ones, and simplicity; “How long, ye simple,” &c.

2. The aggravation of the simplicity, and so heightening of the character, and that by two further considerations.

First, from their loving of that which was so unlovely, that they should be so simple as to love simplicity.

Secondly, from their continuance in it, that they should not at length discern their error, that they should love simplicity so long.

3. The passion that it produceth in the speaker—be it wisdom, or be it Christ, or be it Solomon—to consider it; and that passion, whether of pity, that men should be such fools; or of indignation, that they should love and delight in it so long. “How long,” &c.

I begin first with the first; the character of sin and sinners, i. e. of the ungodly man’s condition, contained in these two expressions: simple ones, and simplicity. “How,” &c.

Four notions we may have of these words, which will all be applicable to this purpose: you shall see them as they rise.

[Mat. v.
22.]

First, as the calling one simple is a word of reproach or contumely, the very same with the calling one *ράκα*, i. e. “empty, brainless person,” the next degree to the *μῶρε*, or “thou fool,” in the end of that and this verse. And then the thing that we are to observe from thence is, what a reproachful thing an unchristian life is; what a contumelious, scandalous quality.

[Rom. i.
26. *πάθη*
ἀτίμιας.]

[Rev. xxii.
15.]

A reproach to nature first, to our human kind, which was an honourable reverend thing in paradise, before sin came in to humble and defame it; a solemn, severe law-giver, *σύστημα λογικῶν νοημάτων*, in Clemens; the system or pandect of all rational notions, *σύμψηφος τῷ Θεῷ*, that either likes or commends all that now Christ requires of us, bears witness to the word of God that all His commandments are righteous; and so is by our unnatural sins, those *ἀτίμα πάθη*, ignoble dishonourable affections of ours,—which have coupled together sins and kennels, adulterers and dogs,—put to shame and rebuke, dishonoured and degraded, as it were. Not all the ugliness and poison of the toad hath so deformed that kind of creatures, brought it so low in *genere entium*, as the deformed malignant condition of sin hath brought down the very nature and kind of men, making them *τέκνα ὀργῆς*, the children, i. e. the objects of all the wrath and hatred in the world.

[Eph. ii.
3.]

2. A reproach to our souls, those immortal vital creatures inspired into us by heaven, and now raised higher, super-inspired by the grace of Christ; which are then, as Mezentius’s invention of punishment, bound up close with a carcase of sin, tormented and poisoned with its stench, buried in that noisomest vault or charnel-house. It was an admirable golden saying of the Pythagoreans^a, the *αἰσχύνεο σαυτὸν*, what a restraint of sin it would be if a man would remember the reverence he ought unto himself, and *ἡ ψυχὴ σου*^b was their own explication of it; the soul within thee is that self to whom all that dread and awe and reverence is due. And O what an impudent affront, what an irreverential profaning of that sacred celestial beam within thee,—that *ἀπαύγασμα θεοῦ*, as

^a [Pythag. Carm. Aur., ver. 12.]

^b [Hierocl. in Carm. Aur. Pythag. ad ver. 25.]

the philosophers call it,—is every paltry oath, or rage, or lust, that the secure sinner is so minutely guilty of! Every sin, say the schools, being in this respect a kind of idolatry, an incurvation and prostitution of that heavenly creature—ordained to have nothing but divinity in its prospect—to the meanest, vilest heathen worship, the crocodile, the cat, the scarabee, the *dii stercorii*, the most noisome abominations under heaven.

3. A reproach to God, who hath owned such scandalous creatures, hath placed us in a degree of divinity next unto angels, nay, to Christ, that by assuming that nature and dying for it hath made it emulate the angelical eminence, and been in a manner liable to the censure of partiality in so doing; in advancing us so unworthy, dignifying us so beyond the merit of our behaviours, honouring us so unproportionably above what our actions can own, “whilst those that are in scarlet embrace the dunghill,” as it is in the Lam. iv. 5. Lamentations, those that are honoured by God, act so dishonourably. It was Plato’s^c affirmation of God in respect of men, that He was a Father, when of all other creatures He was but a maker; and it is Arrian’s^d superstruction on that, that remembering that we are the sons of God, we should never admit any base degenerate thought, any thing reproachful to that stock, unworthy of the grandeur of the family from whence we are extracted. If we do, it will be more possible for us to profane and embase heaven, than for the reputation of that parentage of ours to ennoble us: the scandal that such a degenerate, disingenuous progeny will bring on the house from whence we came, is a kind of sacrilege to heaven, a violation to those sacred mansions, a proclaiming to the world what colonies of polluted creatures came down from thence, though there be a *nulla retrorsum*^e, no liberty for any such to return thither.

Lastly, it is a reproach to the very beasts, and the rest of the creation which are designed by God the servants and slaves of sinful man; which may justly take up the language of the slave to his vicious master in the satirist^f, *Tune mihi*

^c [See Plat. Sophist. i. p. 234.]

^d [Arrian. Dissert. Epictet., lib. i. c. 3.]

^e [Horat. Epist. i. 1. 75.]

^f [Horat. Sat. ii. 7. 75.]

dominus? Art thou my lord, who art so far a viler bondsman than those over whom thou tyrannizest? a slave to thy passion, thy lust, thy fiends, who hast so far dethroned thyself that the beast becomes more beast when it remembers thee to have any degree of sovereignty over it?

Put these four notions together, and it will give you a view of the first intimation of this text, the baseness and reproachfulness of the sinner's course: and unless he be the most abject, wretched, forlorn sot in the whole creation; unless he be turned all into earth or phlegm; if he hath in his whole composition one spark of ambition, of emulation, of ordinary sense of honour; the least warmth of spirit; impatience of being the only degenerate wretch of the earth now, and of hell to all eternity; if he be not absolutely arrived to Arrian's^h ἀπολίθωσις τοῦ πρακτικοῦ,—his practical as well as judicative faculty quite quarried and petrified within him,—

Mark iii. 5. to that πώρωσις in the Gospel, that direct ferity and brutality, in comparison of which the most crest-fallen numbness, palsy or lethargy of soul, were dignity and preferment; if he be not all that is deplorable already, and owned to be so for ever; he will certainly give one vital spring, one last plunge, to recover some part of the honour and dignity of his creation; break off that course that hath so debased him, precipitated him into such an abyss of filth and shame, if it be but in pity to the nature, the soul, the god, the whole creation about
Isa. iv. 1. him; that like the seven importunate women lay hold on this one insensate person in the eager clamorous style of the אסף חרפתנו “take away our reproach.” And let that serve for a first part of the sinner's character, the consideration of his reproachful, scandalous, offensive state, which might in all reason work some degree of good on him in the first place.

A second notion of this phrase, and degree of this character, is the giddiness and unadvisedness of the sinner's course; as simplicity ordinarily signifies senselessness, precipitousness, as Trismegistus defines it, *μανίας εἶδος*, a “species of madness” in one place, and *τις μέθη*, a “kind of drunkenness” in another, a wild irrational acting, and this doth express itself in our furious mischieving ourselves, in doing all quite contrary unto our own ends, our own aims, our own principles of

^h Lib. i. cap. 5. [§ 3. ἐντρεπτικοῦ.]

action; and this you will see most visible in the particulars, in every motion, every turn of the sinner's life. As

I. In his malices, wherein he breathes forth such Ætnas of flames against others, you may generally mark it he hurts neither God nor man, but only himself. In every such hellish breathing, all that malignity of his cannot reach God; he is ἀπείραστος κακῶν, untemptable by evil in this other sense, I mean impenetrable by his malice. All that was shot up towards God comes down immediately on the sinner's own head; and for the man against whom he is enraged, whose blood he thirsts after, whose ruin he desires, he does him the greatest courtesy in the world, he is but blest by those curses; that honourable blissful estate that belongs to all poor persecuted saints—and consequently, the χαίρετε καὶ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε, matter of joy and exultation—is hereby become his portion; and that is the reason he is advised to do good to him by way of gratitude, to make returns of all civility and acknowledgments, not as to an enemy, but a benefactor, to bless and pray for him by whom he hath been thus obliged. Only this raving madman's own soul is that against which all these blows and malices rebound; the only true sufferer all this while; first, in the very meditating and designing the malice, all which space he lives not the life, but the hell of a fiend or devil,—that ἐχθρὸς ἀνίηρ, that “enemy-man,” as he is called,—his namesake and parallel. And again, secondly, in the executing of it; that being one of the basest and most dishonourable employments; that of an ἄγγελος Σατᾶν, “an angel or officer of Satan's,”—to buffet some precious image of God,—which is to that purpose filled out of Satan's fulness, swollen with all the venomous humour that that fountain can afford to furnish and accommodate him for this enterprise. And then, lastly, after the satiating of his wrath, a bloated, guilty, unhappy creature, one that hath fed at the devil's table, swilled and glutted himself in blood, and now betrays it all in his looks and complexion.

And as in our malices, so, secondly, in our loves, in our softer as well as our rougher passions, we generally drive quite contrary to our own ends and interests; and if we obtain, we find it experimentally the enjoyment of what we pursue most vehemently proves not only unsatisfactory, but grating, hath to the

vanity the addition of vexation also; not only the *τίνα τότε* [Rom. vi. 21.] *καρπὸν*, no manner of fruit, then at the point of enjoying an empty paltry nothing, but over and above, the *νῦν αἰσχύνεσθε*, shame and perturbation of mind, the gripings and *tormina* of a confounded conscience immediately consequent; and it would even grieve an enemy to hear the Apostle go on to the dear payment at the close for this sad nothing, the *τὸ τέλος θάνατος*, *ex abundantia*, and over and above, the “end of those things is death.” And oh what a simplicity is this! thus to seek out emptiness and death, when we think we are on one of our advantageous pursuits, in this “error of our ways,” as the wise man calls it, is sure a most prodigious mistake, a most unfortunate error; and to have been guilty of it more than once the most unpardonable simplicity.

From our loves proceeding to our hopes, which if it be any 1 John iii. 3. but the Christian hope, than this “hope on Him,” i. e., hope on God, and that joined with purifying, it is in plain terms the greatest contrariety to itself, the perfectest desperateness; and for secular hopes the expectation of good, of advantages from this or that staff of Egypt, the depending on this, [Is. xxxvi. 7.] whether profane, or but ordinary innocent auxiliary, it is the forfeiting all our pretensions to that great aid of heaven,—as they say the loadstone draweth not when the adamant is near,—it is the taking us off from our grand trust and dependence, setting us up independent from God; and that must needs be the blasting of all our enterprises; that even lawful aid of the creature, if it be looked on with any confidence as our helper, [Rom. i. 25.] *παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα*, beside, or in separation from the Creator, is—and God is engaged in honour that it should be—struck presently from heaven, eaten up with worms like Herod, when [Acts xii. 23.] once its good qualities are deified; broken to pieces with the brazen serpent, burnt and stamped to powder with the golden calf: and “the strong shall be as tow,” the false idol strength is but a prize for a flash of lightning to prey on. And as [Acts xiv. 15.] St. Paul and Barnabas are fain to run in a passion upon the multitude that meant to do them worship, with a “Men and brethren,” &c., and the very angel to St. John, when he fell [Rev. xxii. 9.] down before him, *vide ne feceris*, “see thou do it not;” for fear if he had been so mistaken by him he might have forfeited his angelical estate by that unluckiness; so certainly

the most honourable promising earthly help, if it be once looked on with a confidence or an adoration; if it steal off our eyes and hearts one minute from that sole waiting and looking on God; it is presently to expect a being thunder-struck from heaven, as hath been most constantly visible among us; and that is all we get by this piece of simplicity also.

And it were well when our worldly hopes have proved thus little to our advantage, our worldly fears, in the next place, might bring us in more profit. But alas! that passionate perturbation of our faculties stands us in no stead, but to hasten and bring our fears upon us, by precipitating them sometimes, casting ourselves into that abyss which we look on with such horror, running out to meet that danger which we would avoid so vehemently; sometimes dispiriting and depriving us of all those succours which were present to our rescue; the passion most treacherously betraying the aids ^{Wisd. xvii.} ^{12.} which reason, if it had been allowed admission, was ready to have offered; but perpetually anticipating that misery which is the thing we fear, the terror itself being greater disease sometimes, constantly a greater reproach and contumely to a masculine spirit, than any of the evils we are so industrious to avoid. It is not a matter of any kind of evil report, really to have suffered, to have been squeezed to atoms by an unremediable evil, especially if it be for well-doing; but to have been sick of the fright, to have lavished our constancy, courage, conscience, and all, an Indian sacrifice to a sprite or mormo, *ne noceat*, to escape not a real evil, but only an apprehension or terror; this is a piece of the most destructive wariness, the ἀσόφων ἀκριβεια, the greatest simplicity that can be.

I shall not enlarge the prospect any further, as easily I might, to our unchristian joys that do so dissolve, our unchristian sorrows that do so contract and shrivel up the soul;—and then, as Themison and his old sect of methodists resolved, that the *laxum* and *strictum*, the immoderate dissolution or constipation, were the principles and originals of all diseases in the world, so it will be likely to prove in our spiritual estate also;—nor again to our heathenish ἐπιχαίρεκακίαι¹, rejoicing at the mischiefs of other men; which directly

¹ [Arist. Rhet. ii. 9, 5; Eth. ii. 7, ad fin.]

transform us into fiends and furies, and wreak no malice on any but ourselves, leave us a wasted, wounded, prostitute, harassed conscience, to tire and gnaw upon its own bowels, and nothing else. I have exercised you too long with so trivial a subject, such an easy every-day's demonstration, the wicked man's contradictions to all his aims, his acting quite contrary to his very designs, a second branch of his character, a second degree and advancement of his simplicity.

[Eccles.
xii. 6.]

The third notion of simplicity is that of the idiot, the natural, as we call him, he that hath some eminent failing in his intellectuals, the *lasum principium*, the pitcher or wheel, I mean the faculty of understanding or reason, broken or wounded at the fountain or cistern; and so nothing but animal, sensitive actions to be had from him. And of this kind of imperfect creatures it will be perhaps worth your marking, that the principal faculty which is irrecoverably wanting in such, and by all teaching irreparable and unimprovable, is the power of numbering; I mean not that of saying numbers by rote,—for that is but an act of sensitive memory,—but that of applying them to matter; and from thence that of intellectual numbering, i. e. of comparing and measuring, judging of proportions, pondering, weighing, discerning the differences of things by the power of the judicative faculty; which two seem much more probably the propriety and difference of a man from a beast, than that which the philosophers^k have fancied, the power of laughing or discoursing. To reckon and compute is that which in men of an active clear reason is perpetually in exercising *per modum actus eliciti*, that naturally of its own accord, without any command or appointment of the will, pours itself out upon every object. We shall oft deprehend ourselves numbering the panes in the window, the sheep in the field; measuring every thing we come near with the eye, with the hand; singing tunes, forming every thing into some kind of metre,—which are branches still of that faculty of numbering,—when we have no kind of end or design in doing it. And this is of all things in the world the most impossible for a mere natural or idiot. And so you have here the third, and that is the prime, most remarkable degree of simplicity, that the un-

^k [Porphyrii Isagoge, cap. 4.]

christian fool, the ἀνὴρ ψυχικὸς, whether you render it the animal or natural man, is guilty of; that piteous *læsum principium*, that want of the faculty of weighing, pondering, or numbering; that weakness or no kind of exercise of the judicative faculty, from whence all his simplicity and impiety proceeds. The Hebrews have a word to signify a wise man, which hath a near affinity with that of weighing and pondering, מְשִׁילִי from שָׁכַל, which hath no difference in sound from that which signifies *ponderavit*, whence the *shekel*, the known Hebrew word is deduced, to note, as the Psalmist saith, that “He that is wise, will ponder things.” All the folly and unchristian sin comes from want of pondering; and all the Christian wisdom, piety, discipleship, consists in the exercise of this faculty. Whatsoever is said most honourably of faith in Scripture, that sets it out in such a grandeur as the greatest designer and author of all the high acts of piety, and as the conqueror over the world, is clearly upon this score, as faith is the spiritual wisdom or prudence,—for so it is best defined,—and as by comparing, and proportioning, and weighing together the promises, or the commands, or the terrors of the gospel on one side, with the promises, the prescriptions, and terrors of the world on the other, it pronounces that handwriting on the wall against the latter of them, the “*Mene, tekel, upharsin.*” They are weighed in the balance and found most pitifully light, in comparison of those which Christ hath to weigh against them; and so the kingdom, the usurped supremacy,—that they have so long pretended to in the inconsiderate simple precipitous world,—is by a just judgment torn and departed from them.

Will you begin with the promises, and have but the patience awhile to view the scales, and when you have set the beam even, removed the carnal or secular prejudices,—which have so possessed most of us that we can never come to a right balancing of any thing; the beam naturally inclines still as our customary wonts and prepossessions will have it,—when, I say, you have set the beam impartially, throw but into one scale the promises of Christ, those of His present, of His future bliss; of present, “such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor entered into the heart of man to conceive,” prepared for them that love God, and that at the very minute

[1 Cor. ii. 14. ἔνθρονονος.]

[Ps. cvii. 43.]

Heb. xi.

1 John v. 4.

[Dan. v. 25.]

1 Cor. ii. 9.

of loving Him,—the word ἡτοιμασμένα, referring to the manna of old; the Hebrew deduced from מַנָּה, *præparavit*, and therefore described by the author of the book of Wisdom, according to that literal denotation of the Hebrew, ἄρτος ἔτοιμος ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ, bread baked, as it were, and sent down ready from heaven to the true Israelite,—the gust of every Christian duty being so pleasurable and satisfactory to the palate, as it were, of our human nature; so consonant to every rational soul, that it cannot practise or taste without being truly joyed and ravished with it: and so that which was the [Ex. xvi.] Israelites' feast, the quails and manna, being become the Christians' every day ordinary diet, you will allow that to be of some weight or consideration, if there were nothing else but that present festival of a good conscience in the scale before you. But when to that you have further cast in the [Rom. ii. 7.] "glory, honour, immortality," which is on arrear for that Christian in another life, that infinite inestimable weight of that glory laid before us, as the reward of the Christian, for his having been content that Christ should shew him the way to be happy here and blessed eternally. And when that both present and future felicity is set off and heightened by the contrary, by "the indignation, and anger, and wrath," that is the portion of the atheistical fool, and which nothing could have helped us to escape, but this only Christian sanctuary; when the bliss of this Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, is thus improved by the news of the scorching of the Dives in that place of torments; and by all these together, the scale thus laded on one side, I shall then give the devil leave to help you to what weight he can in the other scale, be it his *totum hoc*, all the riches and glory of the whole world,—and not only that thousandth part of the least point of the map, which is all thou canst aspire to in his service,—and what is it all but the *bracteata felicitas*, in Seneca¹; *μυθικὴ μακαρία*, in Nazianzen^m; a little fictitious felicity, a little paltry trash, that nothing but the opinion of men hath made to differ from the most refuse stone, or dirt in the kennel; the richest gems, totally behold- ing to the simplicity and folly of men for their reputation and value in the world. Besides these, I presume the fancies ex-

¹ [Seneca, Epist. 115.]

^m [S. Greg. Naz. Epist. xxvi. ad Amphiloeh. Op., tom. ii. p. 23, B.]

pect to have liberty to throw in all the pleasures and joys, the ravishments and transportations of all the senses; and truly, that is soon done; all the true joy that a whole age of carnality affords any man, if you but take along with it—as you cannot choose but do in all conscience—the satieties, and loathings, and pangs, that inseparably accompany it,—the leaven as well as the honey, under which the pleasures of sin are thought to be prohibited,—it will make but a pitiful addition in the scales, so many pounds less than nothing is the utmost that can be affirmed of it; and when you have fetched out your last reserve, all the painted air, the only commodity behind that you have to throw into that scale, the reputation and honour of a gallant vainglorious sinner, that some one fool or madman may seem to look on with some reverence; you have then the utmost of the weight that that scale is capable of; and the difference so vast betwixt them, such an inconsiderable proportion of straw, stubble, to such whole mines and rocks of gold and silver and precious stones, that no man that is but able to deal in plain numbers—no need of logarithms or algebra—can mistake in the judgment, or think that there is any profit, any advantage “in gaining the whole world,” if accompanied with the least hazard or possibility of “losing his own soul:” and therefore the running that adventure is the greatest idiotism, the most deplorable, woeful simplicity in the world. ^[Lev. ii. 11.] ^[Mat. xvi. 26.]

The same proportion would certainly be acknowledged in the second place, betwixt the commands of Christ on one side, high, rational, venerable commands, that he that thinks not himself so strictly obliged to observe cannot yet but revere Him that brought them into the world, and deem them *νόμον βασιλικόν*, “a royal and a gallant law,” whilst all the whole volume or code of the law of the members hath not one ingenuous dictate, one tolerable, rational proposal in it, only a deal of savage drudgery to be performed to an impure tyrant,—sin and pain being of the same date in the world, and the Hebrew *יג* signifying both,—and the more such burdens undergone, the more mean submissions still behind; no end of the tale of brick to one that is once engaged under such Egyptian kiln and task-masters. ^[Jam. ii. 8.]

And for the terrors in the last place, there are none but

those of the Lord, that are fit to move or to persuade any: the utmost secular fear is so much more impendent over Satan's than God's clients,—the killing of the body, the far more frequent effect of that which had first the honour to bring death into the world: the devil owning the title of destroyer, *abaddon*, and *ἀπολλύων*, and inflicting diseases generally on those whom he possessed, and Christ, that other of the *ιατρός* and *σωτήρ*, the physician and the Saviour, that hath promises of long life annexed to some specials of His service,—that if it were reasonable to fear those that can kill the body, and afterwards have no more that they can do,—i. e. are able by the utmost of their malice, and God's permission, but to land thee safe at thy fair haven, to give thee heaven and bliss before thy time, instead of the many lingering deaths that this life of ours is subject to,—yet there were little reason to fear or suspect the fate in God's service, far less than in those steep precipitous paths which the devil leads us through. And therefore to be thus low-bellied with panic frights, to be thus tremblingly dismayed where there is no place of fear, and to ride on intrepid on the truest dangers, as the barbarians in America do on guns, is a mighty disproportion of men's faculties, a strange superiority of fancy over judgment, that may well be described by a defect in the power of numbering, that discerns no difference between ciphers and millions, but only that the noughts are a little the blacker, and the more formidable. And so much for the third branch of this character.

There is yet a fourth notion of simplicity, as it is contrary to common ordinary prudence, that by which the politician and thriving man of this world expects to be valued, the great dexterity and managery of affairs, and the business of this world; wherein let me not be thought to speak paradoxes, if I tell you with some confidence that the wicked man is this only impolitic fool, and the Christian generally the most dexterous, prudent, practical person in the world; and the safest motto that of the *virtutem violenter retine*, the keeping virtue with the same violence that heaven is to be taken with. Not that the Spirit of Christ infuses into him the subtleties and crafts of the wicked, gives him any principles, or any excuse for that greater portion of the serpentine wisdom;

[Rev. ix.
11.]

[Mat. x.
28.]

[Mat. xi.
12.]

but because honesty is the most gainful policy, the most thriving thorough prudence, that will carry a man further than any thing else. That old principle in the mathematics, that the right line comes speediest to the journey's end, being, in spite of Machiavel, a maxim in politics also: and so will prove till Christ shall resign and give up to Satan the economy of the world. Some examples it is possible there may be of the *prosperum scelus*, the thriving of villainy for a time, and so of the present advantages that may come in to us by our secular contrivances; but sure this is not the lasting course, but only an anomaly or irregularity, that cannot be thought fit to be reckoned of in comparison of the more constant promises, the long life in a Canaan of milk and honey, that the Old and New Testament both have ensured upon the meek disciple.

[Ps. xxxvii.
11; Mat.
v. 5.]

And I think a man might venture the experiment to the testimony and trial of these times, that have been deemed most unkind and unfavourable to such innocent Christian qualities; that those that have been most constant to the strict, stable, honest principles, have thrived far better by the equable figure than those that have been most dexterous in changing shapes, and so are not the most unwise, ἐν γενεᾷ ταύτῃ, if there were never another state of retributions but this. Whereas it is most scandalously frequent and observable that the great politicians of this world are baffled and outwitted by the providence of heaven, sell their most precious souls for nought, and have not the luck to get any money for them; the most unthrifty, improvident merchandise, that כסל, "folly," which the LXXII render σκάνδαλον, "scandal:" the most piteous, offensive folly, the wretchedest simplicity in the world.

[Luke xvi.
8.]

Ps. xlix.
13.

You would easily believe it should not stand in need of a further aggravation, and yet now you are to be presented with one in my text, by way of heightening of the character, and that was my second particular, that at first I promised you, made up of two further considerations; first, the loving of that which is so unlovely; secondly, the continuing in the passion so long, "How long, you simple ones, will you love," &c.

First, the degree and improvement of the atheist's folly

consists in the loving of it, that he can take a delight and complacency in his way: to be patient of such a coarse, gainless service; such scandalous, mean submissions had been reproach enough to any that had not divested himself of ingenuity and innocence together, and become one of Aristotle'sⁿ *φύσει δοῦλοι*, "natural slaves," which, if it signify any thing, denotes the fools and simple ones in this text, whom nature hath marked in the head for no very honourable employments. But from this passivity in the mines and galleys to attain to a joy and voluptuousness in the employment, to dread nothing but sabbatic years and jubilees, and with the crest-fallen slave to disclaim nothing but liberty and manumission, i. e. in effect, innocence, and paradise, and bliss; to court and woo Satan for the mansions in hell, and the several types and præludiums of them, the ἀρχαὶ ὀδίνων, "the initial pangs in this life," which he hath in his disposing, to be such a Platonic lover of stripes and chains, without intuition of any kind of reward, any present or future wages for all his patience, and as it follows, to hate knowledge and piety, hate it as the most treacherous enemy that means to undermine their hell, to force them out of their beloved Satan's embraces: this is certainly a very competent aggravation of the simplicity; and yet to see how perfect a character this is of the most of us, that have nothing to commend or even excuse in the most of those ways, on which we make no scruple to exhaust our souls, but only our kindness, irrational, passionate kindness and love toward them; and then that love shall cover a multitude of sins, supersede all the exceptions and quarrels that otherwise we should not choose but have to them. Could a man see any thing valuable or attractive in oaths and curses, in drunkenness and bestiality, (the sin, that when a Turk resolves to be guilty of he makes a fearful noise unto his soul to retire all into his feet, or as far off as it is possible, that it may not be within ken of that bestial prospect, as Busbequius tells us^o;) could any man endure the covetous man's

ⁿ [Arist. Polit. i. 5.]

^o [Vidi senem quendam Constanti-nopoli: qui quum calicem sumsisset in manum ut biberet, magnos prius clamores edebat. Rogati a nobis amici

cur ita faceret, respondebant eum his clamoribus comonitam velle animam, ut se reciperet in aliquem corporis angulum, aut prorsus emigraret, ne rea fieret ejus delicti, quod ipse erat ad-

sad galling mules, burdens of gold, his Achan's wedge that cleaves and rends asunder nations,—so that in the Hebrew that sin signifies “wounding” and “incision,” and is alluded to Joel ii. 8. by his “piercing himself through with divers sorrows,”—his 1 Tim. vi. very purgatories and limbos, nay, hell, as devouring and perpetual as it; and the no kind of satisfaction, so much as to his eye, from the vastest heaps or treasures; were he not in love with folly and ruin, had he not been drenched with philters and charms, had not the necromancer played some of his prizes on him, and as St. Paul saith of his Galatians, even “bewitched him to be a fool;” would we but make [Gal.iii.1.] a rational choice of our sins, discern somewhat that were amiable before we let loose our passion on them, and not deal so blindly in absolute elections of the driest unsavoury sin that may but be called a sin,—that hath but the honour of affronting God and damning one of Christ's redeemed,—most of our wasting, sweeping sins, would have no manner of pretensions to us; and that you will allow to be one special accumulation of the folly and madness of these simple ones, that they thus love simplicity.

The second aggravation is the continuance and duration of this fury, a lasting, chronical passion, quite contrary to the nature of passions, a flash of lightning, lengthened out a whole day together; that they should love simplicity so long.

It is the nature of acute diseases either to have intervals and intermissions, or else to come to speedy crises; and though these prove mortal sometimes, yet the state is not generally so desperate; and so it is with sins; many, the sharpest and vehementest indispositions of the soul—pure fevers of rage and lust—prove happily but flashing, short furies, are attended with an instant smiting of the heart, a hating and detesting our follies, a striking on the thigh in [Jer. xxxi. 19.] Jeremy, and in David's penitential style, a “so foolish was I [Ps. lxxiii. 22.] and ignorant, even as a beast before Thee.” And it were happy if our fevers had such cool seasons, such favourable, ingenuous intermissions as these. But for the hectic, continual fevers,—that like some weapons, the *ἀγγῶνες*, “barbed shafts” in use among the Franks in Agathias^p, being not

missurus, nec vino, quod infusus erat, pollueretur.—Busb^q. Epist., i. p. 11.]

^p [ἀλλὰ πελκεῖς ὅρ ἀμφοιστόμους

mortal at the entrance, do all their slaughter by the hardness of getting out,—the vultures that so tire and gnaw upon the soul, the *συνοχοὶ* that never suffer the sinner fool to make any approach toward his wits, toward sobriety again: this passionate love of folly improved into an habitual, steady course of atheisticalness, a deliberate, peremptory, final reprobating of heaven,—the purity at once, and the bliss of it,—the stanch, demure covenanting with death, and resolvedness to have their part, to run their fortune with Satan, through all adventures; this is that monstrous brat, that—as for the birth of the champion in the poet—three nights of darkness, more than Egyptian, were to be crowded into one—all the simplicity and folly in a kingdom—to help to a being in the world. And at the birth of it you will pardon Wisdom if she break out into a passion and exclamation of pity first, and then of indignation, “How long, ye simple ones?” &c.; my last particular.

The first debt that wisdom, that Christ, that every Christian brother owes and pays to every unchristian liver, is that of pity and compassion; which is to him of all others the properest dole. Look upon all the sad, moanful objects in the world, betwixt whom all our compassion is wont to be divided; first, the bankrupt rotting in a gaol; secondly, the direful, bloody spectacle of the soldier, wounded by the sword of war; thirdly, the malefactor howling under the stone, or gasping upon the rack or wheel; and fourthly, the gallant person on the scaffold or gallows ready for execution; and the secure, senseless sinner is the brachygraphy of all these.

You have in him, 1. a rich patrimony and treasure of grace—purchased dear, and settled on him by Christ—most prodigally and contumeliously misspent and exhausted; 2. a soul streaming out whole rivers of blood and spirits through every wound, even every sin it hath been guilty of, and not enduring the water to cleanse, much less the wine or oil to be poured into any one of them; the whole soul transfigured into one wound, one *θρόμβος αἵματος*, “congelation and clod of blood:” then thirdly, beyond this, all the racks and

[Lukexxii.
44.]

καὶ τοὺς ἄγγωνας. οἷε δὲ καὶ τὰ τελευτά κ. τ. λ.—*Δεσφίλια*, Π. 1. 1. p. 10. apud Corp. Hist. Byz. Paris. 1660.]

pangs of a tormenting conscience, his only present exercise ; and lastly, all the torments in hell—the officer ready hurrying him to the judge, and the judge delivering him to the executioner—his minutely dread and expectation, the dream ^[Mat. v. 25.] that so haunts and hounds him. And what would a man give in bowels of compassion (to Christianity ? or but) to human kind, to be able to reprieve or rescue such an unhappy creature ; to be but the Lazarus with one drop of water to cool the tip of the scalding tongue, that is engaged in such a pile of flames ? If there be any charity left in this frozen world, any beam under this cold uninhabitable zone, it will certainly work some meltings on the most obdurate heart ; it will dissolve and pour out our bowels into a seasonable advice or admonition,—that excellent recipe, saith Themistius⁹, *Ἀντὶ καύσεων καὶ τομῶν*, “ that supplies the place and does the work of the burnings and scarifyings,”—a cry to stop him in his precipitous course ; a tear at least to solemnize, if not to prevent so sad a fate. And it were well if all our bowels were thus employed, all our kindness and most passionate love, thus converted and laid out on our poor lapsed sinner-brethren’s souls, to seize upon those fugitives, as Christ is said to do, *ἐπιλαμβάνεσθαι*, to catch hold and bring them back, ere it be yet too late ; rescue them out of the hands of their dearest espoused sins, and not suffer the most flattering kind of death,—*κακοτεχνία ὑποδύουσα ὀνόματι σεμνῶ* in Gal. de Athl.^r, “ the devil in the angelical disguise,”—the sin that undertakes to be the prime saint,—the zeal for the Lord of Hosts,—any the most venerable impiety, to lay hold on them. Could I but see such a new-fashioned charity received and entertained in the world : every man to become his brother’s keeper, and every man so tame as to love and interpret aright, entertain and embrace this keeper, this *ἐπίτροπος δαίμων*, this guardian angel, as an angel indeed, as the only valuable friend he hath under heaven, I should think this a lucky omen of the world’s returning to its wits, to some degree of piety again. And till then there is a very

[Heb. ii. 16.]

⁹ [ἔχεις δὲ καὶ σὺ φαρμάκοις ἀντὶ καύσεων καὶ τομῶν εἰς τὴν ἰατρειάν κεχρησθαι. τὰ δὲ φάρμακα ταῦτα λόγῳ εἰσι μεστοὶ εὐνοίας καὶ παρησίας, οὐχ οἱ

γλυκεῖς καὶ πρὸς χάριν, κ. τ. λ.—Themistius, Orat. xxii. περὶ φιλιᾶς, p. 335. ed. Dindorf.]

^r Solon.

fit place and season for the exercise of the other part of the passion here, that of indignation, the last minute of my last particular, as the "how long" is an expression of indignation.

Indignation, not at the men,—for however Aristotle's^a *δεῖ νεμεσᾶν*, "a man ought to have indignation at some persons," may seem to justify it, our Saviour calls not for any [Phil.ii.1.] such stern passion, or indeed any but love, and bowels of pity, and charity toward the person of any the most enormous sinner; and St. Paul, only for the *καταρτίζετε*, the [Gal.vi.1.] "restoring," setting him in joint again, that is thus "overtaken in any fault,"—but indignation, I say, at the sin, at the simplicity and the folly, that refuse reproachful creature, that hath the fate to be beloved so passionately and so long. And to this will Aristotle's season of indignation belong, the seeing favours and kindness so unworthily dispensed,—the upstarts, saith he, and new men advanced and gotten into the greatest dignities,—knowledge to be professedly hated, and under that title, all the prime, i. e. practical wisdom, and piety, and simplicity, i. e. folly, and madness, and sin, to have our whole souls laid out upon it.

O let this shrill sarcasm of Wisdom's, the "How long, ye simple ones," be for ever a sounding in our ears. Let this indignation at our stupid ways of sin transplant itself to that soil where it is likely to thrive and fructify best, I mean, to that of our own instead of other men's breasts, where it will appear gloriously in St. Paul's inventory, a prime part of [2 Cor. vii. 10.] that *ἀμεταμέλητος μετάνοια*, the durable, unretracted repentance, an effect of that godly sorrow that worketh to salvation. And if it be sincere, O what indignation it produceth in us! what displeasure and rage at our folly! to think how senselessly we have moulted and crumbled away our souls! what unthrifty bargains we have made! what sots and fools we shall appear to hell, when it shall be known to the wretched, tormented creatures what ambitions we had to be but as miserable as they! upon what Gotham errands, what wild-goose chases we are come posting and wearied thither! O that a little of this consideration and this passion betimes, might ease us of that endless woe and indignation; those

^a [Arist. Rhet. ii. 9.]

tears and gnashing of teeth quit us of that sad arrear of horrors that otherwise waits behind for us. Lord, do Thou give us that view of our ways; the errors, the follies, the furies of our extravagant, atheistical lives; that may, by the very reproach and shame, recover and return us to Thee! "Make our faces ashamed, O Lord, that we may seek Thy Law;" give us that pity and that indignation to our poor, perishing souls, that may at length awake and fright us out of our lethargies, and bring us so many confounded, humbled, contrite penitentiaries, to that beautiful gate of Thy temple of mercies, where we may retract our follies, implore Thy pardon, deprecate Thy wrath; and for Thy deliverance from so deep a hell, from so infamous a vile condition, from so numerous a tale of deaths, never leave praising Thee, and saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts; heaven and earth are full of Thy glory; glory be to Thee, O God, most high."

To whom, with the Son and the Holy Ghost be ascribed, &c.

SERMON XVI.

MATT. i. 23.

Emmanuel, which is by interpretation, God with us.

THE different measure and means of dispensing divine knowledge to several ages of the world, may sufficiently appear by the gospels of the New, and prophecies of the Old Testament; the sunshine and the clearness of the one, and the twilight and dimness of the other: but in no point this more importantly concerns us than the incarnation of Christ. This hath been the study and theme, the speculation and sermon of all holy men and writers since Adam's fall; yet

Mat. iii. 3. never plainly disclosed till John Baptist, in the third of Matthew and the third verse, and the angel in the next verses before my text, undertook the task, and then indeed was it fully performed; then were the writings, or rather the riddles, of the obscure, stammering, whispering prophets,

Isa. xl. 3. turned into the voice of "one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the ways of the Lord," &c. Then did the cry, yea, shouting of the Baptist, at once both interpret and perform

ver. 4. what it prophesied; at the sound of it, "every valley was exalted, and every hill was brought low: the crooked was made straight, and the rough places plain," that is, the hill and groves of the prophets were levelled into the open campaign of the gospel; those impediments which hindered God's approach unto men's rebel hearts were carefully removed; the abject mind was lifted up, the exalted was depressed, the intractable and rough was rendered plain and even; in the same manner as a way was made unto the Roman army marching against Jerusalem.

This I thought profitable to be premised to you, both that you might understand the affinity of prophecies and gospel, as differing not in substance, but only in clearness of revelation, as the glorious face of the sun from itself being overcast and masked with a cloud; and also for the clearing of my text. For this entire passage of Scripture, of which these words are a close, is the angel's message or gospel unto Joseph, and set down by St. Matthew, as both the interpretation and accomplishment of a prophecy delivered long ago by Isaiah, but perhaps not at all understood by the Jews: to wit, "that a virgin should conceive and bear a son, and they should call His name Emmanuel."

Where first we must examine the seeming difference in the point of Christ's name, betwixt the place here cited from Isaiah, and the words here vouched of the angel, and proved by the effect. For the prophet says, "He shall be called Emmanuel," but the angel commands He should be, and the Gospel records He was named Jesus. Mat. i. 21.
ver. 25.
Isa. vii. 14.

And here we must resume and enlarge the ground premised in our preface, that prophecies being not histories, but rude imperfect draughts of things to come, do not exactly express and delineate, but only shadow and covertly veil those things which only the Spirit of God and the event must interpret. So that in the Gospel we construe the words, but in prophecies the sense; i. e. we expect not the performance of every circumstance expressed in the words of a prophecy, but we acknowledge another sense beyond the literal; and in the comparing of Isaiah with St. Matthew we exact not the same expressions, provided we find the same substance and the same significancy. So then the prophet's, "and call His name Emmanuel," is not, as human covenants are, to be fulfilled in the rigour of the letter, that He should be so named at His circumcision, but in the agreement of sense, that this name should express His nature; that He was indeed "God with us," and that at the circumcision He should receive a name of the same power and significancy. Whence the observation by the way is, that Emmanuel in effect signifies "Jesus," "God with us," "a Saviour;" and from thence the point of doctrine, that God's coming to us, i. e. Christ's incarnation, brought salvation into the world. For

if there be a substantial agreement betwixt the prophet and the angel; if Emmanuel signify directly "Jesus;" if "God with us," and "a Saviour," be really the same title of Christ; then was there no Saviour, and consequently no salvation, before this presence of God with us. Which position we will briefly explain, and then, omitting unnecessary proofs, apply it.

In explaining of it we must calculate the time of Christ's incarnation, and set down how with it, and not before, came salvation.

We may collect in Scripture a threefold incarnation of Christ; 1. in the counsel of God, 2. in the promises of God, 3. in a personal open exhibiting of Him unto the world; the effect and complement of both counsel and promises.

Rev. xiii. 8. 1. In the counsel of God; so He was as "slain," so incarnate, "before the foundation of the world." For the word slain, being not competent to the eternal God, but only to the assumption of the human nature, presupposes Him incarnate, because slain. God then in His prescience, surveying before He created, and viewing the lapsed, miserable, sick estate of the future creation, in His eternal decree
[Heb. xii. 2.] foresaw and pre-ordained Jesus, the Saviour, the "author and finisher of" the world's salvation. So that in the counsel of God, to whom all things to come are made present, Emmanuel and Jesus went together; and no salvation bestowed on us, but in respect to this, "God with us."

2. In the promises of God; and then Christ was incarnate
Gen. iii. 15. when He was promised first in paradise, "The seed of the woman," &c., and so He is as old in the flesh as the world in sin, and was then in God's promise first born when Adam and mankind began to die. Afterwards He was, not again, but still incarnate in God's promise more evidently in Abraham's time, "In thy seed," &c., and in Moses's time when
Gen. xii. 3; xviii. 18; xxii. 18; Exod. xiii. at the addition of the passover, a most significant representation of the incarnate and crucified Christ, He was more than promised, almost exhibited. Under which times it is by some asserted that Christ, in the form of man, and habit of angel, appeared sundry times to the fathers^a, to give them not a hope, but a possession of the incarnate God, and to be *prælium incarnationis*, a pawn unto them that they

^a [Vid. Bulli Def. Fid. Nic., I. 1, 2, sqq.]

trusted not in vain. And here it is plain throughout, that this incarnation of Christ, in the promise of God, did perpetually accompany or go before salvation: not one blessing on the nations, without mention of "thy seed;" not one encouragement against fear, or unto confidence, but confirmed and backed with an "I am thy shield," &c., i. e. according to [Gen. xv. the Targum, "My Word is thy shield;" i. e. my Christ, who is δ $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$, "the Word;" not any mention of righteousness [John i. 1.] and salvation but on ground and condition of belief of that Jesus which was then in promise, "Emmanuel, God with us."

3. In the personal exhibiting of Christ in form of flesh unto the world, dated at the fulness of time, and called in our ordinary phrase His incarnation; then no doubt was Emmanuel, Jesus; then was He openly shewed to all people in the form of God a Saviour, which Simeon most divinely Luke ii. 30. styles "God's salvation," thereby, no doubt, meaning the incarnate Christ, which by being "God with us," was salvation.

Thus do you see a threefold incarnation, a threefold Emmanuel, and proportionably a threefold Jesus.

1. A Saviour first decreed for the world, answerable to God, incarnate in God's counsel; and so no man was ever capable of salvation but through "God with us."

2. A Saviour promised to the world, answerable to the second "God with us," to wit, incarnate in the promise; and so there is no covenant of salvation but in this "God with us."

3. A Saviour truly exhibited and born of a woman, answerable to the third Emmanuel; and so also is there no manifestation, no proclaiming, no preaching of salvation, but by the birth and merits of "God with us."

To these three, if we add a fourth incarnation of Christ, the assuming of our immortal flesh, which was at His resurrection, then surely the doctrine will be complete, and this Emmanuel incarnate in the womb of the grave, and brought forth clothed upon with an incorruptible seed, is now more fully than ever proved an eternal Jesus; for "when He had overcome the sharpness of death, He opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers," as it is in our *Te Deum*; as if all that till then ever entered into heaven had been admitted by some

privy key ; but now the very gates were wide opened to all believers. This last incarnation of Christ, being accompanied with a catholic salvation, that Jesus might be as eternal as Emmanuel, that He might be as immortal a Saviour as a God with us. It were but a superfluous work further to demonstrate that through all ages of the world there was no salvation ever tendered but in respect to this incarnation of Christ ; that the hopes, the belief, the expectation of salvation, which the fathers lived and breathed by, under the types of the law, was only grounded upon, and referred unto, these promises of the future incarnation ; that they which were not in some measure enlightened in this mystery were not also partakers of this covenant of salvation ; that all the means besides that heaven and earth, and which goes beyond them both, the brain of man or angel, could afford or invent, could not excuse, much less save any child of Adam ; that every soul which was to spring from these loins had been without those transcendent mercies which were exhibited by this incarnation of Christ's, plunged in necessary desperate damnation ; your patience shall be more profitably employed in a brief application of the point ;

First, that you persuade and drive yourselves to a sense and feeling of your sins, those sins which thus plucked God out of heaven, and for a while deprived Him of His majesty ; which laid an engagement upon God, either to leave His infinite justice unsatisfied, or else to subject His infinite deity to the servile mortality of flesh, or else to leave an infinite world in a common damnation.

Secondly, to strain all the expressions of our hearts, tongues, and lives, to the highest note of gratitude which is possible, in answer to this mystery and treasure of this "God with us ;" to reckon all the miracles of either common or private preservations, as foils to this incomparable mercy, infinitely below the least circumstance of it ; without which thine estate, thy understanding, thy body, thy soul, thy being, thy very creation, were each of them as exquisite curses as hell or malice could invent for thee.

Thirdly, to observe with an ecstacy of joy and thanks the precious privileges of us Christians, beyond all that ever God professed love to, in that we have obtained a full revel-

ation of this "God with us;" which all the fathers did but see in a cloud, the angels peeped at, the heathen world gaped after, but we behold as in a plain at mid-day: for since the veil of the temple was rent, every man that hath eyes may see *sanctum sanctorum*, the holy of holies, "God with us." Mat. xxvii.
51.

Fourthly, to make a real use of this doctrine to the profit of our souls, that if God have designed to be Emmanuel, and Jesus an incarnate God, and Saviour to us; that then we will fit, and prepare, and make ourselves capable of this mercy; and by the help of our religious, devout, humble endeavours, not frustrate, but further and promote in ourselves this end of Christ's incarnation, the saving of our souls; and this use is effectually made to our hands in the twelfth to the Hebrews, at the last, "Wherefore we receive a kingdom that cannot be moved;" i. e. being partakers of the presence, the reign, the salvation of the incarnate God, "let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear." And do Thou, O powerful God, improve the truth of this doctrine to the best advantage of our souls, that Thy Son may not be born to us unprofitably; but that He may be God, not only with us, but in us; in us, to sanctify and adorn us here with His effectual grace; and with us, to sustain us here, as our Emmanuel; and as our Jesus, to crown and perfect us hereafter with glory. Heb. xii.
ult.

And so much for this point, that Jesus and Emmanuel import the same thing, and there was no salvation till this presence of "God with us." We now come to the substance itself, i. e. Christ's incarnation, noted by "Emmanuel, which is by interpretation," &c. Where first we must explain the word, then drive forward to the matter. The word in Isaiah, in the Hebrew, is not so much a name as a sentence describing unto us the mystery of the conception of the Virgin, עִמָּנוּ אֱלֹהִים, "with us God;" where אֱלֹהִים or אֱלֹהִים, "God," is taken in Scripture, either absolutely for the nature of God, as for the most part in the Old Testament, or personally; and so either for the person of the Father in many places, or else distinctly for the person of the Son. "And will save them by the Lord their God," אֱלֹהֵיהֶם, their God, i. e. Hos. i. 7.

Christ: and so also most evidently in this place, out of Isaiah, where בן signifies the "Son incarnate, God-man," $\theta\epsilon\acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$, and many the like; especially those where the Targum paraphrases Jehovah, or Jehovah Elohim, by דְּבִיר אֱלֹהִים , *John i. 1.* "the Word of the Lord," i. e. Christ Jesus. As for in-
Gen. iii. 22. stance, "that Word of the Lord said;" and "the Word
Gen. ii. 6. created." Secondly, עַם , which signifies in its extent "near," "at," "with," or "amongst." Thirdly, the particle signify-
 ing "us," though it expresses not, yet it must note, our human nature, our abode, our being in this our great world, wherein we travel, and this our little world, wherein we dwell; not as a mansion place, to remain in, but either as an inn to lodge, or a tabernacle to be covered, or a prison to suffer in. So that the words in their latitude run thus; Emmanuel; i. e. the second Person in Trinity is come down into this lower world amongst us, for a while to travel, to lodge, to sojourn, to be fettered in this inn, this tabernacle, this prison of man's flesh; or briefly, at this time, is conceived and born God-man, $\theta\epsilon\acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$, the same both God and man, the man Christ Jesus. And this is the cause and business, the ground and theme of our present rejoicing: in this were limited and fulfilled the expectation of the fathers, and in this begins and is accomplished the hope and joy of
Luke ii. 28. us Christians; that which was old Simeon's warning to death, the sight and embraces of the Lord's Christ, as the greatest happiness which an especial favour could bestow on him; and therefore made him in a contempt of any further life, sing his own funeral, *Nunc dimittis*, "Lord, now lettest Thou," &c. This is to us the prologue, and first part of a Christian's life; either the life of the world, that that may be worthy to be called life; or that of grace, that we be not dead whilst we live. For were it not for this assumption of flesh, you may justly curse that ever you carried flesh about you; that ever your soul was committed to such a prison as your body is; nay, such a dungeon, such a grave: but through this incarnation of Christ, our flesh is or shall be cleansed into a temple for the soul to worship in, and in heaven for a robe for it to triumph in. For our body shall be purified by His body.

If ye will be sufficiently instructed into a just valuation of

the weight of this mystery, you must resolve yourselves to a pretty large task,—and it were a notable Christmas employment, I should bless God for any one that would be so piously valiant as to undertake it,—you must read over the whole book of Scripture and nature to this purpose. For when you find in the Psalmist the news of Christ's coming, Ps. xl. 7. "Then said I, lo I come;" you find your directions how to track Him, "In the volume of the book it is written of Me," &c., i. e. either in the whole book, or in every folding, every leaf of this book,—thou shalt not find a story, a riddle, a prophecy, a ceremony, a downright legal constitution, but hath some manner of aspect on this glass, some way drives at this mystery, "God manifest in flesh." For example,—perhaps you have not noted,—wherever you read Seth's genealogies more insisted on than Cain's, Shem's than his elder brother Ham's, Abraham's than the whole world besides, [Gen. v., xi.; I Chron. i., ii., &c.] Jacob's than Esau's, Judah's than the whole twelve patriarchs; and the like passages which directly drive down the line of Christ, and make that the whole business of the Scripture; whensoever, I say, you read any of these, then are you to note that Shiloh was to come; that He which was sent was on His journey; that from the creation till the fulness of time the Scripture was in travail with Him; and by His leaping ever now and then, and as it were, springing in the womb, gave manifest tokens that it had conceived, and would at last bring forth the Messias. So that the whole Old Testament is a mystical Virgin Mary, a kind of mother of Christ; which by the Holy Ghost conceived Him in Genesis; Gen. iii. 15. and throughout Moses and the prophets carried Him in the womb, and was very big of Him; and at last in Malachi was Mal. iii. 4. in a manner delivered of Him. For there you shall find mention of John Baptist, who was, as it were, the midwife of the Old Testament, to open its womb, and bring the Messias into the world. Howsoever, at the least it is plain, that the Old Testament brought Him to His birth, though it had not strength to bring forth; and the prophets, as Moscs from [Deut. xxxiv. 1.] Mount Nebo, came to a view of this land of Canaan.

For the very first words of the New Testament being, as it were, to fill up what only was wanting in the Old, are the book and history of His generations and birth. You would Mat. i. 1.

yet be better able to prize the excellency of this work, and reach the pitch of this day's rejoicing, if you would learn how the very heathen fluttered about this light; what shift they made to get some inkling of this incarnation beforehand; how the sibyls, heathen women, and Virgil^b, and other heathen poets in their writings, before Christ's time, let fall many passages, which plainly referred and belonged to this incarnation of God. It is fine sport to see in our authors, how the devil, with his famous oracles and prophets, foreseeing by his skill in the Scripture, that Christ was near His birth, did droop upon it, and hang the wing; did sensibly decay in his courage, began to breathe thick, and speak imperfectly; and sometimes as men in the extremity of a fever, distractedly, wildly, without any coherence, and scarce sense; and how at last about the birth of Christ, he plainly gave up the ghost, and left his oracular prophets as speechless as the caves they dwelt in, their last voice being, that their great god Pan^c, i. e. the devil, was dead, and so both his kingdom and their prophecies at an end; as if Christ's coming had chased Lucifer out of the world, and the powers of hell were buried that minute when a Saviour was born.

And now by way of use, can ye see the devil put out of heart, and ye not put forward to get the field? can you delay to make use of such an advantage as this? can ye be so cruel to yourselves as to shew any mercy on that now disarmed enemy? will ye see God send His Son down into the field to enter the lists, and lead up a forlorn troop against the prince of this world, and ye not follow at His alarm? will ye not accept of a conquest which Christ so lovingly offers you? It is a most terrible exprobration in Hosea, look on
 Hos. xi. 3. it, where God objects to Ephraim her not taking notice of His mercies; her not seconding and making use of His loving deliverances, which plainly adumbrates this deliverance by Christ's death; as may appear by the first verse of the chapter, compared with Matthew xv. 2. "Well," saith God, "I taught Ephraim to go, taking them by their arms; but they knew not that I healed them. I drew them with

^b [Vid. Oracula Sibyllina, et Virg. Bucol. iv.]

^c [Cf. Plutarch. de Oraculorum Defectu. Op., tom. vii. p. 651. ed. Reiske.]

the cords of a man ;” an admirable phrase,—with all those means that use to oblige one man to another,—“ with bands of love,” &c., i. e. I used all means for the sustaining and strengthening of My people : I put them in a course to be able to go, and fight, and overcome all the powers of darkness, and put off the devil’s yoke : I sent My Son amongst them for this purpose. And all this I did by way of love, as one friend is wont to do for another, and yet they would not take notice of either the benefit or the donor, nor think themselves beholden to Me for this mercy. Mat. xv. 1.

And this is our case, beloved, if we do not second these and the like mercies of God bestowed on us ; if we do not improve them to our souls’ health ; if we do not fasten on this Christ incarnate ; if we do not follow Him with an expression of gratitude and reverence, and stick close to Him as both our friend and captain. Finally, if we do not endeavour and pray that this His incarnation may be seconded with another ; that as once He was born in our flesh to justify us, so He may be also born spiritually in our souls to sanctify us : for there is a spiritual *ἐνσάρκωσις*, or mystical incarnation of Christ in every regenerate man, where the soul of man is the womb wherein Christ is conceived by the Holy Ghost. The proof of which doctrine shall entertain the remainder of this hour : for this is the Emmanuel that most nearly concerns us, “ God with us,” i. e. with our spirits, or Christ begotten and brought forth in our hearts. Of which briefly.

And that Christ is thus born in a regenerate man’s soul, if it were denied, might directly appear by these two places of Scripture, “ I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” Again, “ That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith,” &c. Gal. ii. 20.
Eph. iii. 17.

Now that you may understand this spiritual incarnation of Christ the better, we will compare it with His real incarnation in the womb of the Virgin ; that so we may keep close to the business of the day, and at once observe both His birth to the world and ours to grace ; and so even possess Christ whilst we speak of Him.

And first, if we look on His mother Mary we shall find her

Mat. i. 18. an entire pure Virgin, only espoused to Joseph; "but before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost," and then the soul of man must be this Virgin.

Now there is a threefold purity or virginity of the soul; first, an absolute one, such as was found in Adam before his fall; secondly, a respective, of a soul, which like Mary, hath not yet joined or committed with the world, to whom it is espoused; which though it have its part of natural corruptions, yet either for want of ability, of age, or occasion, hath not yet broke forth into the common outrages of sin; thirdly, a restored purity of a soul formerly polluted, but now cleansed by repentance.

The former kind of natural and absolute purity, as it were to be wished for, so is it not to be hoped; and therefore is not to be imagined in the Virgin mother, or expected in the virgin soul. The second purity we find in all regenerate infants, who are at the same time outwardly initiated to the Church and inwardly to Christ; or in those whom God hath called before they have engaged themselves in the courses of actual, heinous sins; such are well disposed, well brought up,

[Mark xii.
34.]
Acts x. 1.

and to use our Saviour's words, have so lived as "not to be far from the kingdom of God;" such haply, as Cornelius; and such a soul as this is the fittest womb in which our Saviour delights to be incarnate; where He may enter and dwell without either resistance or annoyance, where He shall be received at the first knock, and never be disordered or repulsed by any stench of the carcase, or violence of the body of sin. The re-

Ps. li. 10.

stored purity is a right spirit renewed in the soul, a wound cured up by repentance, and differs only from the former purity as a scar from a skin never cut, wanting somewhat of the beauty and outward clearness, but nothing of either the strength or health of it. *Optandum esset ut in simplici virginitate servaretur navis*^d, &c.; "it were to be wished that the ship, our souls, could be kept in its simple virginity, and never be in danger of either leak or shipwreck." But this perpetual integrity, being a desperate, impossible wish, there is one only remedy, which though it cannot prevent a leak, can stop it.

^d Tertull. [de Pœnit., c. 4. p. 116. see Practical Catechism, p. 129. The metaphor of the "tabula post naufr-

gium," occurs in that passage, but the words quoted here by Hammond are from S. Ambrose ad Virg. Laps.]

And this is repentance after sin committed, *post naufragium tabula*, a means to secure one after a shipwreck, and to deliver him even in the deep waters. And this we call a restored virginity of the soul, which Christ also vouchsafes to be conceived and born in. The first degree of innocence being not to have sinned, the second to have repented.

In the second place, the mother of Christ in the flesh was a Virgin, not only till the time of Christ's conception, but also till the time of His birth, "He knew her not till she had brought forth," &c. And further, as we may probably believe, remained a Virgin all the days of her life after; for to her is applied by the learned that which is typically spoken of the east gate of the sanctuary, "This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it, because the Lord the God of Israel hath entered in by it; therefore it shall be shut." A place, if applicable, very apposite for the expression. Hence is she called by the fathers and councils *ἀειπαρθένος*, a "perpetual Virgin," against the heresy of Helvidius^e. The probability of this might be further proved if it were needful. And ought not upon all principles of nature and of justice, the virgin soul, after Christ once conceived in it, remain pure and staunch till Christ be born in it, nay, be *ἀειπαρθένος*, a "perpetual Virgin," never indulge to sensual pleasures, or cast away that purity which Christ either found or wrought in it? If it were a respective purity, then ought it not perpetually retain and increase it, and never fall off to those disorders that other men supinely live in? If it were a recovered purity, hold it fast, and never turn again, "as a dog to his vomit, or a sow to her wallowing in the mire?" For this conception and birth of Christ in the soul would not only wash away the filth that the swine was formerly mired in, but also take away the swinish nature, that she shall never have any strong propension to return again to her former inordinate delights. Now this continuance of the soul in this its recovered virginity, is not from the firm, constant, stable nature of the soul, but as Eusebius^f saith in another case, *ἀπὸ μείζονος καὶ κρατεροῦ δεσμοῦ*,

^e [Cf. S. Hieron. Tract. adv. Helvidium; Op., tom. ii.]
^f Euseb. Præp. Evang., lib. xiii. p.

412. [His words (quoted from Plato, Timæus, p. 41.) are *μείζονος ἔτι δεσμοῦ καὶ κυριωτέρου λαχόντες.*]

Mat. i. 25.

Ezek. xliv. 2.

[2 Pet. ii. ult.]

“from a more strong, able band,” the union of Christ to the soul, His spiritual incarnation in it: “Because the Lord, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it; therefore it shall be shut,” i. e. it shall not be opened either in consent or practice to the lusts and pollutions of the world or flesh; because Christ, by being born in it, hath cleansed it; because He the Word of God, said the word, therefore the leprosy is cured; in whom He enters He dwells, and on whom He makes His real impression “He seals them up to the day of redemption;” unless we unbuild ourselves and change our shape we must be His.

In the third place, if we look on the agent in this conception, we shall find it, both in Mary and in the soul of man, to be the Holy Ghost, that which is conceived in either of them “is of the Holy Ghost;” nothing in this business of Christ’s birth with us to be imputed to natural power or causes, the whole contrivance and final production of it, the preparations to and labouring of it, is all the workmanship of the Spirit. So that as Mary was called by an ancient, so may the soul without an hyperbole by us be styled, “the shop of miracles,” and “the workhouse of the Holy Ghost;” in which every operation is a miracle to nature, and no tools are used but what the Spirit forged and moves. Mary conceived Christ, but it was above her own reach to apprehend the manner how; for so she questions the angel, “How shall this be?” &c. So doth this soul of man conceive and grow big, and bring forth Christ, and yet not itself fully perceives how this work is wrought; Christ being, for the most part, insensibly begotten in us, and to be discerned only spiritually, not at His entrance, but in His fruits.

In the fourth place, that Mary was chosen and appointed among all the families of the earth to be the mother of the Christ, was no manner of desert of hers, but God’s special favour and dignation; whence the words run truly interpreted, “Hail, thou that art highly favoured;” not as the vulgar read, *gratia plena*, “full of grace.” And again, “Thou hast found favour with God.” So is it in the case of man’s soul; there is no power of nature, no preparation of morality, no art that all the philosophy or learning in the world can

* [See above, p. 311.]

teach a man, which can deserve this grace at Christ's hands, that can any way woo or allure God to be born spiritually in us, which can persuade or entice the Holy Ghost to conceive and beget Christ in us, but only the mere favour and good pleasure of God, which may be obtained by our prayers, but can never be challenged by our merits, may be comfortably expected and hoped for as a largess given to our necessities and wants, but can never be required as a reward of our deserts. For it was no high pitch of perfection which Mary observed in herself as the motive to this favour; but only the mere mercy of God, which "regarded the lowliness of His handmaid." Luke i. 48.

Whence in the fifth place, this soul in which Christ will vouchsafe to be born must be a lowly, humble soul; or else it will not perfectly answer Mary's temper, nor fully bear a part in her *Magnificat*; where in the midst of her glory she humbly specifies the "lowliness of His handmaid." But this by the way.

In the sixth place, if we consider here with John the Baptist, His forerunner, coming to prepare His way, and his preaching repentance as a necessary requisite to Christ's being born and received in the world; then we shall drive the matter to a further issue, and find repentance a necessary preparation for the birth of Christ in our hearts. For so the Baptist's message, "Prepare the ways," &c., is here interpreted by the event, "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand;" as if this harbinger had no other furniture and provision to bespeak in the heart that was to receive Christ, but only repentance for sins. I will not examine here the precedence of repentance before faith in Christ, though I might seasonably here state the question, and direct you to begin with John and proceed to Christ; first repent, then fasten on Christ; only this for all, the promises of salvation in Christ are promised on condition of repentance and amendment, they must be weary and heavy laden, who ever come to Christ, and expect rest. Isa. xl. 3.
Mat. iii. 2.

And therefore whosoever applies these benefits to himself, and thereby conceives Christ in his heart, must first resolve to undertake the condition required, to wit, "newness of life," which yet he will not be able to perform till Christ be fully born and dwell in Him by Mat. xi. 28.

His enabling graces; for you may mark, that Christ and John being both about the same age, as appears by the story, Christ must needs be born before John's preaching: so in the soul there is supposed some kind of incarnation of Christ, before repentance or newness of life; yet before Christ is born, or at least come to His full stature and perfect growth in us; this Baptist's sermon, that is, this repentance and resolution to amendment, must be presumed in our souls.

- And so repentance is both a preparation to Christ's birth, and
 Mat. iii. 2. an effect of it. For so John preached, "Repent, for," &c.
 Mat. iv. 17. And so also in the same words Christ preaches, "Repent," &c.
 And so these two together, John and Christ, repentance and faith, though one began before the other was perfected; yet,
 Mat. iii. 15. I say, these two together in the fully regenerate man "fulfil all righteousness."

- In the seventh place you may observe, that when Christ was born in Bethlehem, the whole land was in an uproar.
 Mat. ii. 3. Herod the king "was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him;" which whether we apply to the lesser city, the soul of man, in which, or the adjoining people, amongst whom Christ is spiritually born in any man, you shall for the most acknowledge the agreement: for the man himself, if he have been any inordinate sinner, then at the birth of Christ in him, all his natural, sinful faculties are much displeased, his reigning Herod sins, and all the Jerusalem of habituate lusts and passions are in great disorder, as knowing that this new birth bodes their instant destruction; and then they cry off in
 Mark i. 24. the voice of the devil, "What have we to do with Thee, [Matt. viii. 29.] Jesus, Thou Son of God? Art Thou come to torment and dispossess us before our time?" If it be applied to the neighbour worldlings which hear of this new convert, then are they also in an uproar, and consult how they shall deal with this turbulent spirit, "which is made to upbraid our ways and reprove our thoughts," which is like to bring down
 Wisd. ii. [14.] all their trading and cozenage to a low ebb, like Diana's silversmith in the Acts, which made a solemn speech—and the text says there was a great stir—against Paul, because the attempt of his upstart doctrine was like to undo
 Acts xix. 24. the shrine-makers: "Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth." And no marvel that in both these

respects there is a great uproar, seeing the spiritual birth of Christ is most infinitely opposite to both the common people of the world and common affections of the soul, two of the most turbulent, tumultuous, wayward, violent nations upon earth.

In the eighth and last place,—because I will not tire you above the time which is allotted for the trial of your patience,—you may observe the increase and growth of Christ, and that either in Himself, “in wisdom and stature,” &c., or else Luke ii. 52. in His troop and attendants, and that either of “angels to Mat. iv. 11. minister unto Him,” or of disciples to follow and obey Him; and then the harmony will still go current. Christ in the regenerate man is first conceived, then born, then by degrees of childhood and youth grows at last to the “measure of [Eph. iv. 13.] the stature of this fulness,” and the soul consequently from strength to strength, from virtue to virtue, is increased “to a perfect manhood in Christ Jesus.” Then also where Christ is thus born He chooses and calls a jury at least of disciple-graces, to judge and sit upon thee, to give in evidence unto thy spirit, “that thou art the son of God.” Then is he also [Rom. viii. 16.] ministered unto, and furnished by the angels with a perpetual supply, either to increase the lively, or to recover decayed graces. So that now Christ doth bestow a new life upon the man, and the regenerate soul becomes the daughter, as well as the mother of Christ; she conceives Christ, and Christ her; she lives, and grows, and moves in Christ, and Christ in her. So that at last she comes to that pitch and height and *ἀκμή*, that St. Paul speaks of, “I live, yet not I, but Christ Gal. ii. 20. liveth in me; and the life which I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

And do Thou, O Holy Jesus, which hast loved us and given Thyself for us, love us still, and give Thyself to us. Thou which hast been born in the world to save sinners, vouchsafe again to be again incarnate in our souls, to regenerate and sanctify sinners. Thou which art the theme of our present rejoicing, become our author of perpetual, bring forth, spiritual rejoicing; that our souls may conceive and and Thou mayest conceive and regenerate our souls; that we may dwell in Christ, and Christ in us: and from the

meditation of Thy mortal flesh here, we may be partakers with Thee of Thine immortal glory hereafter.

Thus have we briefly passed through these words, and in them first shewed you the real agreement betwixt Matthew and Isaiah, in the point of Christ's name, and from thence noted that Jesus and Emmanuel is in effect all one; and that Christ's incarnation brought salvation into the world. Which being proved through Christ's several incarnations were applied to our direction: 1. to humble ourselves; 2. to express our thankfulness; 3. to observe our privileges; 4. to make ourselves capable and worthy receivers of this mercy. Then we came to the incarnation itself, where we shewed you the excellency of this mystery by the effects which the expectation and foresight of it wrought in the fathers, the prophets, the heathens, the devils: and then by way of use, what an horrible sin it was not to apply and employ this mercy to our souls. Lastly, we came to another birth of Christ, besides that in the flesh, His spiritual incarnation in man's soul; which we compared with the former exactly in eight chief circumstances; and so left all to God's Spirit and your meditations to work on.

Now the God, &c.



THIRTY-ONE SERMONS

PREACHED

ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

BY

HENRY HAMMOND, D.D.,

ARCHDEACON OF CHICHESTER AND CANON OF CHRIST CHURCH.

“How shall they hear, without a preacher? And how shall they
preach, except they be sent?” *Rom. x. 14, 15.*

“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every crea-
ture.” *St. Mark xvi. 15.*

A NEW EDITION.

OXFORD :

JOHN HENRY PARKER.

M DCCC L.



OXFORD :
PRINTED BY I. SHRIMPTON.

SERMON XVII.

LUKE IX. 55.

You know not what spirit you are of.

OF all errors or ignorances there are none so worthy our pains to cure, or caution to prevent, as those that have influence on practice. The prime ingredient in the making up a wise man, saith Aristotle in his *Metaphysics*^a, is to be well-advised *περὶ ὧν ἀπορήσαι δεῖ πρώτον*, what doubts must first be made, what ignorances earliest provided for: and there is not a more remarkable spring and principle of all the Scripture folly (that is wickedness) among men, than the beginning our Christian course unluckily, with some one or more false infusions, which not only are very hardly ever corrected afterward—like the errors of the first concoction, that are never rectified in the second—but moreover have an inauspicious poisonous propriety in them, turn all into nourishment of the prevailing humour: and then, as the injury of filching some of that corn that was delivered out for seed, hath a peculiar mark of aggravation upon it; is not to be measured in the garner but in the field; not by the quantity of what was stolen, but of what it would probably have proved in the harvest; so the damage that is consequent to this infelicity is never fully aggravated but by putting into the bill against it all the sins of the whole life; yea, and all the damnation that attends it.

Of this kind I must profess to believe the ignorance of the gospel-spirit to be chief, an ignorance that cannot choose but have an influence on every public action of the life. So that as Padre Paolo was designed a handsome office in the

^a [Aristot. *Metaph.* B. c. 1.]

senate of Venice, to sit by and observe, and take care *nequid contra pietatem*; so it were to be wished that every man on whom the name of Christ is called had some assistant angel, some *ἐπίτροπος δαίμων*, be it conscience, be it the remembrance of what I now say unto him, to interpose in all, especially the visible undertakings of the life, *nequid contra spiritum Evangelii*, that nothing be ventured on but what is agreeable to the spirit of the gospel. Even disciples themselves may, it seems, run into great inconveniences for want of it; James and John did so in the text; *ignem de caelo*, "fire from heaven" on all that did not treat them so well as they expected; but Christ turned and reproved them, saying, "You know not what spirit," *οἴου πνεύματος*, "what kind of spirit you are of;" and that with an *ἔμφασις* on *ὑμεῖς*, not *ὑμεῖς ἐστὲ*, but *ἔστε ὑμεῖς*, you "disciples," you "Christians," "You know not what spirit you are of."

In the words it will be very natural to observe these three particulars; 1. That there is a peculiar spirit that Christians are of, *οἴου πνεύματος ὑμεῖς*: 2. That some prime Christians do not know the kind of spirit, *οὐκ οἶδατε*: even so James and John, "You know not," &c.: 3. That this ignorance is apt to betray Christians to unsafe, unjustifiable designs and actions. You that would have fire from heaven, do it upon this one ignorance, "You know not," &c.

I begin first with the first of these, that there is a peculiar spirit that Christians are of; a spirit of the gospel; and that must be considered here, not in an unlimited latitude, but only as it is opposite to the spirit of Elias, *θέλεις ὡς καὶ Ἡλίας*; wilt thou do as he did? It will then be necessary to shew you the peculiarity of the gospel spirit by its opposition to that of Elias, which is manifold; for instance, first, Elias was the great assertor of law; upon which ground Moses and he appear with our Saviour at His transfiguration; so that two things will be observable which make a difference betwixt the legal and the gospel spirit: 1. That some precepts of Christ now clearly (and with weight upon them) delivered by Christ, were, if in substance delivered at all, yet sure not so clearly, and at length, and intelligibly proposed under the law. You have examples in

the fifth of Matthew, in the opposition betwixt the *ἐρρήθη* Matt. v.
ἀρχαίως, what was said by Moses to the ancients, and the
ἐγὼ δὲ ὑμῖν, Christ's sayings to His disciples; which if they
be interpreted of Moses' law,—as many of the particulars are
evidently taken out of the decalogue, "Thou shalt not kill,
commit adultery, perjury,"—Christ's are then clearly super-
additions unto Moses'; or if they refer to the Pharisees' glosses,
—as some others of them possibly may do,—then do those
glosses of those Pharisees—who were none of the loosest nor
ignorantest persons among them; but, *ἀκριβεστάτη αἴρεσις*, [Acts xxvi.
for their lives the strictest; and, "they sit in Moses' chair, and 5.]
whatever they teach, that do," for their learning most consider- [Matt.
able—argue the Mosaic precepts not to be so clear and in- xxiii. 2.]
capable of being misinterpreted; and so still Christ's were
additions, if not of the substance, yet of light and lustre, and
consequently improvements of the obligation to obedience in
us Christians, who enjoy that light, and are precluded those
excuses of ignorance that a Jew might be capable of. From
whence I may sure conclude, that the *ego autem*, of not re-
taliating, or revenging of injuries,—for that is sure the mean-
ing of the *μὴ ἀντιστῆναι*, which we render "resist not evil," [Matt. v.
—the strict precept of loving, and blessing, and praying for 39.]
enemies, and the like, is more clearly preceptive, and so more
indispensably obligatory to us Christians, than ever it was to
the Jews before. And there you have one part of the spirit
of the gospel, in opposition to a first notion of the legal spirit.
And by it you may conclude, that what Christian soever can
indulge himself the enjoyment of that hellish sensuality, that
of revenge, or retributing of injuries; nay, that doth not prac-
tise that high piece of (but necessary, be it never so rare) per-
fection of "overcoming evil with good;" and so heap those [Rom. xii.
precious melting coals of love, of blessings, of prayers, those 20.]
three species of sacred vestal fire upon all enemies' heads;
nescit qualis spiritus, "he knows not what kind of spirit he
is of."

But there is another thing observable of the law, and so of
the Judaical legal spirit; to wit, as it concerned the planting
the Israelites in Canaan, and that is the command of rooting
out the nations; which was a particular case, upon God's
sight of the filling up of the measure of the Amorites' sins, [Gen. xv.
16.]

and a judicial sentence of His proceeding upon them; not only revealed to those Israelites, but that with a peremptory command annexed to it, to hate, and kill, and eradicate some of those nations. Which case, because it seldom or never falls out to agree in all circumstances with the case of any other sinful people, cannot lawfully prescribe to the eradicating of any other—though in our opinion never so great—enemies of God, until it appear as demonstrably to us, as it did to those Israelites, that it was the will of God they should be so dealt with; and he that thinks it necessary to shed the blood of every enemy of God, whom his censorious faculty hath found guilty of that charge, that is all for the fire from heaven, though it be upon the Samaritans, the not receivers of Christ, is but as the Rabbis call him sometimes one of the בני דמים and בני אש, “sons of bloods,” in the plural number, and “sons of fire;” yea, and like the disciples in my text, *Boanerges*, “sons of thunder,” far enough from the soft temper that Christ left them; “Ye know not what kind of spirit ye are of.”

[Mark iii.
17.]

In the next place, Elias’ spirit was a prophetic spirit, whose dictates were not the issue of discourse and reason, but impulsions from heaven. The prophetic writings were not, saith St. Peter, *ιδίας ἐπιλύσεως*, (I conceive in an agonistic sense,) of “their own starting,” or incitation, as they were moved or prompted by themselves, but, as it follows, *ὑπὸ πνεύματος ἁγίου φερόμενοι*, “as they were carried by the Holy Ghost;” not as they were led, but carried;—“when the Lord speaks, who can but prophesy?” And so likewise are the actions prophetic; many things that are recorded to be done by prophets in Scripture, they proceed from some peculiar incitations of God; I mean not from the ordinary, or extraordinary, general, or special direction or influence of His grace, co-operating with the Word, as in the breast of every regenerate man,—for the spirit of sanctification, and the spirit of prophecy, are very distant things,—but from the extraordinary revelation of God’s will, many times against the settled rule of duty—acted and animated not as a living creature, by a soul, but moved as an outward impellent, a sphere by an intelligence, and that frequently into eccentric and planetary motions; so that they were no further justifiable than that

[2 Pet. i.
20.]

[Amos iii.
8.]

prophetic calling to that particular enterprise will avow. Consequent to which is, that because the prophetic office was not beyond the Apostles' time to continue constantly in the Church, any further than to interpret, and super-struct upon what the canon of the Scripture hath settled among Christians,—Christ and His word in the New Testament being *bath-col*, which the Jews tell us was alone to survive all the other ways of prophecy,—he that shall now pretend to that prophetic spirit, to some vision, to teach what the word of God will not own; to some incitation to do what the New Testament law will not allow of; he that with the late friar in France^b, pretends to ecstasical revelations, with the enthusiasts of the last age^c, and fanatics now with us, to ecstasical motions; that with Mahomet pretends a dialogue with God, when he is in an epileptic fit, sets off the most ghastly diseases, I shall add, most horrid sins, by undertaking more particular acquaintance and commerce with the Spirit of God, a call from God's providence and extraordinary commission from heaven, for those things, which if the New Testament be canonical, are evaporate from hell; and so first “leads captive silly women,”—as Mahomet did his wife,^[2 Tim. iii. 6.]—and then a whole army of Janizaries into a war, to justify and propagate such delusions, and put all to death that will not be their proselytes, is far enough from the gospel spirit that lies visible in the New Testament (*verbum vehiculum spiritus*), and the preaching of the word (*διακονία πνεύματος*), and is not infused by dream or whisper, nor authorized by a melancholy or fanatic fancy; and so οὐκ οἶδεν οἶον, “knows not what kind,” &c.

In the third place, Elias was the great precedent and example of sharp unjudiciary procedure with malefactors, which [differed] from the common ordinary awards on criminals, in that execution preceded trial, and the malefactor suffered ἐπ' αὐτοφώρῳ, without attending the formalities of law.

Of this kind two examples are by Mattathias cited, one of^{1 Maccab. ii. [54.]}

^b Pere Barnard.

^c Copinger or Arthington. [Fanatics in the reign of Q. Elizabeth, the pretended prophets of Hacket who pretended to be our Saviour; see the book entitled “Conspiracie for intended Reformation, a treatise discovering the late

designments and courses held for advancement thereof by Edmund Copinger, William Hacket, and Henry Arthington (out of others' depositions, and thir own letters, writings and confessions.) 4to. Lond. 1592. (by Rich. Cosin, LL.D.)”]

[Ex. xxv.
7.]

Phinehas, ἐν τῷ ζηλωσάει ζῆλον, that “zealed a zeal,” and in that, run through Zimri and Cozbi, and so—as the captain once answered for the killing the drowsy sentinel—*reliquit quos invenit*, found them in unclean embraces, and so left them. And the variety of our interpretations in rendering of that passage in the Psalm, “Then stood up Phinehas and prayed,” in the old, and “then stood up Phinehas and executed judgment,” in the new translations, may perhaps give some account of that action of his, that upon Phinehas’ prayer for God’s direction what should be done in that matter, God raised up him in an extraordinary manner to execute judgment on those offenders. And the other of Elias in the text, and he with some addition, ἐν τῷ ζηλωσάει ζῆλον νόμου, “In zealing the zeal of the law, called fire from heaven upon those that were sent out from Abaziah, to bring him to him.” And this fact of his, by God’s answering his call, and the coming down of the fire upon them, was demonstrated to come from God also, as much as the prediction of the king’s death, which was confirmed by this means.

[1 Macc.
ii. 58.]
[2 Kings
i. 10.]

It may very probably be guessed by Mattathias’ words in that place, that there were no precedents of the zelotic spirit in the Old Testament but those two; for among all the catalogue of examples mentioned to his sons to inflame their zeal to the law, he produceth no other; and it is observable, that though there be practices of this nature mentioned in the story of the New Testament, the stoning of St. Stephen, of St. Paul at Iconium, &c., yet all of them practised by the Jews, and not one that can seem to be blameless, but that of Christ (who sure had extraordinary power) upon the buyers and sellers in the temple; upon which the Apostles remembered the Psalmist’s prophecy, ζῆλος κατέφαγε, the “zeal of God’s house” carried him to that act of *νέμεσις*, of indignation and punishment upon the transgressors. And what mischief was done among the Jews by those of that sect in Josephus^d, that called themselves by the name of zealots, and withal took upon them to be the saviours and preservers of the city, but as it proved, the hasteners and precipitators of the destruction of that kingdom, by casting out and killing the high-priests first, and then the nobles and chief men of the nation,

[Acts vii.
59; xiv. 5,
19.]

[John ii.
15.]

[Ps. lxiix.
9.]

^d [Josephus de Bell. Jud., lib. iv. 3. et passim.]

and so embasing and intimidating, and dejecting the hearts of all the people, that all was at length given up to their fury—Josephus, and any of the learned that have conversed with the Jewish writers, will instruct the enquirer. And ever since, no very honourable notion had of ζῆλος in the New Testament; one of the “fruits of the flesh,” Gal. v., of the “wisdom that comes not from heaven,” Jam. iii., and in the same, πικρὸς ζῆλος, a “bitter zeal,” a gall that will embitter all that come near it. The short of it is, the putting any man to death, or inflicting other punishment upon any terms but that of legal, perfectly legal process, is the importance of a zealous spirit, as I remember in Maimonides^e, “him that curses God in the name of an idol, the עִוָּן that meet him, kill him,” i. e. the zealous—permitted, it seems, if not authorized to do so. And this is the spirit of Elias, that is of all others most evidently reprehended and renounced by Christ. The Samaritans, no very sacred persons, added to their habitual constant guilts at that time to deny common civility of entertainment to Christ Himself; and the disciples asked whether they might not do what Elias had done, “call for fire from heaven” upon them in that case; and Christ tells them that the gospel spirit was of another complexion from that of Elias, καὶ στραφεῖς ἐπετίμησε, turned to them as He did to Peter, when He said, “Get thee behind Me, Satan;” as to so many fiery satanical-spirited men, and checked them for that their furious zeal, with an οὐκ οἴδατε οἴου, κ.τ.λ. The least I can conclude from hence is this, that they that put any to death by any but perfectly legal process, that draw the sword upon any but by the supreme magistrate’s command, are far enough from the gospel spirit, whatever precedent they can produce to countenance them. And so if they be really what they pretend, Christians, οὐκ οἴδασι, they are in a prodigious mistake or ignorance; “they know not what spirit they are of.”

Yet further it is observable of Elias, that he did execrate and curse, call for judgments from heaven upon men’s persons; and that temper of mind in the parallel, you may distribute into two sorts: first, in passing judgments upon men’s future estates, the censorious reprobating spirit, which though we find it not in Elias at this time, yet is a consequent of

^e De Idol., c. 2. [sect. xiii. p. 34. ed. Voss. 1641.]

Gal. v.

[20.]

Jam. iii.

[14, 15.]

[Luke ix.
54.]

[Matt. xvi.
23.]

the prophetic office, and part of the burden received from the Lord, and laid upon those guilty persons concerning whom it hath pleased Almighty God to reveal that secret of His cabinet; but then this rigour cannot, without sin, be pretended to by any else; for in the blackest instances, "charity believes all things," and "hopes all things," and even in this sense, "covers the multitudes of sins." Now this so culpable an insolent humour, rashly to pass a condemning sentence, was discernible in the Pharisees,—“this publican,” whose profession and trade is forbidden by that law, and this “people that know not that law, is accursed,”—so likewise in the Montanists,—*nos spirituales*, and all others *animales* and *psychici*—so in the Romanists (who condemn all but themselves) and in all those generally whose pride and malice conjoined—most directly contrary to the gospel spirit of humility and charity—doth prepare them one, and the other inflame them, to triumph and glut themselves in this spiritual assassiny, this deepest dye of blood, the murdering of souls; which because they cannot do it really, they endeavour in effigy, anathematize and slaughter them here in this other Calvary, the place for the crucifying of reputations, turning them out of the communion of their charity, though not of bliss; and I am confident reject many whom the angels entertain more hospitably. Another part of this cursing spirit there is, more peculiarly Elias's, that of praying (and so calling) for curses on men's persons; and that being upon the enemies of God, and those appearing to Elias a prophet to be such, might be then lawful to him and others like him—David perhaps, &c., in the Old Testament—but is wholly disliked and renounced by Christ under this state of higher discipline to which Christians are designed by Him in the New. I say, not only for that which concerns our own enemies, for that is clear, “When thine enemy hungereth, feed him;” and somewhat like that in the Old Testament, “When thine enemy's ox,” &c. &c: but I extend it even to the enemies of God Himself, and that I need not do upon other evidence than is afforded

[Luke xviii. 11.]
[John vii. 49.]

[e. g. Ps. cix.]

[Rom. xii. 20.]

† [Cf. Tertullian. de jejun. ad init.]
‡ [“If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it to him again. If thou see the

ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him.” Exod. xxiii. 4, 5.]

from the text; the Samaritans were enemies of Christ Himself and were barbarous and inhuman to His person, and they must not be cursed by disciples. And he that can now curse even wicked men, who are more distantly the enemies of God, can call for—I say not discomfiture upon their devices, for that is charity to them, to keep them from being such unhappy creatures as they would be, contrivers of so much mischief to the world; but—plagues and ruin upon their persons,—which is absolutely the voice of revenge, that sulphur-vapour of hell;—he that delighteth in the misery of any part of God’s image,—and so usurps upon that wretched quality of which we had thought the devil had gotten the monopoly—that of *ἐπιχαιρεκακία*, joying in the brother’s misery,—but now see with horror is got loose out of that pit to rave among us;—he that would mischief, if it were in his power, and, now it is not, by unprofitable wishes of execration shews his good-will toward it, is quite contrary to the gospel spirit, and so *οὐκ οἶδε οἶον*, “he knows not,” &c.

Lastly, Elias was not only rapt to heaven, but moved on earth in a fiery chariot, *ζηλώσας ζῆλον*, saith the author of ^[1 Macc. ii. 54.] the book of Maccabees; his zeal had fire and fire again,—*ζηλώ* comes from *ζέω*, an excessive fervency,—and agreeable to his temper is his appetite; he desires nothing but fire upon his adversaries, calls for fire, and fire, and fire, as you may see it in the story. And the gospel spirit is directly contrary to this, an allaying, quenching spirit, a gentle lambent flame, that sits on the Apostles’ heads to enlighten and adorn; by its vital warmth expelling partial hectic heats, and burning feverish distempers, that spiritual *πύρωσις* mentioned in the gospel; and putting in the place, a cool, sedate, and equable temper, “to have peace with all men,” and chiefly with ourselves, *φιλοτιμείσθαι ἡσυχάζειν*,—an admirable phrase in ^[1 Thess. iv. 11.] St. Paul,—to use as much diligence to restore the earth to peace again as all the wind, or air, or perhaps fire in its bowels (I mean, ambitious, contentious men) do to set it a shaking; and he that will not contribute his utmost to quench those flames, that will not joyfully do any thing that may not directly or by consequence include sin, toward the extinguishing a fire thus miserably gotten into the veins and bowels of a calamitous kingdom, is far enough

from the gospel spirit, and so οὐκ οἶδε οἶον, "he knows not," &c.

[2 Kings
xviii. 33.]

I shall not clearly give you the gospel spirit unless I proceed from its opposition to Elias' act, to that other, the opposition to the motion of those disciples, considered in the particular circumstances. The case stood thus; Christ was going up to Jerusalem, thereupon the Samaritans receive Him not; the disciples will have fire from heaven upon those Samaritans. Jerusalem was at that time the only proper place of God's worship, and may note to us as an emblem, the true established Protestant religion of this kingdom. The Samaritans were great enemies to this, enemies to Jerusalem; being, first, heretics in religion, took in the Assyrian idols into the worship of the true God; "they feared the Lord, and served their own gods," as it is in the story, and continued their wont when they turned Christians, make up the first sort of heretics in Epiphanius' catalogue^b. Secondly, they were schismatics in an eminent manner, set up a new separation by themselves on mount Gerizim. And further yet, in the third place, pretended to the only purity and antiquity; they lived where Jacob once lived; and therefore, though Assyrians by extraction, they boast they are Jacob's seed, and pretend more antiquity for that schism of theirs, because Jacob once worshipped in that mountain, than they think can be shewed for the temple at Jerusalem, which was but in Solomon's time of a later structure. Just as they which pretended, though never so falsely, that they were of Christ, have still despised and separated from all others as novelists, which walked in the Apostles' steps and practices; and so Samaritans under guilts enough; first, haters of Jerusalem; secondly, heretics; thirdly, separatists; fourthly, pretenders—though without all reason—to the first antiquity, and so arrogant hypocrites too; and fifthly, beyond all, prodigious, but still confident, disputers; and yet, sixthly, one higher step than all these, contemners and haters of all, even of Christ Himself, on this only quarrel, because He was a friend to Jerusalem, and looked as if He were a going thither, as if He had some favour to the established religion of the land. I wish this

^b [S. Epiphanius cont. Hæreses, lib. i. p. 24.],

passage did not hitherto parallel itself; but seeing it doth too illustriously to be denied or disguised, I shall imagine that that which follows may do so too.

All this together was temptation to two honest disciples, to think fire from heaven a but reasonable reward for such Samaritans; and, having flesh and blood about them, compounded with piety, you will not much wonder at them that they were wrought on by the temptation; and yet this very thought of theirs, the *Κύριε θέλεις*, is presently checked by Christ, as being against the gospel spirit; “you know not what spirit you are of.” Haters of the Church, heretics, schismatics, hypocrites, irrational pretenders, enemies, contumelious even to Christ Himself, must not presently be assigned the devil’s portion, the *ἐσφράγισται ταμιεῖα*, may be yet capable of some mercy, some humanity, not instantly devoted to be sacrifices to our fury. The gospel spirit will have thoughts of peace, of reconcilcableness toward them. And let me beseech God first, and then you, right honourable: God, that He endue and inspire your hearts with this piece of the gospel spirit, so seasonable to your present consultations; and you, that you would not reject my prayers to God, but open your hearts to receive the return of them, and not imitate even the disciples of Christ, in that they are Boanerges; but stay till the cool of the day, till you have them in a calmer temper, when Christ’s word and doctrine hath stilled those billows, as once He did the other tempestuous element. It was Antoninus’ⁱ way to be revenged on his enemies, *μὴ ἐξομοιοῦσθαι*, not to imitate them, whatever he did. And this was but an essay or obscure shadow of the Christian magnanimity, that goes for poverty of spirit in the world, but proceeding from the right principle of unshaken patience, of constant unmoveable meekness, of design to be like our royal Master-sufferer. “Father, forgive them” that crucify Me; and “Go and preach” the doctrine of the kingdom to them, after they have crucified Me. And you know all we ministers ever since are but ambassadors of Christ, to ingrate crucifying enemies, “praying them in Christ’s name and stead that they would be reconciled,” that they

[Luke
xxii. 34;
xxiv. 47.]

[2 Cor. v.
20.]

ⁱ [Ἄριστος τρόπος τοῦ ἀμύνησθαι, τὸ μὴ ἐξομοιοῦσθαι.—Antoninus ad Seipsum, lib. vi. § 6.]

that have done the wrong will vouchsafe to be friends. What is it but that eminent piece of gospel spirit which they that can be persuaded to part with, for all the sweetness that thirst of revenge can promise or pretend to bring in unto them, are unhappily ignorant of the richest jewel that ever came within their reach. "They know not," &c.

I have as yet given you the gospel spirit in one colour or notion, that of its opposition to Elias first, and then to the Boanerges. It will be necessary to add somewhat of the positive consideration of it, though that must be fetched from other Scriptures. And this will be but necessary to this text, because that which is here mentioned is the *πνεῦμα*, spirit in the extent, not only that one part of it that respected the present action; where, though any one eminent defect—that particularly wherein those disciples offended—were destructive to the gospel spirit, *malum ex quolibet defectu*, yet all the several branches of it are required to integrate or make up the gospel spirit, *bonum ex essentia integra*. And what these branches are I cannot better direct you, than by putting you in mind of these few severals. First, Christ's badge or cognizance—"By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if you love one another"—not of one opinion, but of love. Add *nunquam læti sitis*¹, &c., as Jews rend garments at blasphemy, so we at uncharitableness. Secondly, Christ's legacy, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you." Thirdly, Christ's copy, "Learn of Me;" what is beyond all His other perfections, "I am meek." Fourthly, the nature of that "wisdom which cometh from above; first pure, then peaceable." Fifthly, the quality of the fruits of the spirit in St. Paul; "Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness," &c. Sixthly, the gallantry of meekness in St. Peter, "Ornament of a meek and quiet spirit." Seventhly, Titus' charge that all Christians are to be put in mind of, "To be subject to principalities, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers (*ἄμαχοι*, no fighters), but gentle, shewing all meekness to all men"—things that it seems nothing but

[John xiii.
35.]

[John xiv.
27.]

[Matt. xi.
29.]

James iii.
[17.]

[Gal. v.
22.]

[1 Pet. iii.
4.]

Tit. iii. 1, 2.

¹ Nazar. Sosp. [So in printed editions by mistake for Gosp. The passage is quoted from the Nazarene Gos-

pel by St. Jerome, Comment. in Ephes. lib. iii. (in cap. v. 4.) Op., tom. vii. p. 641. B. See above, Sermon ii. p. 37.]

Christianity could infuse—"For we ourselves were some- [Tit. iii. 3.] times fools, disobedient, &c. . . . but after the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared," then room for this spirit.

I cannot give you a readier landscape to present them all to your view together than that excellent sermon of Christ upon the mount, that *ἄκρον καὶ κορυφή φιλοσοφίας*, as Chrysostom calls it, "that top pitch of divine philosophy," worthy to be imprinted in every man's heart; and of which he that hath not been a pondering student, and resolved to regulate his practice by it, as much as his faith by the Apostles' creed; yea, and to lay down his life a martyr of that doctrine—though he hath all faith, I cannot promise myself much of his Christianity. If you will have the brachygraphy of that, the manual picture that may be sure, either in words or sense, never to depart from your bosom, but remain your constant phylactery or preservative from the danger of all ungodly spirits, then take the beatitudes in the front of it; and among them—that I may, if it be possible, bring the whole Iliads into a nutshell—those that import immediately our duty towards men; for in that the gospel spirit especially consists, increasing our love to brethren, whose flesh Christ now assumed, and in whose interests He hath a most immediate concern. And if you mark, in the chapter following, all the improvements mentioned, except only that of swearing, belong to the commands of the second table. And then the integral parts of this gospel spirit will be these four constantly, humility, [See Matt. v. 3—12.] meekness, mercifulness, peaceableness, and if need be, suffering too. Every of these four brought in to us with a checker or lay of duty towards God, of mourning betwixt humility and meekness; hungering and thirsting after righteousness, betwixt meekness and mercifulness; purity of heart betwixt mercifulness and peaceableness; and persecution and reproaches, and *πάντων πονηρὸν ῥῆμα*, every Rabshakeh topic of railing rhetoric vomited out upon us,—blessed persecution, blessed reproaches, when our holding to Christ is that which brings them all upon us,—the consummation and crown of all.

Having but named you these severals, humility, meekness, mercifulness, peaceableness, and, if need be, patience of all

stripes, both of hand and tongue; the sparkling gems in this jewel, blessed ingredients in this gospel spirit, you will certainly resolve it full time for me to descend to my second particular at first proposed, that some disciples there were, some prime professors do not know the kind of that spirit, *οὐκ οἶδατε οἴου*, “You know not what kind of spirit you are of.”

James and John it appears were such disciples, and that after they had been for some competent time followers and auditors of His sermons; so far an easier thing it is to leave their worldly condition and follow Christ, than to leave their carnal prejudices and ignorances and obey Him; especially those that had such hold in their passions,—as revenge, they say, is the pleasingest piece of carnality in the heap,—cheaper to hear His gospel sermons than to practise them. And you will less wonder at these two when you see that St. Peter himself, after a longer space of proficiency in that school, even at the time of Christ’s attachment, had not yet put off that ignorance, *ὁ θερμὸς Πέτρος*, say the fathers^k, Peter was of an hot constitution, and Christ’s doctrine had not yet got down deep enough into his heart to allay or cool him. *Nondum concipiens in se Evangelicam patientiam illam traditam sibi a Christo, &c.*, saith Origen^l; that gospel patience and peaceableness that Christ had commended to him, he had not, it seems, yet received into an honest heart, and so he makes no scruple to cut off Malchus’ ear when he was provoked to it. I have heard of a friar that could confess that Malchus signified a king, and yet after made no scruple to acknowledge him in that notion to be the high-priest’s servant; and secondly, to justify St. Peter’s act and avoid Christ’s reprehension, by saying that he was chid, not for doing so much, but for doing no more; not for cutting off his ear, but for not directing the blow better to the cutting off his head. And how far this friar’s barbarous divinity hath been justified of late by the writings of some—who will yet persuade us that Christ did not reprehend St. Peter for that act—and by

[John
xviii. 10.]

^k [e. g. St. Chrysostom; *τι οὖν ὁ Πέτρος ὁ πανταχοῦ θερμὸς καὶ ἀεὶ τῶν ἄλλων προπηδῶν.*—Op., tom. vii. p. 525. D; cf. *ibid.*, p. 524. D.]

^l [Origen. Tractat. xxxv. in S. Matth. § 101. Op., tom. iii. p. 907 E. Only extant in the Latin.]

the actions of others, I have little joy to represent unto you ; God knows I love not to widen breaches ; only I am sure the fathers are clear ; that though formerly St. Peter were ignorant, and from that ignorance and zeal together, ran into that fury, yet Christ μεταρρυθμίζων αὐτὸν εἰς εὐαγγελικὴν πολιτείαν^m, desirous to tune him to that sweet harmonical gospel temper, tells him he must not use the sword,—he having no commission, especially against those that have it, though they use it never so ill,—*κὰν τὸν θεὸν δοκεῖ τις ἐνδικεῖν*, “though it were to avenge even God Himself.” And having given you these proofs of this ignorance in three disciples, I think it is possible I might extend it to the rest of them that they were in this particular ignorant too,—as it seems they were in many other things,—till the Holy Ghost came according to promise, “to teach them all things, and to bring to their remembrance,”—to thaw their memories,^[John xiv. 26.] that the words of Christ, like the voice in Plutarch that had been frozen, might at length become audible ; or as Plato’s precepts were learned by his scholars when they were young, but never understood till they were men of full age, and tamer passionsⁿ,—I say, to bring to their remembrance whatsoever Christ had in person said unto them. And I wish to God it were uncharitable to charge this ignorance still upon disciples, after so many solemn embassies of the Holy Ghost unto us, to teach us and remember us of this duty. Nay, I wish, that now after He hath varied the way of appearing, after He hath sat upon us in somewhat a more direful shape, not of a dove, but vulture,—tearing even the flesh from us on purpose, that when we have less of that carnal principle left, there might be some heed taken to this gospel spirit,—there were yet some proficiency observable among us, some heavings of the εὐαγγελικὴ πολιτεία, that hath so long been a working in the world ; I am confident there were no such way of designing a prosperous, flourishing, durable kingdom, as to found its policy upon gospel principles, and maintain it by the gospel spirit. I have authority to think that was the meaning of that prophecy of

^m Theophyl. Comm. in Matth. xxvi. [Op., tom. i. p. 151. B.]

ⁿ [See Plutarch ; “Quomodo quis

suos in virtute sentiat profectus,” § 7. Op., tom. i. P. i. p. 302. Wytttenb.]

[Isa. iii.
4.]

Christ's "turning swords into plough-shares," not that He should actually bring peace, He tells you that it would prove quite contrary, but because the fabric of the gospel is such that would all men live by it, all wars and disquiets would be banished out of the world. It was a madness in Machiavel to think otherwise, and yet the unhappiness of the world that Sir Thomas More's book that designed it thus should be then called Utopia, and that title to this hour remain

[Gen. viii.
9.]

perfect prophecy, no place to be found where this dove may rest her foot, where this gospel spirit can find reception. No not among disciples themselves, those that profess to adventure their lives to set up Christ's kingdom in its purity; none so void of this knowledge as they. Whether we mean a speculative or practical knowledge of it, few arrived to that height or vacancy of considering whether there be such a spirit or no. Some so in love with nature, that old Pelagian idol, resolve that sufficient to bring them to heaven, if they but allow their brethren what they can claim by that grand character, love of friends, those of the same persuasion, those that have obliged them; they have nature's leave, and so are resolved to have Christ's, to hate, pursue to death whom they can fancy their enemies. And I wish some

[Acts xxvi.
28.]

were but thus of Agrippa's religion, *ἐν ὀλίγῳ Χριστιανοί*, so near being Christians as nature itself would advance them; that gratitude, honour to parents, natural affection, were not become malignant qualities, disclaimed as conscientiously as obedience and justice, and honouring of betters. Others again so devoted to Moses' law, the Old Testament spirit, that whatever they find practised there, they have sufficient authority to transcribe. And it is observable that they which think themselves little concerned in the Old Testament duties,—which have a long time passed for unregenerate morality, that faith hath perfectly outdated,—are yet zealous assertors of the Old Testament spirit, all their pleas for the present resistance fetched from them, yea, and confessed by some that this liberty was hidden by God in the first ages of the Christian Church, but now revealed we cannot hear where, yet, but in the Old

Psalm cix.

Testament, and from thence a whole Psalm, 109th, full of curses against God's enemies and theirs,—and generally

those pass for synonymous terms,—the special devotion they are exercised in; and if ever they come within their reach, no more mercy for them than for so many of the seven nations, in rooting out of which a great part of their religion consists. I wish there were not another prodigy also abroad under the name of the Old Testament spirit, the opinion of the necessity of sacrifice, real bloody sacrifice,—even such as was but seldom heard of among Indians and Scythians themselves,—such sacrifices, of which the cannibal Cyclops' feasts may seem to have been but attendants,—furnished with the *τομαὶ* and *μερίδες*, that come from such savage altars,—sacrificing of men, of Christians, of protestants as good as any in the world, to expiate for the blood shed by papists in Queen Mary's days; and some prophets ready to avow, that without such sacrifice there is no remission, no averting of judgments from the land. What is this but like the Pharisees, “to build and garnish the sepulchres of the prophets, and say, that if they had lived in their fathers' days, they would never have partaken of the blood of the prophets,” and yet go on “to fill up the measure of their fathers?” The very men to whom Christ directs thee, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest,” in the present tense, a happy turn, if but the progeny of those murderers, and what can then remain, but the “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate,”—irreversible destruction upon the land. A third sort there is again, that have so confined the gospel to promises, and a fourth, so persuaded that the *Unum necessarium* is to be of right persuasions in religion; i. e. of those that every such man is of,—for he that did not think his own the truest, would sure be of them no longer,—that betwixt those two popular deceits, that of the fiduciary, and this of the solifidian, the gospel spirit is not conceived to consist in doing any thing; and so still those practical graces, humility, meekness, mercifulness, peaceableness, and Christian patience, are very handsomely superseded; that one Moses' rod, called faith, is turned serpent, and hath devoured all these for rods of the magicians; and so still you see men sufficiently armed and fortified against the gospel spirit. All that is now left us, is not to exhort, but weep in secret, not to dispute, but pray for it, that God will at last give us eyes

[Matt. xxiii. 29.]

[ver. 37.]

[ver. 38.]

[Ex. vii. 12.]

to discern this treasure put into our hands by Christ, which would yet, like a whole navy and fleet of plate, be able to recover the fortune and reputation of this bankrupt island, fix this floating Delos, to restore this broken shipwrecked vessel to harbour and safety, this whole kingdom to peace again. Peace! seasonable, instant peace, the only remedy on earth to keep this whole land from being perfect vastation, perfect Afric of nothing but wild and monster; and the gospel spirit that Christ came to preach and exemplify, and plant among men, the only way imaginable to restore that peace. Lord that it might at length break forth among us! the want of it is certainly the author of all the miseries we suffer under; and that brings me to the third and last particular, that this ignorance of the gospel spirit is apt to betray Christians to unsafe, unjustifiable enterprises: you that would have fire from heaven, do it upon this one ignorance, "You know not," &c.

It were too sad, and too long a task, to trace every of our evils home to the original; every of the fiends amongst us to the mansion in the place of darkness peculiar to it. If I should, it would be found too true, what Du Plesse is affirmed to have said to Languet, as the reason why he would not write the story of the civil wars of France, "that if he were careful to observe the causes, and honest to report them, he must hound the fox to a kennel which it was not willing to acknowledge;" drive such an action to the brothel-house, that came speciously and pretendedly out of a church: find that to be in truth the animosity of a rival that took upon it to be the quarrel for religion; or as in Polybius^o oft, the *πρόφασις* to be a thing very distant from the *αἰτία*, the colour from the cause.

In the mean, it will not be a peculiar mark of odium on the embroilers of this present State and Church, to lay it at their doors, which I am confident never failed to own the like effects in all other Christian states, the ignorance—i. e. in the Scripture phrase, not practising—of those Christian rules which the gospel spirit presents us with.

I might tire you but with the names of those effects that flow constantly from this ignorance, such are, usurping the

^o [Polybius. Hist., lib. iii. c. 6. § 6; and *ibid.*, c. 7. § 3.]

power that belongs not to us, which humility would certainly disclaim; such, resisting the powers under which we are placed by God, to which meekness would never be provoked; such the judging and censuring men's thoughts and intentions any further than their actions enforce, most unreconcilable with the forgiving part of mercifulness; such the doing any kind of evil, that the greatest or publickest good may come, designing of rapine or blood to the sanctified end, which St. Paul and peaccableness would never endure; such impatience of the cross, shaking a kingdom to get it off from our own shoulders, and put it on other men, diametrically opposite to the suffering and patience of a Christian.

To retire from this common to the enclosure, and to go no further than the text suggests to me, "To call fire from heaven upon Samaritans," is here acknowledged the effect of the *οὐκ οἶδατε*, the want of knowledge, or consideration of the quality of their spirit.

And what may that signify to us? Why, fire, you know, is the emblem of a civil war, which is called a *πύρωσις*, a "combustion," or, being further broken out into flames, a "conflagration;" and I conceive should be so rendered in that place of St. Peter, where we read "the fiery trial."

[1 Pet. iv.
12.]

Now fire, you know, belongs most naturally to hell; and therefore when the fire and brimstone came down upon Sodom, the fancy of the fathers calls it *gehennam de caelo*: and so generally the civil fire, the combustion in a state, its original is from thence too; part of that "wisdom that is not from above." These tares so apt for burning, are sowed by Satan, the enemy-man. From whence come "wars and strivings among you,"—*πόλεμοι καὶ μάχαι*, wars of all sizes,—
"are they not from your lusts, that war in your flesh?" saith St. James. The lusts from the flesh, but the war from hell, the devil, the *spiritus sufflans* that sets them a warring. Believe it, they would not be able to do it in this manner, prove such fiery *boutefeus*, if they were not inflamed from beneath, if they were not set on fire by hell. And therefore to call fire from heaven, to entitle God or heaven to that fire, is to do both of them great injury; nay, though it be on Samaritans, that are not so friendly to Christ as might be expected. And so to call fire from heaven upon Samaritans,

[Jam. iii.
15.]

[Jam. iv.
1.]

is (by accommodation at least) to pretend God, or heaven, or religion, for the cause of war, which of all things hath least to do it, if the gospel spirit may have leave to be considered. Indeed, very few kinds of war there are that will be justified by gospel principles. It was truly said, (though by a rough soldier,) "that if the Lord of Hosts were permitted to sit in the council of war, there would soon be a cessation of arms, and disbanding of armies." Though that all war is not unlawful, will appear by John Baptist's address to the soldiers, who gave rules to regulate their militia, but did not disband them; and the example of the convert centurion, a centurion still after his conversion: where yet this still remains as an infallible resolution, that wars are to be used like the *regia medicamenta*, never but when the physician sees there is no other means available; never upon the wantonness of the patient, but command of the physician, and never but when peace appears to be impossible; for if it be possible, the precept is of force, "Follow peace with all men." And then to shed the blood of Christians, when blood may be spared, what an hideous thing it is you may guess by that emperor, that having beheaded a Christian, was by the sight of a fish's head that came to his table so astonished, fancying that it was the head of that slaughtered Christian gaping on him, that he scarce recovered to his wits; or of that poor penitent David in his pathetic expression, "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O Lord." A wonderful deliverance, it seems, to get clear from that. And what an ocean of fishes' heads may appear one day gaping on some men I have no joy to tell: "Deliver us from blood-guiltiness, O God."

[Luke iii.
4.]

[Heb. xii.
14.]

[Ps. li. 14.]

I have done with my third particular also, and have now no more to importune you with, but my requests to you, and to heaven for you, that the time past of all our lives be sufficient to have spent in the will of the Gentiles, after the dictates of that heathen spirit, the natural or Jewish principles. That you be content at length to go up to the mount with Christ, and be auditors of His sermon; to that other mount with the same Christ, and be transfigured after Him to that spirit of humility, spirit of meekness, spirit of all kind of mercifulness; that peaceable, patient spirit, which will give you a comfortable passage through this valley of Achor here;

yea, though it prove a Red sea of blood, and will fit you for a crown, that true Olympic olive crown; the "peaceable fruits of righteousness," an "eternal weight of glory hereafter." [Heb. xii. 11; 2 Cor. iv. 17.] Which God of His infinite mercy grant, through the merit and promise of His Son.

To whom with the Father, &c.

SERMON XVIII.

EZEK. xviii. 31.

For why will ye die?

SINCE the devil was turned out of heaven, all his care and counsels have been employed to keep us from coming thither ; and finding God's love very forward and increasing towards us, he hath set us upon all ways of enmity and opposition against Him. The first warlike exploit he put us upon, was the building of Babel, when man having fortified himself, and the arm of flesh grown stout, began to reproach and challenge, and even assault the God of heaven. But the success of that boldness cost so dear, that we have ever since been discouraged from such open proud attempts. Our malice and despite hath kept in somewhat more close and secretly, hath retired and settled in the soul ; the inward man hath ever since erected its Babel ; proud and high imaginations out-bidding heaven and God. These were a long while forged in the brain, when instead of the acknowledgment of one true God, all monsters of atheism filled the understanding, sometimes with a multitude and shoal of gods ; sometimes deprived it quite, and left it utterly void of any : but now at last, the devil and all the atheism in the world, being at last exorcised and banished out of the brain, by the evidence and power of truth, hath like the legion, which being cast out of the man, had leave to enter the swine, fixed violently, and taken possession, and intrenched itself in the brutish bestial part, the affections. All the swellings, and tumours, and ulcers, that ever shewed themselves in any portion of the circumference, are now retired into the centre. All the atheism or

heresy that ever soared or floated in the brain, or surface of the soul, is now sunk into the heart; and there the devil is seated at ease, there to set up and fortify and contemn God for ever. So that in brief, the issue of all this is, there is an infinite opposition and thwarting, a professed combat and bandying of forces betwixt the will of man and the will of God; God doing, in a kind, His best on one side, and man on the other. God wonderfully willing and desirous that we should live; man most perversely wilful to his own destruction.

This is a truth of a most dismal importance that concerns you to be instructed in, and will not be more powerfully enforced on you from any place of Scripture than the text which I have read to you, "Why will ye die?" It is God speaks it, and with an infinite emphasis and *πάθος*, to note His passion and affectionateness in desiring our good, and willing that we should live. And then secondly, "Why will you die?" Man's resoluteness and stubborn wretchedness towards his own ruin, rushing or tumbling as in a precipice violently to hell, like the swine which formerly our wills were resembled to, running full speed down a steep place into the lake. And these are like to prove the parts of my ensuing discourse; first, God's willingness that we should be saved; secondly, man's wilfulness toward his own damnation. And of these plainly to your hearts, not your ears; not so much to advance your knowledge, which though it could be raised to the tallest pitch, might yet possibly bear thee company to hell; but rather to increase your zeal, to work some one good inclination in you, to persuade you to be content to suffer yourselves to be saved; to be but so tame as to be taken by heaven that now even besieges you. And with my affectionate prayers for success to this design, I will presume of your cars and patience, and begin first with the first, God's willingness that we should live. "Why will ye die?"

Luke viii.
33.

Amongst all other prejudices and misconceits that our fancy can entertain of God, I conceive not any so frequent or injurious to His attributes, as to imagine Him to deal double with mankind in His word; seriously to will one thing, and to make show of another; to deliver Himself in

one phrase, and reserve Himself in another. It were an unnecessary, officious undertaking to go about to be God's advocate, to apologize for Him, to vindicate His actions, or in Job's phrase, to "accept the person of God." Our proceedings will be more Christian, if we take for a ground or principle, that scorns to be beholding to an artist for a proof, that every word of God is an argument of His will, every action an interpreter of His word. So that howsoever he reveals Himself, either in His Scripture or His works, so certainly He wisheth and intends to us in His secret counsels. Every protestation of His love, every indignation at our stubbornness, every mercy conferred on us, and that not insidiously, but with an intent to do us good, are but ways and methods to express His will; are but rays, and emissions, and gleams of that eternal love which He exhibits to the world. Now there is no way to demonstrate this willingness of God that we should live, *a priori*, or by any thing either in God or us, pre-existent as the cause of it, unless it be His love, which yet is rather its *genus* than its cause, somewhat of larger extent, though otherwise coincident with it. The more vulgar powerful convincing way, is to enforce it to your hearts by its effects, and those divers and familiar: some few of which we will insist on.

1 Jol.n iv. 9. And first, and principally, the sending of His Son; "In this was manifest the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him." Mark God's love to us in sending His Son that we might live through Him. His love the cause of this mission; this mission, the manifestation and argument of that love; and that we live, the end of both. Had God been any way inclined to rigour or severity, there had needed no great skill, no artificial contrivance for a fair plausible execution of it; it had been but passing us by, the taking no notice of us, the "leaving of us in our blood," and then hell had presently opened its mouth upon us. "We were all cast out in the open field to the loathing of our persons, in the day that we were born," ready for all the vultures infernal to fix on, that hideous Old Testament, *διαθήκη ἕδου*, "the testament of hell," or in the mercifulest construction, the "covenant of grace" had passed on us, natu-

Ezek. xvi.
[6.]
ver. 5.

Eccles.
xiv. 12.

rally then—what infidelity now makes us—condemned already; our damnation sealed to us with our life, born to no other inheritance but hell; as if the devil had out of policy fallen before Adam, or rather descended, and that in post, “like Luke x. 18. lightning,” lest if his journey from heaven had been to have been performed after, some other creature should have intercepted him of his prey. But God’s bowels were enlarged above the size, wider than either the covetous gates of hell, or that horrid yawning head that is all mouth. It was not within the devil’s skill to fear or suspect what a way of mercy and deliverance God had found out for us. Somewhat he understood by the event, the decay of his prophetic arts becoming now his oracle; and even his silence growing vocal to him. But all this could not declare the mystery at large; when Christ was born, he would have been rid of Him betimes, musters all his forces, Pharisees and people, Herods and Pilates, Rome and Jerusalem, and all the friends he had in the world, to make away with Him; and yet when he was just come to the push, to the consummation of his plot, he was afraid to act it; as in the epistle ascribed to Ignatius the Martyr^a, and directed to the Philippians, it is observed, that whilst he was at a pretty distance, *ἔσπευσε γενέσθαι σταυρὸν*, “the devil hastened the structure of Christ’s cross,” as much as he could; set Judas and all the artificers of hell about the work, *μέλλοντος δὲ γίνεσθαι*, but “when all was even ready,” Christ for the cross, and the cross for Christ, then he began to put in demurs; shews Judas an halter, frights Pilate’s wife in a dream, she could not sleep in quiet for him; and in sum, uses all means possible to prevent Christ’s crucifixion. Yet this, saith Ignatius, not out of any repentance, or regret of conscience, but only being started with the foresight of his own ruin by this means. Christ’s suffering being in effect the destruction of his kingdom, His death our triumph over hell, and His cross our trophy. By this you may discern what a miracle of God’s love was this giving of His Son; the conceiving of which was above the devil’s reach, and wherein he was providentially engaged, and (if we may so speak) *θεοφορούμενος*, carried blindfold by God, to be an instrument of his own ruin, and in a kind, be a co-worker of our salvation.

^a [Pseudo-Ignatius, Epist. ad Philipp., c. iv. Patr. Apost., tom. ii. p. 119.]

Not to enlarge or expatiate upon circumstances; man being thus involved in a necessity of damnation, and no remedy within the sphere, either of his power or conceit, left to rescue him;—nay, as some have been so bold to say, that God Himself had no other means besides this in His storehouse of miracles to save us, without intrenching on some one of His attributes;—for God then to find out a course that we could never prompt Him to, being solicited to it by nothing in us but our sins and misery, and without any interposition, any further consultation or demur, to part with a piece of Himself to redeem us; *Brachium Domini*, “the arm of the Lord,” as Isaiah calls our Saviour. Nay, to send down His very bowels amongst us to witness His compassion; to satisfy for us by His own death, and attach Himself for our liberty; to undergo such hard conditions rather than be forced to a cheap severity; and, that He might appear to love His enemies, to hate His Son. In brief, to fulfil the work without any aid required from us, and make salvation ready to our hands, as manna is called in the sixth of Wisdom, *ἑτοιμος ἄρτος ἀπ’ οὐρανοῦ*, “bread baked, and sent down ready from heaven,” to drop it in our mouths, and exact nothing of us but to accept of it: this is an act of love and singleness, that all the malice we carry about us knows not how to suspect; so far from possibility of a treacherous intent, or double dealing, that if I were a heathen, nay a devil, I would bestow no other appellation on the Christians’ God, than what the author of the book of Wisdom doth so often, — *φιλόψυχος*, the “friend,” or the lover of souls. But this is a vulgar, though precious subject, and therefore I shall no longer insist on it. Only before I leave it, would I could see the effect of it expressed in our souls, as well as acknowledged in our looks; your hearts ravished as thoroughly as your brains convinced; your breasts as open to value and receive this superlative mercy, as your tongues to confess it; then could I triumph over hell and death, and scoff them out of countenance; then should the devil be reduced to his old pittance, confined to an empty corner of the world; and suffer as much by the solitariness as darkness of his abode; all his engines and arts of torment should be busied upon himself, and his whole exercise, to curse Christ for ever, that hath thus deprived him

Isa. liii.
[1.]

Wisd. xvi.
20.

[cf. Wisd.
xi. 26.]

of associates. But alas! we are too solicitous in the devil's behalf, careful to furnish him with companions, to keep him warm in the midst of fire; it is to be feared we shall at last thrust him out of his inheritance. It is a probable argument that God desires our salvation, because that hell, wheresoever it is,—whether at the centre of the earth, or concave of the moon,—must needs be far less than heaven; and that makes us so besiege the gate as if we feared we should find no room there. We begin our journey betimes, lest if we should be forestalled, and had rather venture a throng or crowd in hell, than to expect that glorious liberty of the sons of God. It is to be feared that at the day of judgment, when each body comes to accompany its soul in torment, hell must be let out, and enlarge its territories, to receive its guests. Beloved, there is not a creature here that hath reason to doubt but Christ was sent to die for him, and by that death hath purchased his right to life. Only do but come in, do but suffer yourselves to live, and Christ to have died; do not uncrucify Christ by crucifying Him again by your unbelief; do not disclaim the salvation that even claims right and title to you; and then the angels shall be as full of joy to see you in heaven, as God is willing, nay, desirous to bring you thither; and Christ as ready to bestow that inheritance upon you at His second coming, as at His first to purchase it. Nothing but infidelity restrains Christ's sufferings, and confines them to a few. Were but this one devil cast out of the world, I should be straight of Origen's religion, and preach unto you universal catholic salvation.

A second argument of God's good meaning towards us, of His willingness that we should live, is the calling of the Gentiles, the dispatching of posts and heralds over the whole ignorant heathen world, and giving them notice of this treasure of Christ's blood. Do but observe what a degree of profaneness and unnatural abominations the Gentile world was then arrived to, as you may read in all their stories; and in the first to the Romans, how well grown and ripe for the devil Christ found them; all of them damnably superstitious and idolatrous in their worship; damnably unclean in their lives; nay, engaged for ever in this road of damnation by a law they had made, *μη̄ ἄλλοτρινομεῖν*, "never to entertain any new

[Rom. viii.
21.]

laws^b," or religion : not to innovate, though it were to get salvation, as besides their own histories, may be gathered out of Acts xvii. 18. And lastly, consider how they were hooked in by the devil, to join in crucifying of Christ, that they might be guilty of that blood which might otherwise have saved them, and then you will find no argument to persuade you it was possible that God should have any design of mercy on them. Peter was so resolved of the point that the whole succession of the Gentiles should be damned, that God could scarce persuade him to go and preach to one of them. He was fain to be cast into a trance, and see a vision about it; and for all that he is much troubled about the *τὸ κοινὸν καὶ ἀκάθαρτον*, "their profaneness and uncleanness," that they were not fit for an Apostle to defile himself about their conversion.

And this was the general opinion of all the Jews; they of Acts x. 45. the "circumcision were astonished at the news." Nay, this is it that the angels wondered at so, when they saw it wrought at the Church by Paul's ministry; never dreaming it possible, till it was effected, as may appear, Eph. iii. 10. This was the "mystery, which from the beginning of the world had been hid in God," ver. 9. One of God's cabinet councils, a mercy decreed in secret, that no creature ever wist of till it was performed.

And in this behalf are we all—being lineally descended from the Gentiles—bound over to an infinite measure both of humiliation and gratitude, for our deliverance from the guilt and reign of that second original sin, that heathenism of our ancestors, and catholic damnation, that sixteen hundred years ago we were all involved in. Beloved, we were long ago set right again, and the obligation lies heavy upon us, to shew this change to have been wrought in us to some purpose; to prove ourselves Christians in grain, so fixed and established, that all the devils in hell shall not be able to reduce us again to that abhorred condition. If we that are thus called out, shall fall back, after so much gospel, to heathen practices, and set up shrines and altars in our hearts to every poor delight that our sottishness can call a God; if we are not called out of their sins, as well as out of their ignorance;

^b [Cf. Dio Cassius, Hist. Rom., lib. lii. cap. 36. p. 689. ed. Reimar.]

then have we advanced but the further toward hell; we are still but heathen gossellers; our Christian infidelity and practical atheism will but help to charge their guilt upon us, and damn us the deeper for being Christians. Do but examine yourselves on this one interrogatory, whether this calling the Gentiles hath found any effect in your hearts, any influence on your lives; whether your conversations are not still as heathenish as ever? If you have no other grounds or motives to embrace the Gospel, but only because you are born within the pale of the Church, no other evidences of your discipleship but your livery; then God is little beholding to you for your service. The same motives would have served to have made you Turks, if it had been your chance to have been born amongst them: and now all that fair Christian outside is not thankworthy. It is but your good fortune that you are not now at the same work with the old Gentiles, or present Indians, a worshipping either Jupiter or the sun! It was a shrewd speech of Clemens, that the life of every unregenerate man is an heathen life; and the sins of unsanctified men are heathen sins; and the estate of a libertine Christian an heathen estate: and unless our resolutions and practices are consonant to our profession of Christ, we are all still heathens; the Lord make us sensible of this our condition.

The third, and in sum, the powerfulest argument to prove God's willingness that we should live, is, that "He hath bestowed His Spirit upon us;" that as soon as He called up the Son, He sent the Comforter. This may seem to be the main business that Christ ascended to heaven about; so that a man would guess from the 16th chapter of St. John, verse John xvi. 7. 7, that if it had not been for that, Christ had tarried amongst us till this time; but that it was more expedient to send the Spirit to speak those things powerfully to our hearts, which often and in vain had been sounded in our ears. It is a fancy of the Paracelsians, that if we could suck out the lives and spirits of other creatures, as we feed on their flesh, we should never die: their lives would nourish and transubstantiate into our lives, their spirit increase our spirits, and so our lives grow with our years, and the older we were, by consequence, the fuller of life; and so no difficulty to become immortal.

1 Cor. xv.
31.

Thus hath God dealt with us; first sent His Son, His incarnate Son, His own flesh to feed and nourish us; and for all this we “die daily.” He hath now given us His own very life and incorporeous essence, a piece of pure God, His very Spirit to feed upon, and digest, that if it be possible we might live. There is not a vein in our souls, unless it be quite pinned and shrivelled up, but hath some blood produced in it by that holy nourishment; every breath that ever we have breathed toward heaven, hath been thus inspired; besides those louder voices of God, either sounding in His word, or thundering in His judgments, there is His calm, soft voice of inspiration, like the night vision of old, which stole in upon the mind, mingled with sleep, and gentle slumber. He draws not out into the field, or meets us as an enemy; but entraps us by surprise, and disarms us in our quarters, by a spiritual stratagem, conquers at unawares, and even betrays, and circumvents, and cheats us into heaven. That precept of Pythagoras^c, *πρὸς τὴν ἀνέμων πνεόντων ἡχὴν προσκυνεῖν*, “To worship at the noise and whistling of the wind,” had sense and divinity in it, that Jamblichus that cites it never dreamt of; that every sound and whispering of this Spirit, which rustles either about our ears, or in our hearts,—as the philosopher saith, *Tecum est, intus est*—when it breathes and blows within us, the stoutest faculty of our souls, the proudest piece of flesh about us, should bow down and worship. Concerning the manner of the Spirit’s working, I am not, I need not to dispute. Thus far it will be seasonable and profitable for you to know, that many other illuminations and holy graces are to be imputed to God’s Spirit, besides that by which we are effectually converted. God speaks to us many times when we answer Him not, and shines about our eyes, when we either wink or sleep. Our many sudden, short-winded ejaculations toward heaven, our frequent but weak inclinations to good, our ephemeral wishes, that no man can distinguish from true piety but by their sudden death; our every day resolutions of obedience, whilst we continue in sin, are arguments that God’s Spirit hath shined on us, though the warmth that it produced be soon chilled with the damp it meets within us. For example, there is no doubt,

^c [Jamblichus Protrept. Explanation of Symbol. viii.]

beloved, but the Spirit of God accompanies His word, as at this time, to your ears; if you will but open at its knock, and receive, and entertain it in your hearts, it shall prove unto you, according to its most glorious attribute, "the power of God unto salvation:" but if you will refuse it, your stubbornness may repel and frustrate God's work, but not annihilate it; though you will not be saved by it, it is God's still, and so shall continue to witness against you at the day of doom. Every word that was ever darted from that Spirit, as a beam or javelin of that piercing sun, every atom of that flaming sword, as the word is phrased, shall not, though it be rebated, vanish; the day of vengeance shall instruct your souls that it was sent from God, and since it was once refused, hath been kept in store, not to upbraid, but damn you. [Rom. i. 16.]

Many other petty occasions the Spirit ordinarily takes to put off the cloud, and open His face toward us: nay, it were not a groundless doubt whether He do not always shine, and the cloud be only in our hearts, which makes us think the sun is gone down, or quite extinct, if at any time we feel not his rays within us. Beloved, there be many things amongst us that single fire can do nothing upon; they are of such a stubborn, frozen nature, there must be some material thing for the fire to consist in, a sharp iron, red hot, that may bore as well as burn, or else there is small hopes of conquering them. Many men are so hardened and congealed in sin, that the ordinary beam of the Spirit cannot hope to melt them; the fire must come consubstantiate with some solid instrument, some sound, corpulent, piercing judgment, or else it will be very unlikely to thrive. True it is, the Spirit is an omnipotent agent, which can so invisibly infuse and insinuate its virtue through the inward man, that the whole most enraged adversary shall presently fall to the earth, the whole carnal man lie prostrate, and the sinner be without delay converted; and this is a miracle which I desire from my heart might be presently shewed upon every soul here present. [Acts ix. 41.]

But that which is to my present purpose is only this, that God hath also other manners and ways of working, which are truly to be said to have descended from heaven, though they are not so successful as to bring us thither; other more

calm, and less boisterous influences, which if they were received into an honest heart, might prove *semen immortalitatis*, and in time increase, and grow up to immortality.

There is no such incumbrance to trash us in our Christian progress as a fancy that some men get possessed with; that if they are elected they shall be called and saved in spite of their teeth; every man expecting an extraordinary call, because Saul met with one; and perhaps running the more fiercely because Saul was then called, when he was most violent in his full speed of malice against Christians.

In this behalf, all that I desire of you is, first, to consider, that though our regeneration be a miracle, yet there are degrees of miracles, and thou hast no reason to expect that the greatest and strongest miracle in the world, shall in the highest degree be shewed in thy salvation. Who art thou, that God should take such extraordinary pains with thee?

Secondly, to resolve that many precious rays and beams of the Spirit, though when they enter they come with power, yet through our neglect may prove transitory—pass by that heart which is not open for them.

And then thirdly, you will easily be convinced, that no duty concerns us all so strictly, as to observe, as near as we can, when thus the Spirit appears to us; to collect and muster up the most lively, quick-sighted, sprightfullest of our faculties: and with all the perspectives that spiritual optics can furnish us with, to lay wait for every glance and glimpse of its fire or light. We have ways in nature to apprehend the beams of the sun, be they never so weak and languishing, and by uniting them into a burning-glass, to turn them into a fire. Oh that we were as witty and sagacious in our spiritual estate! then it were easy for those sparks which we so often either contemn or stifle, to thrive within us, and at last break forth into a flame.

In brief, incogitancy and inobservance of God's seasons, supine numbness and negligence in spiritual affairs, may on good grounds be resolved on, as the main or sole cause of our final impenitence and condemnation; it being just with God to take those away in a sleep who thus walked in a dream, and at last to refuse them whom He hath so long solicited. He that hath scorned and wasted his inheritance cannot com-

plain if he dies a bankrupt; nor he that hath spent his candle at play, count it hard usage that he is fain to go to bed darkling. It were easy to multiply arguments on this theme, and from every minute of our lives to discern some pawn and evidence of God's fatherly will and desire that we should live. Let it suffice, that we have been large, if not abundant in these three chief ones: first, the giving of His Son to the world; secondly, dispatching the gospel to the Gentiles; and lastly, the sending of His Spirit. We come now to a view of the opposite trenches, which lie pitched at the gates of hell, obstinate and peremptory to besiege and take it: man's resolvedness and wilfulness to die, my second part, "Why will you die?"

There is no one conceit that engages us so deep to continue in sin, that keeps us from repentance, and hinders any seasonable reformation of our wicked lives, as a persuasion that God's will is a cause of all events. Though we are not so blasphemous as to venture to define God the author of sin, yet we are generally inclined for a fancy, that because all things depend on God's decree, whatsoever we have done could not be otherwise; all our care could not have cut off one sin from the catalogue. And so being resolved, that when we thus sinned we could not choose, we can scarce tell how to repent for such necessary fatal misdemeanors; the same excuses which we have for having sinned formerly, we have for continuing still, and so are generally better prepared for apologies than reformation. Beloved, it will certainly much conduce to our edification, instead of this speculation—whose grounds or truth I will not now examine—to fix this practical theorem in our hearts, that the will of man is the principal cause of all our evil, that death, either as it is the punishment of sin, eternal death, or as it is the sin itself, a privation of the life of grace, spiritual death, is wholly to be imputed to our wilful will. It is a problem in Aristotle, why some creatures are longer in conceiving and bringing forth than others, and the sensiblest reason he gives for it, is *σκληρότης ὑστέρας*^d, "the hardness of the womb," which is like dry earth, that will not presently give any nourishment to either seed or plant; and so is it in the spiritual conception

^d [Aristot. Problem., sect. 10. § 9.]

and production of Christ, that is, of life in us. The hardness and toughness of the heart, the womb where He is to be born, that *ξηρὰ γῆ*^e, that "dry earth," in the philosopher's, or that "way-side," or at best "stony ground" in Christ's phrase, is the only stop and delay in begetting of life within us, the only cause of either barrenness or hard travail in the Spirit. Be the brain never so soft and pliable, never so waxy and capable of impressions; yet if the heart be but carnal, if it have any thing much of that "lust of the flesh" in its composition, it will be hard for the spiritual life to be conceived in that man. For faith, the only means by which Christ lives and dwells in us, is to be seated in the heart, i. e. the will and affections, according to the express words, "that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." So that, be your brains never so swelled and puffed up with persuasions of Christ our Saviour, be they so big that they are ready to lie in, and travail of Christ, as Jove's did of Minerva in the poem^f; yet if the heart have not joined in the conception, if the seed sown have not taken root and drawn nourishment from the will, it is but an aerial or fantastical birth, or indeed rather a disease or tympany; nay, though it come to some proof, and afterward extend and increase in limbs and proportions never so speciously, yet if it be only in the brain, neither is this to be accounted solid nourishment and augmentation, but such as a chameleon may be thought to have, that feeds on air, and itself is little better, and in sum, not growth but swellings.

So then if the will, either by nature or custom of sinning, by familiarity and acquaintance, making them dote on sensual objects otherwise unamiable; by business and worldly ambitious thoughts, great enemies to faith; or by pride and contentment, both very incident to noble personages and great wits, to courtiers and scholars; in brief, if this will, the stronger and more active part of the soul, remain carnal, either in indulgence to many, or, which is the snare of judicious men in chief, of some one prime sin, then cannot all the faith in the world bring that man to heaven; it may work so much miracle, as Simon Magus is said to have done, who undertook to raise the dead, give motion to the head, make the eyes look up or the tongue speak; but the lower part of the man, and that the heaviest, will by no charm or

* [Aristot. *ibid.*]

^f [Cf. the Homeric Hymn to Pallas.]

spell be brought to stir, but weigh and sink even into hell, will still be carcass and corruption; "damnation is his birth-right." And it is impossible, though not absolutely, yet *ex hypothesi*, the second covenant being now sealed, even for God Himself to save him or give him life. It is not David's music that exorcised and quieted Saul's evil spirit, nor Pythagoras's ^ε spondee that tamed a man, *καὶ ἐπανάρθωσαν*, "set him right in his wits for ever, that can work any effect on a fleshy heart." So that Chrysostom ^h would not wonder at the voice that cried, "O altar, altar, hear the voice of the Lord," because Jeroboam's heart was harder than that; nor will I find fault with Bonaventure that made a solemn prayer for a stony heart, as if it were more likely to receive impression than that which he had already of flesh.

It were long to insist on the wilfulness of our fleshy hearts, how they make a faction within themselves, and bandy faculties for the devil; how when grace and life appear, and make proffer of themselves, all the carnal affections, like them in the Gospel, "join all with one consent to make excuses;" nothing in our whole lives we are so solicitous for, as to get off fairly, to have made a cleanly apology to the invitations of God's Spirit, and yet for a need rather than go, we will venture to be unmannerly. We have all married a wife, espoused ourselves to some amiable delight or other; we cannot, we will not come. The devil is wiser in his generation than we; he knows the price and value of a soul, and will pay any rate for it rather than lose his market; he will give all the riches in the world rather than miss. And we, at how low a rate do we prize it? it is the cheapest commodity we carry about us. The beggarliest content under heaven is fair, is rich enough to be given in exchange for the soul. *Spiritus non ponderat*, saith the philosopher; the soul being a spirit, when we put it into the balance, weighs nothing; nay, more than so, it is lighter than vanity, lighter than nothing, i. e. it doth not only weigh nothing, but even lifts up the scale it is put into, when nothing is weighed against it. How many sins, how many vanities, how many idols, i. e. in the Scripture phrase, how many nothings be there in the

Eccelus.
xx. 25.

[1 Kings
xiii. 2.]

Luke xiv.
18:

[1 Cor. viii.
4.]

^ε [Cf. Jamblichus, de Vita Pythagoræ, cap. xxv. §§ 112, 114.]

^h [S. Chrysostom, De Pœnitentia, Homil. viii. Op., tom. ii. p. 345, E.]

world, each of which will outweigh and preponderate the soul!

It were tedious to observe and describe the several ways that our devilish sagacity hath found out to speed ourselves to damnation, to make quicker dispatch in that unhappy road than ever Elias's fiery chariot could do toward heaven. Our daily practice is too full of arguments, almost every minute of our lives as it is an example, so is it a proof of it. Our pains will be employed to better purpose if we leave that as a worn, beaten, common-place, and betake ourselves to a more necessary theme, a close of exhortation.

And that shall be by way of treaty, as an ambassador sent from God, that you will lay down your arms, that you will be content to be friends with God, and accept of fair terms of composition; which are, that as you have thus long been enemies to God, proclaiming hostility, and perpetually opposing every merciful will of His by that wilfulness, so now being likely to fall into His hands, you will prevent that ruin, you will come in; and whilst it is not too late, submit yourselves, that you may not be forced as rebels and outlaws, but submit as servants. This perhaps may be your last parley for peace, and if you stand out the battery will begin suddenly, and with it the *horrendum est*, "It is a fearful, hideous thing to fall into the hands of the living God." All that remains upon our wilful holding out may be (the doom of apostates from Christianity) a "certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, that shall devour the adversaries." And methinks the very emphasis in my text notes as much; "Why will you die?" as if we were just now falling into the pit, and there were but one minute betwixt this time of our jollity and our everlasting hell. Do but lay this one circumstance to your hearts, do but suppose yourselves on a bed of sickness, laid at with a violent burning fever, such a one as shall finally consume the whole world; as it were battered with thundering and lightning, and besieged with fire, where the next throw or plunge of thy disease may possibly separate thy soul from thy body, and the mouth of hell just then open and yawning at thee; and then suppose there were one only minute wherein a seri-

Heb. x. 31.

ver. 27.

ous resigning up thyself to God might recover you to heaven ; O then what power and energy ! what force and strong efficacy would there be in this voice from God, " Why will you die ?" I am resolved, that heart that were truly sensible of it, that were prepared seasonably by all these circumstances to receive it, would find such inward vigour and spirit from it, that it would strike death dead in that one minute ; this *ultimus conatus*, this last spring and plunge, would do more than a thousand heartless heaves in a lingering sickness, and perhaps overcome and quit the danger.

And therefore let me beseech you to represent this condition to yourselves, and not any longer be flattered or cozened in a slow security : " To-day if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." [Ps. xcvi. 8.] If you let it alone till this day come in earnest, you may then perhaps heave in vain, labour and struggle, and not have breath enough to send up one sigh toward heaven. The hour of our death we are wont to call *tempus improbabilitatis*, a very improbable inch of time to build our heaven in ; as after death is *impossibilitatis*, a time wherein it is impossible to recover us from hell. If nothing were required to make us saints but outward performances ; if true repentance were but to groan, and faith but to cry, Lord, Lord ; we could not promise ourselves that [Matt. vii. 21.] at our last hour we should be sufficient for that ; perhaps a lethargy may be our fate, and then what life or spirits even for that ? perhaps a fever may send us away raving, in no case to name God, but only in oaths and curses ; and then it were hideous to tell you what a Bethlehem we should be carried to. But when that which must save us must be a work of the soul, and a gift of God, how can we promise ourselves that God will be so merciful, whom we have till then contemned, or our souls then capable of any holy impression, having been so long frozen in sin, and petrified even into adamant ? Beloved, as a man may come to such an estate of grace here, that he may be most sure he shall not fall, as St. Paul in likelihood was, when he " resolved [Rom. viii. 39.] that nothing could separate him." so may a man be engaged so far in sin that there is no rescuing from the devil. There is an irreversible estate in evil as well as good, and perhaps I may have arrived to that before my hour of death ;

Exod. ix.
34.

for I believe Pharaoh was come to it after the seventh plague hardening his heart; and then I say, it is possible, that thou that hitherto hast gone on in habituate, stupid, customary rebellions, mayest be now at this minute arrived to this pitch, that if thou run on one pace further thou art engaged for ever past recovery. And therefore at this minute, in the strength of your age and lusts, this speech may be as seasonable as if death were seizing on you, "Why will you die?" At what time soever thou repentest God will have mercy; but this may be the last instant wherein thou canst repent, the next sin may benumb or scar thy heart, that even the pangs of death shall come on thee insensibly; that the rest of thy life shall be a sleep, or lethargy, and thou lie stupid in it till thou findest thyself awake in flames. Oh, if thou shouldst pass away in such a sleep! Again, I cannot tell you whether a death-bed repentance shall save you or no. The

Cant. iii. 1.

spouse sought Christ on her bed, but found Him not. The last of Ecclesiastes would make a man suspect, that remembering God when our feeble impotent age comes on us, would stand us in little stead. Read it, for it is a most learned

Tit. ii. 14.

powerful chapter. This I am sure of, "God hath chosen to Himself a people zealous of good works." And they that find not some of this holy fire alive within them, till their souls are going out, have little cause to think themselves of God's election. So that perhaps there is something in it, that the

Matt. iii. 8.

exhortation, "Bring forth fruits worthy of repentance," is expressed by a tense that ordinarily signifies time past, *ποιήσατε*, "have brought forth fruits." It will not be enough upon an exigence, when there is no way but one with me, to be inclinable to any good works, to resolve to live well when I expect to die. I must have done this, and more too in my life, if I expect any true comfort at my death. There is not any point we err more familiarly in and easily than our spiritual condition; what is likely to become of us after death? any slight fancy that Christ died for us in particular, we take for a faith that will be sure to save us.

Now there is no way to preserve ourselves from this error but to measure our faith and hopes by our obedience; that if we sincerely obey God, then are we true believers. And this cannot well be done by any that begins not till he is on his

death-bed ; be his inclinations to good then never so strong, his faith in Christ never so lusty ; yet how knows he whether it is only fear of death, and a conviction that in spite of his teeth he must now sin no longer, that hath wrought these inclinations, produced this faith in him ?

Many a sick man resolves strongly to take the physician's dose, in hope that it will cure him ; yet when he comes to taste its bitterness will rather die than take it. If he that on his death-bed hath made his solemnest, severest vows, should but recover to a possibility of enjoying those delights which now have given him over, I much fear his fiercest resolutions would be soon out-dated. Such inclinations that either hover in the brain only, or float on the surface of the heart, are but like those wavering, temporary thoughts, "Like a wave of the sea, driven by the wind and tossed ;" Jam. i. 6. they have no firmness or stable consistence in the soul ; it will be hard to build heaven on so slight a foundation.

All this I have said, not to discourage any tender, languishing soul, but by representing the horrors of death to you now in health, to instruct you in the doctrine of mortality betimes, so to speed and hasten your repentance ; now, as if to-morrow would be too late, as if there were but a small isthmus or inch of ground between your present mirth and jollity and your everlasting earnest.

To gather up all on the clue. Christ is now offered to you as a Jesus : the times and sins of your heathenism and unbelief, "God winketh at." The Spirit proclaims all this by Acts xvii. 30. the Word to your hearts ; and now—God knows if ever again—commands all men "every where to repent."

Oh that there were such a spirit in our hearts, such a zeal to our eternal bliss, and indignation at hell, that we would give one heave and spring before we die ; that we would but answer those invitations of mercy, those desires of God, that we should live with an inclination, with a breath, with a sigh toward heaven.

Briefly, if there be any strong, violent, boisterous devil within us, that keeps possession of our hearts against God ; if the lower sensual part of our soul ; if an habit of sin, i. e. a combination or legion of devils, will not be overtopped by reason or grace in our hearts ; if a major part of our carnal

[Matt.
xvii. 21.]

faculties be still canvassing for hell ; if for all our endeavours and pains it may appear to us that this kind of evil spirit will not be cast out, save only by fasting and prayer ; then have we yet that remedy left, first, to fast and pine, and keep him weak within, by denying him all foreign, fresh provision, all new occasions of sin, and the like, and so to block, and in time starve him up : and then secondly, to pray that God will second and fortify our endeavours ; that He will force, and rend, and ravish this carnal devil out of us ; that He will subdue our wills to His will ; that He will prepare and make ready life for us, and us for life ; that He will prevent us by His grace here, and accomplish us with His glory hereafter.

Now to him, &c.

SERMON XIX.

JER. V. 2.

Though they say, The Lord liveth; surely they swear falsely.

Nor to waste any time or breath, or—which men in this delicate and effeminate age are wont to be most sparing and thrifty of—any part of your precious patience unprofitably, but briefly to give you a guess whither our discourse is like to lead you, we will severally lay down and sort to your view every word of the text single; and so we may gather them up again, and apply them to their natural proper purposes.

First, then, the particle “though” in the front, and “surely” in the body of the text, are but bands and junctures to keep all together into one proposition.

Secondly, the pronoun “they,” in each place, is in the letter the Jews, in application, present Christians; and being indefinite, might seem to be of the same extent in both places, did not the matter alter it, and make it universal in the former, and particular in the latter. For artists say, that an indefinite sign, where the matter is necessary, is equivalent to an universal, where but contingent, to a particular. Now to say “the Lord liveth,” was and is necessary; though not by any logical, yet by a political necessity; the government and human laws, under which then the Jews and now we Christians live, require this profession necessarily at our hands: but to “swear falsely,” not to perform what before they professed, is *materia contingens*, a matter of no necessity, but free-will and choice, that no human law can see into; and therefore we must not interpret by the rules of art, or charity,

that all were perjured, but some only; though it is probable a major part; and as we may guess by the first verse of this chapter, well nigh all of them.

v. r. 1.

Thirdly, to "say" is openly to make profession, and that very resolutely and boldly, that none may dare to distrust it; nay, with an oath to confirm it to jealous opinions, as appears by the latter words, "They swear falsely," while they do but "say:" and, "Thou shalt swear, The Lord liveth," &c.

Jer. iv. 2.

Fourthly, "the Lord," i. e. both in Christianity and orthodox Judaism the whole Trinity.

Fifthly, "liveth," i. e. by way of excellency hath a life of His own, independent and eternal, and in respect of us is the fountain of all life and being that we have; and not only of life, but motion, and perfection, and happiness, and salvation, and all that belongs to it. In brief, to say, "The Lord liveth," is to acknowledge Him in His essence, and all His attributes, contained together under that one principle; on that of life, to believe whatever Moses and the prophets then, or now our Christian faith, hath made known to us of Him.

Sixthly, to falsify and swerve from truth becomes a further aggravation, especially in the present instance; though they make mention of that God, who is "Yea," and "Amen," and loves a plain veracious speech, yet they swear; though by loud and dreadful imprecations they bespeak Him a witness and a judge unto the criminal, pray as devoutly for destruction for their sin as the most sober penitent can do for its pardon, yet are they perjured; "they swear falsely."

More than all this, they openly renounce the Deity when they call upon Him; their hearts go not along with their words and professions; though it be the surest truth in the world that they swear when they assert that "the Lord liveth," yet they are perjured in speaking of it; though they make a fair show of believing in the brain, and from the teeth outward, they never lay the truth that they are so violent for at all to their hearts; or as the original hath it, לִשְׁפָר, *in vanum*, to no purpose it is that they swear, no man that sees how they live will give any heed to their words, will imagine that they believe any such matter.

So now having paced over, and as it were spelt every

word single, there will be no difficulty for the rawest understanding to put it together, and read it currently enough in this proposition; amongst the multitude of professors of Christianity there is very little real piety, very little true belief.

In the verse next before my text there is an "O yes" made, a proclamation, nay, a hue and cry, and hurrying about the streets, if it were possible to find out but a man that were a sincere believer; and here in my text is brought in a *Non est inventus*, "Though they say, The Lord liveth,"—a multitude of professors indeed every where,—“yet surely they swear falsely;” there is no credit to be given to their words; infidelity and hypocrisy is in their hearts; for all their fair believing professions, they had an unfaithful rebellious heart, and the event manifested it, “they are departed and gone,” ver. 23. arrant apostates in their lives, by which they were to be tried; “Neither say they in their hearts, Let us fear the ver. 24. Lord,” whatsoever they flourished with their tongues.

Now for a more distinct survey of this horrible wretched truth, this heathenism of Christians, and infidelity of believers,—the true ground of all false swearing, and indeed of every other sin,—we will first examine wherein it consists; secondly, whence it springs; the first will give you a view of its nature, the second its root and growth, that you may prevent it. The first will serve for an ocular or mathematical demonstration, called by artists *ὄτι*, “that” it is so; the second a rational or physical *διότι*, “how” it comes about. The first to convince of the truth of it, the second to instruct you in its causes.

And first of the first, wherein this infidelity, and to speak more plainly, perjury of formal believers consists; “Though they say,” &c.

Since that rather fancy than divinity of the Romanists, schoolmen, and casuists, generally defining faith to be a bare assent to the truth of God’s word seated only in the understanding, was by the protestant divines banished out of the schools, as a faith for a chameleon to be nourished with, which can feed on air; as a direct piece of sorcery and conjuring, which will help you to remove mountains only by thinking you are able; briefly, as a chimera or fantastical

nothing, fit to be sent to limbo for a present; since, I say, this magical divinity which still possesses the Romanist, and also a sort of men who would be thought most distant from them, hath been exorcised, and silenced, and cast out of our schools—would I could say out of our hearts—by the Reformation, the nature of faith hath been most admirably explained; yet the seat or subject of it never clearly set down,—some confining it to the understanding, others to the will,—till at last it pitched upon the whole soul, the intellective nature. For the soul of man, should it be partitioned into faculties,—as the grounds of our ordinary philosophy would persuade us,—it would not be stately enough for so royal a guest: either room would be too pent and narrow to entertain at once so many graces as attend it. Faith therefore, that it may be received in state, that it may have more freedom to exercise its sovereignty, hath required all partitions to be taken down; that sitting in the whole soul it may command and order the whole man; is not in the brain sometimes, as its gallery, to recreate and contemplate; at another in the heart, as its parlour to feed, or a closet to dispatch business; but if it be truly that royal personage which we take it for, it is repletive in the whole house at once, as in one room, and that a stately palace, which would be much disgraced, and lose of its splendour, by being cut into offices: and accordingly this royal grace is an entire absolute prince of a whole nation,—not as a tetrarch of Galilee, a sharer of a Saxon heptarchy,—and described to us as one single act, though of great command; and defined to be an assent and adherence to the goodness of the object;—which object is the whole word of God, and specially the promises of the gospel. So then, to believe, is not to acknowledge the truth of Scripture, and the articles of the Creed,—as vulgarly we use knowledge,—but to be affected with the goodness and excellency of them, as the most precious objects which the whole world could present to our choice; to embrace them as the only desirable thing upon the earth; and to be resolutely and uniformly inclined to express this affection of ours, in our practice, whensoever there shall be any competition betwixt them and our dearest delights. For the object of our faith is not merely speculative, somewhat to be understood only,

and assented to as true, but chiefly moral, a truth to be prosecuted with my desires through my whole conversation, to be valued above my life, and set up in my heart as the only shrines I worship.

So that he that is never so resolutely sworn to the Scriptures,—believes all the commands, prohibitions, and promises never so firmly, if he doth not adhere to them in his practice, and by particular application of them as a rule to guide him in all his actions, express that he sets a true value on them; if he do not this, he is yet an infidel; all his religion is but like the beads-man's, who whines over his creed and commandments over a threshold so many times a week, only as his task to deserve his quarterage, or to keep correspondence with his patron. Unless I see his belief expressed by uniform obedience, I shall never imagine that he minded what he said. The sincerity of his faith is always proportionable to the integrity of his life; and so far is he to be accounted a Christian as he performs the obligation of it, the promise of his baptism. Will any man say that Eve believed God's inhibition, when she eat the forbidden fruit? If she did, she was of a strange intrepid resolution, to run into the jaws of hell and never boggle. It is plain by the story that she heard God, but believed the serpent; as may appear by her obedience, the only evidence and measure of her faith. Yet can it not be thought, that she that was so lately a work of God's omnipotence, should now so soon distrust it, and believe that He could not make good His threatenings. The truth is this; she saw clearly enough in her brain, but had not sunk it down into her heart; or perhaps she assented to it in the general, but not as applicable to her present case. This assent was like a bird fluttering in the chamber, not yet confined to a cage, ready to escape at the first opening of the door or window; as soon as she opens either ears or eyes to hearken to the serpent or behold the apple, her former assent to God is vanished, and all her faith bestowed upon the devil. It will not be Pelagianism to proceed and observe how the condition of every sin since this time hath been an imitation of that. The same method in sin hath ever since been taken, first to revolt from God, and then to disobey; first to become infidels, and then sinners. Every murmuring of the Israel-

ites was a defection from the faith of Israel, and turning back to Egypt in their hearts.

Heb. iii. 12. Infidelity, as it is the fountain from whence all rebellion springs,—faith being an adherence, and “every departure from the living God, arising from an evil heart of unbelief,”—so it is also the channel where it runs; not any beginning or progress in sin, without a concomitant degree of either weakness or want of faith. So that heathens or heretics are not the main enemies of Christ,—as the question *de oppositis fidei* is stated by the Romanists,—but the hypocrite and libertine, he is the heathen in grain, an heretic of Lucifer’s own sect; one that the devil is better pleased with than all the catalogue in Epiphanius or the Romish calendar. For this is it that Satan drives at; an engine by which he hath framed us most like himself; not when we doubt of the doctrine of Christ,—for himself believes it fully, no man can be more firmly resolved of it,—but when we heed it not in our lives, when we cleave not to it in our hearts; when instead of Heb. x. 38. living by faith, *ὑποστέλλομεν*, we draw back, and cowardly subduce ourselves and forsake our colours, refusing to be marshalled in His ranks, or fight under His banner. Arrian the Stoic philosopher hath an excellent discourse concerning the double infidelity, of the brain and heart, very applicable; *Διτται ἀπολιθώσεις, κ.τ.λ.*, “There are two sorts of this senselessness and stupidity, whereby men are hardened into stones; the first of the understanding part, the second of the practical.” He that will not assent to things manifest, his brain is frozen into a stone or mineral; there is no more reasoning with him than with a pillar. The academic’s *ἀκαταληψία*^a, never to believe or comprehend any thing, was a stupid philosophy, like to have no disciples but posts or statues; and therefore long ago laughed out of the schools, as an art of being brutes, or metamorphosis, not to instruct but transform them: he could not remain a man that was thus incredulous. But the second stupidity, that of the practical, not to abstain from things that are hurtful, to embrace that which would be their death,—the vice, though not doctrine of the epicures,—though this were an argument, both in his and Scripture phrase, of a “stony heart,” yet was it such an

^a [Cf. e. g. Sextus Empericus, Pyrrhon. Hypotyp., p. 1. ed. Bekker.]

one as the lustiest, sprightfulest men in the world carried about with them. Nay, "It was an evidence," saith he, "of their strength and valour, of a heart of metal and proof, to have all modesty and fear of ill cold as a stone, frozen and dead within it^b." And thus holds it in Christianity, as it did then in reason: not to believe the truth of Scripture, to deny that the "Lord liveth," would argue a brain as impenetrable as marble, and eyes as crystal: we sooner suspect that he is not a man, that he is out of his senses, than such an infidel. Some affected atheists I have heard of, that hope to be admired for eminent wits by it: but I doubt whether any ever thought of it in earnest, and (if I may so say) conscientiously denied a Deity. But to deny Him in our lives, to have a heart of marble or adamant, *ψυχὴν ἀπονεκρομένην*, saith Arrian^c, "a dead stupified soul," οὐδὲν μέλει, it is so frequent amongst us, that it is not worth observing. He is but a puny in the devil's camp that hath not a privy coat within him to secure his heart from any stroke that God or Scripture can threaten him with.

Thus you see wherein this Christian infidelity consists, in the not rooting faith in the heart; in indulgence to those practices which directly contradict his doctrine. So that though every commission of sin be not incompatible with the habit of faith, so far as to denominate him an infidel; yet is it from the not exercising of faith actually that I ever sin; and every man in the same degree that he is a sinner, so far is he an unbeliever. So that this conversible retrogradous Sorites may shut up all. He that truly believes, assents in his heart to the goodness as well as the truth of Scripture: he that assents so in his heart, approves it according to its real excellency above all rivals in the world: he that thus approves, when occasion comes, makes an actual choice of God's Word before all other most precious delights: he that actually makes the choice, performs uniform obedience, without any respect of sins or persons: he that performs this obedience, never indulges himself in sin. And then *e converso*, backward, thus: he that indulges himself in

^b Ἄν δὲ τίσις τὸ ἐντροπικὸν καὶ αἰδημον ἀπονεκρωθῆ, τοῦτο ἔτι καὶ δύναμιν καλοῦμεν.—[Arrian, Epicteti Dis-

sertat., lib. i. c. 5. § 3. ad init.]

^c [Arrian, *ibid.*, § 4.]

sin, doth not uniformly obey the Word: he that doth not so obey, doth not actually make choice of it before all competitors: he that makes not this choice, approves it not according to its real excellency above all things in the world: he that doth not so approve, assents not to the absolute goodness of it in his heart: he that so assents not, doth not truly believe; therefore every indulgent sinner is an infidel. And then look about you and within you: whosoever say, "The Lord liveth," and yet remain in your ways of sin, be you never so stout or proud-hearted, my prophet gives you the lie: if you are incensed, and swear that you are in the truth, and stand upon your reputation, his answer is mannerly, but tart, "Surely you swear falsely;" every indulgent sinner is an infidel. "Whosoever sins, hath not seen Christ, neither known Him." But amongst professors of the gospel there be a multitude of habitual sinners, *ergo* of infidels; ὁπερ ἔδει πρῶτον δεῖξαι, the thing which in the first place we undertook to demonstrate.

We now come to the next thing proposed, the root or fountain of this hypocritical faith; where we are to enquire how it comes about, that they which are so forward to profess, are so far from true belief. And higher in our search we cannot go than Adam's fall; for the spring-head of all this infidelity—as for God's absolute decree, in rejecting men's persons, and then suffering and leading them to an acknowledgment of the truth of the gospel, only that they may be unexcusable, I will not be so vain or unseasonable to examine. Adam had once the tree of life to have eaten, and have been immortal; to have confirmed him and his posterity into an irreversible estate of happiness: but since his disobedient heart preferred the tree of knowledge before that of life, the tree of life hath never thrived currently with his progeny. All our care, and traffic, and merchandise, hath been for knowledge, never prizing or cheapening so poor a commodity as life. Ἐύλον γνώσεως ἐστὶν ἐὰν παρανομῶμεν^d, κ.τ.λ., "All sin is from the tree of knowledge;" and that hath rooted it so deep, and given it so fair a growth within us.

As for the tree of life, seeing then we would not feed on it, we were never since suffered to come within reach: the

^d [Clemens Alexandr. Strom., lib. iii. c. 17. § 104. p. 559. ed. Potter.]

cherubins and a flaming sword have fenced it round about ; Gen. iii. and that makes men grow so unproportionably into such monstrous shapes, vast, strong, swollen heads ; and weak, thin, crazy bodies, like Pharaoh's lean kine, lank, and very ill-favoured : men for the most part having brains to understand, and eyes to see, and tongues to profess ; but neither hearts to apply, nor hands to practise, nor feet to walk the ways of God's commandments : as one far spent in a consumption, who hath his senses perfectly enough, when he is not able to go. It is only the effectual grace of God—of which that other tree was but an emblem—which must give us life and strength to practise what we know. And this amongst us is so little cared for, finds such disesteem and slight observance when it appears, meets with such resolute, hardened, stubborn hearts, that it is a miracle if it ever be brought to submit itself to such coarse entertainment.

And this is the first and main ground of this hypocritical faith, our corrupt, immoderate desires of knowledge, and neglect of grace. The second ground more evidently discernible in us, is, the secret consent and agreement betwixt our carnal desires and divine knowledge ; and the antipathy and incompatibleness of the same with true faith.

The first pair dwell many times very friendly and peaceably together, do not quarrel in an age, or pass an affront or cross word. Knowledge doth seldom jostle or offer violences to the desires of the flesh ; a man may be very knowing and very lewd ; of a towering brain and a grovelling soul ; rich in speculation, and poor in practice.

But for the other pair, they are like opposite signs in the heaven, have but a vicissitude of presence or light in our hemisphere, never appear or shine together. Faith lusteth and strugglcth against the flesh, and the flesh against faith. The carnal part is as afraid of faith, as the devil was of Christ : for faith being seated in the concurrence of the dictate of judgment, and—on the other side—the sway of the affections, the one must either couch or be banished at the other's entrance ; and then it cries out in the voice of the devil, “ What have I to do with Thee ? ” or, as the words Mark i. 24. will bear, *τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοὶ* ; “ What communion can there be betwixt me and Thee ? ” Thou precious grace of God, “ Art

Thou come to torment and dispossess me before my time?"

O what a stir there is in the flesh, when faith comes to take its throne in the heart; as at the news of Christ's incarnation corporal, so at His spiritual, "Herod the king is troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." All the reigning Herod sins, and all the Jerusalem of habitual ruling lusts and affections, are in great disorder, as knowing that this new King abodes their instant destruction.

It was Aristotle's^e observation, that the mathematics being an abstract knowledge, had nothing in them contrary to passions; and therefore young men and dissolute might study and prove great proficient in them, if they had but a good apprehension; there was no more required: and that perhaps is the reason that such studies as these, history and geometry, and the like, go down pleasantest with those which have no design upon books, but only to rid them of some hours, which would otherwise lie on their hands. The most studious of our gentry ordinarily deal in them, as inoffensive, tame, peaceable studies, which will never check them for any the most inordinate affections. But of morality, saith he, and practical knowledge, a young man or intemperate is incapable: you may make him con the precepts without book, or say them by rote, ἀλλ' οὐ πιστεύει^f, "He cannot be said to believe a word of them;" his heart is so possessed with green, fresh, boisterous lusts, that he cannot admit any sober precepts any further than his memory. If you are in earnest with him to apply and practise what he reads, you exact of him beyond his years; he is not solemn enough for so sad severe employment; and therefore it is concluded that he is fit for any intellectual virtue, rather than prudence. This consists in a peaceable temper of the mind; an artist he may prove and never live the better; suppose him one of youthful luxuriant desires, and never think he will be taught to live by rule, all the learning and study in books will never give him Aristotle's moral prudence, much less our spiritual, which is by interpretation, faith.

And this is the second ground of infidelity amongst Christians, the competency of knowledge, and incompeti-

^e Eth. vi. 9.

^f [Aristot., *ibid.*.]

bility of true faith, with carnal desires. The third is, the easiness of giving assent to generalities, and difficulty of particular application.

A common truth delivered in general terms is received without any opposition : should it be proposed, whether nothing be to be done but that which is just? whether drunkenness were not a vice? whether only an outside of religion would ever save a man? no man would ever quarrel about it. When thus Nathan and David discoursed, they were [2 Sam. xii.] both of one mind; the one could talk no more against unconscionable dealing than the other would assent to. If you propose no other problems than these, the debauchedest man under heaven would not dispute against you. But all quarrelling, saith the Stoic^ε, is *περι τὴν ἐφαρμογὴν τῶν προλήψεων ταῖς ἐπὶ μέρους οὐσίαις*, “about the application of general granted rules, to personal, private cases.”

The Jews, and Assyrians, and Egyptians, and Romans, are all agreed, that holiness is to be preferred above all things; but whether it be not impious to eat swine’s flesh and the like, which of them observes the rules of holiness most exactly, there the strife begins.

Common general declamations against sin are seldom ever offensive; and therefore the master of rhetorics^h finds fault with them as dull, liveless, unprofitable eloquence, that no man is affected with. The cowardliest bird in the air is not afraid of the falcon, as long as she sees him soaring and never stoop: but when the axe that was carried about the wood, threatening all indifferently, shall be laid to the root of the tree, when Nathan shall rejoinder with a “thou art the man,” and St. Paul come home to his Corinthians after his declamation against fornicators and idolaters with “and such were some of you,” then their hearts come to the touchstone; this is a trial of their belief: if they will forsake their sins, which before their judgment condemned at a distance; if they will practise the holiness and integrity which they were content to hear commended.

That famous war of the Trojans and Iliads of misery, following it in Homer, were all from this ground. The two

^ε Πρόληψις προλήπει οὐ μάχεται.— ^h [Perhaps refers to Aristot. Rhet., Arr. Epict. Dissertat., lib. i. c. 22. § 1. lib. ii. c. 22.]

great captains at the treaty agree very friendly that just dealing was very strictly to be observed by all men ; and yet neither would one of them restore the pawn committed to his trust, nor the other divide the spoils : each as resolute not to practise, as both before unanimous to approve.

There is not a thing more difficult in the world, than to persuade a carnal man that that which concerns all men should have any thing to do with him ; that those promises of Christ which are confessed to be the most precious under heaven, should be fitter for his turn than this amiable, lovely sin, that now solicits him. That Scripture is inspired by God ; and therefore in all its dictates to be believed and obeyed, is a thing fully consented on amongst Christians. We are so resolved on it, that it is counted but a dull barren question in the schools, a man can invent nothing to say against by way of argument ; and if a preacher in a sermon should make it his business to prove it to you, you would think he either suspected you for Turks, or had little else to say. But when a particular truth of Scripture comes in balance with a pleasing sin, when the general prohibition strikes at my private lust, all my former assent to Scripture is vanished, I am hurried into the embraces of my beloved delight. Thus when Paul “ reasoned of temperance, righteousness, and judgment to come, Felix trembled.” His trembling shews that he assented to Paul’s discourse ; and as in the devils, it was an effect of a general belief ; but this subject of temperance and judgment to come agreed not with Felix’s course of life. His wife Drusilla was held by usurpation ; he had tolled her away from her husband, the king of the Emiseni, saith Josephus^k, and therefore he could hear no more of it : he shifts and compliments it off till another time, and never means to come in such danger again to be converted, for fear of a divorce from his two treasures, his heathenism and his whore.

Thus was Agrippa converted from the shoulders upward, which he calls “almost a Christian ;” or as the phrase may be rendered, *ἐν ὀλίγῳ*, “ a little way,” convinced as to the general truths in his brain ; but the lower half, his heart and affections, remained as heathenish as ever.

^k Antiq. Jud., lib. xx. c. 7.

Acts xxiv.
25.

Jam. ii. 29.

Acts xxvi.
28.

And this is the third ground of practical unbelief, that generalities can be cheaply believed without parting from any thing we prize; the doctrine of the Trinity can be received, and thwart never a carnal affection as being an inoffensive truth. Christ's sufferings and satisfaction for sin by the natural man may be heard with joy; but particular application is very difficult: that our obedience to every command of that Trinity must be sincere: that we must forego all, and hate our own flesh to adhere to so merciful a Saviour, and express our love to the most contemptible soul under heaven, as He hath loved us; that we must at last expect Him in majesty as a judge, whom we are content to hug and embrace in His humility as a Saviour: this is a bloody word, as Moses' [Exod. iv. 26.] wife counted the circumcision too harsh and rough to be received into such pampered, tender, fleshy hearts.

The fourth ground is a general humour that is gotten in the world, to take care of nothing but our reputations: nor God, nor life, nor soul, nor any thing can weigh with it in the balance. Now it is a scandalous thing, a foul blot to one's name, to be counted an atheist, an arrant infidel, where all are Christians; and therefore for fashion's sake we will believe; and yet sometime the devil hath turned this humour quite the contrary way, and made some men as ambitious of being counted atheists, as others of being Christians. It will shortly grow into a gentile garb, and part of courtship, to disclaim all religion in shew, as well as deeds. Thus are a world of men in the world, either professed atheists, or atheistical professors, upon the same grounds of vainglory; the one to get, the other to save their reputation in the world. Thus do many men stand up at the Creed, upon the same terms as gallants go into the field; that have but small maw to be killed, only to keep their honour, that they might not be branded and mocked for cowards. And yet certainly in the truth, these are the veriest dastards under heaven; no worldly man so fearful of death, or pious man of hell, as these are of disgrace.

The last ground I shall mention, and indeed the main of all, is, the subtlety and wiliness of the devil. He hath tried all his stratagems in the world, and hath found none like this for the undermining and ruining of souls, to suffer them

to advance a pretty way in religion, to get their heads full of knowledge, that so they may think they have faith enough, and walk to hell securely. The devil's first policies were by heresies to corrupt the brain, to invade and surprise Christianity by force: but he soon saw this would not hold out long; he was fain to come from batteries to mines, and supplant those forts that he could not vanquish. The fathers—and amongst them chiefly Leo¹, in all his writing—within the first five hundred years after Christ, observe him at this ward, *ut quos vincere ferro flammisque non poterat, cupiditatibus irretiret, et sub falsa Christiani nominis professione corrumpere*. He hoped to get more by lusts than heresies, and to plunge men deepest in a high conceit of their holy faith. He had learned by experience from himself, that all the bare knowledge in the world would never sanctify; it would perhaps give men content, and make them confident and bold of their estate; and by presuming on such grounds, and prescribing merit to heaven by their "Lord, Lord," even "seal them up to the day of damnation;" and therefore it is ordinary with Satan to give men the tether a great way, lest they should grumble at his tyranny, and prove apostates from him upon hard usage. Knowledge is pleasant, and books are very good company; and therefore if the devil should bind men to ignorance, our speculators and brain epicures would never be his disciples; they would go away sadly, as the young man from Christ, who was well affected with His service, but could not part with his riches. So then you shall have his leave to know and believe in God, as much as you please, so you will not obey Him; and be as great scholars as Satan himself, so you will be as profane. The heart of man is the devil's palace, where he keeps his state; and as long as he can strengthen himself there by a guard and band of lusts, he can be content to afford the outworks to God, divine speculation, and never be disturbed or affrighted by any enemy at such a distance.

Matt. xix.
22.

Thus have you the grounds also whereupon true faith—which is best defined a spiritual prudence, an application of spiritual knowledge to holy practice—should be so often

¹ S. Leo. Mag. [cf. e. g. tom. i. pp. 94, 133, 134, 179. The express passage has not been found.]

wanting in men which are very knowing, and the fairest professors of Christianity.

Now lest this discourse also should reach no further than your ears, lest that which hath been said should be only assented to in the general as true, not applied home to your particular practices, and so do you no more good than these general professions did here to the Jews, only to prove you perjured hypocrites, "swearing falsely, whilst you say the Lord liveth," we will endeavour to leave some impression upon your hearts by closing all with application.

And that shall be in brief meekly to desire you; and if that will not serve the turn, by all the mercies of heaven, and horrors of hell, to adjure you to examine yourselves on these two interrogatories, which my text will suggest to you, first, whether you are as good as the Jews here? secondly, whether you are not, the best of you, altogether as bad?

For the first, the Jews here said the "Lord liveth," were very forward to profess; and it were some, though but a low measure of commendation, for us to be no worse than Jews. Let there go a severe inquisition out from the royal majesty over the whole court, or at least from every particular man upon himself; and bring in an impartial verdict, whether there be not some amongst you, that are not come thus far as to say, "the Lord liveth." Some are so engaged in a trade of misshapen, horrid, monstrous vices, have so framed and fashioned the whole fabric of their lives, without any blush or lineament of God in them, that they are afraid ever to mention Him in earnest, for fear of putting them out of their course; they dare not believe too much of God, lest it should be their undoing; a little sense of Him would take off many of their tricks of sinning, and consequently spoil their thriving in the world; like Diana's silversmith, "for by this ^{Acts xix.} craft they have their wealth." ^{24.} The least glimpse of God in these men's hearts, nay, one solemn mention of Him in their mouths, were enough to bring them into some compass, to upbraid their ways, and reprove their thoughts. Were these men taken to task according to the canon laws of our kingdom, and not suffered to live any longer amongst Christians, till they understood clearly the promise of their baptism, till they durst come and make the same vow in

their own persons, before all the congregation, which in their infancy their sureties made for them; were our canon of confirmation duly put in execution, and every one, as soon as he were capable, either persuaded or forced to fit himself for the receiving of it,—as it is severely required by our rubric, though much neglected in the practice;—I doubt not but there would be fewer sins amongst us, much more knowledge of God, and mentioning of His name, without the help of oaths and blasphemies, to which God now is in a kind beholding that ever He comes into our mouths. But now men having a great way to go in sin, and nothing in the world to stop them, begin their journey as soon as they are able to go, and make such haste—like the sun, or giant in the Psalmist—to run their course, are so intent upon the task the devil hath set them, that they can never stay to see or hear of God in their lives, which yet is legible and palpable in every syllable of the world. If they are so well brought up as to have learned their Creed and Catechism, they have no other use for it but to break jests, and swear by; and would soon forget God's very name or attributes, did they not daily repeat them over—as schoolboys their parts,—and often comment on them by oaths and profanations; and these are *ἄθεοι* in the Apostle's phrase, “without God in the world.”

[Ps. xix.
5.]

Eph. ii.
12.

Others there are of a prouder, loftier strain, *ἀντίθεοι*, and *θεομάχοι*, that pitch camp, and arm and fortify themselves against God, that would fain be a forging some other religion, they are so weary and cloyed with this. Thus have I heard of some that have sought earnestly for an Alcoran, and profess an opinion that all true divinity lies there, and expect to be esteemed great wits, of a deep reach, for this supposal. Others that have not skill enough to understand Turkism, yet have lusts enough to admire it, and the brave carnal paradise it promises; and if they cannot persuade themselves to believe in it, yet they fancy it notably; and because they cannot expect to have it in another life, they will be sure of it in this.

Hence do they advance to such a pitch of sensuality, as heathenism was never guilty of; their whole life is a perpetual study of the arts of death, and their whole souls an

holocaust or burnt sacrifice to their fleshly lusts. It were an horrid representation but to give you in a diagram the several arts that the god of this world hath now taught men to vilify and reproach the God of heaven. Professed atheism begins to set up; it comes in fashion, and then some courtiers must needs be in it. Profaning of Scripture, and making too cheap of it, was never so ordinary; that holy volume was never so violently and coarsely handled, even ravished and deflowered by unhallowed lips. It is grown the only stuff in request, and ordinarist garment to clothe a piece of scurrilous wit in, and the best of us can scarce choose but give it some applause. Beloved, there is not a sin in the world that sticks closer to him that once entertained it; the least indulgence in it is a desperate sign. It is called the "chair of scorers," a sin of ease and pleasure: [Ps. i. 1.] a man that uses it, that is once a merry atheist, seldom, if ever, proves a sad sober Christian. Julian, and many others, have gone scoffing to hell,—like men whom custom of mocking hath made wry-mouthed,—scarcely composing themselves to a solemn countenance, till horror either of hell or conscience hath put smiling out of date. And if any of these sins are but crept in amongst you, it will be worthy our enquiry and examination;—and God grant your own impartial consciences may return you not guilty:—however this will but prove you no worse than Jews, for they here acknowledge God in their brain and tongues; they said, "The Lord liveth."

Your second interrogatory must be, whether whilst you thus profess, you do not also swear falsely? And then it is to be feared that every action of your lives will bring in an evidence against you. It were an accusation perhaps that you seldom hear of, to be challenged for hypocrites, to be turned puritans and pretenders to holiness: yet this is it my text must charge you with; professing of religion, and never practising it; assenting to the truth of Scripture in your brain, but not adhering to it in your hearts; believing in Christ, and yet valuing Him beneath the meanest sin you meet with. Look over your Creed, and observe whether your lives do not contradict every word in it; and is it not hypocrisy and perjury, or, if you will have it, high compli-

menting with God, to be thus profuse and prodigal in our professions, which we never mean to perform? Then is it to be called belief, when it is sunk down into our hearts, when it hath taken root in a well-tempered soil, and begins to spring above ground, and hasten into an ear. That which grows like moss on the tiles of an house, which is set no deeper than the fancy, will never prove either permanent or solid nourishment to the soul. It were a new hour's work to shew every defect in our faith by our defections and desertions of God in our manners; yet if you will be in earnest with yourselves, and apply the grounds premised to your serious examination, your meditations may throughly make up what here is likely to be omitted.

One thing take home with you for a rule to eternity, that every indulgence in any sin is a sure argument of an infidel: be you never so proud and confident of your faith, and justification by it; be you never so resolute that the "Lord liveth;" yet if your obedience be not uniform, if you embrace not what you assent to, "surely you swear falsely." Your particular failings I am not knowing enough to represent to you; your own consciences, if they be but called to, cannot choose but reflect them to your sight. Your outward profession and frequency in it, for the general is acknowledged; your custom of the place requires it of you; and the example of piety that rules in your eyes cannot but extort it. Only let your lives witness the sincerity of your professions; let not a dead carcass walk under a living head, and a nimble active Christian brain be supported with bed-rid, motionless heathen limbs. Let me see you move and walk, as well as breathe, that I may hope to see you saints as well as Christians.

And this shall be the sum, not only of my advice to you, but for you, of my prayers: that the Spirit would sanctify all our hearts as well as brains; that He will subdue, not only the pride and natural atheism of our understandings, but the rebellions, and infidelity, and heathenism of our lusts; that being purged from any relics, or tincture, or suspicion of irreligion in either power of our souls, we may live by faith, and move by love, and die in hope; and both in life and death glorify God here, and be glorified with Him hereafter.

SERMON XX.

LUKE xviii. 11.

*God, I thank Thee, that I am not as other men, extortioners, &c.,
or even as this publican.*

THAT we may set out at our best advantage, and yet not go too far back to take our rise, it is but retiring to the end of the eighth verse of this chapter, and there we shall meet with an abrupt speech, hanging like one of Solomon's proverbs, without any seeming dependence on any thing before or after it: which yet upon enquiry will appear *διοπετής*, fallen down from heaven, in the posture it stands in. In the beginning of the eighth verse he concludes the former parable, "I tell you that He will avenge them speedily;" and then abruptly, "Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, shall He find faith upon the earth?" And then immediately, verse 9, "He spake another parable to certain that trusted in themselves," where this speech in the midst, "when the Son of Man comes," &c., stands there by itself, like the Pharisee in my text, *seorsim*, apart, as an *εμβόλιμον* or intercalary day between two months, which neither of them will own, or more, truly like one of Democritus' atoms, the casual concurrence of which he accounted the principle and cause of all things. [Acts xix. 35.]

That we may not think so vulgarly of Scripture as to dream that any tittle of it came by resultance or casually into the world, that any speech dropped from His mouth unobserved, "that spake as man never spake," both in respect of the matter of His speeches, and the weight and secret energy of all accidents attending them, it will appear on consideration, that this speech of His, which seems an

ὑπερβάλλον or *ὑπερβαῖνον*, a supernumerary superfluous one, is indeed the head of the corner, and ground of the whole parable, or at least a fair hint or occasion of delivering it at that time. Not to trouble you with its influence on the parable going before concerning perseverance in prayer,—to which it is as an isthmus or fibula, to join it to what follows,—but to bring our eyes home to my present subject; after the consideration of the prodigious defect of faith in this decrepit last age of the world, in persons who made the greatest pretences to it, and had arrived unto assurance and security in themselves; He presently arraigns the Pharisee, the highest instance of this confidence, and brings his righteousness to the bar, *sub hac forma*.

There is like to be toward the second coming of Christ, His particular visitation of the Jews, and (then its parallel) His final coming to judgment, such a specious pompous show, and yet such a small pittance of true faith in the world, that as it is grown much less than a grain of mustard-seed, it shall not be found when it is sought; there will be such giantly shadows and pigmy substances, so much and yet so little faith, that no hieroglyphic can sufficiently express it, but an Egyptian temple gorgeously overlaid, inhabited within by crocodiles, and cats, and carcasses, instead of gods; or an apple of Sodom, that shews well till it be handled; a painted sepulchre, or a specious nothing; or which is the contraction and tachygraphy of all these, a Pharisee at his prayers. And thereupon Christ spake the parable, “There were two men went up into the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee,” &c.

v. cr. 9.

ver. 10.

Concerning the true nature of faith, mistaken extremely now-a-days by those which pretend most to it, expelled almost out of men’s brains as well as hearts, so that now it is scarce to be found upon earth, either in our lives or almost in our books, there might be framed a seasonable complaint in this place, were I not already otherwise embarked. By some prepossessions and prejudices infused into us as soon as we can con a catechism of that making, it comes to pass that many men live and die resolved that faith is nothing but the assurance of the merits of Christ applied to every man particularly; and consequently of his salvation: that I must first

be sure of heaven, or else I am not capable of it; confident of my salvation, or else necessarily damned. Cornelius Agrippa being initiated in natural magic, Paracelsus in mineral extractions, Plato full of his ideas, will let nothing be done without the Pythagoreans, brought up with numbers perpetually in their ears, and the physicians poring daily upon the temperaments of the body; the one will define the soul an harmony, the other a *κράσις*, saith Philoponus. And so are many amongst us, that take up fancies upon trust for truths, never laying any contrary proposals to heart, come at last to account this assurance as a principle without which they can do nothing; the very soul that must animate all their obedience, which is otherwise but a carcass or heathen virtue; in a word, the only thing by which we are justified or saved. The confutation of this popular error I leave to some grave learned tongue, that may enforce it on you with some authority; for I conceive not any greater hindrance of Christian obedience and godly practice among us, than this: for as long as we are content with this assurance as sufficient stock to set up for heaven, there is like to be but little faith upon the earth. Faith, if it be truly so, is like Christ Himself, when He was Emmanuel, God upon the earth, *ἐνσάρκωθεῖσα*, an incarnate faith, cut out and squared into limbs and lineaments; not only a spiritual invisible faith, but even flesh and blood, to be seen and felt, organized for action; it is to speak, and breathe, and walk, and run the ways of God's commandments: an assent not only to the promises of the gospel, but uniformly to the whole word of God, commands and threats as well as promises. And this, not in the brain or surface of the soul, as the Romanist seats it, but in the heart, as regent of the hand and tongue in the concurrence of all the affections. Where it is not only a working faith, an obeying faith, but even a work, even obedience itself; not only a victorious faith, but even victory itself; "This is our victory, even our faith:" to part with this as a *πάρεργον*, which is our only business, is sure an unreasonable thesis. Any faith but this is a faith in the clouds, or in the air, the upper region of the soul, the brain; or at most but a piece of the heart; a magical faith, a piece of sorcery and conjuring; that will teach men to remove mountains, only by thinking they

Rom. i. 5;
1 John v. 4.

are able; but will never be taken by Christ for this faith upon the earth: if it do walk here, it is but as a ghost, it is even pity but it were laid. Let me beseech you meekly, but if this would not prevail, I would conjure you all in this behalf; the silly weak Christian to fly from this *μορμολύκειον*, and call for some light of their lawful pastors, to find out the deceit; and the more knowing illuminate Christian to examine sincerely and impartially by feeling and handling it throughly, whether there be any true substance in it or no. The Pharisee, looking upon himself superficially, thought he had gone on, on very good grounds, very unquestionable terms, that he was possessed of a very fair estate; he brought in an inventory of a many precious works; "I fast, I tithe," &c.; hath no other liturgies but thanksgivings, no other sacrifice to bring into the temple, but eucharistical; and yet how foully the man was mistaken!

ver. 12.

"God, I thank," &c.

The first thing I shall observe in the words is the *τὸ λογικόν*, the rational importance of them, as they are part of a rhetorical syllogism, an example or parallel to shew that in the last days, though men think that there is a great deal, yet there is indeed like to be but little faith upon the earth. And the issue from thence is the Pharisee's flattering favourable misconceit of his own estate, and the parallel line to that, our premature deceivable persuasions of ourselves, that is ordinary among Christians.

The second thing is the *τὸ ῥητόν*, the natural literal importance of the words, and therein the concomitants or effects of those his misconceits.

1. Pride, 2. Censoriousness. Pride noted by his speech, "I thank Thee that I am not;" then his posture, pluming up himself, "standing by himself he prayed;" as the Syriac set the words, and many Greek copies, some by making a comma after *πρὸς ἑαυτὸν*, others by reading *σταθεὶς καθ' ἑαυτὸν*, "standing by himself;" as Beza renders it, *seorsim*, "apart;" not as our English, he "stood and prayed thus with himself," but as the words will likewise bear it, "he stood by himself" thus; this posture signifying a proud contemptuous behaviour, whilst the publican stood crouching humbly and tremblingly behind.

2. Censoriousness and insinuating accusations of other men's persons, "even as this publican." To which we may add the occasion of all this, seeing the publican behind him, i. e. comparing himself with notorious sinners, he was thus proud and censorious.

And of these in their order, as powerfully and effectually to your hearts, as God shall enable me. And first of the first, the Pharisee's favourable misconceits of himself, and parallel to these, our deceivable persuasions of ourselves, "God, I thank," &c.

The black sin that hath dyed the Pharisee's soul so deep, as to become his characteristic inseparable property, a kind of agnomen, a perpetual accession to his name, is hypocrisy. The proper natural importance of which word signifies the personating or acting of a part, putting on another habit than doth properly belong to him. But by the liberty we ordinarily allow to words, to enlarge themselves sometimes beyond their own territories, to thrive and gain somewhat from their neighbours, it is come vulgarly to signify all that ambitious outside, or formality, the colour and varnish of religion, by which any man deceives either others or himself; and accordingly there is a twofold hypocrisy, the first, deceiving others; the second, himself. That by which he imposeth upon others is the sin we commonly declaim against, under that name, most fiercely, sometime by just reason, as having been circumvented by such glozes, sometime in a natural zeal to truth, preferring plain downright impiety, before the same transfigured by a varnish. *Reatus impij pium nomen*, his being counted innocent is an accession to his guilt. But then sometimes too, under this odious name we may wound sincere and pure devotion; as the primitive Christians were by the tyrants put in wild beasts' skins that they may be torn in pieces; men may be deterred from all the least appearance of purity, for fear they should be counted hypocrites. However this first sort of hypocrisy may deserve its seasonable reprehension, this parable in my text doth not take it in; but insists mainly upon the other, that colour of piety by which a man deceives himself, and cheats and glozes with his own soul. That first sort, were it not for some hurtful consequences, might for aught I can gainsay pass for an in-

nocent quality in a sinner. For what great injury doth that man do to any other, or himself? what grand sin against God or the world, by desiring to seem better than he is; by labouring to conceal those sins in himself, which could not be known without dishonour to God, and scandal to his neighbour? It was a lawyer's answer, being questioned whether it were lawful for a woman to take money for prostituting herself, that indeed it was a sin to prostitute herself; but that being supposed, as in some kingdoms it is permitted, he thought it was no great fault to get her living by it.

Not to justify his opinion, but apply it by accommodation: in like manner arraign an hypocrite, and muster up all the sins he hath committed in secret, and all these I will acknowledge worthy of condemnation, because sins: nay, if his end of concealing them be to circumvent a well-believing neighbour, that shall be set upon his score also; but for the desire itself of keeping his sin from the eyes of men, so that he do not from the eyes of God, and His ministers upon occasion, for a cautiousness in any one not to sin scandalously, or on the house-top, take this by itself, abstracted from the sin it belongs to, and I cannot see why that should be either a part or aggravation of a sin. There is nothing that deserves the tears, yea and holy indignation of a godly soul, more than the sight of an immodest boasting sinner, that makes his crimes his reputation, and his abominations his pride and glory. It is that which we lay to the devil's charge in the times of heathenism; that he strove to bring sin in credit by building temples, and requiring sacrifices to lust, under the name of Venus, Priapus, and the like; that incontinence might seem an act of religion, and all the profaneness in the world a piece of adoration. And it begins now to be revived in the world again, when bashfulness is the quality of all others most creditably parted with; and the only motive to the commission of some sins is, to be in the fashion, to be seen of men; when men put on affected errors, affected vanities, affected oaths, just as they do gay clothes, that they may be the better counted of: this indeed is a damnable hypocrisy, when men are fain to act parts in sin, that they are not naturally inclined to; and to force their constitutions, and even to offer violence to their own tender dispositions, that so they may

not be scoffed at for punies, or precise persons, as Augustus's daughter, which being admonished of a sin that beasts would never have committed, answered that that was the reason they omitted the enjoyment of so precious a delight, because they were beasts; as if innocence were more bestial than lust, and ignorance of some sins the only guilt. The horror and detestation that this sin strikes into me, makes me, I confess, willing almost to become an advocate of the first kind of hypocrisy, whereby men retain so much modesty in their sins (I hope of weakness) as to be willing to enjoy the charitable men's good opinion though undeserved.

But for the second kind of hypocrisy, this cozening of a man's own soul, this tiring and personating in the closet, this inventing of arts and stratagems to send himself comfortably and believingly to the devil, this civil intestine treachery within, and against one's-self; this is the grand imposture that here the Pharisee is noted for. An easiness and cheatableness that costs the bankrupting of many a jolly Christian soul. He, saith Plutarch^b, that wants health, let him go to the physicians, but he that wants *εὐεξία*, a good durable habit of body, let him go to the *γυμναστὰς*, "the masters of exercise," otherwise he shall never be able to confirm himself into a solid firm constant health, called thereupon by Hippocrates^c *ἔξις ἀθλητικῆ*, "the constitution of wrestlers;" without which health itself is but a degree of sickness, nourishment proves but swellings, and not growth, but a tympany. Both these, saith he, philosophy will produce in the soul, not only teaching men *θεοῦ σέβασθαι*,—where by the way he repeats almost the whole Decalogue of Moses, though in an heathen dialect,—to "worship the gods," &c., which is *ὑγίεια ψυχῆς*, "the health of the soul," but *τόδε μέγιστον*, that "which is above all," *μὴ περιχαρεῖς ὑπάρχειν μήτε ἐκλύτους*, "not to be overjoyed or immoderately affected in all this." This which he attributes to philosophy in general, is, saith Aristotle^d, an act of intellectual prudence, or sobriety, *μειζόνων ἢ ἄξιος ἑαυτὸν μὴ ἀξιοῦν*, "not to vouchsafe higher titles to himself than he is worthy of;" not to

^b [De Liberis Educ., § 10. tom. i. pt. xxiii. Med. Græci. ed. Kuhn.]
 1. p. 24. ed. Wyttenb.]

^d [Nic. Eth. iv. 7.]

^c [Aphorismi, tom. iii. p. 706; tom.

think himself in better health than he is, which is not the dialect of a mere heathen, but the very language of Canaan, Rom. xii. 3. *φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν*, the very word in Aristotle, which cannot be better expressed than by that *περίφρασις*, to have a moderate, sober, equal opinion of one's own gifts; not to overprize God's graces in ourselves, not to accept one's own person or give flattering titles to one's-self, in Job's phrase. This Chrysostom^e calls *ταπεινοφροσύνη*, a word near kin unto the former, the meekness or lowliness of heart, *ὅταν τις, κ.τ.λ.*, "when a man having attained to a great measure of grace, and done great matters by it, and knoweth it too," yet *μηδὲν μεγάλα*, "fancies no great matter of himself for all this." As the Three Children in Daniel having received a miracle of graces, which affected even the enemies of God, yet were not affected with it themselves; enabled to be martyrs, and yet live. Or as the poet of Callimachus^f that stood after he was dead; *τί μ' ἔπεμπες ἐς ἀθανάτους πολεμιστὰς; βάλλομεν, οὐ πίπτουσι, τιτρώσκομεν, οὐ φοβέουσι*: which is Nebuchadnezzar's phrase, walking "in the midst of the fire and yet they have no hurt." Yet in their *εὐχαριστικὸν*, "their song of praise," all that they say of themselves is this, "and now we cannot open our mouths;" for this, saith Chrysostom, "we open our mouths that we may say this only, that it is not for us to open our mouths." By this low modest interpretation every Christian is to make of his own actions and gifts, you may guess somewhat of the Pharisee's misconceits.

[Dan. iii. 25.]

Song of Three Children, ver. 10.

For first, were he never so holy and pure, of never so spiritual angelical composition, yet the very reflecting on these excellencies were enough to make a devil of him. The angels, saith Gerson^g, as the philosopher's intelligences, have a double habitude, two sorts of employments natural to them; one upwards, in an admiration of God's greatness, love of His beauty, obedience to His will, moving as it were a circular daily motion about God, their centre,—as Boethius^h of them, *mentemque profundam circumeunt*;—another downward, of regiment and power in respect of all

^e Tom. v. p. 261. [This reference is to Saville's edition; to a homily on the Pharisee and Publican, which is taken out of the fifth homily de Incomprehensibili Dei Naturâ, tom. i. p. 489, C. ed. Ben. where the passage will be found.]

^f [Pantelius, ap. S. Maximum. Op., tom. ii. p. 543. Anthol. Palat., tom. iii. Append. Epigr. 58. ed. Jacobs.]

^g Cf. Gerson. Tr. i. in Magnif.

^h [See Consol. Philosophiæ, lib. iii. Metrum ix. v. 16. p. 223. ed. Delphin.]

l e' o v, which they govern and move and manage. Now if it be questioned, saith he, which of these two be more honourable,—for the credit of the angelical nature I determine confidently, that of subjection *pulchriorem et perfectiorem esse, quam secunda regitivæ dominationis*, “it is more renown to be under God than over all the world besides;” as the service to a king is the greatest preferment that even a peer of the realm is capable of. And then if an angel should make a song of exultance to set himself out in the greatest pomp, he would begin it as Mary doth her *Magnificat*, “For He hath [Luke i. 48.] regarded the low estate of His servant:” so that the blessed Virgin’s mention of her own lowliness, was not a piece only of modest devotion, but an *ὑψος* of expression, and high metaphysical insinuation of the greatest dignity in the world. And then let the Pharisee be as righteous as himself can fancy, come to that pitch indeed which the contemptuous opinionative philosophers feigned to themselves, *λέγοντες μὲν δεῖσθαι μηδενός*, in Tatianusⁱ, which is in the Church of Laodicea’s phrase, “I am rich, and am increased in spiritual Rev. iii. 17. wealth, and have need of nothing;” or the fools in the Gospel, “I have store laid up for many years;” nay, to St. Paul’s [Luke xvi. 19.] pitch, rapt so high, that the schools do question whether he were *viator* or *comprehensor*, a traveller, or at his journey’s end; yet the very opinion of God’s graces would argue him a Pharisee; this conceiving well of his estate is the foulest misconception. For if he be such a complete righteous person, so accomplished in all holy graces, why should he thus betray his soul, by depriving it of this *ταπεινοφροσύνη*, which the very heathens could observe so absolutely necessary; this humility and lowliness of mind, this useful and most ingenuous virtue always to think vilely of himself; not to acknowledge any excellence in himself, though he were even put upon the rack. The philosophers that wrote against pride, are censured to have spoiled all by putting their names to their books. Modesty, like Dinah^k, desiring never so little to be seen, is ravished. The sanctifying spirit that beautifies the soul, is an humbling spirit also, to make it unbeauteous

ⁱ Contra Græcos, § 25. [p. 265, A. a¹ calcein. Op., S. Justini. Paris. 1742.]

^k Gerson. Tr. 10. in Magnif. [Op., tom. iv. p. 468, B.]

in its own eyes. And this is the first misconceit, the first step in Pharisaical hypocrisy, thinking well of one's-self on what ground soever; contrary to that virgin grace, humility, which is a virtue required not only of notorious infamous sinners—for what thanks or commendation is it for him to be on the ground that hath fallen and bruised himself in his race? for him that is ready to starve, to go a begging?—but chiefly and mainly of him that is most righteous; when he that knows a great deal of good by himself, *μεγάλα κατορθώματα*¹, a great deal of good success in the spirit, yet *μηδὲν μέγα φαντάζεται*, is not advanced a whit at the fancy of all this.

The Pharisee's second misconceit is a favourable overprizing of his own worth, expecting a higher reward than it in proportion deserves. When looking in the glass he sees all far more glorious in that reflect beam than it is in the direct, all the deformities left in the glass, and nothing but fair returned to him, a rough harsh displeasing voice smoothed, and softened, and grown harmonious in the echo: there is no such cheating in the world as by reflections. A looking-glass by shewing some handsome persons their good faces, and that truly, hath often ruined them by that truth, and betrayed that beauty to all the ugliness and rottenness in the world; which had it not been known by them, had been enjoyed. But then your false glasses, what mischief and ruin have they been authors of! how have they given authority to the deformedest creatures to come confidently on the stage, and befooled them to that shame which a knowledge of their own wants had certainly prevented! What difference there may be betwixt the direct species of a thing, and the same reflected, the original and the transcript, the artificial famous picture of Henry the Fourth of France will teach you; where in a multitude of feigned devices, a heap of painted, fantastical chimeras, which being looked on right resembled nothing, being ordered to cast their species upon a pillar of polished metal reflected to the spectator's eye the most lively visage of that famous king. He that hath not seen this piece of art, or hath not skill in catopticks enough to understand the demonstrable grounds and reasons of it, may yet discern as much in nature, by the appearance of a

¹ S. Chrysost. [Hom. v. de Incompreh. Dei naturâ, tom. i. p. 489, C.]

rainbow, where you may see those colours reflected by the cloud, which no philosopher will assert to be existent there. And all this brings more evidence to the Pharisee's indictment, and demonstrates his opinion of his own actions or merits to be commonly deceivable and false.

He sees another man's actions *radio recto*, by a direct beam, and if there be no humour in his eye, if it be not glazed with contempt or envy, or prejudice, he may perhaps see them aright. But his own he cannot see but by reflection, as a man comes not to see his own eyes, but in the shadow, and at the rebound; whereupon Alcinous the Platonic, calls this act of the soul, *τῆς ψυχῆς πρὸς ἑαυτὴν διάλογον*, a dialogue of the soul with itself, and the knowledge that comes from thence, *ἀναζωγράφησιν*, a resemblance by shadowing. The soul understands, and wills its object; this act of it by its species is cast upon the fancy, and from thence, as even now from the column of brass, or bell-metal, it is reflected to the understanding: and then you may guess what a fair report he is likely to receive, when a Pharisee's fancy hath the returning of it. He that with his own clearest eyes could take a gnat for a taller unwieldier creature than a camel, and thereupon strains at it, what would he do if he should come to his multiplying glass! He that when he sees a mote, and that *radio recto*, in other's eyes, can mistake it for a beam, how can he, think you, improve the least atom of good, when he is to look on it in himself! How will his fancy and he, the one a cheat from the beginning, the other full greedy of the bait, fatten and puff up a sacrifice that he himself hath offered! O how fair shall it appear, and ready to devour all the seven fat ones, though it be the thinnest of Pharaoh's lean kine, lank and very ill favoured! How shall the reflection of his beggarliest rags return to his eye the picture of a king! and the ordinariest vapour, or cloud of his exhaling, be decked over with all the beauty and variety of the rainbow! What Aristotle^m said of the Sophists, that they did *φυλετικῶς ἐμφυσᾶν ἑαυτοὺς*, though it be a puzzling place for the critics, this censor or Aristarchus in my text, will interpret by his practice; he blows up him-

Matt.
xxiii. 24.

^m [See Arist. Sophist. Elerch. i. 1.]

self, as they were used to do their meat against a *φυλετικὸν δεῖπνον*^o, a tribune's or a sheriff's feast, that it may look the fairer, and not deceive others only, but himself; forgets what he has done, and now thinks it is his natural complexion :

Wisd. xiii. as the carpenter in the thirteenth of Wisd. om; that piece of wood which himself had just now carved into an idol, he presently prays to and worships as a god: or as liars, that by telling a tale often at last begin to believe themselves; so hath he befooled himself into a credulity: the farthing alms he hath given shall by a strange kind of usury (yet not stranger perhaps than what he deals in daily) be fancied into a mountain of gold, and the bare calves of their lips become hecatombs. If he have abstained from flesh when the market would yield none, or forborne to eat a supper after a notorious feast, he will call this "fasting twice in the week," and avouch himself an obedient abstemious subject and Christian, though Good Friday be witness of his unchristian epicurism. If he afford the minister the tenth of his house-rent, an annual benevolence far below that that his dues would come to, which by taking of a jolly fine at first, is for ever after pared into but a larger sort of quit-rents,—though his extortion bring in no revenue to any but the devil and himself,—he will yet be confident with the Pharisee, "I pay tithes of all that I possess."

ver. 12.

A pittance of virtue in a Pharisee is like the polypod's head, to which Plutarch^p compares poetry, hath some good, but as much or more ill in it also; sweet indeed and nutritive, saith he; and so is all virtue though simply moral, good wholesome diet for the soul, but withal *παρακτικῆ*, it sends up vapours into the brain, and ends in whimses and strange and troublesome dreams: the man fancies, I know not what, presently of himself; like learning in an ill-natured man, all about him are the worse for it; one moral virtue tires sometimes the whole vicinity of natural good-disposed gifts: it were well perhaps for his ingenuity and modesty that he were not so virtuous, that one drop of water being attenuated into air hath taken up all the room in the bladder: it were

^o [Cf. Alexand. Aphrod. ad loc. in ire debeat, § 1. p. 56. tom. i. pt. 1. ed. Schol. ed. Berl.] Wyttenb.]

^p [Quomodo Adolescens Poetas aud-

as good for the heart to be shrivelled up, as thus distended, it must be squeezed again to make place for some more substantial guest, and be emptied quite, that it may be filled. In brief, it is the small measure, and this only of airy, empty piety, that hath puffed up the man. As they say a little critical learning makes one proud; if there were more it would condensate and compact itself into less room.

And generally the more there is within, the less report they give of themselves; as St. Matthew mentioning himself before his conversion, doth it distinctly, by the name of Matthew, and his trade sitting at the receipt of custom, “Matthew the publican,” by that odious re-naming of sin,—whereas all the other Evangelists call him Levi, or the son of Alpheus,—Matt. ix. 9. but leaves out the story of his own feasting of Christ,—only “as Christ sat at meat in the house,”—[Mark ii. 14; Luke v. 27.] which St. Luke sets down exactly, “and Levi made him a great feast,” or as in the history of St. Peter’s fall and repentance in the Gospel according to St. Mark;—Matt. ix. 10. Luke v. 29. which the primitive Church agree that St. Peter had a hand in it;—his denial is set down with all the aggravating circumstances, more than in all the rest put together, “he began to curse and swear, I know not this man of whom you speak:” two Evangelists say only, he denied him the third time; to this St. Matthew adds, “he cursed and sware, saying, I know not the man.” But he in his own witness, most exactly in aggravating the sin, “I know not this,” &c. But when he comes to the mention of his repentance, when the two other say, *ἐκλαυσε πικρῶς*, he himself, or St. Mark from him, only *ἐκλαιε*, he wept; always speaking as much bad and as little good of themselves as can be. Mark xiv. 71. [Luke xxii. 61; Matt. xxvi. 74.]

A little windy opinionative goodness distempers the empty brain, it is charity must ballast the heart; and that is the grace, according to holy Maximus’ opinion⁹, that all this while we have required, but not found in the Pharisee, and that is the reason that the brass sounds so shrill, and the cymbal tinkles so merrily. And this is the Pharisee’s second misconceit, his overprizing his own good deeds and graces. The third is,

His opinion of the consistence and immutability of his

⁹ [Cf. Centena Capita de Caritate, i. § 47, &c. Op., tom. i. p. 400.]

present estate, without any, either consideration of what he hath been, or fear what he may be again; he hath learnt or rather abused so much Scripture, as that the yesterday and the morrow must care for themselves; Prometheus or Epimetheus are profane heathen names to him; he is all in contemplation of present greatness; like the heathen gods, which are represented to have nothing to do but admire their own excellencies. "I thank God that I am not," &c. The Pharisee having a first-born's portion from the hand of God, will not be rude or importunate with Him for new and fresh supplies; nor will he disparage himself so much as to suspect the perpetuity of his enjoyment. *Καλὸς παρρησίας θησαυρὸς εὐγένεια*, saith Plutarch^r, "a man that is honourably and freely born hath a fair treasure of confidence," and so a natural advantage of other men; but bastards and men of a cracked race, *ὑπόχαλκον καὶ κίβδηλον ἔχοντες γένος*, that have a "great deal of copper or dross mixed" with their or and silver, *ταπεινοῦσθαι πέφυκε*, "these men are born to be humble" and shamefaced. But amongst these contemplations he may do well to consider the Amorite his father, and his mother the Hittite, the pollutions and blood he was clothed with in the day that he was born, the accursed inheritance as well of shame as sin derived unto him. For then certainly he would never so plume himself in his present sunshine. If he have not gotten in the *ὑπόκαυστον*, among the Adamites in Epiphanius^s, and there set up for one of Adam's sect before his fall, or the Valentinians^t which called themselves the spirituals, and the seed of Abel, who indeed never had any natural seed we hear of. If he will but grant himself of the ordinary composition and race of men, come down from Adam either by Cain or Seth, I am sure he shall find sins past enough either in his person or nature to humble him, be he never so spiritual. And then for the time to come, Christ certainly was never so espoused to any soul, as to be bound to hold it for better for worse. That if he find aught in that spouse contrary to the vow of wedlock, he can *ἀποπέμπειν*^u,—the word used in divorces

Ezek. xvi.
[3, sq.]

^r [De Liberis Educandis, § 2.]

^t Id., lib. i. Hær. 31. § 23. Op., tom.

^s [Epiphani., lib. ii. Hæresis 32. Op., tom. i. p. 438.]

i. p. 192, B, C, sq.]

^u [Cf. e. g. Demosth., p. 1362. 25.]

amongst the Athenians on the husband's part,—send the soul out of his house or temple; especially if she do ἀπολείπειν,—the phrase used on the woman's part,—if she leave or forsake the husband, if she draw back or subduce herself out of his house, “by an evil heart of unbelief, openly depart from the living God.” It is observed by the critics as an absurd ridiculous phrase in some authors, to call the emperors *divi* in their life-time, which, saith Rittershusius, when the propriety of the Roman tongue was observed, *capitale fuisset*, had been a grand capital crime. And as absurd no doubt is many men's ἀποθέωσις and ἀπαθανατισμὸς, their canonizing, securing and besainting themselves in this life, upon every slight premature persuasion that they are in Christ. That which Aphrodisius^v on the Topics observes of the leaves of trees, may perhaps be too true of the spiritual estate and condition of men, that the vine, and fig, and plane tree, which have thin broad leaves, and make the fairest show, φυλλοροοῦσι, do thereupon shed them presently: some few indeed, the olive, bay, and myrtle, which have narrow solid leaves, are able to keep them all the year long, αἰφύλλα and αἰθαλή, always green and flourishing. And God grant such laurels may for ever abound in this paradise, this garden of the land; that the children of this mother may environ her like olive plants round about her table; this perhaps you will count an high thing, to shed the leaf, but what think you of extirpation and rooting up? even this you shall hear denounced, and executed on those that cast a fair shadow, either as on degenerated or unprofitable trees; either for bad fruit, or none at all, “Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?” [Luke xiii. 7.]

But to our purpose; when St. Paul therefore resolves that nothing should “ever separate him from the love of God,” [Rom. viii. 39.] sin is there left out of the catalogue; be he never so possessed of that inheritance, for aught he knows this very confidence may root him out again. His brethren the Jews thought their estate as irreversible as the Pharisee's here; and upon as good grounds as he can pretend; the very promise of God to Abraham's seed indefinitely; and yet by that time this parable was spoken, they can bring him word of

^v Alex. Aphrod. in Top. Arist. [f. 63. Aldus.]

the repeal of that promise, within a while sealed and confirmed by their *πανωλεθρία*, their instant utter destruction; a forerunner of which, if not the cause, was this confidence of their immutable estate.

It was a fancy of the Stoics mentioned by Plutarch *, *περὶ πάντα κατορθοῦν τὸν ἀστέρειον*, that a "wise man could do nothing amiss," that all that he did was wise and virtuous. And they that will have men saved and damned by a stoical necessity, now-a-days, may borrow this fancy of the Stoics also; but Homer, saith he, and Euripides long since exploded it. I am sure St. Paul will fairly give any man leave that takes himself to be in a good estate now, to fear a bad before he die; to expect a tempest in a calm; or else he would not have been so earnest with him that "thinks he stands, to take heed lest he fall." It was the confidence of a Turk, i. e. a Stoic revived, in Nicetas Chon., that said he knew they must overcome, on now for ever, as having got *ἔξιεν τοῦ νικᾶν*, an "habit of conquering:" and it was well if this assurance did not take the pains to lose it him again. It is the rhetoric of discreet captains to their soldiers in Thucydides †, and other historians, to exhort them to fight on comfortably and courageously, as having overcome, in remembrance of their past victories as pawns and pledges of the future: but it is always on condition and presumptions of the same diligence and valour which formerly they shewed. And the same military encouragements and munition the fathers frequently furnish us with against our spiritual warfare, but all rather to increase our diligence than security, to set us to work on hope of success, not to nourish us in idleness in hope of a victory. If we should suffer the devil from this proposition, "he will give His angels charge" that a child "of His shall not dash his foot against a stone," and then that assumption, thou art the child of God, to conclude that thou canst not hurt thyself with a fall, he would straight back that with a *mitte te deorsum*, "Cast thyself down," to shew what thou canst do; and then if thou hast not another *scriptum est* to rejoinder, thou "shalt not tempt,"—then this confidence is tempting of God,—I know not how thou wilt be able to

1 Cor. x.
12.

[Matt. iv.
6.]

* [De Audiend. Poetis, tom. vi. p. 89. Reiske.]

† [Cf. e.g. Thucyd. ii. 89; vii. 66.]

escape a precipice, a bruise if not a breaking. The Valentinian having resolved himself to be πνευματικὸς², “spiritual,” confessed indeed that other men must get some store of faith and works to help them to heaven, *ἑαυτὸν δὲ μὴ δεῖσθαι διὰ τὸ φύσει πνευματικὸν εἶναι*. “But they had no need of either, because of their natural spiritualness;” that which is spiritual cannot part with its spiritual hypostasis whatever it do or suffer; no more than gold by a sink can lose its lustre; or the sunbeams be defamed by the dung-hill they shine on. They commit all manner of impurity, saith he, and yet they are σπέρματα ἐκλογῆς, “seeds of the election;” the seeds indeed, deep set in the earth, that take root downward, but never bear fruit upward; they never spring at all except it be towards hell; nor sprout out any branch or stalk of works, unless it be of darkness. These forsooth have grace *ιδιόκτητον*, as their “proper possessions,” all others but to use, and so it seemed, for they of all others made no use of it. There was another like fancy in the same Irenæus³, of Marcus and his followers, that by the *ἀπολύτρωσις*, a form of baptizing that they had, that they were become *ἀόρατοι τῷ κριτῇ*, “invisible to the judge,” then if ever they were apprehended it were but calling to the Mother of Heaven, and she would send the helmet in Homer, that they should presently vanish out of their hands. Thus have men been befooled by the devil to believe that their sacred persons could excuse the foulest acts, and as it was said of Cato, even “make crimes innocent;” thus have some gotten the art of sinning securely, nay, religiously, as he that in our English history would put his neighbours in a course to rebel legally. But I hope all these fancies have nothing to do but fill up the catalogues in Irenæus and Epiphanius; I trust they shall never be able to transplant themselves into our brains or hearts. But pray God there be no credence of them scattered here and there among hasty, ignorant, overweening Christians. A man shall sometimes meet abroad some reason to suspect it, yet it were pity to fear so far as to set to confute them. There may be indeed a state and condition of Christians, so well settled and rivetted by Christ

² [S. Irenæus adv. Hær., lib. i. c. 6. *ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸ φύσει πνευματικούς εἶναι.*] Op. tom. i. p. 29. αὐτοὺς δὲ μὴ διὰ πράξεως,

³ [Id., lib. i. c. xiii. *ibid.* p. 64.]

in grace, that their estate may be comfortably believed immutable, an election under oath, perhaps that mentioned by the Psalmist, "I have sworn by My holiness, I will not fail David;" for spiritual blessings are frequently in Scripture conveyed along with temporal. But it is much to be doubted, that those men that have boldness to believe this of themselves, have not ballast enough of humility and fear to make it good. Porphyry had so much divinity in him as to observe that *καθύρσια* were the only *ἀποτρόπαια*^a, that perpetual washings, and purgings and lustrations, were the only means to defend or deliver from evil, either to come or present; the only amulets and *ἀλεξίκακα* in the world; it is the rainbow in the heaven reflected thither from a cloud of tears below, that is, God's engagement never again to drown the earth. But then there must be also another bow in the heart, that must promise for that, that it shall not be like a deceitful bow, go back again to folly, never again be drowned with swinish, bestial, filthy lusts. In the 17th of Exodus the Israelites prevailed against Amalek, and that miraculously without any sensible means; and verse 16 the promise is made for the future, that the "Lord will fight with Amalek for ever;" where by the way the LXX. put in *ἐν κρυφαίᾳ χειρὶ*, "God will fight against Amalek as it were underhand," by secret hidden strength; which addition of theirs—if it were inspired into the translators, as St. Augustin^b is of opinion, all their variations from the Hebrew are *θεόπνευστα*, and so Canon—then happily that *κρυφαία χεὶρ* may signify some secret infusion of supernatural power into Moses' hands; that there is promised, answerable to that same effusion of grace, to enable all the people of God in our fight with sin, the spiritual Amalek, by which grace Moses and the Christians have assurance to prevail. And this may be ground enough for a Christian; Christ hath prayed, and God promised that "your faith shall not fail." But then all this while the story of the day will tell us on what terms this security of victory stood, if so be Moses continue to hold up his hands; noting 1. the power of prayer; 2. of obedience; 3. of perseverance; and upon these terms even a Pharisee

^a [De Abstin., lib. ii. § 44.]

^b [De Civit. Dei, xviii. c. 43. Op., tom. vii. p. 525.]

may be confident without presumption; but if his hands be once let down; if he remit of his Christian valour—for so *manus demittere* signifies in agonistics—“Amalek prevails.” Exod. xvii. 11. Just as it fared with Samson, he had an inconceivable portion of strength, even a ray of God’s omnipotence bestowed on him, but this not upon term of life, but of his Nazarite’s vow, i. e. as the LXXII. render it, *εὐχὴ ἀφαγνίσασθαι ἀγνείαν* Numb. vi. 2. *Κυρίῳ*, “a prayer as well as a vow;” and that of separating or “hallowing purity and sanctity to the Lord;” and his vow being broken, not only that of his hair, but with it that of his holy obedience, that piece of divinity presently vanished, and the Philistines deprived him of his eyes and life. And thereupon it is observable that which is in the Hebrew in performing a vow, is rendered by the LXXII. *μεγαλῦναι τὴν εὐχὴν*, Numb. xv. 9. “to magnify a vow,” then is the vow or resolution truly great that will stand us in stead when it is performed. As for all others they remain as brands and monuments of reproach to us; upbraiding us of our inconstancy first, then of disobedience; and withal as signs to warn that God’s strength is departed from us. I doubt not but this strength being thus lost, may return again before our death, giving a plunge, as it did in Samson when he plucked the house about their ears Judg. xvi. at last. But this must be by the growing out of the hair again, ver. 22. the renewing of his repentance and sanctity with his vow, and by prayer unto God, “Lord God,” or as the LXXII., ver. 21. *Κύριε, Κύριε δυνάμεων*, “Remember me, I pray Thee, and strengthen me,” but for all this, it was said before in the 19th verse, his “strength,” and in the 20th verse, the “Lord ver. 19. was departed from him.” ver. 20. And so no doubt it may from us, if we have no better security for ourselves than the present possession, and a dream of perpetuity. For though no man can excommunicate himself by one rule, yet he may by another, in the canon law; that there be some faults excommunicate a man *ipso facto*; one who hath committed them, the law excommunicates, though the judge do not; you need not the application; there be perhaps some sins and devils like the Carian scorpions which Apollonius and Antigonus^c mention out of Aristotle^c, which when they strike strangers, do

^c [Antigonus, Hist. Mirab. c. 18. Apollonius, Hist. Comment., c. xi. ap. Meursium, Op., tom. vii. p. 13. *ibid.*, p. 157.]

them no great hurt, *ἐπιχωρίους δὲ αὐτίκα ἀποκτείνουσι*, “presently kill their own countrymen;” some devils perhaps that have power to hurt only their own subjects; as sins of weakness and ignorance, though they are enough to condemn an unregenerate man, yet we hope, through the merits of Christ into whom he is ingrafted, *οὐ λίαν ἀδικούσι πατάξαντες*, “shall do little hurt to the regenerate,” unless it be only to keep him humble, to cost him more sighs and prayers. But then, saith the same Apollonius^d there, your Babylonian snakes that are quite contrary, do no great hurt to their own countrymen, but are present death to strangers; and of this number it is to be feared may presumption prove, and spiritual pride; sins that the *ἐπιχώριοι*, the devil’s natives, ordinary habitual sinners need not much to fear; but to the stranger, and him that is come from afar, thinking himself, as St. Paul was, dropped out of the third heaven, and therefore far enough from the infernal country, it is to be feared I say, they may do much mischief to them. And therefore as Porphyry^e says of Plotinus in his life, and that for his commendation, that he was not ashamed to suck when he was eight years old, but as he went to the schools frequently diverted to his nurse; so will it concern us for the getting of a consistent firm habit of soul, not to give over the nurse when we are come to age and years in the spirit, to account ourselves babes in our virility, and be perpetually a calling for the dug, the “sincere milk of the word,” of the sacraments, of the Spirit, and that without any coyness or shame, be we in our own conceits, nay, in the truth, never so perfect, full-grown men in Christ Jesus.

[2 Cor. xii.
2.]

[1 Pet. ii.
2.]

And so much be spoken of the first point proposed, the Pharisee’s flattering misconceit of his own estate; and therein implicitly of the Christian’s premature deceivable persuasions of himself; 1. thinking well of one’s-self on what grounds soever; 2. overprizing of his own worth and graces; 3. his opinion of the consistency and immutability of his condition, without either thought of what is past, or fear of what is to come. Many other misconceits may be observed, if not in the Pharisee, yet in his parallel the ordinary confident Christian; as 1. that God’s decree of election is terminated in their

^d Cap. 12. [ibid.]

^e [In vita Plotini, § 3.]

particular and individual entities, without any respect to their qualifications and demeanours : 2. that all Christian faith is nothing but assurance, a thing which I touched *ἐν παρήργῳ*, in the preface, and can scarce forbear now I meet with it again : 3. that the gospel consists all of promises of what Christ will work in us, no whit of precepts or prohibitions : 4. that it is a state of ease altogether and liberty, no whit of labour and subjection ; but the Pharisee would take it ill if we should digress thus far, and make him wait for us again at our return. We hasten therefore to the second part, the *τὸ ῥητὸν*, or natural importance of the words, and there we shall find him standing apart, and thanking God only perhaps in compliment ; his posture and language give notice of his pride, the next thing to be touched upon.

Pride is a vice either 1. in our natures, 2. in our educations, or 3. taken upon us for some ends : the first is a disease of the soul, which we are inclined to by nature ; but actuated by a full diet, and inflation of the soul, through taking in of knowledge, virtue, or the like ; which is intended indeed for nourishment for the soul, but through some vice in the digestive faculty, turns all into air and vapours, and windiness, whereby the soul is not fed but distended, and not filled but troubled, and even tortured out of itself. To this first kind of pride may be accommodate many of the old fancies of the poets and philosophers, the giants fighting with God, i. e. the ambitious daring approaches of the soul toward the unapproachable light, which cost the angels so dear, and all mankind in Eve, when she ventured to taste of the tree of knowledge. Then the fancy of the heathens mentioned by Athenagoras^f, that the souls of those giants were devils ; that it is the devil indeed, that old serpent, that did in Adam's time, and doth since animate and actuate this proud soul, and set it a moving. And Philoponus^g saith that winds and tumours, i. e. lusts and passions, those troublesome impressions in the soul of man, are the acceptablest sacrifices, the highest feeding to the devils ; nay, to the very damned in hell, who rejoice as heartily to hear of the con-

^f [Legat. pro Christianis, p. 303. C. Comment. in Aristot. de Animâ præf. (ad calcem op. S. Justini.)] ^g [Refers probably to Philoponus, *prope fin.*]

^g [Refers probably to Philoponus,

version of one virtuous, or learned man to the devil, of such a brave proselyte, I had almost said, as the angels in heaven at the repentance and conversion of a sinner. This is enough I hope to make you keep down this boiling and tumultuousness of the soul, lest it make you either a prey, or else companions for devils; and that is but a hard choice, nay, a man had far better be their food than their associates, for then there might be some end hoped for by being devoured; but that they have a villainous quality in their feeding, they bite perpetually but never swallow, all jaws and teeth, but neither throats nor stomachs; which is noted perhaps by that phrase in the Psalmist, "Death gnaweth upon the wicked;" is perpetually a gnawing, but never devours or puts over.

[Ps. xlix.
14.]

Pride in our education is a kind of tenderness and chillness in the soul, that some people by perpetual softness are brought up to, that makes them incapable and impatient of any corporal or spiritual hardness; a squeasiness and rising up of the heart against any mean, vulgar or mechanical condition of men; abhorring the foul clothes and rags of a beggar, as of some venomous beast: and consequently as supercilious and contemptuous of any piece of God's service, which may not stand with their ease and state, as a starched gallant is of any thing that may disorder his dress. Thus are many brought up in this city to a loathing and detestation of many Christian duties, of alms-deeds, and instructing their families in points of religion; of visiting and comforting the sick, nay, even of the service of God, if they may not keep their state there; but specially of the public prayers of the Church, nothing so vulgar and contemptible in their eyes as that. But I spare you, and the Lord in mercy do so also.

The third kind of pride is a supercilious affected haughtiness, that men perhaps meekly enough disposed by nature, are fain to take upon them for some ends, a solemn censorious majestic garb, that may entitle them to be patriots of such or such a faction; to gain a good opinion with some, whose good opinion may be their gain. Thus was Mahomet fain to take upon him to be a prophet, and pretend that it was discoursing with the angel Gabriel made him in that case, that his new wife might not know that he was epileptical, and so

repent of her match with a beggar, and a diseased person. And upon these terms Turkism first came into the world, and Mahomet was cried up μέγιστος προφήτης, the greatest prophet, (to omit other witness,) as the Saracen fragments tell us, that we have out of Euthymius. Thus are imperfections and wants, sometimes even diseases, both of body and mind, assumed and affected by some men to get authority to their persons, and an opinion of extraordinary religion; but rather perhaps more oil to their cruse, or custom to their trading. But not to flutter thus at large any longer, or pursue the commonplace in its latitude, the Pharisee's pride here expresseth itself in three things; 1. his posture, standing apart; 2. his manner of praying altogether by way of thanksgiving; 3. his malicious contemptuous eye upon the publican. The first of these may be aggravated against the schismatic that separates from the Church, or customs, but especially service and prayers of the Church. It is pride certainly that makes this man set himself thus apart, whereas the very first sight of that holy place strikes the humble publican upon the knees of his heart afar off; as soon as he was crept within the gates of the temple, he is more devout in the porch than the Pharisee before the altar. The second, against those that come to God in the pomp of their souls, commending themselves to God, as we ordinarily use the phrase, commending indeed not to His mercy, but acceptance; not as objects of His pity, but as rich spiritual presents; not tears to be received into His bottle, but jewels for His treasure. Always upon terms of spiritual exultancy, what great things God hath done for their souls; how He hath fitted them for Himself; never with humble bended knees in acknowledgment of unworthiness with St. Paul, who cannot name that word, sinners, but most straight subsume in a parenthesis, of "whom I am the chief." And for the expression of the opinion he had of his own sanctity, is fain to coin a word for the purpose, ἐλαχιστότερος, a word not to be met with in all Greek authors again before he used it, "less than the least of the saints." And Jacob in a like phrase, "I am less than all Thy mercies." The Litany that begins and ends with so many repetitions importuning for mercy, even conjuring God by all powerful names of rich

I Tim. i.

15.

Eph. iii. 8.

Gen. xxxii.

10.

mercy that can be taken out of His exchequer, to “have mercy upon us miserable sinners,” this is set aside for the publican,—the sinner’s liturgy,—nay as some say, for the profane people only, not to pray but to swear by. But this only as *in transitu*, not to insist on. The third expression of his pride is his malicious sullen eye upon the publican, and that brings me to the next thing proposed at first, the Pharisee’s censoriousness and insinuated accusations of all others. “I am not as other men, extortioners, &c. . . . or even as this publican.”

It were an ingenious speculation, and that which would stand us in some stead in our spiritual warfare, to observe what hints and opportunities the devil takes from men’s natural inclinations to insinuate and ingratiate his temptations to them; how he applies still the fuel to the fire, the nourishment to the craving stomach; and accommodates all his proposals most seasonably and suitably to our affections; not to enlarge this *καθόλου*, in the gross, nor yet *καθέκαστον*, to each particular, you may have a *δέξις* or taste of it in the Pharisee.

To an easy-natured man whose soul is relaxed, and has its pores open to receive any infection or taint, the devil presents a multitude of adulterers, drunkards, &c., thereby to distil the poison softly into him; to sweeten the sin and secure him in the commission of it, by store of companions: but to a Pharisee,—rugged, singular, supercilious person,—he proposeth the same object under another colour. The many adulterers, &c., that are in the world, not to entice, but to incense him the more against the sin; not to his imitation, but to his spleen and hatred: that seeing he can hope to gain nothing upon him by bringing him in love with their sin, he may yet inveigle him by bringing him in hatred with their persons; and plunge him deeper through uncharitableness, than he could hope to do by lust. He knows well the Pharisee’s constitution is too austere to be caught with an ordinary bait, and therefore puts off his title of Beelzebub, prince of flies, as seeing that they are not now for his game; but trolls and baits him with a nobler prey, and comes in the person of a Cato or Aristarchus, a severe disciplinarian, a grave censor, or, as his most satanical name imports, *διάβολος*, an accuser,

and then the Pharisee bites presently. He could not expect to allure him forward, and therefore drives him as far back as he can; that so he may be the more sure of him at the rebound; as a skilful woodsman, that by windlassing presently gets a shoot, which, without taking a compass and thereby a commodious stand, he could never have obtained. The bare open visage of sin is not lovely enough to catch the Pharisee, it must be varnished over with a show of piety; with a colour of zeal and tenderness in God's cause, and then, the very devilishest part of the devil, his malice and uncharitableness, shall go down smoothly with him. And that this stratagem may not be thought proper to the meridian only where the Pharisee lived, Leo¹ within five hundred years after Christ, and other of the fathers, have observed the same frequently practised by the devil among the primitive Christians; *ut quos vincere flamma ferroque non poterat, ambitione inflaret, virus invidiæ infunderet, et sub falsa Christiani nominis professione corrumperet*: that they whom persecution could not affright, ambition may puff up, envy poison, and a false opinion of their own Christian purity betray to all the malice in the world. Thus have heretics and sectaries, in all ages, by appropriating to themselves those titles that are common to all the children of God, left none for any other, but of contumely and contempt: as soon as they fancy to themselves a part of the spirit of God, taken upon them the monopoly of it also. Thus could not the Valentinians^{*} be content to be πνευματικοὶ themselves; but all the world beside must be ψυχικὸς and χαϊκὸς, animal and earthly. It were long to reckon up to you the idioms and characters that heretics have usurped to themselves in opposition and reproach, and even defiance of all others; the Pharisee's *separati*, Sadducee's *justi*, Novatian's *καθαροὶ, puri*, Messalian's *precantes*. As if these several virtues, separation from the world, love of justice, purity, daily exercise of prayer, were nowhere to be found but amongst them. Even that judicious, learned, eloquent, yea and godly father Tertullian¹, is caught in this pitfall; as soon as he began to relish Montanus's heresy, he straight changeth his style,

¹ S. Leo Magn. [cf. supr. p. 406.] ch. vi.]

^{*} [S. Irenæus cont. Hæres., lib. i. ¹ [Tertull. De Jejun. ad init.]

nos spirituales, and all other orthodox Christians *psychici*, animal, carnal men. The devil could not be content that he had gained him to Montanism,—an heresy which it is confessed only a superlative care of chastity, abstinence, and martyrdom, brought him to,—but he must rob him of his charity too, as well as his religion. Not to keep any longer on the wing in pursuit of this censorious humour in the Pharisee and primitive heretics, the present temper and constitution of the Church of God will afford us plenty of observation to this purpose. Amongst other crimes with which the Reformation charge the Romanists, what is there that we so importunately require of them as their charity! that seeing with the apostolical seat they have seized upon the keys of heaven also, they would not use this power of theirs so intemperately, as to admit none but their own proselytes into those gates, which Christ hath opened to all believers. For this cause, saith Eulogius^m in Photius, were the keys given to Peter, not to John or any other, because Christ foresaw Peter would deny Him, that so by the memory of his own failings, he might learn humanity to sinners, and be more free of opening the gates of heaven, because he himself,—had it not been for special mercy,—had been excluded; other Apostles, saith he, having never fallen so foully, *τάχα ἂν ἀποτομώτερον αὐτοῖς διεκέχρηντο*, “might like enough have used sinners more sharply:” but it was not probable that Peter would be such a severe Cato; and yet there is not a more unmerciful man under heaven than he that now tyrannizeth in his chair. Spalatensis indeed, after his revolt from us, could ingeniously confess, that he could have expected comfortably, and perhaps have been better pleased, to have been saved in the Church of England, with a thousand pound a year, as in the Roman with five hundred pound. But do not all others of them count this no less than heresy in him thus to hope? Cudsemiusⁿ the Jesuit denies the English

^m [ὅτι διὰ τοῦτο, φησὶν, οὐτε πρὸς Ἰωάννην, οὐτε πρὸς ἕτερον τινα τῶν μαθητῶν ἐφη ὁ σωτὴρ τό· καὶ δώσω σοι τὰς κλείς τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν, καὶ τὰ ἐξῆς· ἀλλ’ ἢ πρὸς Πέτρον, ὅς ἐμελλε τῷ τῆς ἀνοήσεως περιπίπτειν ὀλισθήματι, καὶ διὰ δακρύων καὶ μετανοίας ἀποπίπτειν τὸ ἁμάρτημα, ἵνα τῷ καθ’ ἑαυτὸν ὑπο-

δείγματι πρὸς τοὺς ἐξαμαρτάνοντας φιλανθρωπότερον διατίθειτο· οἱ γὰρ ἄλλοι ἀπείραστοι γεγενηκότες, τάχα ἂν ἀποτομώτερον αὐτοῖς διεκέχρηντο.—Eulogius ap. Photium, Biblioth., p. 1600. ed. Hoeschel.]

ⁿ [De desperata Calvini Causa, lib. i. c. 11.]

nation to be heretics, because they remain under a continual succession of bishops. But alas! how few be there of them, which have so much charity to afford us! What fulminations and clattering of clouds is there to be heard in that horizon! What anathematizing of heretics, i. e. Protestants! what excommunicating them without any mercy, first out of the Church, then out of the book of life; and lastly, where they have power, out of the land of the living! And yet, would they be as liberal to us poor Protestants, as they are to their own stews and seminaries of all uncleanness, then should we be stored with indulgences. But it was Tertullian's^o of old, that there is no mercy from them to be expected, who have no crime to lay against us but that we are true Christians. If they would but allow one corner of heaven to receive penitent humble Protestants, labouring for good works, but depending on Christ's merit; if they would not think us past hopes, or prayers, there might be possibly hoped some means of uniting us all in one fold. But this precious Christian grace of charity being now so quite perished from off the earth, what means have we left us, but our prayers, to prepare or mature this reconciliation? Shall we then take heart also, and bring in our action of trespass? Shall we sit and pen our railing accusation in the form that Christ uses against the Pharisees, "Woe unto you Scribes Matt. xxiii. 13. and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men, for you neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in?" This we might do upon better grounds, were we so revengefully disposed; but we fear to incur our Saviour's censure, "And Luke ix. 55. He turned and rebuked them, saying, Ye know not what manner of spirits ye are of." We should much mistake our Christian spirit, if we should not in return to their curses, intercede with God in prayer for them; first, that He will bestow on them the grace of meekness or charity; then, sincerity and uprightness, without wilful blindness and partiality; and lastly, to intercede for the salvation of all our souls together. And this is the only way St. Paul hath left us, "by returning them good to melt them," hoping and pray- Rom. xii. 20.

^o [Cf. Tertull. Apoll., c. 2.]

[Prov. xxv.
15.]

ing in the words of Solomon, that by long forbearing this great Prince of the West will be persuaded; and that our soft tongues may in time break the bone. But whilst we preach charity to them, shall we not betray partiality in ourselves, by passing over that uncharitable fire that is breaking out in our own chimneys? It were to be wished that this Christian grace, which is liberal enough of itself, would be entertained as gratefully as it is preached; we should not then have so many בני אש, “sons of fire” amongst us as we have; who being inflamed, some with faction, others with ignorant prejudice, others with doting on their own abilities, fall out into all manner of intemperate censures, דברי הרב, “words of the sword,” all sharp contumelious invectives against all persons, or doctrines, or lives that are not ordered or revised by them. For what Photius^p out of Josephus observes among others to have been one main cause or prognostic of the destruction of Jerusalem, the civil wars betwixt the ζηλωται and the σικάριοι, the zealots and the cut-throats, pray God we find not the same success amongst us. Whilst the zealots, saith he, fell on the sicarii, the whole body of the city, πικρῶς καὶ ἀνηλεῶς ἐσπαράττετο, “was bitterly and unmercifully butchered betwixt them;” and under one of those two names all the people were brought to suffer their part in the massacre. I desire not to chill or damp you with unnecessary fears, or to suspect that our sins shall be so unlimited as utterly to outvie and overreach God’s mercies. But, beloved, this ill blood that is generally nourished amongst us, if it be not a prognostic of our fate, is yet an ill symptom of our disease. These convulsions and distortions of one member of the body from another as far as it can possibly be distended, this burning heat, and from thence raving and disquietness of the soul, are certainly no very comfortable symptoms. When the Church and kingdom must be dichotomized, precisely divided into two extreme parts, and all moderate persons by each extreme tossed to the other with furious prejudice; must brand all for heretics or carnal persons that will not undergo their razor; and then, the contrary extreme, censure and scoff at their preciseness that will not bear them company to every kind of riot; these, beloved,

^p [Biblioth., p. 36. ed. Hoeschel.]

are shrewd feverish distempers, pray God they break not forth into a flame. When the boat that goes calmly with the stream, in the midst of two impetuous rowers, shall be assaulted by each of them, for opposing or affronting each; when the moderate Christian shall be branded on the one hand for preciseness, on the other for intemperance, on the one side for a puritan, on the other for a papist, or a remonstrant; when he that keeps himself from either extreme, shall yet be entitled to both; what shall we say is become of that ancient primitive charity and moderation? The use, beloved, that I desire to make of all this, shall not be to declaim at either; but only by this compass to find out the true point that we must fail by. By this, saith Aristotle^q, you shall know the golden mediocrity, that it is complained on both sides, as if it were both extremes; that may you define to be exact liberality, which the covetous man censures for prodigality, and the prodigal for covetousness. And this shall be the sum not only of my advice to you, but prayers for you; that in the Apostle's phrase, "your moderation may be known unto all men," by this livery and cognizance, that you are indited by both extremes. And if there be any such Satanical art crept in amongst us, of authorizing errors or sins on one side, by pretending zeal and earnestness against their contraries; as Photius^r observes that it was a trick of propagating heresies, by writing books entitled to the confutation of some other heresy; the Lord grant that this evil spirit may be either laid or cast out; either fairly led, or violently hurried out of our coasts.

I have done with the Pharisee's censoriousness; I come now in the last place to the ground, or rather occasion of it; his seeing the publican,—comparing himself with notorious sinners; "I thank Thee that," &c.

That verse which St. Paul cites out of Menander's *Thais*,^{1 Cor. xv. 33.} that "wicked communication corrupts good manners," is grounded on this moral essay, that nothing raiseth up so much to good and great designs as emulation; that he that casts himself upon such low company, that he hath nothing to imitate or aspire to in them, is easily persuaded to give

^q Eth. ii. 7.

^r [Biblioth., p. 399. ad med.; and p. 259. ad fin.]

over any further pursuit of virtue, as believing that he hath enough already, because none of his acquaintance hath any more: thus have many good wits been cast away, by falling unluckily into bad times, which could yield them no hints for invention, no examples of poetry, nor encouragement for any thing that was extraordinary. And this is the Pharisee's fate in my text, that looking upon himself, either in the deceivable glass of the sinful world, or in comparison with notorious sinners, extortioners, adulterers, publicans, sets himself off by these foils, finds nothing wanting in himself, so is solaced with a good comfortable opinion of his present estate, and a slothful negligence of improving it. And this, beloved, is the ordinary lenitive which the devil administers to the sharp unquiet diseases of the conscience, if at any time they begin to rage,—the only conserve that he folds his bitterest receipts in, that they may go down undiscerned,—that we are not worse than other men; that we shall be sure to have companions to hell; nay, that we need not neither at all fear that danger; for if heaven gates be so strait as not to receive such sinners as we, the rooms within are like to be but poorly furnished with guests; the marriage feast will never be caten, unless the lame and cripples in the street or hospital be fetched in to fill the table. But, beloved, the comforts with which the devil furnisheth these men are,—if they were not merely feigned and fantastical,—yet very beggarly and lamentable, such as Achilles in Homer^s would have scorned, only to be chief among the dead, or princes and eminent persons in hell. We must set our emulation higher than so, somewhat above the ordinary pitch or mark. Let our designs fly at the same white that the skilfullest marksmen in the army of saints and martyrs have aimed at before us; that the *ἰσκηται*, and *ἀθληται*, and *τροπαιοφόροι* of the Church, the religious exercisers and champions and trophy-bearers of this holy martial field have dealt in. It is a poor boast to have outgone heathens and Turks in virtue and good works; to be taller than the dwarfs, as it were, and pigmies of the world; we must not be thus content, but outvie even the sons of Anak, those tall, giantly, supererogatory under-

^s [Cf. Hom. *Odyssey*, xi. 491.]

takings of the proudest, nay, humblest Romanists. O what a disgrace will it be for us Protestants at the dreadful day of doom! O what an accession not only to our torments, but our shame, and indignation at ourselves, to see the expectation of meriting in a papist, nay, the desire of being counted virtuous in a heathen, attended with a more pompous train of charitable magnificent deeds, of constant magnanimous sayings, than all our faith can shew, or vouch for us! Shall not the Romanist triumph and upbraid us in St. James's language, "Thou hast faith and I have works," and all that Jam. ii. 18. we can fetch out of St. Paul not able to stop his mouth from going on, "shew me thy faith without thy works," as our English reads it out of the Syriac and vulgar Latin, "and I will shew thee my faith by my works?" It will be but a nice distinction for thee then to say, that works are to be separated from the act of justification, when they are found separated *a supposito*, from the person also. But not to digress; the Pharisee seems here pretty well provided,—no extortioner, no adulterer, guilty of no injustice. And how many be there among you that cannot go thus far with the Pharisee! Some vice or other perhaps there is, that agrees not with your constitution or education; drunkenness is not for one man's turn, prodigality for another's, and I doubt not but that many of you are as forward as the Pharisee to thank God, or rather require God to thank them, that they are not given to such or such a vice. But if you were to be required here to what the Pharisee undertakes, if you were to be arraigned at that severe tribunal, I say not concerning your thoughts and evil communications, but even the gross actual, nay, habitual sins; if a jury or a rack were set to enquire into you thoroughly, how many of you durst pretend to the Pharisee's innocence and confidence, that you are not extortioners, unjust, adulterers! Nay, how many be there that have all the Pharisee's pride and censoriousness, and all these other sins too into the vantage! Certainly there is not one place in the Christian world that hath more reason to humble itself for two or all three of these vices, than this city wherein you live. I am sorry I have said this, and I wish it were uncharitably spoken of me; but though it will not become me to have thought it of you, yet it will

concern you to suspect it of yourselves, that by acknowledging your guilts you may have them cancelled, and by judging yourselves, prevent being judged of the Lord. And here [1 Cor. xi. 31.] St. Chrysostom's^t caution will come in very seasonably toward a conclusion of all, that the publican's sins be not preferred before the Pharisee's works, but only before his pride. It is not his store of moral virtues that was like to prove the Pharisee's undoing, but his overvaluing them; *ταράττει οὐ τὰ πράγματα, ἀλλὰ δόγματα*, saith the Stoic^u, applicable to this also. It is not his innocence that hath so encumbered him all this while, but his opinion of it. The fasting and the tithing must not be cast away, because the Pharisee was proud of them; this were a furious discipline which would down with all violently, that had ever been abused to idolatry or sin; or with him in Plutarch^x, that because poetry had some ill consequences sometimes, would have the muses and their favourites dispatched into Epicurus's boat. His counsel was more seasonable, that, to prevent drunkenness, appointed them to mix water with their wine, that the mad god might be allayed with a tame sober one; and that is the caution that I told you of, that you abstract the Pharisee's works from his pride, and then borrow the publican's humility from his works; that you come to the temple of God with all the provision a Pharisee can boast of, and then lay it down all at the publican's feet, and take up his *miserere*, his sighs, his dejection, his indignation at himself instead of it, then shall you be fit to approach to that *templum misericordiae* which Gerson speaks of, *sine simulachro, &c.*, that had not a picture or image of a saint in it, no manner of ostentation or show of works, *non sacrificiis sed gemitibus, &c.*, not to be visited with sacrifices but sighs, not to be filled with triumphant *ἐπινίκια*, songs of rejoicing and victories, but with the calm and yet ravishing rhetoric of the publican, *θεὸς ἰλάσθητί μοι [τῷ] ἁμαρτωλῷ*, "Lord be merciful to me a sinner." Even so, O Lord, deal Thou with us, according to Thy mercies; visit us with Thy salvation, draw us with Thy mercies, and enlighten us with Thy Spirit, Thy humbling Spirit to season us with a sense of our sins and un-

^t [De Incomprehens. Dei Naturâ, Hom. v. Op., tom. i. p. 490, C.]

^x [Quom. Adolesc. Poet. aud. debeat., § 1. tom. vi. p. 53. ed. Reisk.]

^u Arrian Epict. Dissert. [i. 19. 7.]

worthiness ; Thy sanctifying Spirit to fill us here with all holy sincere requisite graces ; and in the Spirit of Thy power to accomplish us hereafter with that immarcessible crown of glory.

Now to Him, &c.

SERMON XXI.

MATT. iii. 3.

Prepare ye the way of the Lord.

THAT our preface may afford some light to our proceeding, that it may prepare the way and stand us in stead hereafter in our discourse of preparation, we will employ it to observe that natural progress and method of all things, which consists in steps and degrees: travelling on by those gists which nature hath set them from one stage to another, from a lower degree of perfection to an higher, built upon this ground of nature, that the first things are always least perfect, yet absolutely necessary to the perfection of the last: and in sum, so much the more necessary, by how much less perfect. Thus is the foundation more necessary to an house than the walls, and the first stone than the whole foundation, because the walls are necessary only to the setting on of the roof, not to the laying of the foundation; the foundation necessary both to the walls and roof, but not to the first stone; because that may be laid without the whole foundation: but the first stone necessary to all the rest, and therefore of greatest and most absolute necessity. The course of nature is delineated and expressed to us by the like proceedings and method of arts and sciences. So those general principles that are most familiar to us, are the poorest and yet most necessary rudiments required to any deeper speculation: the first stage of the understanding in its peregrination or travel into those foreign parts of more hidden knowledge is usually very short; and it is most requisite it should be so; for beginning at home with some *κοινὰ ἔννοιαι*, and taking its rise at its own threshold, thereby it advances the length, and secures the success of the future voyage. Thus in politics hath the

body of laws from some thin beginnings under Lycurgus, Solon, Phaleas, and the like, by daily accessions and further growth at last increased into a fair bulk; every age perfecting somewhat, and by that degree of perfection making the matter capable of a further; so that the very politics themselves, as well as each commonwealth, have been observed to have their infancy, youth, and manhood, the last of which is the only perfect state; which yet this body had never attained to, had it not been content to submit itself to the imperfection of the former. Thus also in practical philosophy there be some *præambula operationis*, some common precepts which must be instilled into us, to work a consistency in our tempers firm enough for the undertaking and performing all moral tasks. One excellent one Aristotle^a learnt from Plato, in the second of the Ethics, *χαίρειν τε καὶ λυπεῖσθαι οἷς δεῖ*, a skill of ordering those two passions aright, joy and sorrow, an habit never to rejoice or grieve but on just occasion: which lesson we must con perfectly when we are young, and then with years an easy discipline will bring on virtue of its own accord. Lastly, in the transcendent knowledge of metaphysics, which Aristotle would fain call wisdom, it is the philosophers' labour, which they were very sedulous in, to invent and set down rules to prepare us for that study: the best that Aristotle hath is in the third of Metaph.^b, to examine and inform ourselves, *περὶ ὧν ἀπορῆσαι δεῖ πρῶτον*, "which things are chiefly worth doubting of," and searching after: in which one thing if we would observe his counsel, if we would learn to doubt only of those things which are worth our knowledge, we should soon prove better scholars than we are. Jamblichus^c, beyond all the rest, most to the purpose prescribes retiredness and contempt of the world, that so we might *ταῖς διεξόδοις τοῦ νοῦ ζῆν*, ever "live and be nourished by the excursions of the mind towards God;" where indeed he speaks more like a Christian than a Pythagorean, as if he had learnt Christ, to deny himself and the world, and follow Him, and intended to come to that pitch and *ἀκμὴ* which St. Paul speaks of, "The life which I now live in the flesh I Gal. ii. 20 live by faith," &c. But to conclude this *præcognoscendum*,

^a [Cf. Arist. Nic. Eth., lib. ii. c. 2.]

^b [Arist. Metaph. B. c. 1.]

^c Jambl. Protrept., pp. 36, 37.

[1 Cor. xv.
46.]

there be throughout all works of nature and imitations of art some imperfect grounds on which all perfection is built; some common expressions with which the understanding is first signed; some ground-colours without the laying on of which no perfect effigies or portraiture can be drawn. Nay thus it is in some measure in spiritual matters also; we are men before we are Christians: there is a natural life and there is a spiritual life. And as in the resurrection, so also in the spiritual *παλιγγενεσία* of the soul, “first that which is natural, and after that which is spiritual:” and in the spiritual life there be also its periods, the infancy, the youth and virility of the spirit; the first being most imperfect yet most necessary, and preparing the way to the last perfection. To bring all home to the business in hand; thus did it not befit the Saviour of the world to come abruptly into it; to put on flesh as soon as flesh had put on sin; the business was to be done by degrees, and after it had been a long time in working, for the final production of it, the fulness of time was to be expected. The law had its time of pædagogoy to declare itself, and to be obeyed as His usher for many years; and after all this, He appears not in the world till His Baptist hath proclaimed Him; He makes not toward His court till His harbinger hath taken up the rooms. He comes not to inhabit either in the greater or lesser Jewry, the world or man’s heart, till the precursor hath warned all to make ready for Him; and this is the voice of the precursor’s sermon and the words of my text, “Prepare ye the way of the Lord.”

Instead of dividing the words I shall unite them, and after I have construed them to you, contrive that into one body which would not conveniently be dismembered. *Ἐτοιμάζειν* signifies to fit, to prepare, to make ready. “Ye” are all those to whom Christ should ever come. “The ways of the Lord” are whatsoever is capable of receiving of Christ or His gospel, peculiarly the hearts of the elect. The form of speech, imperative, notes the whole *complexum* to be one single duty required of all the Baptist’s and my auditors, *sub hac forma*, that every man’s heart must be prepared for the receiving of Christ, or, punctually to imitate the order of the words in my text, the preparation of the soul is required for Christ’s

birth in us. For there is in every elect vessel a spiritual *ἐνσάρκωσις*, or “mystical incarnation” of Christ, where the soul, like Mary, is first overshadowed by the Holy Ghost, then conceives, then carries in the womb, grows big, and at last falls into travail and brings forth Christ. My text goes not thus far to bring to the birth, neither will I. My discourse shall be happy if it may be His Baptist, His *πρόδρομος* in your hearts, to prepare them for His birth, which I shall endeavour to do, first, by handling preparation in general; 2. the preparation here specified, of the soul; 3. in order to Christ’s birth in us.

And first of preparation in general; *ἐτοιμάζετε*, “prepare ye,” or make ready. The necessity of this performance to any undertaking may appear by those several precedaneous methods in common life, which have nothing in themselves to ingratiate them unto us, but cost much toil and trouble, yet notwithstanding are submitted to. If the earth would answer the farmer’s expectation without any culture or husbandry, he would never be so prodigal towards it. But seeing it hath proposed its fruitfulness under condition of our drudgery, we plough, and harrow, and manure, and drain, and weed it, or else we are sure to fare the worse at harvest. The variety of preparations in these low affairs was by Cato and Varro and Columella accounted a pretty piece of polite necessary learning. And a Christian, if he will apply their rules to his spiritual Georgics, the culture of his soul, shall be able to husband it the better; and by their directions have a further insight into those fallow grounds of his own heart, which the prophet ^[Hos. x. 12.] speaks of. It were a great, and perhaps unnecessary journey, to trace over the whole world of creatures to perfect this observation: almost every passage of nature will furnish you with an example. Hence is it that they that had nothing but natural reason to instruct them, were assiduous in this practice, and never ventured on any solemn business without as solemn endeavours to fit themselves for the work they took in hand; those series of preparations before the ancient *athletica*, as anointing, and bathing, and rubbing, and dust, it were fit enough for a sermon to insist on the exercise which they prepared, for being reputed sacred and parts of their solemnest worship; and the moral of them would prove of

good use to discipline, and to bring us up to those spiritual *agones* mentioned in Scripture, as *πάλη*, Eph. vi. 12, *πυγμή*, 1 Cor. ix. 26, and in the same place *δρόμος ἐν σταδίῳ*, and its preparative *ὑπωπιασμός*, wrestling, cuffing, and running, three of the five Olympian games adopted as it were into the Church, and spiritualized by the Apostle for our imitation. But to pass by these and the like as less apposite for our discourse, what shall we think? Was it superstition, or rather mannerliness, that made the Grecian priests so rub and wash and scour themselves before they would meddle with a sacrifice? *δεισιδαιμονία* it was, and that we construe superstition; but indeed it signifies an awe and reverence to the deity they worship, and a fear and a care lest the unpreparedness of the priest should pollute their sacrifice; as it is much to be feared that our holiest duties, for want of this care, are turned into sin; the vanities and faults of our very prayers adding to the number of those guilts we pray against, and every sacrifice, even of atonement itself, needing some expiation. To look awhile on the highest part, and as it were the sacraments of their religion, their *Eleusinia sacra*, resembling in one respect Christian baptism, in another holy orders; what a multitude of rites and performances were required of every one before his admission to them! For their *μυστήρια* being divided into two classes, the lesser or lower sort were *prælia* to the greater, or as the scholiast on Aristophanes^d hath it more clearly to our purpose, *προκάθαρσις καὶ προάγνευσις τῶν μεγάλων*, “a premundation or presanctification” of them that sued to be admitted higher: as baptism, confirmation, and a Christian education in the Church, fits us for the participations of those mysteries which the other sacraments present to us, so that it punctually notes that preparation we here talk of: for before they were admitted to those grand *τελεταὶ* and *ἐποπτεία*, they were, saith Suidas, to spend a year or two in a lower form, undergo a shop of purgations, *λούτρα, καθάρσεις*, and many more; so that Tertullian^e could not without wonder and praise of their solemnities observe *tot suspiria exoptarum, et multam in adytis divinitatem*. It was no mean toil nor ordinary merit that was required to

Eph. vi.
12; 1 Cor.
ix. 26.

[Acts xvii.
22.]

^d [Plutarch. De Auditione. Op. tom. Plut. v. 846.]

vi p. 170. Reiske. Schol. on Aristoph.

^e Tertull., lib. i. in. Valent. ad init.

make them capable^f of these *ἀγίαι τελεταί*, as Aristophanes^g calls them. The ground of all the ceremony we may observe to be the natural impurity which the heathens themselves acknowledge to be in every man, as may appear most distinctly by Jamblichus^h, though they knew not clearly at what door it came in at; sure they were they found it there, and therefore their own reason suggested them that things of an excellent purity, of an inherent or at least an adherent sanctity, were not to be adventured on by an impure nature, *ἀλλὰ μετὰ τινῶν καθαρμῶν*, saith Clementⁱ, till it had by some laborious prescribed means somewhat rid itself of its pollutions; and this the barbarian did *μόνον λούτρῳ*, saith he, thinking the bare washing of the outward parts sufficient: but the Grecians, whom learning had made more substantial in their worship, required moreover an habituate temper of passions, *longam castimoniam et sedatam mentem*, that the inward calmness and serenity of the affections might perform the promises of the outward purity. In sum, when they were thus qualified and had fulfilled the period, or circle of their purgation required to their *μύησις*, they were at length admitted *intra adyta ad eoptica sacra*, where all the mysteries of their theology were revealed to them. All which seems to me—as much as can be expected from their dim imperfect knowledge—to express the state of grace and saving knowledge in the world; and also the office of ministering in sacred things, into which no man was thought fit to be received or initiated but he which had undergone a prenticeship of purgations: for although those Eleusinia of theirs, at a Christian's examination, would prove nothing but religious delusions, containing some prodigies of their mythical divinity; in sum, but grave specious puppets and solemn serious nothing; yet hence it may appear that the eye of nature, though cheated in the main, taking that for a sacred mystery which was but a prodigious vanity, yet kept itself constant in its ceremonies; would not dare or hope to approach abruptly to any thing which it could believe to be holy. Now shall we be more saucy in our devotions, and insolent in our approaches to

^f [Plutarch. *ibid.*]^g [Aristoph. *Nub.* 304.]^h Protrept., [explanation of Sym-bol. *iv.*]ⁱ [Clemens Alexandr. *Strom.*, lib. v. cap. 11. § 71. p. 689.]

either the throne of majesty or grace of our true God, than they were to the unprofitable empty *τελευταί* of their false? Shall we call the mannerliness of the heathen up in judgment against the Christian rudeness? It will be an horrid exprobration at the day of doom, when a neat, washed, respectful Gentile shall put a swinish, miry, negligent Christian to shame; such a one who never took so much care to trim himself to entertain the Bridegroom, as the heathen did to adore an empty gaud, a vain ridiculous bauble. Yet is not their example prescribed you as an accomplished pattern, as the pitch to aim at and drive no higher: but rather as a *στηλιτευτικόν*, a sarcasm or contumely engraved in marble to upbraid you mightily if you have not gone so far. All that they practised was but superficial and referring to the body, and therein the washing of the outsides; yours must be inward, and of the soul; which is the next word in the doctrine, the specification of it by the subject noted in the text by *τὴν ὁδόν*, "the way," and expressed in the latter part of the subject of my proposition, the preparation of the soul.

This preparation consists in removing those burdens, and wiping off those blots of the soul, which any way deface or oppress it; in scouring off that rust and filth which it contracted in the womb, and driving it back again as near integrity as may be. And this was the aim and business of the wisest among the ancients, who conceived it possible fully to repair what was lost, because the privation was not total; and finding some sparks of the primitive flame still warm within them, endeavoured and hoped hard to enliven them. To this purpose a great company of them, saith St. Austin^j, puzzled themselves in a design of purging the soul *per theourgias, et consecrationes theurgicas*, but all in vain, as Porphyry himself confesses; "No man," saith he, "by this theurgic magic could ever purge himself the nearer to God, or wipe his eyes clear enough for such a vision." They indeed went more probably to work, which used no other magic or exorcism to cast out these devils, to clear and purge the soul, but only their reason, which the moralist set up and maintained against *θυμὸς* and *ἐπιθυμία*, the two ringleaders of sensuality. To this purpose did Socrates, the first and wisest

^j [Cf. S. August. De Civit. Dei, lib. x. c. 9. Op., tom. vii. p. 245.]

moralist, furnish and arm the reasonable faculty with all helps and defensions that philosophy could afford it, that it might be able to shake off and disburden itself of those encumbrances which naturally weighed and pressed it downward, *ut exoneratus animus naturali vigore in aeterna se attolleret*^k: where if that be true which some observe of Socrates, that his professing to know nothing was because all was taught him by his *δαιμόνιον*, I wonder not that by others his *δαιμόνιον* is called *θεός*, and consecrated into a deity: for certainly never devil bore so much charity to mankind, and treachery to his own kingdom, as to instruct him in the cleansing of his soul: whereby those strongholds of Satan are undermined, which cannot subsist but on a stiff and deep clay foundation. From these beginnings of Socrates, the moralists ever since have toiled hard at this task, to get the soul *ἐκ γενέσεως*, as Jamblichus^l phrases it, out of that corruption of its birth, that impurity born with it, which the soul contracts by its conversation with the body, and from which, they say, only philosophy can purge it. For it is Philoponus's^m observation, that that canon of the physicians, "that the inclinations of the soul necessarily follow the temper of the body," is by all men set down with that exception implied, "unless the man have studied philosophy," for that study can reform the other, *καὶ μὴ ἔπεσθαι ποιεῖν*, "make the soul contemn the commands," and arm it against the influences and poisons and infections of the body. In sum, the main of philosophy was to this purpose, to take off the soul from those corporeal dependencies, and so in a manner restore it to its primitive self; that is, to some of that divine perfection with which it was infused, for then is the soul to be beheld in its native shape, when it is stripped of all its passions. At other times you do not see the soul, but some froth and weeds of it; as the gray part of the sea is not to be called sea, ἀλλὰ τὰ φυκία ἃ περιβέβληται, "some scurf and foam and weeds that lie on the top of it." So then to this spiritualizing of the soul, and recovering it to the simplicity of its essence, their main precepts were to quell and suppress τὸν ἐν ψυχῇ

^k [S. Augustin., De Civit. Dei, lib. viii. c. 3.]

^l [Jambl. Protrept., c. iii.]

^m [Philoponus, Comment. in Aristot. De Anima, on the words, *εἴκει δὲ τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς πάθη*.—De A., lib. i. c. 1.]

δῆμον, as Maximus Tyriusⁿ speaks, that turbulent, prachant, "common people of the soul," all the irrational affections, and reduce it εἰς πολιτεῖαν, "into a monarchy or regal government," where reason might rule lord and king. For whensoever any lower affection is suffered to do any thing there, saith Philoponus^o, "we do not work like men but some other creatures." Whosoever suffers their lower nutritive faculties to act freely, οὔτοι κινδυνεύουσιν ἀποδενδρωθῆναι, "these men are in danger to become trees:" that is, by these operations they differ nothing from mere plants. So those that suffer their sensitive appetites, lust and rage, to exercise at freedom, are not to be reckoned men, but beasts; τότε μόνον ὡς ἄνθρωποι, κ.τ.λ., "then only will our actions argue us men, when our reason is at the forge." This was the aim and business of philosophy, to keep us from unmanning ourselves, to restore reason to its sceptre, to rescue it from the tyranny of that most atheistical usurper, as Jamblichus calls the affections; and from hence he which lived according to those precepts of philosophy was said both by them and Clement, and the fathers, κατὰ νοῦν ζῆν, and in Austin, *secundum intellectum vivere*, to live according to the guidance of the reasonable soul. Which whosoever did, saith Plotinus, though by it in respect of divinity he was not perfect, yet at last should be sure to find a gracious providence, first to perfect, then to crown his natural moderate well-tempered endeavour, as Austin cites it out of him^p. This whole course and proceedings and assent of the soul, through these philosophical preparations to spiritual perfection, is summarily and clearly set down for us in Photius out of Isidorus^q, philosophically observed to consist in three steps, τὰ μὲν πρῶτα, κ.τ.λ. The first business of the soul is to call in those parts of it which were engaged in any foreign fleshly employ-

ⁿ Maximus Tyr. supr. p. 278.

^o [Plotinus, quoted by Philoponus, Comment. in Aristot. de Anima, f. 4. ed. Aldus.]

^p [S. August. De Civit. Dei, lib. x. c. 29, addressing Porphyry: Uteris etiam hoc verbo apertius, ubi Platonis sententiam sequens, nec ipse dubitas, in hac vita hominem nullo modo ad perfectionem sapientiæ pervenire, secundum intellectum tamen viventibus omne quod deest, providentiâ Dei et gra-

tiâ, post hanc vitam posse compleri.]

^q [αὐτὴν δὲ τὴν ψυχὴν ἐν ταῖς ἱεραῖς εὐχαῖς πρὸς ὅλον τὸ θεῖον πέλαγος εἶναι, τὰ μὲν πρῶτα συναγειρομένην ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος εἰς ἑαυτὴν, αἰθῆς δὲ ἐξισταμένην τῶν ἰδίων ἡθῶν, καὶ ἀναχαροῦσαν ἀπὸ τῶν λογικῶν ἐννοιῶν ἐπὶ τὰς τῷ νῷ συγγενεῖς, ἐκ δ' αὐτῶν ἐνθουσιῶσαν καὶ παραλλάττουσαν εἰς ἀήθη τινὰ γαλήνην θεοπρεπῆ καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρωπίνην.—S. Isidorus Pel. ap. Phot. Biblioth., p. 350. Bekker.]

ment, and retire and collect itself unto itself: and then secondly, it learns to quit itself, to put off the whole natural man, *ἴδια ἤθη*, “its own fashions” and conceits: all the notions, all the pride of human reason, and set itself on those things which are nearest kin to the soul, that is, spiritual affairs; and then thirdly, *ἐνθουσιᾷ καὶ παραλλάττει*, it falls “into holy enthusiasms and spiritual elevations,” which it continues, till it be changed and led into the calm and serenity above the state of man, agreeable to the tranquillity and peace which the gods enjoy. And could the philosophers be their own scholars, could they exhibit that felicity which they describe and fancy, they might glory in their morality, and indeed be said to have prepared and purged the soul for the receipt of the most pure and spiritual guest. But certainly their speculation outran their practice; and their very morality was but theoretical, to be read in their books and wishes far more legible than in their lives and their enjoyments. Yet some degrees also of purity, or at least a less measure of impurity they attained to, only upon the expectation and desire of happiness proposed to them upon condition of performance of moral precepts; for all things being indifferently moved to the obtaining of their *summum bonum*; all, I say, not only rational agents, *ἀλλὰ καὶ φύσει κινούμενα ἀλόγως*, as Andronicus saith on the Ethics^r, “which have nothing but nature to incite them to it;” the natural man may, upon a sight and liking of an happiness proposed on severe conditions, call himself into some degrees of moral temper, as best suiting to the performance of the means and obtaining of the end he looks for; and by this temper be said to be morally better than another, who hath not taken this course to subdue his passions. And this was evident enough among the philosophers, who were as far beyond the ordinary sort in severity of conversation, as depth of learning: and read them as profitable precepts in the example of their lives, as ever the schools breathed forth in their lectures. Their profession was incompatible with many vices, and would not suffer them to be so rich in variety of sins as the vulgar; and then whatsoever they thus did, an unregenerate Christian may surely perform in a far higher

^r [Andronicus in his Paraphrase of the Nic. Ethics ad init.]

measure, as having more choice of ordinary restraint from sin than ever had any heathen : for it will be much to our purpose to take notice of those ordinary restraints by which unregenerate men may be, and are curbed, and kept back from sinning ; and these, saith Austin, God affords to the very reprobates, *non continens in ira suas misericordias*. Much to this same purpose hath holy Maximus^s in those admirable sections, *περὶ ἀγάπης*, where most of the restraints he speaks of are competent to the unregenerate, *φόβος ἀνθρώπων, κ.τ.λ.* 1. Fear of men. 2. Denunciation of judgments from heaven. 3. Temperance and moral virtues : nay, sometimes other moral vices, as *κενοδοξία*, “vain-glory” or ostentation of integrity. 4. Natural impressions to do to others as we would be done to. 5. Clearness of judgment in discerning good from evil. 6. An expectation of a reward for any thing well done ; lastly, some gripes and twinges of the conscience : to all add a tender disposition ; a good Christian education ; common custom of the country where one lives, where some vices are out of fashion ; nay at last the word of God daily preached ; not a love, but servile fear of it. These, I say, and the like may outwardly restrain unregenerate men from riots ; may curb and keep them in, and consequently preserve the soul from that weight of the multitude of sins which press down other men to a desperation of mercy. Thus is one unregenerate man less engaged in sin than another, and consequently his soul less polluted ; and so in all likelihood more capable of the ordinary means of salvation, than the more stubborn habituate sinner ; when every aversion, every commission of every sin doth more harden against grace, more alien and set at a greater distance from heaven : and this briefly we call a moral preparation of the soul ; and a purging of it, though not absolutely from sin, yet from some measure of reigning sin, and disposing of it to a spiritual estate : and this is no more than I learn from Bradwardine in his lib. i. *de causa Dei*, ch. 37^t. A servile fear, a sight of some inconvenience, and moral habit of virtue, and the like, *multum retrahunt a peccato, inclinant ad opera bona, et sic ad charitatem, et gratiam, et opera vere grata preparant*

^s [S. Maximus, Centena Capita de Caritate, ii. §§ 23, 32.]

^t [Bradwardine, De Causa Dei, lib. i. c. 37. ad fin.]

et disponunt. And so I come to my last part, to shew of what use this preparation of the soul is, in order to Christ's birth in us, "The ways of the Lord."

I take no great joy in presenting controversies to your ears out of this place; yet seeing I am already fallen upon a piece of one, I must now go through it; and to quit it as soon as I can, present the whole business unto you in some few propositions, of which some I shall only recite as conceiving them evident enough by their own light: the rest I shall a little insist on, and then apply and drive home the profit of all to your affections. And in this pardon me, for certainly I should never have meddled with it, had not I resolved it a theory that most nearly concerned your practice, and a speculation that would instruct your wills as well as your understandings. The propositions which contain the sum of the business are these.

1. No preparation in the world can deserve or challenge God's sanctifying grace: "the Spirit bloweth where it listeth," and cannot by any thing in us be predetermined to its object or its work.

2. The Spirit is of power to work the conversion of any, the greatest, sinner; at one minute to strike the most obdurate heart and soften it, and out of the unnatural womb of stones, infinitely more unfruitful than barrenness and age had made the womb of Sarah, "to raise up children unto Abraham." According to the *ὑπόθεσις* of Aristotle, *νόσους ὑγιάζουσι πολλάκις ὅταν πολὺ ἐκστῆ τις*¹, "diseases are sometimes cured when the patient is at the extremity or height of danger," in an ecstacy and almost quite gone.

3. It is an ill consequence, that because God can and sometimes doth call unprepared sinners, therefore it is probable He will deal so with thee in particular, or with unprepared men in general. God doth not work in conversion as a physical agent, to the extent of His power, but according to the sweet disposition and counsel of His will.

4. In unprepared hearts there be many professed enemies to grace, ill dispositions, ambition, atheism, pride of spirit, and, in chief, an habit in a voluptuous settled course of sinning, an indefatigable resolute walking after their own lusts. And

¹ Problem. 1. § 2.

therefore there is very little hope that Christ will ever vouchsafe to be born in such polluted hardened souls. For it is Basil's^v observation that that speech of the fool's heart, "There is no God," was the cause that the Gentiles were given over to a reprobate sense, and fell headlong εἰς πάντα βδελύγματα, "into all manner of abominations." Hence it is that Jobius in Photius^x observes that in Scripture some are called "dogs," some "unworthy to receive the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven," that some "hated the light" and came not to it, as if all those had taken a course to make themselves incapable of mercy, and by a perfect hostility frightened Christ out of their coasts. In the liberal dispensation of miracles in the Gospel you would wonder to see Christ a niggard in His own country, yet so, in respect of other places, He was, and "did not many miracles there, because of their unbelief," not that their incredulity had manacled Him, had shortened His hand, or straitened His power, but that miracles, which when they met with a passive willingness, a contentedness in the patient to receive and believe them, were then the ordinary instruments of faith and conversion, would have been but cast away upon obdurate hearts; so that for Christ to have numbered miracles among His unbelieving countrymen no way prepared to receive them, had been an injurious liberality, and added only to their unexcusableness; which contradicts not the axiom of St. Paul, "that some signs are only for unbelievers:" for even those unbelievers must have within them τὸ ἐπιτηδειον τῆς ὑπακοῆς, "a proneness or readiness to receive them with belief," καὶ εἰσοκίζεσθαι, κ.τ.λ. in Jobius^y, to "open to the spirit knocking" by those miracles, and improve them to their best profit.

5. Though God needs not, yet He requires moral preparation of us, as an ordinary means to make us more capable of grace: for although according to St. Austin, *Ne ipsa quidem justitia nostra indiget Deus*: yet according to Salvian's^z limi-

^v [S. Basil. Procem. de Judicio Dei. Op., tom. ii. p. 215, A, B.]

^x [Jobius ap. Photium in Biblioth., p. 627. ed. Hoesehel.]

^y [ἐκείνοις μέντοι ταῦτα προβάλλεσθαι, ὅτ' τὸ ἐπιτηδειον τῆς ὑπακοῆς ἀντιπαρέχονται καὶ τὴν ἀπ' αὐτῶν ὠφέλειαν εἰσοκίζονται· ὅσους δὲ τῶν ἀπί-

στων ἐκουσίας πρὸς τὰ τῶν ἔργων ὑπερφυῆ τυφλώττοντας ἐπιστάμεθα, τοῦτοις ἢ τῶν σημείων προβολῆ ἀπρονόητόν τε καὶ μάταιον.—Jobius ap. Phot. Biblioth., p. 202. Bekker.]

^z [Sed Deus, inquis, non eget retributione? Nihil minus quam ut non egeat. Non eget enim juxta potentiam suam,

Mat. xv.
26.
Mat. xiii.
11.
John iii.
20.

Mat. xiii.
58.

1 Cor.
xiv. 22.

tation, *Eget juxta præceptionem suam, licet non juxta potentiam: eget secundum legem suam, non eget secundum majestatem.* We are to think that God hath use of any thing which He commands, and therefore must perform whatever He requires, and not dare to be confident of the end, without the observation of the means prescribed. It is too much boldness, if not presumption, to leave all to His omnipotent working, when He hath prescribed us means to do somewhat ourselves.

6. Integrity and honesty of heart, a sober moral life, and chiefly humility and tenderness of spirit; in sum, whatever degree of innocence, either study, or fear, or love, or natural disposition can work in us, some or all of which may in some measure be found in some men not yet regenerate, are good preparations for Christ's birth in us; so saith Clement^a of philosophy, that it doth προπαρασκευάζειν, κ.τ.λ., "make ready and prepare the way against Christ's coming," συνεργεῖν, "co-operate" with other helps that God hath given us; all with this caution, that it doth only prepare, not perfect; facilitate the pursuit of wisdom to us, οὐ μέντοι ἀθηράτου οὐσης δίχα αὐτῆς, "which God may bestow on us without this means." To this purpose hath Basil^b a notable homily to exhort scholars to the study of foreign, human, especially Grecian learning, and to this end saith he, "that we prepare ourselves, εἰς τὰ ἄνω, to the heavenly spiritual philosophy." In the like kind the fathers prescribe good works of charity, observing out of the nineteenth of St. Matthew, that the distribution of all their substance to the poor was a *prælude* in the primitive believers to the following of Christ, *Prius vendant omnia quam sequantur*: from whence he calls alms-deeds, *exordia quasi et incunabula conversionis nostræ*. The like may be said, though not in the same degree, of all other courses, *quibus carnalium sarcinarum impedimenta projicimus*: for if these forementioned preparations be mere works of nature in us, as some

Vid. Wisd.
iii. 14.

[Mat. xix.
21.]

sed eget juxta præceptionem suam, non eget secundum majestatem suam, sed eget secundum legem suam; et in se ipso quidem non eget, sed in multis eget: non quærit in se munificentiam, sed in suis quærit; et ideo non eget quidem juxta omnipotentiam, sed eget juxta misericordiam; non eget

Deitate pro semetipso, sed eget pietate pro nobis.—Salvian. adv. Avaritiam, lib. iv. § 140.]

^a Clement. Alex. Strom., lib. i. c. 5; and c. vi. § 35. pp. 331. ad fin.—337.

^b [S. Basil. Serm. de legend. libris Gentilium. Op., tom. ii. p. 173.]

would have them, then do they naturally incline the subject for the receiving of grace when it comes, and by fitting, as it were, and organizing the subject, facilitate its entrance; or if they be works of God's restraining preventing grace, as it is most orthodoxly agreed on, then are they good harbingers for the sanctifying Spirit; good comfortable symptoms that God will perfect and crown the work which He hath begun in us.

7. God's ordinary course, as far as by events we can judge of it, is to call and save such as are thus prepared. Thus to instance in a few of the first and chiefest. It was appointed by God that she only should be vouchsafed the blessed office of dignity of being the *θεοτόκος*, "Christ's Mother," who was *πασῶν πάσαις ἀρεταῖς ὑπερανελθοῦσα*, saith he in Photius^c, "fuller of virtues than any else of her sex could brag of." In like manner, that the rest of the family, Christ's father and brethren, in account, on earth, should be such whose virtues had bestowed a more eminent opinion, though not place upon them amongst men; so was Joseph and his sons *δικαιοσύνη διαλάμποντες*, "famous for very just men," James the brother of the Lord *ἐκ κοιλίας ἅγιος*, "holy from the womb," (as Eusebius cites it^d;) called by the Jews *ὀβλίς*, saith he out of Hegesippus, which he interprets *περιοχὴ τοῦ λαοῦ, καὶ δικαιοσύνη*^e, "the stay of the people and justice itself." In brief; if a Cornelius be to be called from Gentilism to Christianity, ye shall find him in the beginning of his character, "to be a devout man and one that feared God with all his house, gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway:" one cut out as it were *εἰς ἀπαρχὴν ἔθνων*, "to be the first-fruit of the Gentiles." Now though none of these virtues can be imputed to nature in the substance of them, but acknowledge a more supernatural spiritual agent in them, yet are they to be reckoned as preparations to Christ's birth in them, because they did precede it: for so in respect of His real incarnation in the world, the type of His spiritual in the soul, Mary was a virtuous pure virgin before the Holy Ghost overshadowed her, Joseph a just man before the Holy Ghost appeared to him, James holy from the womb, and Cornelius capable of all

Acts x. 2.

Mat. i. 19.

^c [ἔδει μητέρα Θεοῦ ἐπὶ γῆς γενέσθαι τὴν πασῶν πάσαις ἀρεταῖς ὑπερανελθοῦσαν ἐκάλεσεν.—Jobius ap. Photium

Biblioth., p. 641. (ed. Hoeschel.)]

^d † Euseb. Eccles. Hist. ii. 23.]

Photius, *ibid.*

that commendation for devotion and alms-deeds, Acts x. 2, Acts x. 2. before either Christ was preached to him in the thirty-seventh ver. 37. or the Holy Ghost fell on him in the forty-fourth verse. ver. 44.

8. The conversion of unprepared, hardened, blasphemous sinners, is to be accounted as a most rare and extraordinary work of God's power and mercy, not an every day's work, like to be bestowed on every habituate sinner; and therefore it is commonly accompanied with some evident note of difference to point it out for a miracle. Thus was Paul called from "the chief of sinners" to the chief of saints, but with this mark, that "Christ Jesus might shew forth all long-suffering," &c., which was "in him first," and perhaps last, in that degree; that others in his pitch of blasphemies might not presume of the like miracle of mercy. And, indeed, he that is thus called must expect what Paul found, a mighty tempest throughout him, three days at least without sight or nourishment, if not a *παράλυσις* or *λιποψυχία*, "a swoon, a kind of ecstasy" of the whole man, at this tumultuary driving out of this high, rank, insolent, habituate body of sin. It is observed, that when the news of Christ's birth was brought by the "wise men," the city was straight in an uproar; "Herod was much troubled, and all Jerusalem with him," for it seems they expected no such matter, and therefore so strange and sudden news produced nothing but astonishment and tumult; whilst Simeon, "who waited for the consolation of Israel," makes no such strange business of it; takes Him presently into his embraces, and familiarly hugs Him in his arms, having been before acquainted with Him by his faith. Thus will it, at Christ's spiritual *ἐνσάρκωσις*, be in an unprepared heart, His reigning Herod sins, and all the Jerusalem and democracy of affections, a strange tumult of repining, old habituate passions will struggle fiercely, and shake the whole house before they leave it. If a strong man be to be dispossessed of house or abode, without warning, a hundred to one he will do some mischief at his departure, and draw at least some pillar after him: when as a prepared Simeon's soul lays hold as soon as he hears of Him, is already organized, as it were, for the purpose, holds out the arms and bosom of faith, and at the first minute of His appearance takes Him into his spiritual embraces. This very prepara-

I Tim. i.
15, [16.]

Mat. ii. 3.

[Luke ii.
25.]

tion either had denied the strong man entrance, or else binds his hands, manacles that blind Samson, and turns him out in peace, and then the Spirit enters into that soul—which itself or its harbingers have prepared—in a soft still wind, in a still voice, and the soul shall feel its gale, shall hear its whispering, and shall scarce discern, perhaps not at all observe, the moment of its entrance.

Lastly, by way of corollary to all that hath been said, though God can, and sometimes doth, call blasphemous sinners; though nothing in us can facilitate God's action to Him; though none of our performances or His lower works in us, can merit or challenge His sanctifying grace; though, in brief, all that we can do is in some respect enmity to grace; yet certainly there is far more hope of the just, careful, moral man, which hath used all those restraints which are given him, that he shall be called and saved; of such a one we are to judge far more comfortably, and expect more confidently, than of another more habituate sinner, negligent of the commands of either God or nature. And this I conceive I have in some measure proved through each part of the former discourse, and so I should dismiss it and come to application, but that I am stayed and thwarted by a contrary proposition maintained by a sort of our popular preachers, with more violence than discretion, which I conceive to be of dangerous consequence, and therefore worth opening to you. In setting down the pitch that an unregenerate man may attain to, and yet be damned, some of our preaching writers are wont duly to conclude with this peremptory doctrine, that of a mere moral man, though never so severe a censor of his own ways, never so rigid an exactor of all the precepts of nature and morality in himself; yet of this man there is less hope, either that he shall be converted or saved, than the most debauched ruffian under heaven. The charity and purity of this doctrine you shall judge of, if you will accompany me awhile, and first observe that they go so far with the mere moral man, and drive him so high, that at his depression again, many a regenerate man falls with him under that title; and in issue, I fear, all will prove mere moralists in their doom, which do fall short of that degree of zeal, which their either faction or violent heats pre-

tend to ; and so as Tertullian^f objects to the heathen, ex-
postulating with them why they did not deify Themistocles
and Cato as well as Jove and Hercules, *Quot potiores viros
apud inferos reliquistis?* They leave many an honest man
in hell, than some of those whom their favour or faction hath
besainted.

Secondly, observe to what end or use this doctrine may
serve, but as an allay to civil honesty in a commonwealth,
and fair, just dealing, which, forsooth, of late is grown so
luxuriant, the world is like to languish and sink, it is so
overburdened with it : and on the other side an encourage-
ment to the sinner in his course, an engagement in the pur-
suit of vice to the height and ἀκμή, as the pitch and cue
which God expects and waits for ; as they conclude on these
grounds, because He looked upon Peter not till the third
denial, and then called Paul when he was most mad against
the Christians : as if the nearest way to heaven were by hell-
gates, and devils most likely to become saints ; as if there
were merit in abominations, and none in the right way to
Christianity, but whom atheism would be ashamed of ; as if,
because “the natural man understands not,” &c., all relics ^[1 Cor. ii. 14.]
of natural purity were solemnly and *pro forma* to be aban-
doned to make us capable of spiritual. It is confessed that
some have been and are thus converted, and by an ecstasy of
the spirit snatched and caught like firebrands out of the
fire ; and though some must needs find their spiritual joys
infinitely increased, ἐκ παραλλήλου, by that gall of bitter-
ness, from which they were delivered, and are therefore more
abundantly engaged to God, as being not the objects only,
but the miracle of His mercy : but yet for all this shall one
or two variations from the ordinary course, from the ὡς ἐπὶ
τὸ πολὺ, be turned into a ruled case ? Shall the rarer ex-
amples of Mary Magdalen or a Saul prescribe and set up ?
Shall we sin to the purpose, as if we meant to threaten God
that it were His best and safest course to call us ? Shall we
abound in rebellions, that grace may superabound ? God ^[Rom. vi. 1.]
pardon and forbid.

Thirdly, consider the reason of their proposition, and you
shall judge of the truth of it, and besides their own fancies

^f [Tertull. Apol. § 11.]

and resolution to maintain them, they have none but this, "the mere moral man trusts in his own righteousness, and this confidence in the arm of flesh is the greatest enemy to sanctifying grace, which works by spiritual humility." To which we answer distinctly, that the foresaid pride, trust or confidence, is neither effect nor necessary adjunct of morality, but an absolute defection from the rules thereof; and therefore whatsoever proceeds either as an effect, or consequent from pride or confidence, cannot yet be imputed to morality at all, or to the moral men *per se*, no more than the thundering or lightning is to be imputed to my walking, because it thunders whilst I walk; or preaching to my standing still, because whilst I stand still I preach; οὐ γὰρ διὰ τὸ βαδίξειν ἤστραψεν, ἀλλὰ συνέβη τοῦτο, saith Aristotle in the first Post. c. 4^s, "It doth not lighten because I walk, but that is an accident proceeding from some other cause." To strive against the motions of the Spirit, and so to render conversion more difficult, is an effect perhaps of pride or trust, but yet is not to be imputed to morality, though the moral man be proud or self-trusting, because this pride or self-trusting is not an effect, but an accident of morality; and therefore their judgment should be able to distinguish and direct their zeal against the accidental vice, not the essential innocent virtue, against pride, not morality. Besides, this pride is also as incident to him who is morally evil; nay, either supposes or makes its subject so, being formally a breach of morality. For that *σωφροσύνη* belonging to the understanding, which is, "not to think more highly" on one's own worth than he ought, ἀλλὰ φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν, do we not find it commended and dilated on by Aristotle^h, *μειζόνων ἢ ἄξιος, κ. τ. λ.*, "not to overprize his own worth," or to expect an higher reward than it in proportion deserves? So that he that trusts in his morality for heaven, doth *eo nomine* offend against morality, according to that of Salvian, *hoc ipsum genus maximæ injustitiæ est, si quis se justum præsumat*; and indeed Aristotle and Seneca could say as much: and so then the accusation is unjust and contumelious; for to a moral man if he be truly so, this pride or confidence is incompatible: for do we not find that

Rom. xii.
3.

^s [Aristot. Post. Anal., lib. i. c. 4.]

^h [Arist. Nic. Eth., lib. iv. c. 7.]

treble humility, *ταπεινοφροσύνη*, of the heart, *πραότης*, of the tongue, *μακροθυμία*, of the actions, handled also and Eph. iv. 2. prescribed by the philosophers? In sum, that which in all moral precepts comes nearest pride or highmindedness, is that *μεγαλοψυχία*, part of which is “setting value on one’s-self.” But if you observe, this goes no further than *τὰ ἔξω ἀγαθὰ*, “honour or worldly pomp:” as for the immortal blessedness of the soul, it was a thing infinitely above the pitch of their hope or confidence: the most perfect among them never pretended any *jus meriti* to it, and if they did, they had by so much the less hopes to attain to it. Now if it be supposed, as I fear is too true, that our moral men fall far short of the ancient philosophers, if they be now-a-days confident and trust in their works for salvation, then they do not make good their name; they are only so *ὀμονύμως* and *καταχρηστικῶς*, “abusively and notionally.” And yet even these equivocal moral men seem to me in as good, if not better case, than the other term of comparison, the careless negligent debauched men. For upon their grounds is it not as easy for the converting spirit to enter and subdue one Lucifer, one proud devil in the heart, otherwise pretty well qualified, as to deal with a whole legion of blasphemous, violent, riotous, railing, ignorant devils? I have done all with the confutation of this loose groundless opinion, which if it were true, would yet prove of dangerous consequence to be preached, in abating and turning our edge, which is of itself blunt and dull enough toward goodness: nay, certainly it hath proved scandalous to those without; as may appear by that boast and exultancy of Campian¹ in his eighth reason, where he upbraids us Englishmen of our abominable Lutheran, licentious doctrine,—as he calls it,—*quanto sceleratior es, tanto vicinior gratiæ*: and therefore I do not repent that I have been somewhat large in the refuting of it; as also because it doth much import to the clearing of my discourse; for if the mere moral men be furthest from heaven, then have I all this while busied myself, and tormented you with an unprofitable, nay, injurious preparation, whereas I should have prescribed you a shorter easier call, by being ex-

¹ Campian. [Rationes decem oblati certaminis in causa fidei redditæ Academicis Anglis.—Rat. viii. ad fin. apud Whitakeri Responsonem.]

tremely sinful, according to these two aphorisms of Hippocrates^k, *αἱ ἐπ' ἄκρον, κ.τ.λ.*, "The strongest bodies are in greatest danger," and *εἰς τὰ ἔσχατα, τὴ ἀκμῇ* and "height of a disease is the fittest opportunity for a miraculous cure."

But beloved, let us more considerably bethink ourselves, let us study and learn and walk a more secure probable way to heaven; and for those of us which are yet unregenerate, though we obtained no grace of God but that of nature and reason, and our Christianity to govern us, yet let us not condemn those ordinary restraints which these will afford us: let us attend in patience, sobriety, and humility and prayers, the good time and leisures of the spirit; let us not make our reasonable soul, our profession of men, of Christians, ashamed of us; let not the heathen and beasts have cause to blush at us; let us remain men till it may please Him to call us into saints, lest being plunged in habitual confident sinning, that hell and Tophet on earth, the very omnipotent mercy of God be in a manner foiled to hale us out again; let us improve, rack, and stretch our natural abilities to the highest; that although, according to our thirteenth article, "we cannot please God," yet we may not mightily provoke Him. Let every man be in some proportion to his gifts, Christ's Baptist and forerunner and harbinger in himself, that whenever He shall appear or knock, He may enter, lodge, and dwell without resistance. Lastly, after all thy preparations, be not secure; if the Bridegroom will not vouchsafe to rest with you, all your provision is in vain; all the morality, and learning, and gifts, and common graces, unless Christ at last be born in us, are but embryos, nay abortives, rude, imperfect, horrid, *νήπιοι καὶ εἰσιν οἱ φιλόσοφοι*, "that philosopher dies in his nonage in whom Christ was never born." The highest reach of years and learning is but infancy without the virility and manhood of the spirit, by which we are made perfect men in Christ Jesus. Wherefore above all things in the world let us labour for this perfection; let us melt and dissolve every faculty and spirit about us in pursuit of it, and at last seal, and bless, and crown our endeavours with our prayers; and with all the rhetoric, and means,

^k [Aphorismi, tom. iii. pp. 706, 708. Medici Græci, tom. xxiii. ed. Kühn.]

and humility, and violence of our souls, importune and lay hold on the sanctifying Spirit, and never leave till He hath blessed and breathed on us. O Thou mighty, controlling, holy, hallowing Ghost, be pleased with Thine effectual working to suppress in us all resistance of the pride of nature, and prepare us for Thy kingdom of grace here, and glory hereafter.

Now to Him which hath elected us, hath created and redeemed us, &c.

SERMON XXII.

JOHN vii. 48.

Have any of the Pharisees believed on Him?

It is observable from history with what difficulty religion attempts to propagate and establish itself with the many; what countenance and encouragement it hath required from those things which are most specious and pompous in the world; how it hath been fain to keep its dependencies and correspondencies, and submit to the poor condition of sustaining itself by those beggarly helps which the world and the flesh will afford it. Two main pillars which it relies on are power and learning, the camp and the schools, or in a word, authority of great ones and countenance of scholars; the one to force and extort obedience, the other to insinuate belief and assent; the first to ravish, the second to persuade. One instance for all: if we would plant Christianity in Turkey, we must first invade and conquer them, and then convince them of their follies; which about an hundred years ago Cleonard proposed to most courts of Christendom, (and to that end himself studied Arabic,) that princes would join their strength, and scholars their brains, and all surprise them in their own land and language, at once besiege the Turk and his Alcoran, put him to the sword, and his religion to the touchstone; command him to Christianity with an high hand, and then to shew him the reasonableness of our commands. Thus also may we complain, but not wonder that the Reformation gets ground so slow in Christendom, because the forces and potent abettors of the papacy secure

them from being led captive to Christ; as long as the pope is riveted so fast in his chair, and as long as the rulers take part with him, there shall be no doubt of the truth of their religion; unless it please God to back our arguments with steel, and to raise up kings and emperors to be our champions, we may question, but never confute his supremacy. Let us come with all the power and rhetoric of Paul and Barnabas, all the demonstrations of reason and Spirit, yet as long as they have such topics against us, as the authority of the rulers and Pharisees, we may dispute out our hearts, and preach out our lungs, and gain no proselytes; all that we shall get is but a scoff and a curse, a sarcasm and an anathema, in the words next after my text, "This people which know not the law are cursed," there is no heed to be taken to such poor contemptible fellows. To bring all home to the business of the text, let Christ come with all the enforcement and violence and conviction of His Spirit, sublimity of His speech and miracles, all the power of rhetoric and rhetoric of His power, so that all that see or hear, bear witness that never man spake as this Man, yet all this shall be accounted but a delusion, but an enchantment of some seduced wretches, unless the great men or deep scholars will be pleased to countenance them. And it is much to be feared they are otherwise possessed, and rather than this shall not be followed, Christ shall be left alone; rather than they shall speak in vain, the Word itself shall be put to silence: and if they which were appointed to take and bring Him to judgment shall be caught by Him they came to apprehend, and turn their accusations into reverence, the Pharisees will not be without their reply, they are doctors in the law, and therefore for a need can be their own advocates: then answered the Pharisees, "Are ye also deceived, have any of the rulers and Pharisees believed on Him?"

Concerning the infidelity of the rulers in my text, as being not so directly applicable to my audience, I shall forbear to speak. My discourse shall retire itself to the Pharisee, as being a professor of learning, brought up at the university in Jerusalem, and God grant his vices and infidelity be not also academical.

The words we shall divide not into several parts, but con-

siderations, and read them either as spoken by the Pharisee, or recorded by the Evangelist. In the first we have the *τὸ λογικὸν*, the rational force of them, as they are part of an argument, that they which believed in Christ were deceived, *sub hac forma*;—he that would judge of the truth of his life, is to look which way the greatest scholars are affected, and then, though in that case it concluded fallaciously, yet the argument was probable, and the point worth our discussion; that the judgment of learning and learned men is much to be heeded in matters of religion.

In the second we have the *τὸ φυσικὸν* and *τὸ ῥῆμα*, the rational sense of the words being resolved, as affirmative interrogations are wont, into a negative proposition, “Have any,” &c. The Pharisees did not believe on Him; i. e. the greatest scholars are not always the best Christians. And first of the first, the authority of learning and learned men in matters of religion, noted from the logical force of the words, “Have any,” &c.

Amongst other acts of God’s providence and wise economy of all things, there is not one more observable than the succession of His Church, and dispensation of His most precious gifts attending it; you shall not in any age find the flourishing of learning severed from the profession of religion; and the proposition shall be granted without exception: God’s people were always the learnedest part of the world. Before the flood we are not so confident as to define and set down the studies and proficiency in all kinds of knowledge amongst those long-lived ancients; how far soever they went, belongs little to us. The deluge made a great chasm betwixt us, and it would be hard for the liveliest eyes to pierce at such distance through so much water; let those who fancy the two pillars^a, in which all learning was engraven, the one of brick, the other of marble, to prevent the malice either of fire or water, please themselves with the fable, and seem to have deduced all arts from Adam. Thus far it is agreed on, that in those times every father being both a priest and a king in his own family, bestowed on his son all knowledge both secular and sacred, which himself had attained to: Adam by tradition instructing Seth, and Seth Enoch, in all knowledge

^a [Josephus Antiq. Jud., lib. i. c. 2. § 3.]

as well as righteousness. For it is Josephus's^b observation, that whilst Cain and his progeny employed themselves about wicked and illiberal inventions, grovelling upon the earth, Seth and his bore up their thoughts as well as eyes towards heaven, and observed the course and discipline of the stars; wherein it was easy to be exquisite, every man's age shewing him the several conjunctions and oppositions and other appearances of the luminaries, and so needing no successors to perfect his observations. Hence Philo^c calls Abraham *ἄνδρα μετεωρολογικόν*, and says his knowledge in astronomy led him to the notice of a Deity, and that his sublime speculation gave him the name of Abram, a high exalted father, before his faith had given the better compellation of Abraham, father of many nations: hence from him, 1. Chaldæa, 2. Egypt, 3. Greece, came all to the skill they brag of; so that Proclus made a good conjecture, that the wisdom of the Chaldæans was *θεόδοτος καὶ θεοπαρίδοτος*, "a gift of some of the gods," it coming from Abraham, who was both a friend and in a manner an acquaintance of the true God, and far ancients and wiser than any of their false. In sum, all learning as well as religion was pure and classical only among the Hebrews, as may appear by Moses in his *ἑξήμερον*, the only true natural philosophy that ever came into the world; so that even Longinus^d, which took the story of the creation to be a fable, yet commends Moses' expression of it, "Let there be light, and there was light," [Gen. i. 3.] for a speech admirably suited to a god, for the greatest *ὑψος* or sublimity that any rhetorician could strain for. And Demetrius Phalereus^e commends the Pentateuch to Ptolemy, *ὡς φιλοσοφωτέραν καὶ ἀκέραιον, κ.τ.λ.*, "as the most philosophical, accurate discourse he had ever heard of." And if by chance any scraps or shreds of knowledge were ever scattered among the Gentiles, they certainly fell from the Chaldæans' table: from whence in time the poor beggarly world gathered such basketsful, that they began to feed full, and be in good liking, and take upon them to be richer than their benefactors, and Athens at last begins

^b [Ibid., §§ 2, 3.]

above, p. 300.]

^c [Philo Jud., De Abrahamo, p. 361,

^e [Demetr. Phal. ap. Euseb. Præpar. Evang., lib. viii. 3. p. 351, b.]

E.]

^d [Longinus, De Sublim., quoted

to set up as the only university in the world. But it is Austin's observation^f, that it was in respect of Christ, and for the propagation of the Church, that learning was ever suffered to travel out of Jewry. Christ was to be preached and received among the Gentiles, and therefore they must be civilized beforehand, lest such holy things being cast abruptly before swine, should only have been trampled on: or as Moses' books falling among the poets, have been only distorted into fables, turned also into prodigies, metamorphoses, and mythical divinity. *Cum enim prophetæ, &c.*, "under Abraham and Moses, whilst the learning and the sermons of the prophets were for Israel's use, the heathen world was as ignorant as irreligious;" but about Romulus' time, when the prophecies of Christ, which belonged also to the Gentiles, were no longer whispered, but proclaimed by the mouth of Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, Micah, and Jonas from the reign of Uzziah to Hezekiah, kings of Judah, then also began learning to flourish abroad among the nations, to dilate itself over the world: Greece began to hearken after wisdom, and brag of its σοφοί, Thales and the like, *ut fontes divinæ et humanæ sapientiæ pariter erupisse videantur*, that then secular knowledge might dare to shed itself among the nations, when Christ began to be revealed, the expectation of the Gentiles. It were an infinite discourse to present unto you the like proceedings through all ages, the continual marriages, the combinations, and never any divorce betwixt learning and religion. The fathers before mentioned are large in drawing it down to our hands in tables of collateral descent throughout all generations; and I hope the present state of the world will sufficiently avouch it. For what is all the beggarly skill of the Arabians in physics and the mathematics, all the cabalisms of the Jews; in sum, all the rather folly than wisdom, that either Asia or Africa pretend to? what hath all the world beside that dare look a Christian in the face? I doubt not but this corner of Europe where we live, may challenge and put to shame, nay upbraid the ignorance of the learnedest Mahometan, and be able to afford some champions which shall grapple with the tallest giant, with the proudest son of Anak that Italy can boast of. I will

^f [S. Augustin. De Civit. Dei, lib. xviii. c. 27.]

hope and pray, and again dare to hope, that as all Europe hath not more moderation and purity of religion than this kingdom, so it never had a more learned clergy; never more encouragement for learning from religion; never more advantages to religion from learning. But all this while we hover in the air, we keep upon the wing, and talk only, *καθ'όλου*, at large and *in thesi*: we must descend lower to the *καθέκαστον* and *hypothesis* here; where heed is to be taken to the Pharisee, to the doctor, in my text. The disciples were but fishermen and mechanics, illiterate enough, and yet a word of theirs shall more sway mine assent, and rule my faith, than the proudest dictates out of Moses' chair. And thus indeed are we now-a-days ready to repose as much trust in the shop as in the schools, and rely more on the authority of one lay-professor, than the sagest elders in theirs or our Israel. Learning is accounted but an ostentatious complement of young scholars, that will never bring the pastor or his flock the nearer to the way toward heaven. But to recal our judgments to a milder temper, we are to learn from Clemens^e, that although the wisdom of God, and doctrine of the gospel, be *ἀντοτελής καὶ ἀπροσδεής*, able to maintain, and fence, and authorize itself, yet even philosophy and secular learning is of use, nay necessity, to defeat the treacheries, and sophisms, and stratagems of the adversary: and although the truth of Scripture be the bread we live on, the main staff and stay of our subsistence; yet this exoterical learning, *τὰ θύραθεν μαθήματα*, as Sophronius calls them, this *προπαίδεια* of the schools, must be served in *ὡς παροψήματα καὶ τραγήματα*, as cates and dainties to make up the banquet; nay they are not only for superfluity, but solid and material uses. It was a custom of old, saith Dionysius Halicarnensis^h, to build cities, *συνεχέως ἐπὶ τοῖς ὄρεσι*, never far from some hill, or mountain, that beside the natural strength, the hold from the foundation, they may receive some security and safeguard from so stout and tall a neighbour: thus will it stand us upon, so to build our faith upon a rock, that we may also have some shelter near us to fence and fortify our fabric, when the wind or tempest shall arise.

^e [Clemens Alexand. Strom., lib. i. cap. 20. § 100. p. 377.]

^h [Dionys. Halicarn. Hist., lib. i. c. 9.]

Had not Peter, indeed, and the rest at Christ's call left their ignorance with their nets and trades, had they not been made scholars as well as disciples, all trades promiscuously might justly have challenged and invaded the pulpit, and no man denied to preach that was able to believe. But you are to know that their calling was an inspiration, they were furnished with gifts as well as graces; and whatever other learning they wanted, sure I am they were the greatest linguists in the world. Yea, the power and convincing force of argument, which the heathen observed in Peter¹, made them get the oracles to proclaim that he had learnt magic from his Master. To drive the whole business to an issue, in brief, take it in some few propositions.

1. There is not so great a dependence betwixt learning and religion in particular persons, as we have observed to be in ages and countries: so that though plenty of knowledge be a symptom or judiciary sign, that that Church where it flourishes is the true Church of God, yet it is no necessary argument, that that man where it in special resides, is the sincerest Christian; for upon these terms is the wisest man, the scribe, the disputer of the world, the loudest braggers of Jews or Grecians are found guilty of spiritual ignorance, as the last part of our discourse shall make evident.

2. Matters of faith are not *ultimo resolubilia in principia rationis*, therefore not to be resolved any further than the Scriptures; they are not to beg authority from any other science; for this is the true metaphysics, ἀρχικωτάτη καὶ ἡγεμονικωτάτη, the mistress and commandress of all other knowledges, which must perpetually do their homage to it, as servants always to attend and confirm its proposals, never to contradict it, as Aristotle hath it^j.

3. Though faith depend not upon reason, though it subsist entirely upon its own bottom, and is then most purely faith when it relies not on reason, and adheres wholly to the αὐτοπιστία of God's word, yet doth the concurrence, and agreement, and evidence of reason add much to the clearness, and beauty, and splendour of it: takes away all fears and jealousies, and suspicious surmisings out of the understanding, and

ⁱ [S. August. De Civit. Dei, lib. xviii. c. 53.]
^j [Aristot. Metaph. B. c. ii.]

bestows a resolution and constancy on it. For faith, though in respect of its ground, God's word, it be most infallible, yet in its own nature is, as the philosopher defines it, a kind of opinion, and in our human frailty subject to demurs, and doubts, and panic terrors, for fear it be false grounded, and therefore Aristotle saith of it, that it differs from knowledge *ὡς νοσώδης ὑγιεινοῦ*, "as a sickly man from a strong," it is very weak and aguish, subject to sweats and colds, and hourly distempers: whereas the evidence and assurance of sense and reason added to it, bestows a full health and strength upon it, an *ἀθλητικὴ ἔξις*, a perfect state that it shall never be forced or frightened out of. In brief, where reason gives its suffrage, it unveils faith, and to adherence superadds evidence, and teaches us to feel, and touch, and handle what before we did believe; to gripe, and hold, and even possess what before we apprehended: and these are believers in a manner elevated above an earthly condition, initiated to the state which is all vision, where every thing is beheld *γυμνὸν καὶ τετραχρηλισμένον*, "naked and displayed," as the entrails ^[Heb. iv. 13.] of a creature cut down the back; or with "open face, beholding as in a glass." ^{2 Cor. iii. 28.}

4. There be some difficulties in religion at which an illiterate understanding will be struck in a maze; some depths of mystery where an elephant can scarce tread water, a lamb must not hope to wade; many above the apprehensions of the most capacious brain, where reason being not able to express, must be content to shadow and describe in some rude lines what it cannot perform in portraiture: and here, I say, learning, though it cannot reach, yet can heave up and point at; profit, though not perfect us; help us to some images and resemblances, to conceive that which we cannot fully comprehend: so saith Philoponus^k, will mathematical abstractions facilitate the simplicity of God's essence to our understandings, the lucid nature of the sun express the brightness of his glory, and the mysterious numbers of the Pythagoreans represent the Trinity to our fancies. And thus doth Zoroaster in Patricius^l, *philosophari de Deo*, subdue, as it were, divinity

^k [Philoponus in Aristot. De Anima, f. 2. (Aldus.)]

1593. from Psellus' *Expositio Dogmatum quæ sunt apud Assyrios.*]

^l Patricius, [Zoroaster, p. 6. Venice.

to reason, and raise up reason to join issue with divinity, and by his πατρικὸς βύθος ἐκ τριῶν συγκείμενος τριάδων, "that paternal depth made of three threes," comprise all the secrets of the Godhead. But besides these secrets of the upper cabinet, these supernatural depths, there are others *secundæ altitudinis*, and as Halicarnensis^m calls those which are above the reach of all but philosophers, φυσικὰ θαύματα, and Aristotleⁿ θαυμαζόμενα κατὰ φύσιν, "natural miracles," which none but scholars can attain to. And these I hope shall never be discussed upon a shopboard, or enter into any brain that is not before well ballast with weight and substance at the bottom: I need not name them to you, you may know them by this, that when they come into an empty brain, they breed winds, and turn all into vertiges and dizziness. There be yet further lights of a third magnitude, which yet every one hath not eyes to gaze on, and of this condition are almost all the speculations in divinity; nay, the ordinariest truth in a catechism can scarce be forced into a vulgar understanding; his brain is not set that way, and many of our subtlest worldlings have mistaken the Virgin Mary for an angel, and the Apostles' Creed, where only they find mention of her, for a prayer: and then you cannot imagine what stead a little learning would stand these men in, what even miracles it would work upon them.

5. It is but necessity and exigence of nature that those which are the weak should apply themselves for help and directions to those that are stronger; the child in a cradle must be put to a nurse, which may give it suck till it be able to eat, and for a while bear it in her arms, that it may be taught to go. There be in nature, saith Aristotle^o in his *Mechanics*, many wants; she performs not all our needs, and therefore engines were invented to supply defects. Thus is art a *machina* or invention, πρὸς τὰς τοιαύτας ἀπορίας βοηθοῦν μέρος, to furnish us with those abilities which nature was a niggard in: and therefore to deprive ourselves of this guidance when it is offered, is μονόφθαλμον τυφλοῦν^p, to put out an eye of his that hath but one in all, which was of old

^m [πρᾶγμα κρεῖττον λόγον τοῖς ἀθεάτοις ὧν ἡ φύσις δρᾷ, καὶ θαυμάτων οὐδενὸς δεύτερον.—Dionys. Halicarn., lib. i. cap. 15. ad fin.]

ⁿ [Aristot. *Mechanica*. ad init.]

^o [Id., *ibid.*]

^p [Id. *Rhet.* i. cap. 7. ad fin.]

a great aggravation to the injury in the Rhetoric, indeed to leave ourselves desperately blind. *Περὶ πυθαγορείων ἀνεὺ φωτὸς μὴ λάλει*, in Jamblichus^q, in matters of religion we must not so much as speak, nay, not think without a candle; we shall want the guidance of some teacher to direct every such word out of our mouths, or thought into our hearts. An ignorant man must not have leave so much as to meditate on God without a guide; for he is mad, say the philosophers^r, and then every thought of his will be a kind of delirium or frenzy. “It is the law of nature,” saith the historian^s, *ἄρχειν ἡττόνων τοὺς κρείττους*, “that superiors should have a kind of sovereignty over all that are inferior to them,” a *magisterium* and command over them, to rule and order them; and this superiority and sovereignty hath the learned pastor, or generally the scholar, over all ignorant men, be they never so rich or potent; and whosoever denies or scorns thus to obey, I say not, is to be slain—as the law was in the ancient wars—*ἀκρίτως*, without an assizes, but to be condemned of much peevishness and more stupidity, and his punishment is, let him fall into his own hands, i. e. be ruled by a fool or madman.

6. Much of the speculative part of religion may be had from a Pharisee as well as a disciple. Christ Himself bears witness of him, that he was orthodox in matters concerning the law: “They sit in Moses’ chair, and therefore whatsoever they bid you, that observe and do.” Mat. xxiii. They err indeed in pre-^{3.}scribing their additions to duty, as divine command, but the chief obliquity was in their lives: they were heretics, nay apostates from their doctrine, and therefore “do not after ver. 4. their works, for they say and do not.” If I am resolved of such a man’s abilities in learning, but see him a scandalous liver, I will borrow of his gifts, and pray God to increase his graces. In matters of spiritual joy and sorrow, I will, if I can, be counselled by an heart which once was broken, that I may see how he recovered, and repair my breaches by a pattern; and yet even these things may be learnt from him which never had them but in his speculation; as the physician may cure a disease, though himself was never sick of it.

^q Jamblichus, [De Vita Pythagoræ, 122. p. 94. ed. Potter.]
 cap. xxiii. § 105.] ^s [Dionys. Halicar., lib. i. c. 5.]
^r [Clemens Alexand. Protrept. §

But for the ordinary theories of religion, I will have patience to receive instructions from any one, and not examine his practices, but in modesty, and in submission, and humility receive the law at his mouth. But all this with caution, *ὡς ἡγεμόνι, οὐ δεσπότῃ*, “as to a guide, not a monarch” of my faith; rule he shall my belief, but not tyrannize over it. I will assent to my teacher till I can disprove him, but adhere, and anchor, and fix myself on the Scripture.

7. In matters of superstruction, where Scripture lays the foundation, but interpreters, i. e. private spirits, build upon it, some gold, some stubble, &c., and I cannot judge or discern which is firmliest rooted on the foundation; I will take the philosopher’s counsel in the first of his Rhetoric^t, and observe either *τὶ παλαιοὶ* or *πρόσφατοι*, be guided either by the ancientest, if they have shewed themselves in the cause, or else men alive, which be best reputed of for integrity and judgment: I shall scarce trust the honestest man you can commend to me, unless I have some knowledge of his parts; nor the learnedest you can cry up, unless I can believe somewhat in his sincerity.

8. All the contradictions and new ways of my own brain opposite or wide from the current of the learned, I must suspect for a work of my own fancy, not entitle them to God’s Spirit in me. *Verebar omnia opera mea*, saith Job, whatever a man can call his own, he must be very cautious and jealous over it. For it is no less than atheism which the scorers of the last age are to fall upon by “walking after their own lusts.” And thus was the Pharisee’s practice here, who makes use of his own authority to deny Christ; it was the Pharisees that said, “Have any of the Pharisees believed on Him?” There is not a more dangerous mother of heresies in the midst of piety than this one, that our fancy first assures us that we have the Spirit, and then that every fancy of ours is *theopneust*, the work of the Spirit. There are a multitude of deceits got altogether here; 1. We make every idle persuasion of our own the evidence of God’s Spirit, then we join infallibility to the person, being confident of the gift; then we make every breath of our nostrils, and flame that can break out of our hearts, an immediate effect of the

[Job ix.
28.]

2 Pet. iii.
3.

^t [Arist. Rhet, lib. i. c. 15. § 13.]

Spirit, and fire which hath spiritually enlivened us, and then we are sure it is authentical; and all this while we never examine either the ground or deductions from it, but take all upon trust from that everlasting deceiver, our own heart, which we ought to sit upon, and judge of by proofs and witnesses, by comparing it with other men's dictates, probably as godly, perhaps more learned, but certainly more impartial judges of thee, than thou canst be of thyself.

Lastly, if the word of God speak distinctly and clearly; enforce, as here by miracles done before all men to their astonishment and redargution, then will I not stay my belief to wait on or follow the learnedest man in the world: when Christ Himself speaks to my eyes, the proudest, eminentest Pharisee in earth or hell, nay if any of their sect have crowded into heaven, shall not be able to charm my ear or lay any clog upon my understanding. So that you see the Pharisee's argument in that case was sophistical,—the matter being so plain to them that they needed no advice, “His works bore witness of Him,”—yet in the general it holds probable, and learning remains a good guide still, though an ill master in matters of religion; *ὁπερ ἔδει δεῖξαι*, the first thing we undertook to demonstrate. John v. 36.

And this we should draw down yet lower to our practice, and that variously, but that almost every proposition insisted on hath in part spoken to your affections, and so prevented store of uses. This only must not be omitted; for scholars to learn to set a value on their precious blessing which God hath vouchsafed them above all the world beside, to bless God infinitely that they understand and conceive what they are commanded to believe; this I am sure of, there is not a greater or more blessed privilege, besides God's Spirit, which our human condition is capable of, than this of learning, and specially divine knowledge, of which Aristotle himself witnesseth, *ἀμείνων δὲ οὐδὲμία*, “none is better than it.” As long as we have no evidence or demonstration from that which yet it most nearly concerns us to rely upon, we cannot enjoy, without an immediate supernatural irradiation, a tranquillity and consistency of spirit; we cannot peremptorily have resolved ourselves that we have built upon the rock; every

^u [Aristot. Metaph. A. c. 2. prope finem.]

temptation proves a discouragement to us, many horrors take hold of us, and sometimes we must needs fall to that low ebb, not far from despair, which the Apostles were in, Luke xxiv. 22. "We had trusted," but now we know not what to think of it, "that this was He that should have redeemed Israel." But to see all the articles of my faith ratified and confirmed to my understanding, to see the greatest treasure and inheritance in the world sealed and delivered to me in my hand, written in a character and language that I am perfectly skilled in; O what a comfort is this to a Christian soul! O what a fulness of joy to have all the mysteries of my salvation transcribed out of the book of the Lord, and written in my heart, where I can turn and survey, and make use of them, as much and as often as I will! nay, where I have them without book, though there were neither father nor Bible in the world, able out of my own stock to give an account, nay, a reason of my faith, before the perversest papist, heathen, or devil. This serves me instead of having lived, and conversed, and been acquainted with Christ. By this I have my fingers put into the print of the nails, and my hands thrust into His side, and am as sure as ever Thomas was; I see Him as palpably as he that handled Him, that He is my "Lord and my God."

It was observed by the philosopher* as an act generally practised among tyrants to prohibit all schools and means of learning and education in the commonwealth, *μήτε παιδείαν, μήτε σχολὰς, μήτε συλλόγους σχολαστικούς*, "to suffer neither learning, nor schools, nor common meetings," that men being kept blind might be sure to obey, and tyrannical commands through ignorance be mistaken for fair government. And thus did Julian interdict the Christians all manner of literature, and chiefly philosophy, "for fear," saith Nazianzen^y, "they should be able to grapple with the heathen," and cut off Goliath's head with his own weapon. The continuance of these arts of spiritual tyranny you may observe, in the prescribed stupidity and commanded ignorance of the laity through all Italy. All which must call for a superlative measure of thanks to be expressed, not in our tongues and hearts only, but in our

* [Aristot. Polit., lib. v. c. 11.]

^y S. Gregor. Nazianz. [Oratio iv. §§ 4, 5. Op., tom. i. pp. 79, D. 80, A.]

lives and actions; from us I say, who have obtained not only a knowledge of His laws, but almost a vision of His secrets, and forasmuch as concerns our eternal bliss, do even see things as they were acted, have already comprehended in our reason—not only in our faith—the most impossible things in nature; the breadth and length and depth and height of the conceived, incarnate, and crucified God; and if all that will not serve our turn, but we must press into His cabinet secrets, invade the Book of Life, and oversee and divulge to all men *abscondita Domini Dei nostri*,—then are God’s mercies ^[Deut. xxix. 29.] unworthily repaid by us, and those indulgences which were to bestow civility upon the world, have only taught us to be more rude. In sum, the realest thanks we can perform to God for this inestimable prize, is modestly and softly to make use of it; 1. To the confirming of others’ faith, and 2. to the expressing of our own. For, 1, he is the deepest scholar, saith the philosopher, who is *διδασκαλικώτερος*, “best able to teach” other men what himself conceives²: and then, 2, he hath the habit most radicated who hath pressed it down into his heart, and there sowed a seed which shall increase and fructify, and spread, and flourish, laden with the fruits of a lively faith. He is the truest scholar that hath fed upon learning, that hath nourished, and grown, and walked, and lived in the strength of it. And till I see you thrive and bestir yourselves like Christians, I shall never envy your learning: the Pharisees were great scholars, well seen in the prophets, and it is much to be suspected could not choose but find Christ there, and acknowledge Him by His miracles; they saw Him plain enough, and yet not a man would believe on Him:—my second part—the greatest scholars are not always the best Christians.

It is observable in the temper of men, that the cowardly are most inquisitive; their fears and jealousies make them very careful to foresee any danger, and yet for the most part they have not spirit enough to encounter, and they are so stupid and sluggish that they will not get out of its way when they have foreseen it: the same baseness and timorousness makes them a sort of men most diligent at a distance to avoid, and near hand most negligent to prevent. Thus

² *σημείων εἰδότες δύνασθαι διδάσκειν.*—[Arist. Metaph. A. c. 1.]

Dan. iii. 5. in Dan. iii. 5, Nebuchadnezzar dreams and is affrighted, and a proclamation is made for all the wisdom of the world to come in and consult and sit upon it, and give their verdict for the interpretation of the dream, and when he had at last got the knowledge of it by Daniel, that his fears were not in vain, that the greatest judgment that ever was heard of was within a twelvemonth to fall on him, then, as though he had been a beast before his time, without all understanding, he goes and crowns himself for his slaughter. Just when, according to the prophecy, he was to suffer, then was he walking in his pride; whilst he was ignorant, he was sensible of his danger, and now he sees it before his eyes, he is most prodigiously blind. “At the end of twelve months, when his ruin was at hand, he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon, and the king spake and said, Is not this great Babylon that I have built,” &c. In brief, he that was most earnest to understand the dream, is most negligent of the event of it, and makes no other use of his knowledge of God’s will, but only more knowingly and wilfully to contemn it. And this generally is the state of corrupt nature, to keep a distance and a bay betwixt our knowledge and our wills, and when a truth hath fully conquered and got possession of our understanding, then to begin to fortify most strongly, that the other castle of the soul, the affections, may yet remain impregnable. Thus will the devil be content to have the outworks and the watch-tower taken, so he may be sure to keep his treasure within from danger: and will give us leave to be as great scholars as himself, so we will continue as profane. And so we are like enough to do for all our knowledge; for wisdom, saith Aristotle^a, is terminated in itself, *οὐδεμιᾶς γὰρ ἐστὶ γενέσεως*, “it neither looks after, nor produces any practical good,” saith Andronicus^b, *οὐ γὰρ τέλος ἔχει πρακτὸν ἀγαθόν*, nay, there is no dependence betwixt knowing and doing; as he that hath read and studied the *ἀθλητικὰ* may perhaps be never the better wrestler, nor the skilfullest physician the more healthy; experience and trial must perfect the one, and a good temperature constitute the other. A young man may be a good naturalist, a good geometer, nay a wise man, because he may understand *θαν-*

^a [Aristot. Nic. Ethic., lib. vi. c. 13.]

^b [Andronicus, Paraphr. in loc.]

μαστά, χαλεπὰ, δαιμόνια^c, “wonders, depths,” nay, “divine matters,” but he will never be φρόνιμος, “prudent” or actually virtuous, i. e. a good moralist: τὰ μὲν οὐ πιστεύουσιν οἱ νεοὶ, ἀλλὰ λέγουσιν^d, moral precepts they cannot be said to believe, they have not entered so far, they float only in their memories, they have them by heart, they say them over by rote, as children do their catechism, or Plato’s scholars (saith Plutarch) his depths of philosophy; they now recite them only, and shall then understand them, when they come of age, when they are staid enough to look into the meaning of them, and make use of them in their practice. The mathematics, saith Aristotle^e, having nothing to do with the end or chief good that men look after, never any man brought good or bad, better or worse into a demonstration; there is no consultation or election there, only plain downright diagrams, necessary convictions of the understanding. And therefore for these mere speculations, which hover only in the brain, the youngest wit is nimblest; for δεινότης^f, “sharpness of apprehension” is a sprightfulness of the mind, and is there liveliest where there be most spirits: but prudence and active virtue requires an habituate temper of passions, a staidness of the mind, and long trial and experience of its own strength, a constancy to continue in virtue in spite of all foreign allurements or inward distempers. And the ground of all this is, that those things that most encumber the will and keep us from practice, do nothing clog or stop the understanding; sensuality or pleasure hinders us not from knowing ὅτι τὸ τρίγωνον^g, κ.τ.λ., that a “triangle hath three angles equal to two right oncs,” and the like. Nay the most insolent tyrannizing passions which domineer over us, which keep us in awe, and never suffer us to stir, or move, or walk, or do any thing that is good, will yet give us leave to understand as much as we would wish; they have only fettered our hands and feet, have not blinded our eyes; as one shut up in the tower from the conversation of men, may be yet the greatest proficient in speculation;

^c [Aristot. Nic. Eth., lib. vi. c. 7.]

^d [Ibid., c. 9.]

^e [Met., B. c. 2.]

^f [φυσικὴ ἐπιτηδείωσις τῆς ψυχῆς. So δεινότης is defined by Andronicus in

his paraphrase on the words σκεπτέον

δὲ πάλιν καὶ περὶ τῆς ἀρετῆς.—Ethic.

Nic. vi. 13.]

^g [Arist. Eth. Nic., lib. vi. c. 5.]

the affections being more gross and corporeous,—from thence called the heels of the soul,—and so easily chained and fettered; but the understanding most pure and spiritual, and therefore incapable of shackles, nay, is many times most free and active, when the will is most dead and sluggish. And this may be the natural reason that even Aristotle¹ may teach us why the greatest scholars are not always the best Christians,—the Pharisees well read in the prophets, yet backwardest to believe,—because faith which constitutes a Christian is a spiritual prudence, as it is best defined, and therefore is not appropriate to the understanding; but, if they be several faculties, is rather seated in the will; the objects of faith being not merely speculative, but always apprehended and assented to *sub ratione boni*, as being the most unvaluable blessings which ever we desired of the Lord, or can require. The speculative part of divine wisdom may make us *δαίμονας*, “intelligent spirits,” nay, possibly do it in the worst notion, render us “devils.” Real practical knowledge only,—prudence,—will make angels, ministering spirits unto God, teach us to live and be better than we did. So then, in the first place, learning doth neither make nor suppose men Christians: nay, secondly, it doth *per accidens* many times hinder, put a rub in our way, and keep us from being Christians. Philoponus and Synesius—miracles of learning—were therefore hardest to be converted, they were so possessed and engaged in peripatetical philosophy, that however they might be persuaded to the Trinity, they will not believe the resurrection. It was too plain a contradiction to philosophical reason ever to enter theirs. Thus in the 1 Cor. i. 21, “the world by wisdom knew not God:” they so relied on their reason, and trusted in it for all truths, that they concluded every thing impossible that would not concur with their old principles. But this resistance which reason makes is not so strong but that it may easily be suppressed, and therefore Synesius was made a bishop before he explicitly believed the resurrection, because they were confident that he which had forsaken all other errors, would not long continue perverse in this, and so good a Christian in other things, *οὐκ ἄν οὐκ ἐλλαμφθείη*, could not choose

¹ Cor. i.
21.

but be illuminated in time, in so necessary a point of faith : and indeed so it happened in them both.

But there are other more dangerous engines, more insidious courses which learning uses to supplant or undermine belief ; other stratagems to keep us out of the way, to anticipate all our desires or inclinations or thoughts that way-ward ; and these are spiritual pride and self-content. Men are so elevated in height of contemplation, so well pleased, so fully satisfied in the pleasures and delights of it, that the first sort scorn to submit or humble themselves to the poverty and disparagement of believing in Christ ; the second are never at leisure to think of it. For the first, spiritual pride, it is set down as a reason that “the natural man receives not the things of ¹ Cor. ii. the spirit,” receives them not, i. e. will not take them, will ^{14.} not accept of them, though they are freely given him ; “for they are foolishness unto him,” i. e. so his proud brain reposes them. The pride of worldly wisdom extremely scorns the foolishness of Christ, and consequently is infinitely opposite to faith, which is wrought by special humility.

Secondly, for self-content : σοφοὶ μὴ δεύονται φίλων, saith Heraclitus in Hesychius^k, “Wise men need no friends,” they are able to subsist by themselves without any help ; they will have an happiness of their own making, and scorn to be beholding to Christ for a new inheritance, they are already so fully possessed of all manner of contents. Let any man whisper them of the joys of the new Jerusalem, of the Intercessor that hath saved, of the way thither and made it passable, of all the privileges and promises of our adoption, they will hear them ὡσεὶ λήρα, “as old wives’ fables ;” they have the fortunate islands too, their exactest tranquillity and serenity of mind in a perpetual contemplation, and all the golden apples in paradise shall not tempt or alarm them out of it. It is strange to see when such a man is called, what ado there is to get him out of his dream, to hale him out of his study to the church, how sleepy, and drowsy, and lethargical he is in matters of religion ; how soon a little devotion hath tired him out, that could have pored over a book incessantly all his life long, and never thought thus to have been inter-

^k [This is a dictum of Theodorus, surnamed Ἄθεος. τοὺς δὲ σοφοὺς ἀνάρκεις ὑπάρχοντας, μὴ δεῖσθαι φίλων.— Hesychius, De Claris Viris, s. v. Theodorus ; ap. Meursium, Op., tom. vii. p. 253.]

dicted the delights of human learning, thus to have been plucked and torn from the embraces of his Athenian idol. His conversion is much unlike another man's; that which calls others into compass seems to let him loose, thrusts him abroad into the world, teaches him to look more like a man than ever he meant, makes him a member of the commonwealth that was formerly but an anchorite, and forces him to walk and run the way of God's commandments, that had once decreed himself to a chair for ever. In brief, there is as little hopes of one that indulges himself, and gives himself up to the pride and contents of any kind of learning, of him that terminates knowledge either in itself or else in the ostentation of it, as of any other that is captived to any one single worldly or fleshly kind of voluptuousness. This of the brain, in spite of the philosopher, is an intemperance, as well as that of the throat and palate, and more dangerous, because less suspected, and seldomer declaimed against; and from this epicurism, especially of the soul, good Lord deliver us.

Not to heap up reasons of this too manifest a truth,—would God it were not so undeniable,—take but this one more, of the unsufficiency of learning never so well used to make a man a Christian. Let all the knowledge in the world, profane and sacred, all the force and reason that all ages ever bragged of, let it concur in one brain, and swell the head as big as his was in the poem, that travailed of Minerva: let all Scriptures and fathers join their power and efficacy, and they shall never by their simple activity produce a saving faith in any one; all the miracles they can work are only on the understanding; the will, distinctly taken, is above their sphere or compass; or if their faculties are not distinguished, “and to will is present with me,” as well as to understand, yet they can produce only an absolute simple general will, that is, an assent and approbation of the absolute goodness of the thing proposed, not a resolute will to abandon all other worldly purposes to perform that which I will. Knowledge and right apprehension of things may convince me first of the history, that all that is spoken of or by Christ, is true, and then of the expedience to apply all His merits to my soul, but when I see all this cannot be done

Rom. vii.
18.

without paying a price, without undoing myself, without pawning all that I have, my learning, my wealth, my delights, my whole worldly being, without self-denial, then the general assent, that absolute will, is grown chill and dead; we are still—whatever we believe—but infidels; all the articles of the Creed thus assented to are not enough to make us Christians. So that the issue of all is,—all knowledge in the world cannot make us deny ourselves, and therefore all knowledge in the world is not able to produce belief; only the Spirit must breathe this power into us of breathing out ourselves, He must press our breasts, and stifle, and strangle us; we must give up the natural ghost, He must force out our earthly breath out of our earthly bodies, or else we shall not be enlivened by His spiritual. Thus have you reasons of the common divorce betwixt knowledge and faith, i. e. the no manner of dependence betwixt them in nature. Secondly, the open resistance in some points betwixt reason and Scripture. Thirdly, the more secret reluctancies betwixt the pride and contents of learning and the Spirit. And lastly, the insufficiency of all natural knowledge, and transcendency of spiritual, so that he “cannot know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” I should now in very charity release you, but that there is one word behind of most important necessity to a sermon, and that is of application;

That laying to our hearts the important documents of the text, our righteousness and faith may exceed that of the Pharisees, our preaching and walking may be like that of Christ’s, “in power and as having authority, and not as the scribes,” and we not content with a floating knowledge in the brain, do press and sink it down into our inferior faculties, our senses and affections, till it arise in a full harvest of fruitful, diligently working faith. It was Zenophanes’¹ fancy, ὄλον ὀρᾶν Θεόν, and that God was all eyes and all ears, but breathed not, there was no use of that in Him; and so is it with us, who are always exercising our knowledge, powers to see and hear whatever is possible; but for any breath of life in us, any motion of the Spirit, we have no use of it: it is not worth valuing or taking notice of,

¹ [Zenophanes apud Diogen. Laert. ix. § 19.]

nothing so vulgar and contemptible in them that have it, nothing of which we examine ourselves so slightly, of which we are so easily mistaken, so willingly deceived, and nothing that we will be content to have so small a measure of. A little of it soon tires us out, it is too thin, airy, diet for us to live upon, we cannot hold out long on it; like the Israelites, soon satiated with their bread from heaven, nothing comparable to their old food that Nilus yielded them. "We remember the fish that we did eat in Egypt, but now our soul is dried away, there is nothing but this manna before our eyes;" as if that were not worth the gathering.

Numb.
xi. 5.

Pythagoras could say, that if any one were to be chosen to pray for the people, to be made a priest, he must be a virtuous man, *ὡς θεῶν τούτοις προσεχόντων*, in Jamblichus, "because the gods would take more heed to his word^m:" and again, that "many things might be permitted the people, which should be interdicted preachersⁿ." It was the confirmation of his precepts by his life and practice, *σύμφωνος βίος*^o, that made Italy, *μέγας Ἑλλάς*, all the country, his school^p, and all that ever heard him his disciples. Nothing will give such authority to our doctrine, or set such a value on our calling, as a religious conversation. He that takes such a journey, as that into holy orders, must go on, *ἀμεταστρεπτὶ*, according to his fifteenth Symbolum, must not return to his former sins as well as trade, saith Jamblichus^q: the falling into one of our youthful vices, is truly a disordering of ourselves, and a kind of plucking our hands from the plough. A physician, saith Hippocrates^r, must have colour and be in flesh, *εὐχρόος τε καὶ εὔσαρκος*, of a good promising healthy complexion, and then men will guess him a man of skill, otherwise the patient will bid the physician heal himself, and having by his ill look a prejudice against his physic, his fancy will much hinder its working. You need no application; he again will tell you, that the profession suffers not so much by any thing as by rash censures, and unworthy professors. In brief, our very knowledge will be set at nought, and our gifts scoffed at, if our lives do not demonstrate that we are Christians as well as

^m De Vita Pyth., c. xi.

ⁿ Ibid., c. xxiv.

^o Ibid., c. xxx.

^p Ibid., c. vi.

^q [Protrept. Symbol. xv.]

^r [De Medico; ad init., tom. i. p. 56. Kühn.]

scholars. No man will be much more godly for hearing Seneca talk of providence, nor be affected with bare words, unless he see them armed and backed with power of him that utters them. Consider but this one thing, and withal, that my doctrine is become a proverb, and he is a proud man that can first draw it upon a scholar, his learning and his clergy make him never the more religious. O let our whole care and carriage, and the dearest of our endeavours, strive and prevail to cross the proverb, and stop the mouth of the rashest declaimer. That comedy of Aristophanes took best, which was all spent in laughing at Socrates, and in him involved and abused the whole condition of learning; though through Alcibiades' faction it miscarried and missed its applause once or twice, yet when men were left to their humour, it was admired and cried up extremely. Learning hath still some honourable favourers which keep others in awe with their countenance; but otherwise nothing more agreeable to the people than comedies or satires, or sarcasms dealt out against the universities: let us be sure that we act no parts in them ourselves, nor perform them before they are acted. Let us endeavour that theirs may be only pronunciations, a story of our faults as presented in a scene, but never truly grounded in any of our actions. One woe we are secure and safe from, "Woe be to you when all men shall speak well of you;" we have many good friends that will not let this curse light on us. O let us deliver ourselves from that catalogue of woes which were all denounced against the Pharisees for many vices, all contained in this accomplished piece, "Ye say but do not." And seeing all our intellectual excellencies cannot allure, or bribe, or woo God's Spirit to overshadow us, and conceive Christ, and bring forth true and saving faith in us; let all the rest of our studies be ordered in a new course; let us change both our method and our tutor, and having hitherto learnt God from ourselves, let us be better advised, and learn ourselves from God. Let us all study all learning from the spring or fountain, and make Him our instructor, who is the only author worth our understanding, and admit of no interpreter on Him but Himself. The knowledge of God shall be our vision in heaven, O let it be our speculation on

Luke vi.
26.

Mat. xxiii.
24.

earth. Let it fill every conceit or fancy that we at any time adventure on. It is *πάσης πραγματείας τελειούργημα*, the last work in which all the promises, all our possible designs are accomplished: O let us in part anticipate that final revelation of Him, lest so sudden and so full a brightness of glory be too excellent for the eyes of a saint: and labour to comprehend here, where the whole comfort of our life is, what we shall then possess. And if all the stretches, and cracking, and torturing of our souls will prevail, the dissolving of all our spirits, nay, the sighing out of our last breath will do any thing, let us join all this even that God hath given us, in this last real service to ourselves, and expire whilst we are about it, in praying, and beseeching, and importuning, and offering violence to that blessed Spirit, that He will fully enlighten and inflame us here with zeal as well as knowledge; that He will fill us with His grace here, and accomplish us with His glory hereafter.

Now to Him that hath elected us, hath created us, and redeemed us, &c.

SERMON XXIII.

MATT. x. 15.

*It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah
in the day of judgment, than for that city.*

THE whole new covenant consists of these two words, Christ and faith; Christ bestowed on God's part, faith required on ours; Christ the matter, faith the condition of the covenant. Now to bring or present this faith before you, as an object for your understandings to gaze at, or to go further, to dissect—and with the diligence of anatomy instruct—in every limb, or joint, or excellency of it, were but to recall you to your catechism, and to take pains to inform you in that which you are presumed to know. The greater danger of us is, that we are behind in our practice; that we know what faith is, but do not labour for it; and therefore the seasonablest work will be on our affections, to produce, if it were possible, this precious virtue in our souls, and to sink and press down that floating knowledge which is in most of our brains, into a solid weighty effectual faith, that it may begin to be *ἔργον πίστεως*, “a work of faith,” which was formerly but a fancy, dream, and apparition. ^[1 Thess. i. 3.] To this purpose to work on your wills, no rhetoric so likely as that which is most sharp and terrible, no such physic for dead affections as corrosives, the consideration of the dismal, hideous, desperate estate of infidels here in my text; and that both in respect of the guilt of the sin, and degree of the punishment proportioned to it, and that above all other sinners in the world, “It shall be more,” &c. Where you ^{ver. 1.} may briefly observe, 1. the sin of infidelity, set down by its

ver. 14.

subject, that city which would not receive Christ being preached unto it; 2. the greatness of this sin, expressed by the punishment attending it; and that either positively, it shall go very sore with it, and therefore it is to be esteemed a very great sin, implied in the whole text; or else comparatively, being weighed with Sodom and Gomorrah in judgment, it shall be more tolerable for them than it: and therefore it is not only a great sin, but the greatest, the most damning sin in the world. And of these in order plainly, and to your hearts rather than your brains, presuming that you are now come with solemn serious thoughts to be edified, not instructed, much less pleased or humoured. And first of the first: the sin of infidelity, noted in the last words, "that city."

To pass by those which we cannot choose but meet with, 1. a multitude of ignorant infidels, pagans and heathens; 2. of knowing but not acknowledging infidels, as Turks and Jews; we shall meet with another order of as great a latitude, which will more nearly concern us; a world of believing infidels, which know and acknowledge Christ, the gospel and the promises, are as fairly mounted in the understanding part as you would wish, but yet refuse and deny Him in their hearts, apply not a command to themselves, submit not to Him, nor desire to make themselves capable of those mercies which they see offered by Christ in the world; and these are distinctly set down in the verse next before my text, "Who-soever shall not receive you," i. e. entertain the acceptable truth of Christ and the gospel preached by you, as it is interpreted by the fortieth verse, "He that receiveth you, receiveth Me," i. e. believes on Me, as the word is most plainly used, Matt. xi. 14; "If you will receive it," i. e. if you will believe it, "this is Elias which was for to come." And John i. 12; "To as many as received Him,—even to them that believe in His name." For you are to know that faith truly justifying is nothing in the world but the receiving of Christ. Christ and His sufferings and full satisfaction was once on the cross tendered, and is ever since by the gospel and its ministers offered to the world: and nothing required of us but a hand and a heart to apprehend and receive: and to "as many as received Him, He gives power to become the sons of God." So that faith and infidelity are not acts properly de-

Mat. xi.

14.

John i. 12.

John i. 22.

terminated to the understanding, but indeed to the whole soul, and most distinctly to the will, whose part it is to receive or repel, to entertain or resist Christ and His promises, "the Author and Finisher of our salvation." Now this receiving of Christ is the taking or accepting of the righteousness of Christ, and so making it our own, as Rom. i. 17, being rightly weighed, will enforce. Read and mark, *δικαιοσύνη γὰρ Θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ ἀποκαλύπτεται ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν*, thus *ἐν αὐτῷ* "in it," or by it, the gospel, mentioned in the former verse; *δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ ἐκ πίστεως*, "the righteousness of God by faith," as Rom. iii. 22, i. e. the not legal but evangelical righteousness, which only God accepts, directly set down, Phil. iii. 9, "that righteousness which is through faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith;" *ἀποκαλύπτεται εἰς πίστιν* "is revealed to faith," is declared that we might believe; that finding no life or righteousness in ourselves, we may go out of ourselves, and lay hold on that which is offered us by Christ; and this you will find to be the clearest meaning of these words, though somewhat obscured in our English reading of them. Now the accepting of this righteousness is an act of ours following a proposal or offer of Christ's, and consummating the match or bargain between Christ and us. Christ is offered to us as an husband in the gospel; we enquire of Him, observe our own needs, and His excellencies and riches to supply them, our sins and His righteousness; and if upon advice we will take Him, the match is struck, we are our beloved's, and our beloved is ours; we are man and wife, we have taken Him for our husband, and with Him are entitled to all His riches: we have right to all His righteousness, and enjoy by His patent all the privileges, all the promises, all the mercies of the gospel. But if, the offer being thus made by God to give us His Son freely, we stand upon terms,—we are too rich, too learned, too worldly-minded, too much in love with the praise of men, i. e. fixed upon any worldly vanity, and resolve never to forego all these, to disclaim our worldly liberty, our own righteousness, and to accept of so poor an offer as a Christ; then are we the infidels here spoken of, "we will not come to Him that we might have life." When He is held out to us, we will not lay hold on Him, we have some conceit of ourselves, and therefore will not step a foot abroad

[Heb. xii. 2.]

Rom. i. 17.

Rom. iii. 22.

Phil. iii. 9.

John xii. 43.

John v. 40.

to fetch His righteousness home to us. And indeed if any worldly thing please you; if you can set a value upon any thing else, if you can entertain a paramour, a rival, a competitor in your hearts, if you can "receive the praise of men, how can you believe?" So that, in brief, infidelity consists in the not receiving of Christ with a reciprocal giving up of ourselves to Him, in the not answering affirmatively to Christ's offer of Himself, in the not taking home and applying Christ to our souls. And this is done, either by denying to take Him at all, or by taking Him under a false person, or by not performing the conditions required or presumed in the making of the match. They that deny to take Him at all, are the profane, negligent, presumptuous Christians, who either never hearken after Him, or else are so familiar with the news as to underprize Him: have either never cheapened heaven, or else [Acts v. 2.] will not come to God's price; like Ananias and Sapphira, perhaps offer pretty fair, bring two parts of their estate and lay them at the Apostles' feet, but will give no more; fall off at last for a trifle, and peremptorily deny Christ if they may not have Him on their own conditions. Some superfluities, some vanities, some chargeable or troublesome sins, perhaps, they can spare, and those they will be inclinable to part withal; but if this will not serve, Christ must seek for a better chapman, they stand not much upon it, they can return as contentedly without it as they came. And this arises from a neglect and security, a not heeding or weighing of God's justice, and consequently undervaluing of His mercies. They have never felt God as an angry Judge, and therefore they now scorn Him as a Saviour: they have lived at such ease of heart, that no legal terror, no affrightments, or ghastly representations of sin can work upon them: and if the reading of the law, that killing letter, have been sent by God to instruct them in the desperateness of their estate, to humble these libertine souls to the spirit of bondage, and so school them to Christ, they have eyes, but see not, ears, Rom. i. 28. but hear it not, they are come to this *νοῦς ἀδόκιμος*, "a reprobate sense," or as it may be rendered, "an undiscerning mind," not able to judge of that which is thus read and proposed to it; or again a sense without sense, not apprehensive of that which no man that hath eyes can be ignorant of; nay, in

Theodoret's phrase, *νοῦς ἀντίτυπος*, an heart that will reverberate any judgment or terror, receiving no more impression from it than the anvil from the hammer, violently return it again, smoothed somewhat over perhaps by often-beating, but nothing softened. Nay if the law cry too loud, and by an inward voice preach damnation in their bowels, and resolve to be heard before it cease; then do they seek out some worldly employment to busy themselves withal, that they may not be at home at so much unquietness: they will charm it with pleasures, or overwhelm it with business, as Cain, when his conscience was too rough and rigid for him, went out from the presence of the Lord, and as it is Gen. iv. 16. observed, "built cities," got some of his progeny to invent ver. 17. music, perhaps to still his tumultuous raving conscience, ver. 21. that the noise of the hammers and melody of the instruments might outsound the din within him, as in the sacrifices of Moloch, where their children, which they offered in an hollow brazen vessel, could not choose but howl hideously, they had timbrels and tabrets perpetually beating,—whereupon Tophet, where these sacrifices were kept, is by grammarians deduced from תוף *tympanum*^a,—to drown the noise 2 Kings xxiii. 10. of the children's cry; these, I say, which will not be instructed in their misery, or bettered by the preaching of the law, which labour only to make their inward terrors insensible, to skin, not cure, the wound, are infidels in the first or highest rank, which deny to take Him at all, will not suffer themselves to be persuaded that they have any need of Him; and therefore let Him be offered for ever, let Him be proclaimed in their ears every minute of their lives, they see nothing in Him worth hearkening after; and the reason is, they are still at home, they have not gone a foot abroad out of themselves, and therefore cannot lay hold on Christ. He that never went to school to the law, he that was never sensible of his own damned estate, he that never hated himself, οὐ μὴ δέξεται, "will never receive," never accept of Christ.

Secondly, some are come thus far to a sense of their estate, and are twinged extremely, and therefore fly presently to the gospel; hearing of Christ, they fasten, are not patient of so much deliberation as to observe whether their hands be empty;

^a Selden, De Diis Syriis. Syntagma i. cap. 6. [Op., tom. ii. p. 314.]

they are in distress, and Christ must needs save them suddenly; they lay hold as soon as ever they hear a promise, and are resolved to be saved by Christ, because they see otherwise they are damned. And these take Christ indeed, but under a false person; either they take the promises only, and let Christ alone, or take Christ the Saviour, but not Christ the Lord; are willing to be saved by Him, but never think of serving Him; are praying for ever for heaven and glory, but never care how little they hear of grace; the end they fasten on, the covenant they hug and gripe with their embraces, but never take the condition of repentance and obedience; this is not for their turn; they abstract the cheap and profitable attributes of Christ, His priestly office of satisfaction and propitiation, but never consider Him as a King; and so, in a word, lay hold of the estate before they have married the husband, which they have yet no more right to than a mere stranger; for the communicating the riches of a husband being but a consequence of marriage, is therefore not yet made over till the marriage—which is the taking of the husband's person—be consummate. And this, I say, is a second degree of infidelity, somewhat more secret and less discernible, when by an error of the person, by taking Christ the Saviour for Christ the Lord, or His promises abstracted from His person, we believe we shall be saved by Him, but deny to be ruled; desire to enjoy all the privileges, but subtract all the obedience of a subject.

In the third place, they which have accepted and received the true person of Christ as a Master, as well as a Jesus, they which have taken Him on a resolved vow of performing this condition of homage and obedience, are not in event as good as their engagements; when they think the match is fast, and past danger of recalling, when they seem to have gotten a firm title to the promises, and are in a manner entered upon the goods and estate of their husband, they do begin to break covenant, and either wholly subtract, or else divide their love; they married Him for His wealth, and now they have that, they are soon weary of His person; they came with the soul of an harlot, looking only what they should get by Him, and now they have many other old acquaintances they must needs keep league with; their self-denial, their

humility, their vows of obedience were but arts and stratagems that want and necessity put them upon, and now they have got their ends, all those are soon out-dated; they have faith and so are justified, and sure of their estate, and so now they may sin securely, "there is no condemnation to them, [Rom. viii. 1.] they are in Christ," and all the sins, nay, all the devils in the world shall never separate them. And this is a sanctified religious piece of infidelity in men, which think they have made sure of the main, and so never think of the consecratories; they have faith, and so it is no matter for good works; the lease is sealed, the wedding solemnized, and then never dream or care for covenants. And these men's fate is like to be the same spiritually, which we read of Samson's bodily strength; he vowed the vow of a Nazarite, and as long as he kept unshaven no opposition could prevail against him; but as soon as he broke his vow, when he had let his mistress [Judg. xvi. 19.] cut his locks, his strength departed from him. All the promises and privileges of our being in Christ are upon condition of our obedience, and our vow being broken, the devil and the Philistines within us will soon deprive us of our eyes and life. Whatsoever livelihood we presume we have in Christ, we are deceived, we are still "dead in trespasses [Eph. ii. 1.] and sins." Thus do you see the three degrees of infidelity frequent amongst Christians, 1. a not taking Him at all, 2. a mistaking of His person; 3. a breaking of the covenants: now that you may abhor and fly from, and get out of each of them by a lively faith, my next particular shall warn you, the greatness of this sin, and that first positively in itself, "it shall be very intolerable for that city."

Faith may be conceived in a threefold relation, either to men, the subjects of it, and those sinners; or 2. to Christ, and His sufferings, the objects of it, with all the effects, remission of sins, and salvation attending it; or 3. to God the Father, the author and commander of it, as the only condition annexed to all His promises. And consequently infidelity, *ἐκ παραλλήλου*, shall be aggravated by these three depths or degrees, each adding to its exceeding sinfulness.

As faith respects its subject, and that a sinful, miserable one, engaged and fixed in an unremediable necessity of sinning and suffering for ever; so is it the only means upon

earth, nay in the very counsel of God, able to do us any help; all the arts and spiritual engines even in heaven besides this are unprofitable. Nay, the second covenant now being sealed, and God for ever having established the rule and method of it; I say, things thus standing, God Himself cannot be presumed to have mercy upon any one but who is thus qualified; it being the only foundation on which our heaven is built, the only ground we have to hope for any thing, as is manifest by that place, being rightly weighed,

Heb. xi. 1. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for," where the Greek phrase, *ὑπόστασις ἐλπιζομένων*, signifies the ground or foundation of every of those things which can be the object of a Christian's hope. So that where no ground-work, no building; if no faith, no hope, no possibility of heaven. If the devil could have but stolen this jewel out of the world, he had shut up heaven gates eternally, and had left it as empty of saints as it is full of glory, not capable of any flesh but what Christ's hypostatical union brought thither. And this is no more than I conceive the learned mean by *necessitas mediæ*, that faith is necessary as a means, i. e. there is no means besides of power, either absolutely or *ex hypothesi*, of itself or on supposition of God's covenant, to bring us to heaven. Nothing is of force besides in reason to prepare, or morally accommodate; and God hath not promised to accept in mercy of any thing else. For whereas the promises are sometimes made to repentance, sometimes to obedience, as, whosoever repenteth shall be saved, and the like; you are to know, that it is on this ground of the necessary union of these graces, that where one of them is truly and sincerely, there the rest are always in some degree, there being no example of penitence or obedience in any subject which had

Heb. xi. 6. not faith also. "For he that comes to God must believe that He is," &c. And he that heartily believes He is, and is "a rewarder of them that seek Him," will not fail to search, pursue, and follow after Him. So that, though the promises are made promiscuously to any one which hath either of these graces, yet it is upon supposal of the rest; if it be

Gal. v. 6. made of faith, it is in confidence that "faith works by love,"

Jam. ii. 22. and as St. James enforces it, "is made perfect by works." So that, in the first place, infidelity is sufficiently aggravated

in respect of the subject; it being a catholic destroyer, an intervenient that despoils him of all means, all hope, all possibility of salvation: finding him in the state of damnation, it sets him going, suffers him not to lay hold on any thing that may stay him in his precipice; and in the midst of his shipwreck, when there be planks and refuges enough about him, hath numbed his hands, deprived him of any power of taking hold of them.

In the second place, in respect of Christ and His sufferings, the objects of our faith, so faith is in a manner the soul of them, giving them life and efficacy, making things which are excellent in themselves prove so in effect to others. Thus the whole splendour and beauty of the world, the most accurate proportions and images of nature are beholding to the eye, though not for their absolute excellency, yet for both the account and use that is made of them; for if all men were blind, the proudest workmanship of nature would not be worth the valuing. Thus is a learned piece cast away upon the ignorant, and the understanding of the auditor is the best commendation of a speech or sermon. In like manner, those infinite unvaluable sufferings of Christ, if they be not believed in, are but, as Aristotle^b saith of divine knowledge, “a most honourable thing, but of no manner of use;” if they be not apprehended, they are lost. Christ’s blood if not caught up in our hearts by faith, but suffered to be poured out upon the earth, will prove no better than that of Abel, “crying for judgment from the ground;” that which is spilt Gen. iv. 10. is clamorous, and its voice is toward heaven for vengeance; only that which is gathered up, as it falls from His side, by faith will prove a medicine to heal the nations. So that infidelity makes the death of Christ no more than the death of an ordinary man, “in which there is no remedy,” *οὐκ ἔστιν* Wisd. ii. 1. *ἰασις*, “there is no cure,” no physic in it; or as the same word is rendered, “no pardon,” no remission wrought by it, a bare Eccles. xxviii. 3. going down into the grave, that no man is better for. It doth even frustrate the sufferings of Christ, and make Him have paid a ransom to no purpose, and purchased an inheritance at an infinite rate, and no man the better for it. Again, Christ is not only contemned, but injured, not only slighted,

^b [Metaph., A. c. 2.]

but robbed, He loses not only His price and His thanks, but His servant, which He hath bought and purchased with His blood. For redemption is not an absolute setting free, but the buying out of an usurper's hands, that he may return to his proper lord; changing him from the condition of a captive to a subject. He which is ransomed from the galleys is not presently a king, but only recovered to a free and tolerable service: nay generally, if he be redeemed, he is *eo nomine* a servant, by right and equity his creature that

Luke i. 74. redeemed him, according to the express words, "that we being delivered might serve Him." Now a servant is a possession, part of one's estate, as truly to be reckoned his as any part of his inheritance. So that every unbeliever is a thief, robs Christ not only of the honour of saving him, but of one of the members of His family, of part of His goods, His servant; nay, it is not a bare theft, but of the highest size, a sacrilege, stealing an holy instrument, a vessel out of God's temple, which He bought and delivered out of the common calamity to "serve Him in holiness," to be put to holy, special services.

In the third place, faith may be considered in reference to God the Father, and that 1. as the author or fountain of this theological grace; 2. as the commander of this duty of believing; and either of these will aggravate the unbeliever's guilt, and add more articles to his indictment. As God is the author of faith, so the infidel resists, and abandons, and flies from all those methods, all those means, by which God ordinarily produces faith; all the power of His Scriptures, all the blessings of a Christian education, all the benefits of sacred knowledge; in sum, the prayers, the sweat, the lungs, the bowels of His ministers, in Christ's stead "beseeching you to be reconciled," spending their dearest spirits, and even praying and preaching out their souls for you, that you would be friends with God through Christ. All these, I say, the infidel takes no notice of, and by his contempt of these inferior graces, shews how he would carry himself even towards God's very Spirit, if it should come in power to convert him, he would hold out and bid defiance, and repel the omnipotent God with His omnipotent charms of mercy: he that contemns God's ordinary means, would be likely to re-

1 Cor. v.
20.

sist His extraordinary, were there not more force in the means than forwardness in the man: and thanks be to that controlling, convincing, constraining Spirit, if ever he be brought to be content to be saved. He that will not now believe in Christ when He is preached, would have gone very near, if he had lived then, to have given his consent, and joined his suffrage in crucifying Him. A man may guess of his inclination by his present practices, and if he will not now be His disciple, it was not his innocence, but his good fortune, that he did not then betray Him. It was well he was born amongst Christians, or else he might have been as sour a professed enemy of Christ as Pilate, or the Pharisees: an unbelieving Christian is, for all his livery and profession, but a Jew or heathen, and the Lord make him sensible of his condition.

Lastly, consider this duty of faith in respect of God the Father commanding it, and then you shall find it the main precept of the Bible. It were long to shew you the ground of it in the law of nature, the obscure, yet discernible mention of it in the moral law, both transcendently, in the main end of all, and distinctly, though not clearly, in the first commandment; he that hath a mind to see may find it in Pct. Baronius, *de præstantia et dignitate divinæ legis*. It were as toilsome to muster up all the commands of the Old Testament, which exactly and determinately drive at belief in Christ; as generally, in those places, where the Chaldee Paraphrase reads instead of God, God's Word, as, "fear not, Abraham, for I am thy shield," say they, "My Word is thy shield," which speaks a plain command of faith; for not to fear is to trust; not to fear on that ground, because God's word, *ὁ Λόγος*, "the Word," Christ, is one's shield, is nothing John i. 1. in the world but to believe, and rely, and fasten, and depend on Christ. Many the like commands of faith in Christ will the Old Testament afford, and the New is nothing else but a perpetual inculcating of it upon us, a driving and calling, entreating and enforcing, wooing and hastening us to believe. In which respect the schools call it also necessary *necessitate præcepti*, a thing which though we should be never the better for, we are bound to perform. So that though faith were not able to save us, yet infidelity would damn us, it being amongst others a direct breach of a natural, a moral,

may, an evangelical commandment. And so much for the danger of infidelity considered positively in relation to the subject whom it deprives of heaven; the object, Christ and His offers in the Gospel, which it frustrates; and lastly the author and commander of it, God the Father, whom it resists, disobeys, and scorns. You will perhaps more feelingly be affected to the loathing of it, if we proceed to the odious and dangerous condition of it, above all other sins and breaches in the world, which is my third part, its comparative sinfulness, "It shall be more tolerable," &c.

And this will appear, if we consider it, 1. in itself; 2. in its consequences. In itself it is fuller of guilt, in its consequences fuller of danger, than any ordinary breach of the moral law. In itself, so it is 1. the greatest aversion from God,—in which aversion the schoolmen place the *formalis ratio*, the very essence of sin—it is the perversest remotion and turning away of the soul from God, and getting as far as we can out of His sight, or ken, the forbidding of all manner of commerce or spiritual traffic, or correspondence with God, as may appear by that admirable place, Heb. x. 38, "The just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul hath no pleasure in him;" and ver. 39, "We are not of them which draw back unto perdition, but of them that do believe to the saving of the soul." Where the phrase of drawing back opposed here to faith and believing, is in the original *ὑποστολή*, a cowardly, pusillanimous subducing of one's-self, a getting out of the way, a not daring to meet, or approach, or accept of Christ when He is offered them; the same with *συστολή* among the physicians, a contraction of the soul, a shrivelling of it up, a sudden correption and depression of the mind, such as the sight of some hideous danger is wont to produce, so 2 Macc. vi. 12, *συστέλλεσθαι, κ. τ. λ.*, to be discouraged, and to forsake the Jewish religion, because of the calamities. So is the word used of Peter, *ὑπέστειλε καὶ ἀφώριζεν ἑαυτὸν, φοβούμενος, κ.τ.λ.*, "he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those that were of the circumcision." The infidel, I say, draws back, withdraws and sneaks out of the way, as if he were afraid of the mercies of his Saviour, as if it were death to him to be so near salvation; as if Christ coming to him with the mercies of the

gospel, were the mortalest enemy under heaven, and there were no such mischief to be done him as his conversion. This indeed is an aversion in the highest degree, when we fly and draw back from God when He comes to save us, when the sight of a Saviour makes us take our heels. Adam might well hide himself when God came to challenge him about his disobedience; the guilty conscience being afraid of revenge, may well slink out of His presence with Cain. Gen. iv. 16. But to tremble and quake at a proclamation of mercy, when God "draws with cords of a man," a powerful phrase expressed Hos. xi. 4. in the next words with "the bands of love;" when He loveth us, and calls His Son out for us, then to be "bent to back-sliding," in the seventh verse, to draw back when He comes to embrace, this is a stubbornness and contraction of the soul, a crouching of it in, a *συστολή* or *ὑποστολή*, that neither nature nor reason would be guilty of: an aversion from God, which no other sin can parallel, and therefore of all other most intolerable in the first place.

2. Infidelity gives God the lie, and denies whatever God proclaims in the gospel. The reason or ground of any one's belief, the *objectum formale quo*, that, by assenting to which I come to believe, is God's veracity; the confidence that God speaks true, the relying on His word, is that which brings me to lay hold on Christ; and therefore the infidel is downright with God; he will not take His word, he will never be persuaded that these benefits of Christ's death that are offered to all men, can ever do him any good. Let God call him to accept them, he will never come; his surly, resolute carriage is in effect a contradicting of whatever God hath affirmed, a direct thwarting, a giving the lie to God and His Evangelists: and this is an aggravation not to be mentioned without reverence or horror, the most odious affront in the world; the Lord be merciful to us in this matter.

Next, this sin is a sin of the most dangerous consequences of any.

1. It produces all other sins; and that positively, by doubting of His justice, and so falling into adulteries, blasphemies, and the like, in security and hope of impunity; by distrusting of His providence and mercy, and so flying to covetousness, murmuring, tempting, subtlety, all arts and

stratagems of getting for our temporal estate, and ordinary despair in our spiritual: then privatively, depriving us of that which is the mother and soul of our obedience and good works, I mean faith, so that every thing for want of it is turned into sin, and thereby depopulating the whole man, making him nothing in the world but ruins and noisomeness, a confluence of all manner of sins, without any concomitant degree of duty or obedience.

2. It frustrates all good exhortations, and forbids all manner of superstructions which the ministers are wont to labour for in moving us to charity, and obedience, and joy, and hope, and prayer, by not having laid any foundation whereon these must be built; any of these set or planted in any infidel heart will soon wither: they must have a stock of faith whereon to be grafted, or else they are never likely to thrive. As Galba's wit was a good one, but it was unluckily placed, ill-seated, there was no good to be wrought by it. The proudest of our works or merits, the perfectest morality will stand but very weakly, unless it be founded on that foundation whose corner-stone is Christ Jesus.

[Eph. ii.
20.]

3. It leaves no place in the world for remedy: he that is an idolater, a sabbath-breaker, or the like; he that is arraigned at the law, and found guilty at that tribunal, hath yet an advocate in the gospel, a higher power to whom he may appeal to mitigate his sentence: but he that hath sinned against the gospel, hath no further to go, he hath sinned against that which should have remitted all other sins; and now he is come to an unremediable estate, to a kind of hell, or the grave of sin, from whence there is no recovery. There is not a mercy to be fetched in the world but out of the gospel, and he that hath refused them is past any further

John iii. 18. treaty: "He that believeth not is condemned already;" his damnation is sealed to him, and the entail past cutting off; it is his purchase, and now wants nothing but livery and
Ecclus. xx. scizin; nay, it is his patrimony, ἀπόλειαν ἐκληρονόμησεν, he
25. is as sure of it, as of any pennyworth of his inheritance.

1 Cor. xv. And the reason is implied, "If Christ be not risen, you are
17. yet in your sins:" there is no way to get out of our sins but Christ's resurrection, and he that believeth not, Christ is not risen to him: it were all one to him if there

had never been a Saviour; and therefore he remains in his old thralldom; he was taken captive in Adam, and hath never since had any other means to restore him: the ransom that was offered all, he would none of, and so he sticks unredeemed, he is yet in his sins, and so for ever like to continue. And now he is come to this state, it were superfluous further to aggravate the sin against him; his case is too wretched to be upbraided him, the rest of our time shall be employed in providing a remedy for him, if it be possible, and that must be from consideration of the disease, in a word and close of application.

The sin being thus displayed to you with its consequences, O what a spirit should it raise in us! O what a resolution and expression of our manhood, to resist and banish out of us this "evil heart of unbelief!" What an hatred should it work in our bowels, what a reluctancy, what an indignation, ^{Heb. iii. 12.} what a revenge against the fruit of our bosom, which hath so long grown and thrived within us, only to our destruction! which is provided as it were to eat our souls, as an harbinger to prepare a place within us for the worm in hell, where it may lie and bite and gnaw at ease eternally! It is an examination that will deserve the most precious minute of our lives, the solemnest work of our souls, the carefulest muster of our faculties, to shrift and winnow, and even set our hearts upon the rack, to see whether any fruit or seed of infidelity lurk in it; and in a matter of this danger to prevent God's inquest by our own, to display every thing to ourselves, just as it shall be laid open before God in judgment, ^{Heb. iv. 13.} *γυμνὸν καὶ τετραχλισμένον*, naked and discernible as the entrails of a creature cut down the back, where the very method of nature in its secrecies is betrayed to the eye. I say, to cut ourselves up, and to search into every cranny of our souls, every winding of either our understanding or affections; and observe whether any infidel thought, any infidel lust be lodged there: and when we have found this execrable thing which hath brought all our plagues on us, then must we purge, and cleanse, and lustrate the whole city for its sake: and with more ceremony than ever the heathen used, even with a superstition of daily, hourly prayers, and sacrificing ourselves to God, strive and struggle, and offer violence to remove this

unclean thing out of our coasts; use these unbelieving hearts of ours, as Josiah did the altars of Ahaz, "break them down, beat them to powder, and cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron;" that Cedron which Christ passed over when He went to suffer, even that brook which "Christ drank of by the way." And there indeed is there a remedy for infidelity, if the infidel will throw it in. If he will put it off, be it never so dyed in the contempt of Christ's blood, that very blood shall cleanse it: and therefore

In the next place, let us labour for faith; let not His hands be stretched out any longer upon the cross to a faithless and stubborn generation. It were a piece of ignorance that a scholar would abhor to be guilty of, not to be able to understand that inscription written by Pilate in either of three languages, "Jesus of Nazareth, King." Nay for all the Gospels and comments written on it, both by His disciples and His works, still to be non-proficients, this would prove an accusation written in marble, nay, an exprobration above a *σηλητευτικόν*. In a word, Christ is still offered and the proclamation not yet outdated, His sufferings in the Scripture proposed to every one of you to lay hold on, and His ministers sent as "ambassadors beseeching you to be reconciled," and more than that, in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, His body and blood set before our eyes to be felt and gazed on, and then even a Didymus would believe; nay, to be divided amongst us, and put in our mouths, and then who would be so sluggish as to refuse to feed on Him in his heart?

For your election from the beginning to this gift of faith, let that never raise any doubt or scruple in you, and foreslow that coming to Him; this is a jealousy that hath undone many, in a resolvedness that if they are not elected, all their faith shall prove unprofitable. Christ that bids thee repent, believe, and come unto Him, is not so frivolous to command impossibilities, nor so cruel to mock our impotence. Thou mayest believe, because He bids: believe, and then thou mayest be sure thou wert predestinated to believe; and then all the decrees in the world cannot deny thee Christ, if thou art thus resolved to have Him. If thou wilt not believe, thou hast reprobated thyself, and who is to be accused that thou art not

2 Kings
xxiii. 12.

John xviii.
1.
Ps. cx. 7.

[Is. lxxv.
2.]

John xix.
19.

2 Cor. v.
20.

saved? But if thou wilt come in, there is sure entertainment for thee. He that begins in God's counsels, and never thinks fit to go about any evangelical duty, till he can see his name writ in the Book of life, must not begin to believe till he be in heaven; for there only is that to be read *radio recto*. The surer course is to follow the Scripture; to hope comfortably every one of ourselves, to use the means, apprehend the mercies, and then to be confident of the benefits of Christ's suffering: and this is the way to make our election sure, to read it in ourselves *radio reflexo*, by knowing that we believe, to resolve that we are elected; thereby "we know that we are past from death to life, if we love the brethren." And so is it also of faith; for these are inseparable graces. So Psalm xxv. 14; Prov. iii. 32, God's secret and His covenant, being taken for His decree, is said to be "with them that fear Him," and to be "shewed to them," i. e. their very fearing of God is an evidence to them that they are His elect, with whom He hath entered covenant. Our faith is the best argument, or *κριτήριον*, by which to make a judgment to God's decree concerning us. I say, if we will believe God hath elected us; it is impossible any true faith should be refused upon pretence the person was predestined to destruction; and if it were possible, yet would I hope that God's decrees—were they as absolute as some would have them—should sooner be softened into mercy, than that mercy purchased by His Son, should ever fail to any that believes. The bargain was made, the covenant struck, and the immutability of the Persian laws are nothing to it, that "whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Wherefore, in brief, let us attend the means, and let what will or can come of the end; Christ is offered to every soul here present to be a Jesus, only do thou accept of Him, and thou art past from death to life; there is no more required of thee, but only to take Him; if thou art truly possessor of Him, He will justify, He will humble, He will sanctify thee; He will work all reformation in thee: and in time seal thee up to the day of redemption: only be careful that thou mistakest not His person; thou must receive Him, as well as His promises; thou must take Him as a Lord and King, as well as a Saviour, and be content to be a subject, as well as a saint. He is

¹ John iii.
14.

Ps. xxv.
14; Prov.
iii. 32.

John iii.
15.

[Ps. xcvi. 8.] now proclaimed in your ears, and you must not foreslow the audience, or procrastinate; "To-day if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." He holds Himself out on purpose to you, and by the minister woos you to embrace Him: and then it nearly concerns you not to provoke so true, so hearty, nay, even so passionate a friend: if He be not kissed He will be angry. Lastly, if in this business of believing so vulgarly exposed, there yet appear some difficulties in the practice, to be overcome before it prove a possible duty: if self-denial be incompatible with flesh and blood; if delights and worldly contentments, if an hardened heart in sin, and a world of high imaginations, refuse to submit or humble themselves to the poverty of Christ; if we cannot empty our hands to lay hold, or unbottom ourselves to lean wholly on Christ, then must we fly, and pray to that Spirit of power, to subdue, and conquer, and lead us captive to itself, to instruct us in the baseness, the nothingness, nay, the dismal, hideous wretchedness of our own estate, that so being spiritually shaken and terrified out of our carnal pride and security, we may come trembling and quaking to that throne of grace, and with the hands of faith, though feeble ones, with the eye of faith, though dimly, with a hearty sincere resigning up of ourselves, we may see and apprehend, and fasten, and be united to our Saviour: that we may live in Christ, and Christ in us, and having begun in the life of grace here, we may hope and attain to be accomplished with that of glory hereafter.

"Now to Him which hath elected us," &c.

SERMON XXIV.

Acts xvii. 30.

And the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men every where to repent.

THE words in our English translation carry somewhat in the sound, which doth not fully reach the importance of the original, and therefore it must be the task of our preface not to connect the text, but clear it; not to shew its dependence on the precedent words, but to restore it to the integrity of itself, that so we may perfectly conceive the words, before we venture to discuss them; that we may *ὑποτυπῶσαι πρῶτον, ὕστερον ἀναγράφειν*, as Aristotle^a phrases it, “first represent them to you in the bulk, then describe them particularly in their several lineaments.” Our English setting of the words seems to make two propositions, and in them a direct opposition betwixt the condition of the ancient and present Gentiles; that God had winked at, i. e. either approved, or pitied, or pardoned the ignorance of the former heathens, but now was resolved to execute justice on all that did continue in that was heretofore pardonable in them, on every one every where that did not repent. Now the original runs thus, *τοὺς μὲν οὖν χρόνους τῆν ἀγνοίας ὑπεριδὼν ὁ Θεὸς, τὰ νῦν παραγγέλλει, κ.τ.λ.*, that is, in a literal construction, “God therefore passing over the times of ignorance, as if He saw them not, doth now command all men every where to repent.” Which you may conceive thus, by this kind of vulgar *ἀνάβασις*, or sensible proceeding in God. God always is, essentially and perfectly, every one of His attributes, wisdom, justice, mercy, &c., but yet is said at one time to be peculi-

^a [Eth. Nicom., i. c. 7.]

arly one attribute, at another time another, i. e. to be at one time actually just, at another time actually merciful, according to His determination to the object. As when God fixes His eyes upon a rebellious people, whose sins are ripe for His justice, He then executes His vengeance on them as on Sodom: when He fixes His eyes upon a penitent, believing people, He then doth exercise His mercy, as on Nineveh. Now when God looks upon any part of the lapsed world on which He intends to have mercy, He suffers not His eye to be fixed or terminated on the medium betwixt His eye and them, on the sins of all their ancestors from the beginning of the world till that day; but having another account to call them to, doth for the present, *ὑπεριδεῖν, ὑπερβλέπειν, ὑπερορᾶν*, “look over all them,” as if they were not in His way, and imputing not the sins of the fathers to the children, fixeth on the children, makes His covenant of mercy with them, and commandeth them the condition of this covenant, whereby they shall obtain mercy, that is, “every one every where to repent.” So that in the first place, *ὑπεριδὼν παραγγέλλει* must not be rendered by way of opposition, “He winked then, but now commands,” as if their former ignorance were justifiable, and an account of knowledge should only be exacted from us. And in the second place, *ὑπεριδὼν*, a word read but this once in all the New Testament, must be rendered, not “winking at,” but “looking over,” or not insisting upon; as when we fix our eyes upon a hill we suffer them not to dwell on the valley on this side of it, because we look earnestly on the hill. Now if this be not the common Attical acception of it, yet it will seem agreeable to the penning of the New Testament, in which whosoever will observe, may find words and phrases which perhaps the Attic purity, perhaps grammar, will not approve of. And yet I doubt not but classic authorities may be brought where *ὑπεριδεῖν* shall signify, not a winking, or not taking notice of, but a looking further, a not resting in this, but a driving higher, for so it is rendered by Stephanus, *ad ulteriora oculos convertere*, and then the phrase shall be as proper as the sense, the Greek as authentical as the doctrine, that God looking over and not insisting upon the ignorance of the former heathen, at Christ’s coming entered a covenant with their successors, the condi-

tion of which was, "that every man every where should repent."

And this is made good by the Greek Scholia of the New Testament, οὐ τοῦτό φησιν^b, κ.τ.λ., "that is spoken, not that the former heathen should be unpunished, but that their successors to whom St. Paul preached, if they would repent, should not be called to an account of their ignorance," should not fare the worse for the ignorance of their fathers; and at this drives also Chrysostom^c, out of whom the scholiasts may seem to have borrowed it, their whole ἐξήγησις being but ἔκλεκτα, gleanings out of the fathers before them. I might further prove the necessity of this interpretation if it were required of me: and thus far I have stayed you to prove it, because our English is somewhat imperfect in the expression of it. Δύο κύβοι οὐκ εἰσὶν κύβος, saith Aristotle, "Two cubes are not a cube," but another figure very different from it: and indeed our English translations by making two propositions of this verse, have varied the native single proposition in that regard, and made it unlike itself, which briefly—if I can inform myself aright—should run thus, by way of one simple enunciation; "God therefore not insisting on, but looking over those times of ignorance, doth now command all men every where to repent;" of which those three lines in Leo's^d fourth sermon *de Passione Domini* are a just paraphrase, *Nos sub veteris ignorantiae profunda nocte pereuntes, in patriarcharum societatem, et fortem electi gregis adoptavit.* So then the words being represented to you in this scheme or single diagram, are the covenant of mercy made with the progeny of ignorant heathens, upon condition of repentance, in which you may observe two grand parallel lines, 1, the ignorance of the heathen, such as in the justice of God might have provoked Him to have pretermitted the whole world of succeeding Gentiles: 2, the mercy of God, not imputing their ignorance to our charge, whosoever every where to the end of the world shall repent. And first of the first, the ignorance of the heathen in these words, τοὺς μὲν οὖν χρόνους, "the times," &c.

^b [Ecumenius Ennarrat in loc. et Op., tom. i. p. 139. Paris. 1631.]

Op., tom. ix. p. 291. C, D.]

^c [In Acta Apostol. Hom. xxxviii.]

^d [S. Leo. Sermon. iv. de Passione Domini, iv. cap. 5. Op., tom. i. p. 210.]

If for the clearing of this bill we should begin our inquest at Japhet the father of the Gentiles, examine them all by their gradations, we should in the general find the evidence to run thus; 1. that they were absolutely ignorant, as ignorance is opposed to learning; 2. ignorant in the affairs of God, as ignorance is opposed to piety or spiritual wisdom; 3. ignorant supinely, perversely, and maliciously, as it is opposed to a simple or more excusable ignorance.

Their absolute ignorance or *ἀπαιδευσία*, their want of learning is at large proved by St. Austin xviii. *de Civ. Dei*, Eusebius *Præpar.* x., Clemens in his *Protrep.* and others, some of whose writings to this purpose—because it is easier for my auditors to believe me in gross, than to be troubled with the retail—is this, that the beginnings of learning in all kinds was among the Jews, whilst the whole heathen world besides was barbarously ignorant; that Moses appointed masters among the tribes, *γραμματῶν εἰσαγωγεῖς*, which initiated the youth of Israel in all kind of secular learning; or if you will believe Patricius^e and his proofs, that Shem erected, and afterwards Heber enlarged, *scholas doctrinarum*, schools or seminaries of learning, where learning was professed and taught; that Abraham, as Eusebius cites Nic. Damascenus^f for it, was excellent in the mathematics, and dispersed and communicated his knowledge in Chaldea, from whence the Egyptians, and from them the Grecians came to them; that Enoch was probably judged by Polyhistor^g to be that Atlas to whom the heathen imputed the beginning of astronomy; that in the sum, all learning was primitive among the Hebrews, and from them, by stealth and filching, some seeds of it sown in Phœnicia, Egypt, and at last in Greece. For they make it plain by computation, that Moses,—who yet was long after Enoch, and Shem, and Heber, and Abraham, all *in confesso* great scholars,—that Moses, I say, was fifteen hundred years ancients than the Greek philosophers, that all the learning that is found and bragged of amongst the Grecians—whose ignorance my text chiefly deals with, St. Paul's discourse here being addressed to the Athenians—was but a babe of a

^e Zoroaster, p. 4.

^f [Nicol. Damascenus, ap. Euseb.,
Præpar. Evang., lib. ix. p. 417 d.]

^g [Ap. Euseb., *ibid.*, lib. ix. p. 419

d.]

day old in respect of the true antiquity of learning: that all their philosophy was but scraps, ἀποσπασμάτια, which fell from the Jews' tables; that in their stealth they were very imprudent, gleaned only that which was not worth carrying away, οὐδὲν ἢ πρὸς Θεὸν, ἢ πρὸς σώφρονα βίου, κ.τ.λ., stuffed their sacks, which they carried into Egypt to buy food, only with some unprofitable chaff, with empty speculations that would puff up, not fill or nourish the soul, but brought no valuable real commodity away with them, whereby they might improve their knowledge, or reform their manners; upon which two grounds, 1. the vanity and unprofitableness of their learning; 2. the novelty of it in respect of the Hebrews from whom they stole it afar off; they are not thought worthy of the title of scholars; and for all the noise of their philosophy, are yet judged absolutely ignorant, as ignorance is opposed to learning.

In the second place, for their ignorance in the affairs of God, their own author's examination will bring in a sufficient evidence. If you will sort out the chiefest names of learned men amongst them, you will there find the veriest dunces in this learning. The deipnosophists, the only wits of the time, are yet described by Athenæus to employ their study only how to get good cheer a free cost, αἰδοὶ αἰὲν ἄκαπνα θύομεν^h, they fed deliciously, and yet were at no charge for the provision; and amongst them you shall scarcely find any knowledge or worship of even their heathen gods, but only in drinking, where their luxury had this excuse or pretence of religion, that it was δειγμα τῆς δυνάμεως τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀγαθοῦ, "an experiment of the power of that good God" which had provided such a creature as wine for them to abuse; which perhaps a drunken Romish casuist stole from them, where he allows of drinking *supra modum, ad glorificandum Deum, &c.*, "to the glorifying of God," creator of so excellent a creature, which hath the effect in it of turning men into beasts. So that it seems by the story of them in brief, that the deipnosophists, men of the finest, politest conceits, as Ulpianus Tyrius, Calliphanes, and the like in Athenæus, in the multitude of the Grecian gods had but one deity, and that was their belly, which they worshipped *religioso luxu,*

^h [Lib. i. c. 14. p. 8 E. ed. Casaub.]

not singing, but eating and drinking praises to his name ; to this add the Sophistæ, Protagoras, Hippias, and the like great boasters of learning in Socrates's time, and much followed by the youth, till he persuaded them from admiring such unprofitable professors, and these are observed by Plutarch, to be mere hucksters of vainglory ; getting great store of money and applause from their auditors, ἀργύριον καὶ οἴημα, "silver and popularity," but had no manner of profitable learning to bestow upon them, as Plutarch dooms them in his Platonic Questionsⁱ, and Socrates in his Dialogues in confutation of them ; and certainly by their very profession it is plain that these men had no God to know or worship, except their gain. But not to insist on these or other their professors of more curious, trim, polite learning, as their philosophers, grammarians, and rhetoricians, it will be more seasonable to our text to examine St. Paul's auditors here, the great speculators among them : 1. the deepest philosophers, and there where you expect the greatest knowledge you shall find the most barbarous ignorance ; in the midst of the πολυθεότης of the Grecians, the philosophers (saith Clement^k, and it is plain by their writings,) finding out and acknowledging in private this multitude of gods to be a prodigious vanity, and infinitely below the gravity and wisdom of their profession, took themselves off from this unreasonable worship, and almost each of them in private worshipped some one God. And here you would think that they jumped with the Jews of that time, in the acknowledging an unity : but if you mark them you shall find that they did not reform the popular atheism, but only varied it into a more rational way. Thales would not acknowledge Neptune, as the poets and people did, but yet he deifies the water as Clement^l observes : another scorned to be so senseless as to worship wood or stone, and yet he deifies the earth, the parent of them both, and as senseless as them both ; and does at once *calcare terram et colere*, "tread on the earth with his feet, and adore it with his heart." So Socrates,—who by bringing in morality was a great refiner and pruner of barren philosophy,—

ⁱ [Platonicæ Quæstiones, Quæst. i. 5. sq.]
Op., tom. x. p. 160. Reiske.] ^l [Id., Ibid.]
[Clemens Alex. Protrept., cap.]

absolutely denying the Grecian gods, and thence called *ἄθεος*, is yet brought in by Aristophanes^m, worshipping the clouds, *ὦ δέσποτ' ἀήρ, κ.τ.λ.*, and by a more friendly historian described addressing a sacrifice to *Æsculapius*ⁿ, being at the point of death. So that in brief, the philosophers, disliking the vulgar superstition, went to school, saith Clement^o, to the Persian magi, and of them learnt a more scholastic atheism. The worship of those venerable elements, which because they were the beginnings out of which natural bodies were composed, were by these naturalists admired and worshipped instead of the God of nature. From which a man may plainly judge of the beginning and ground of the general atheism of philosophers, that it was a superficial knowledge of philosophy, the sight of second causes and dwelling on them, and being unable to go any higher. For men by nature being inclined to acknowledge a Deity, take that to be their God which is the highest in their sphere of knowledge, or the *supremum cognitum* which they have attained to; whereas if they had been studious, or able by the dependence of causes to have proceeded beyond these elements, they might possibly, nay, certainly would have been reduced to piety and religion, which is *εὐσέβεια, θεοσέβεια*, “the knowledge and worship of God;” but there were many hindrances which kept them grovelling on the earth, not able to ascend this ladder. 1. They wanted that *οἰκεία εὐέξια τῆς ψυχῆς*, which Aphrodisiensis^p on the Topics speaks of, that kindly, familiar good temper, or disposition of the soul, *καθ' ἣν εὐρετική τε ἀληθοῦς καὶ κριτική ἐστὶ*, “by which the mind is able to find out and judge of truth;” they wanted either that natural harmony, or spiritual concord of the powers of the soul, by which it is able to reach those things which now in corrupt nature are only spiritually discerned. For it is Clement's^q Christian judgment of them, that the Gentiles being but bastards, not true-born sons of God, but aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, were therefore not able to look up toward the light, (as it is observed of the bastard-brood of eagles,) or

^m Nub. 264.

ⁿ [Cf. Plato, Phæd. ad fin.]

^o [Clemens Alex. Protrept., § 65. p. 57, ed. Potter.]

HAMMOND.

^p [Alex. Aphrodis. in Aristot. Topica, f. 17.]

^q [Clemens Alex. Protrept., ch. x. § 92. p. 75. ed. Pott.]

consequently to discern that inaccessible light, till they were received into the covenant, and made *τέκνα φώτος γνήσια*, true proper "children of light." A second hindrance was the grossness and earthiness of their fancy, which was not able to conceive God to be any thing but a corporeous substance, as Philoponus observes in his Scholia on the books *de anima*^r, *ὅταν θέλωμεν, κ.τ.λ.* "When we have a mind to betake ourselves to divine speculation," our fancy comes in, *καὶ θόρυβον κινεῖ*, "raises such a tempest" in us, so many earthly meteors to clog and over-cloud the soul, that it cannot but conceive the Deity under some bodily shape, and this disorder of the fancy doth perpetually attend the soul, even in the fairest weather, in its greatest calm and serenity of affections, *ὅταν σχολῆν, κ.τ.λ.*, saith Plato, even when the soul is free from its ordinary distractions, and hath provided itself most accurately for contemplation. Philoponus in this place finding this inconvenience, fetches a remedy out of Plotinus for this rarifying and purifying of the fancy, and it is the study of the mathematics, *ἀγέσθωσαν νέοι, κ.τ.λ.*, "Let young men be brought up in the study of the mathematics," to some acquaintance with an incorporeous nature; but how unprofitable a remedy this study of the mathematics was, to the purpose of preparing the soul to a right conceit of God, I doubt not but he himself afterwards found, when he turned Christian, and saw how far their mathematical and metaphysical abstractions fell below those purest theological conceits, of which only grace could make him capable. So that in brief their understanding being fed by their fancies, and both together fattened with corporeous phantasms, as they increased in natural knowledge, grew more hardened in spiritual ignorance, and as Clement^s saith of them, were like birds crammed in a coop; fed in darkness and nourished for death: their gross conceits groping on in obscurity, and furnishing them only with such opinions of God, as should increase both their ignorance and damnation. That I be not too large and confused in this discourse, let us pitch upon Aristotle, one of the latest of the ancient philosophers, not above three hundred and forty years before Christ,

^r [Philoponus, Comment. in Aristot. De Anima, ff. 1, 2. ed. Aldus.]

^s [Clemens Alex. Protrept., ch. x. § 113. p. 87. (ad fin.) Potter.]

who therefore seeing the vanities, and making use of the helps of all the Grecian learning, may probably be judged to have as much knowledge of God as any heathen; and indeed the Cologne divines had such an opinion of his skill and expressions that way, that in their tract of Aristotle's Salvation, they define him to be Christ's *præcursor in naturalibus*, as John Baptist was *in gratuitis*. But in brief, if we examine him, we shall find him much otherwise, as stupid in the affairs of 1. God, 2. the soul, 3. happiness, as any of his fellow Gentiles. If the book *περὶ κόσμου* were his own legitimate work, a man might guess that he saw something, though he denied the particular providence of the Deity, and that he acknowledged His omnipotence, though he would not be so bold with Him as to let Him be busied in the producing of every particular sublunary effect. The man might seem somewhat tender of God, as if being but newly come acquainted with Him he were afraid to put Him to too much pains, as judging it *μηδὲ καλόν, κ.τ.λ.*, "neither comely nor befitting the majesty of a God to interest Himself in every action upon earth". It might seem a reverence and awe which made him provide the same course for God, which he saw used in the courts of Susa and Ecbatana, where the king, saith he, lived invisible in his palace, and yet by his officers, as through prospectives and otacoustics, saw and heard all that was done in his dominions. But this book being not of the same complexion with the rest of his philosophy, is shrewdly guessed to be a spurious issue of later times, entitled to Aristotle and translated by Apuleius, but not owned by its brethren, the rest of his books of philosophy; for even in the *Metaphysics* ^u—where he is at his wisest—he censures Xenophanes for a clown for looking up to heaven, and affirming that there was one God there, the cause of all things, and rather than he will credit him he commends Parmenides for a subtle fellow, who said nothing at all, or I am sure to no purpose.

Concerning his knowledge of the soul, it is Philoponus' ^x observation of him, that he persuades only the more understanding, laborious, judicious sort to be his auditors in that

[†] [Pseud-Aristot. De Mundo, c. 6.] i. cap. 1. ad init. Cf. also Schol. on the
^u [Aristot. Metaph. A. c. 5.] Categories, p. 36. b. ed. Berlin.]
^x [Cf. Com. in Aristot. de Anima, lib.

subject, τοὺς δὲ ῥαθυμοτέρους ἀποτρέπει, κ.τ.λ., but de-
 horts men of meaner vulgar parts, less intent to their study,
 from meddling at all with this science about the soul, for he
 plainly tells them in his first *de anima*, it is too hard for any
 ordinary capacity, and yet in the first of the *Metaphysics*⁷ he
 defines the wise man to be one who besides his own accu-
 rate knowledge of hard things, as the causes of the soul, &c.,
 is also able to teach any body else, who hath such an habit of
 knowledge, and such a command over it, that he can make
 any auditor understand the abstrusest mystery in it. So
 then out of his own words he is convinced to have had no
 skill, no wisdom in the business of the soul, because he could
 not explain nor communicate this knowledge to any but choice
 auditors. The truth is, these were but shifts of pride, and
 ambitious pretences to cloak a palpable ignorance, under the
 habit of mysterious, deep, speculation: when, alas, poor man!
 all that which he knew, or wrote of the soul, was scarce worth
 learning, only enough to confute his fellow ignorant philoso-
 phers, to puzzle others, to puff himself; but to profit, instruct,
 or edify none.

In the third place, concerning happiness, he plainly be-
 trays himself to be a coward, not daring to meddle with
 divinity. For² being probably given to understand, or rather
 indeed plainly convinced, that if any thing in the world were,
 then happiness must likely be θεόσδοτος, “the gift of God”
 bestowed on men, yet he there staggers at it, speaks scepti-
 cally, and not so magisterially as he is wont, dares not be so
 bold as to define it: and at last does not profess his igno-
 rance, but takes a more honourable course, and puts it off to
 some other place to be discussed. Where Andronicus Rho-
 dius’ Greek paraphrase tells us he meant his tract *περὶ προ-
 νοίας*, “about Providence:” but in all Laetius’ catalogue of
 the multitude of his writings we find no such title, and I much
 suspect by his other carriages, that the man was not so valiant
 as to deal with any so unwieldy a subject as the providence
 would have proved. Sure I am he might, if he had had a
 mind to it, have quitted himself of his engagements, and
 seasonably enough have defined the fountain of happiness

⁷ [Aristot. *Metaph.* A. c. 2.]

² [Id., *Eth. Nicom.*, lib. i. c. 10.]

there, in Ethics, but in c. 11^a it appears that it was no pre-emption, but ignorance; not a care of deferring it to a fitter place, but a necessary silence where he was not able to speak. For there mentioning happiness and miserableness after death,—where he might have shewed his skill if he had any,—he plainly betrays himself an arrant naturalist in defining all the felicity and misery “to be the good or ill proof of their friends and children left behind them,” which are to them being dead, happiness or miseries, ἄλλ’ οὐκ αἰσθανόμενοι, “of which they are not any way sensible.” By what hath been spoken it is plain that the heathen never looked after God of their own accord, but as they were driven upon Him by the necessity of their study, which from the second causes necessarily lead them in a chain to some view of the first mover, and then some of them, either frightened with the light, or despairing of their own abilities, were terrified and discouraged from any further search; some few others sought after Him, but, as Aristotle saith the geometer doth after a right line^b, only, ὡς θεατῆς τάληθούς, “as a contemplator of truth,” but not as the knowledge of it is any way useful or conducive to the ordering or bettering of their lives; they had an itching desire to know the Deity, but neither to apply it as a rule to their actions, nor to order their actions to His glory. For generally whensoever any action drove them on any subject which intrenched on divinity, you shall find them more flat than ordinary, not handling it according to any manner of accuracy, or sharpness, but only ἐφ’ ὅσον οἰκεῖον τῇ μεθόδῳ, “only as much use or as little as their study in the search of things constrained them to,” and then for the most part they fly off abruptly, as if they were glad to be quit of so cumbersome a subject. Whence Aristotle observes^c, that the whole tract *de causis* was obscurely and inartificially handled by the ancients, and if sometimes they spake to the purpose, it was as unskilful, unexercised fencers τύπτονσι καλὰς πληγὰς, they lay on, and sometimes strike a lucky blow or two, but more by chance than skill, sometimes letting fall from their pens those truths which never entered their understandings, as Theophilus *ad Autolyicum*^d observes of Homer and

^a [Ibid., lib. i. c. 11.]

^b [Ibid., lib. i. c. 7.]

^c [Id., Metaph. A. c. 4.]

^d [ἦτοι γὰρ οἱ ποιηταί, Ὀμηρος δὴ καὶ

Hesiod, that being inspired by their muses, i. e. the devil, spake according to that spirit lies and fables, and exact atheism, and yet sometimes would stumble upon a truth of divinity, as men possessed with devils did sometimes confess Christ, and the evil spirits being adjured by His name, came out and confessed themselves to be devils. Thus it is plain out of the philosophers and heathen discourses, 1. of God, 2. the soul, 3. happiness, that they were also ignorant, as ignorance is opposed to piety or spiritual wisdom, which was to be proved by way of premise in the second place.

Now in the third place, for the guilt of their ignorance, that it was a perverse, gross, malicious, and inexcusable ignorance, you shall briefly judge. Aristotle^e being elevated above ordinary in his discourse about wisdom, confesses the knowledge of God to be the best knowledge and most honourable of all, but of no manner of use or necessity; *ἀναγκαίστεραι, κ.τ.λ.*, “no knowledge is better than this, yet none more unnecessary,” as if the evidence of truth made him confess the nobility of this wisdom, but his own supine, stupid, perverse resolutions made him condemn it as unnecessary. But that I may not charge the accusation too hard upon Aristotle above others, and take as much pains to damn him as the Cologne divines did to save him, we will deal more at large, as Aristotle prescribes his wise men^f, and rip up to you the inexcusableness of the heathen ignorance in general: 1. by the authority of Clemens^g, who is guessed to be one of their kindest patrons in his *προτρεπτικός*, where having cited many testimonies out of them, concerning the unity, he concludes thus, *εἰ γὰρ, κ.τ.λ.*, “Seeing that the heathen had some sparks of the divine truth,” some gleanings out of the written word, and yet make so little use of it as they do, they do, saith he, “shew the power of God’s word to have been revealed to them, and accuse their own weakness that they did not improve it to the end for which it was sent;” that they increased it not into a saving knowledge; where (by the way) the word weakness is used by Clement by way of softening, or mercy, as here the Apostle useth ignorance, when he might have said impiety.

^e Ἡσίοδος, ὡς φασιν, ἐπὶ μουσῶν ἐμπνευσθέντες, φαντασίᾳ καὶ πλάνῃ ἐλάλησαν, καὶ οὐ καθαρῶ πνεύματι, ἀλλὰ πλάνῳ.—Theophilus ii. 8. [ad calc. S. Justini, p. 354. C. Paris. 1742.]

^e [Aristot. Metaph. A. c. 2.]

^f [Ibid.]

^g [Clemens Alex. Protrept., c. vii. § 74. p. 64.]

For sure if the accusation run thus, that the word of God was revealed to them, and yet they made no use of it, as it doth here in Clemens, the sentence then upon this must needs conclude them, not only *ἀσθενεῖς*, “weak,” but perverse contemners of the light of Scripture. Again, the philosophers themselves confess that ignorance is the nurse, nay, mother of all impiety: *πάντα ὅσα πράττουσιν^h, κ.τ.λ.*, “whatsoever an ignorant man or fool doth, is unholy and wicked necessarily;” ignorance being *μανίας εἶδος*, “a species of madness,” and no madman being capable of any sober action; so that if their ignorance were in the midst of means of knowledge, then must it be perverse; if it had an impure influence upon all their actions, then was it malicious and full of guilt. 2. Their chief ground that sustained and continued their ignorance, proves it to be not blind but affected, which ground you shall find by the heathen objection in Clemensⁱ, to be a resolution not to change the religion of their fathers. It is an unreasonable thing, say the heathens, which they will never be brought to, to change the customs bequeathed to them by their ancestors. From whence the father solidly concludes, that there was not any means in nature which could make the Christian religion contemned and hated, but only this pestilent custom, of never altering any customs or laws, though never so unreasonable; *οὐ γὰρ ἐμισήθη, κ.τ.λ.*, “it is not possible that ever any nation should hate and fly from this greatest blessing that ever was bestowed upon mankind,” to wit, the knowledge and worship of God, unless being carried on by custom they resolved to go the old way to hell, rather than to venture on a new path to heaven. Hence it is that Athenagoras^k in his Treaty with Commodus for the Christians, wonders much that among so many laws made yearly in Rome, there was not one enacted *μὴ στέργειν τὰ πάτρια καὶ γέλοια ἦ*, “that men should forsake the customs of their fathers, which were any way absurd.” From whence he falls straight to their absurd deities^l, as if it being made lawful to relinquish ridiculous customs, there would be no plea left for their ridiculous gods. So Eusebius^m,

^h [Clemens Alex. Protrept., c. xii. § 122. p. 91. Pott.]

init., § 1.]

ⁱ [Ibid., § 1.]

^l [Ibid., c. x. ad init., p. 73. ad fin. Tertull. Apol.]

^m [Eusebius Præp. Evang., lib. ii. p. 74. C.]

^k [Athenag. Leg. pro Christianis, ad

Præp., lib. ii., makes the cause of the continuance of superstition to be, that no man dared to move those things which ancient custom of the country had authorized; and so also in his fourth bookⁿ, where to bring in Christianity was accounted *κινεῖν τὰ ἀκίνητα*, “to change things that were fixed,” *καὶ πολυπραγμονεῖν, κ.τ.λ.*, “and to be pragmatical,” friends of innovation; and so it is plain they esteemed St. Paul, and hated him in that name, as an innovator, because he preached unto them “Jesus and the resurrection,” Acts xvii. 18. So Acts xvi. 21, St. Paul is said to teach “customs which were not lawful for them to receive nor observe, being Romans,” because, saith Casaubon out of Dio, it was not lawful for the Romans to innovate any thing in religion, for saith Dio^o, “this bringing in of new gods will bring in new laws with it.” So that if—as hath been proved—their not acknowledging of the true God was grounded upon a perverse resolution not to change any custom of their fathers, either in opinion or practice, though never so absurd, then was the ignorance—or as St. Paul might have called it, the idolatry—of those times, impious, affected; not a natural blindness, but a pertinacious winking; not a simple deafness, but a resolved stubbornness not to hear the voice of the charmer; which we might further prove by shewing you, thirdly, how their learning or *πολυμαθία*, which might be proved an excellent preparative to religion, their philosophy, which was to them as the law to the Jews, by their using of it to a perverse end, grew ordinarily very pernicious to them. 4. How that those which knew most, and were at the top of profane knowledge, did then fall most desperately headlong into atheism; as Hippocrates observes, that *ἀθλητικὴ ἔξις*, and St. Basil^p, that *ἡ ἐπ’ ἄκρον εὐεξία*, “the most perfect constitution of body,” so of the soul, is most dangerous, if not sustained with good care and wisdom. 5. How they always forged lies to scandal the people of God, as Manetho the famous Egyptian historian saith, that Moses and the Jews were banished out of Egypt, *διὰ λέπραν*, “because of an infectious leprosy” that over-spread the Jews, as Theophilus^q cites it, and Justin out of

Acts xvii.
18.
Acts xvi.
21.

ⁿ [Ibid., lib. iv. p. 130. C.]

^o [Cf. *supr.*, p. 380.]

^p [S. Basil. Cf. e. g. In Hexameron,

hom. ix. Op., tom. i. p. 83. D.]

^q Theophilus ad Autolyce., lib. iii. § 21. [p. 392. E, sq. ad calc. S. Just.]

Trogus^r, and also Tacitus; and the primitive Christians were branded and abominated by them for three special faults which they were little likely to be guilty of: 1. Atheism, 2. Eating their children, 3. Incestuous, common using of women, as we find them set down and confuted by Athenagoras in his Treaty or Apology^s, and Theophilus^t, *ad Autol.* &c. 6. By their own confession, as of Plato to his friend, when he wrote in earnest, and secretly acknowledging the unity which he openly denied against his conscience and the light of reason in him; and Orpheus the inventor of the *πολυθεότης*, professing and worshipping three hundred and sixty-five gods all his life-time, at his death left in his will *ἕνα εἶναι θεόν*^u, that, however he had persuaded them all the while, there was indeed but one God. And lastly, how these two affections in them, admiration and gratitude; admiration of men of extraordinary worth, and gratitude for more than ordinary benefactions done either to particular men or nations, were the chief promoters of idolatry; making the heathens worship them as gods, whom they were acquainted with, and knew to be but men, as might be proved variously and at large. If I could insist upon any or each of these, it would be most evident, what I hope now at last is proved enough, that the ignorance of those times was not simple, blind ignorance, but malign, perverse, sacrilegious, affected, stubborn, wilful^x, I had almost said, knowing ignorance in them; which being the thing we first promised to demonstrate, we must next make up the proposition which is yet imperfect, to wit, that ignorance in these heathen, in God's justice, might have provoked Him to have pretermitted the whole world of succeeding Gentiles, which I must dispatch only in a word, because I would fain to descend to application, which I intended to be the main, but the improvident expense of my time hath now left only to be the close of my discourse.

The ignorance of those times being of this composition, both

^r [Justin. xxxvi. 2. Tacit. Hist. v. 3.]

^s [Athenag. Leg. pro Christianis, § 3.]

^t [Theophilus ad Autolyce., lib. iii.]

§§ 1, 5. p. 382. E, sq.]

^u [Ἡ Ὀρφεία οἱ τριακόσιοι ἐξήκοντα

πέντε θεοί, οὓς αὐτὸς ἐπὶ τέλει τοῦ βίου ἀθετεῖ, ἐν ταῖς διαθήκαις αὐτοῦ λέγων ἕνα εἶναι θεόν.—Ibid., lib. iii. § 2. p. 381 C.]

^x [S. Chrysost. in Matt. Hom. i. § 5. Op., tom. vii. p. 10 sq.]

in respect of the superstition of their worship, which was perverse, as hath been proved, and the profaneness of their lives, being abominable even to nature—as might farther be shewed—is now no longer to be called ignorance, but profaneness, and a profaneness so epidemical over all the Gentiles, so inbred and naturalized among them, that it was even become their property, radicated in their mythical times, and by continual succession derived down to them by their generations. So that if either a natural man with the eye of reason, or a spiritual man by observation of God's other acts of justice, should look upon the Gentiles in that state which they were in at Christ's coming, all of them damnable superstitious, or rather idolatrous in their worship; all of them damnable profane in their lives; and which was worse, all of them peremptorily resolved, and by a law of homage to the customs of their fathers necessarily engaged to continue in the road of damnation; he would certainly give the whole succession of them over as desperate people, infinitely beyond hopes or probability of salvation. And this may appear by St. Peter in the tenth of the Acts, where this very thing, that the Gentiles should be called, was so incredible a mystery, that he was fain to be cast into a trance, and to receive a vision to interpret it to his belief: and a first or a second command could not persuade him "to arise, kill, and eat," that is, to preach to Gentiles; he was still objecting the *τὸ κοινὸν καὶ ἀκάθαρτον*, "the profaneness and uncleanness of them." And at last, when by the assurance of the Spirit, and the heathen Cornelius's discourse with him, he was plainly convinced, what otherwise he never dreamt possible, that God had a design of mercy on the Gentiles, he breaks out into a phrase both of acknowledgment and admiration, "Of a truth I perceive," &c.; and that you may not judge it was one single doctor's opinion, it is added, "And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost." Nay, in the third to the Ephesians, verse 10, it is plain that the calling of the Gentiles was so strange a thing, that the angels themselves knew not of it till it was effected. "For this was the mystery which from the beginning of the world had been hid in God, which was now made known by the

Acts x.

ver. 16.

ver. 15.

ver. 34.

ver. 45.

Eph. iii. 9,
10.

Church to principalities and powers." The brief plain meaning of which hard place is, that by St. Paul's preaching to the Gentiles, by this new work done in the Church, to wit, the calling of the Gentiles, the angels came to understand somewhat which was before too obscure for them, till it was explained by the event, and in it the manifold wisdom of God. And this proposition I might prove to you by many topics; 1. by symptoms that their estate was desperate, and their disease *ὀλέθριον κάρτα λίαν*, "very, very mortal;" as that God, when He would mend a people, He punisheth them with afflictions, when He intends to stop a current of impetuous sinners, He lays the axe to the root, in a *πανωλεθρία* or total subversion of them; but when His punishments are spiritual, as they were here, when He strikes neither with the rod nor with the sword, but makes one sin the punishment of another, as unnatural lust of idolatry and the like; when He leaves a nation to itself, and the very judgment laid upon them makes them only less capable of mercy; then is it much to be feared that God hath little mercy intended for that people, their desertion being a forerunner of judgment without mercy. 2. I might prove it *ab exemplo*, and that exactly with a *nec datur dissimile* in Scripture, that the nine monarchies which the learned observe in Scripture, were each of them destroyed for idolatry, in which sin the heathen now received to mercy, surpass all the precedent world, and for all their many destructions, still uniformly continued in their provocation. These and the like arguments I purposely omit, as conceiving St. Peter's vision mentioned before out of the tenth of the Acts sufficiently to clear the point, and therefore judging any further enlargement of proofs superfluous, I hasten with full speed to application.

And, first, from the consideration of our estate, who being the offspring of those Gentiles, might in the justice of God have been left to heathenism, and in all probability, till St. Peter's vision discovered the contrary, were likely to have been pretermitted eternally; to make this both the motive and business of our humiliation; for there is such a Christian duty required of us, for which we ought to set apart some tithe, or other portion of time, in which we are to call our-

selves to an account for all the general guilts, for all those more catholic engagements that either our stock, our nation, the sins of our progenitors back to the beginning of the world, nay, the common corruption of our nature hath plunged us in. To pass by that ranker guilt of actual sins,—for which I trust every man here hath daily some solemn assizes to arraign himself,—my text will afford us yet some further indictments; if seventeen hundred years ago our father were then an Amorite, and mother an Hittite, if we being then in their loins, were inclosed in the compass of their idolatry; and as all in Adam, so besides that we again in the gentilism of our fathers, were all deeply plunged in a double common damnation; how are we to humble ourselves infinitely above measure; to stretch, and rack, and torture every power of our souls to its extent, thereby to enlarge and aggravate the measure of this guilt against ourselves, which hitherto perhaps we have not taken notice of? There is not a better *μαλακτικόν* in the world, no more powerful medicine for the softening of the soul, and keeping it in a Christian tenderness, than this lading it with all the burdens that its common or private condition can make it capable of; this tiring of it out, and bringing it down into the dust in the sense of its spiritual engagements. For it is impossible for him, who hath fully valued the weight of his general guilts, each of which hath lead enough to sink the most corky, vain, fluctuating, proud, stubborn heart in the world; it is impossible, I say, for him either wilfully to run into any actual sins, or insolently to hold up his head in the pride of his integrity. This very one meditation, that we all here might justly have been left in heathenism, and that the sins of the heathens shall be imputed to us their children, if we do not repent, is enough to loosen the toughest, strongest spirit, to melt the flintiest heart, to humble the most elevated soul, to habituate it with such a sense of its common miseries, that it shall never have courage or confidence to venture on the danger of particular rebellions.

2. From the view of their ignorance or impiety, which was of so heinous importance, to examine ourselves by their indictment, 1. for our learning; 2. for our lives; 3. for the life of grace in us. 1. For our learning, whether that be not mixed

with a great deal of atheistical ignorance, with a delight, and acquiescence, and contentation in those lower elements, which have nothing of God in them; whether we have not sacrificed the liveliest and sprightfulest part of our age and souls in these philological and physical disquisitions, which if they have not a perpetual aspect and aim at divinity, if they be not set upon in that respect, and made use of to that purpose, *κάρτα βλέπτει*, saith Clement^y, their best friend, they are very hurtful and of dangerous issue; whether out of our circle of human heathen learning, whence the fathers produced precious antidotes, we have not sucked the poison of unhallowed vanity, and been fed either to a pride and ostentation of our secular, or a satiety or loathing of our theological learning, as being too coarse and homely for our quainter palates; whether our studies have not been guilty of those faults which cursed the heathen knowledge, as trusting to ourselves, or wit and good parts, like the philosophers in Athenagoras^z, *οὐ παρὰ Θεοῦ, κ.τ.λ.*, “not vouchsafing to be taught by God” even in matters of religion, but every man consulting, and believing, and relying on his own reason; again, in making our study an instrument only to satisfy our curiosity, *ὡς τὰ ληθούσ θεαταὶ*, only as speculators of some unknown truths, not intending or desiring thereby either to promote virtue, good works, or the kingdom of God in ourselves, or which is the ultimate end—which only commends and blesses our study or knowledge—the glory of God in others.

2. In our lives, to examine whether there are not also many relics of heathenism, altars erected to Baalim, to Ceres, to Venus, and the like; whether there be not many amongst us whose god is their belly, their back, their lust, their treasure, or that *ἄγνωστος θεὸς*, that earthly unknown god (whom we have no one name for, and therefore is called at large) the god of the world; whether we do not with as much zeal, and earnestness, and cost, serve and worship many earthly vanities which our own fancies deify for us, as ever the heathen did their multitude and shoal of gods; and in brief, whether we have not found in ourselves the sins,

^y [Cf. Strom. i. c. 6. § 36. p. 337. ed. Pott.]

^z Athenag. Legat. pro Christianis. [§ 7. p. 285. A.]

as well as the blood of the Gentiles, and acted over some or all the abominations, set down to judge ourselves by, Rom. i. from the 21st verse to the end.

· Lastly, for the life of grace in us, whether many of us are not as arrant heathens, as mere strangers from spiritual illumination, and so from the mystical commonwealth of Israel, as any of them; Clemens^a, *Strom.* ii. calls the life of your unregenerate man a heathen life, and the first life we have by which we live, and move, and grow, and see, but understand nothing; and it is our regeneration by which we raise ourselves ἐξ ἐθνῶν, “from being still mere Gentiles:” and Tatianus^b, further, that without the spirit we differ from beasts only κατ’ ἐναρθον φωνῆν, “by the articulation of our voice.” So that in fine, neither our reason, nor Christian profession, distinguisheth us either from beasts or Gentiles, only the Spirit is the *formalis ratio* by which we excel and differ from the heathen sons of darkness. · Wherefore, I say, to conclude, we must in the clearest calm and serenity of our souls make a most earnest search and inquest on ourselves, whether we are yet raised out of this heathenism, this ignorance, this unregeneracy of nature, and elevated any degree in the estate of grace; and if we find ourselves still Gentiles, and—which is worse than that—still senseless of that our condition, we must strive, and work, and pray ourselves out of it, and not suffer the temptations of the flesh, the temptations of our nature, the temptations of the world, nay, the temptations of our secular, proud learning, lull us one minute longer in that carnal security, lest after a careless unregenerate natural life, we die the death of those bold, not vigilant, but stupid philosophers. And for those of us who are yet any way heathenish, either in our learning or lives; which have nothing but the name of Christians to exempt us from the judgment of their ignorance; “O Lord, make us in time sensible of this our condition, and whensoever we shall humble ourselves before Thee, and confess unto Thee the sinfulness of our nature, the ignorance of our ancestors, and every man the plague of his own heart, and repent and turn, and pray toward Thy house, then hear Thou in heaven Thy dwell-

^a [Clemens Alex. *Strom.*, lib. ii. c. 13. p. 459.]

^b Or. c. Græcos, § 15. [p. 256. D. ad calc. S. Just.]

ing-place, and when Thou hearest forgive; remember not our offences, nor the offences of our heathen fathers, neither take Thou vengeance of our sins, but spare us, O Lord, spare Thy people whom Thy Son hath redeemed, and Thy Spirit shall sanctify, from the guilt and practice of their rebellions.”

Now to God, who hath elected us, hath, &c.

SERMON XXV.

ACTS xvii. 30.

And the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men every where to repent.

THEY which come from either mean or dishonoured progenitors, will desire to make up their fathers' defect by their own industry, φιλοκινδυνότεροι γίνονται, saith Leo in his Tactics ^a, will be more forward to undertake any valiant enterprize, to recover that reputation, which their ancestors' cowardice and unworthy carriage forfeited. So doth it nearly concern the son of a bankrupt to set upon all the courses of thrift, and stratagems of frugality, to get out of that hereditary poverty in which his father's improvidence had engaged him. Thus is it also in the poverty and bankrupt estate of the soul; they who come from prodigal ancestors, which have embezzled all the riches of God's mercy, spent profusely all the light of nature, and also some sparks out of the Scriptures, and whatsoever knowledge and directions they meet with, either for the ordering of their worship, or their lives, spent it all upon harlots, turned all into the adoring of those idols, wherein consists the spiritual adultery of the soul; those I say who are the stems of this ignorant, profane, idolatrous root, ought to endeavour the utmost of their powers, and will, in probability, be so wise and careful as to lay some strict obligations on themselves, to strive to some perfection in those particulars which their ancestors failed in; that if the Gentiles were perversely blind, and resolutely, peremptorily ignorant, then must their progeny strive to wipe off the guilt and avoid the punishment of their

^a [Leo Imperator, Tactica, cap. ii. § 24. ap. Meursium. Op., tom. vi. p. 549.]

ignorance. Now this ignorance of theirs being not only by Clemens and the fathers, but by Trismegistus in his Pœmander^b, defined to be μέθη καὶ ἀσέβεια καὶ ὕπνος ἄλογος, “a profaneness, an irrational sleep, and drunkenness of the soul;” in sum, an ignorance of themselves and of God, and a stupid neglect of any duty belonging to either; this ignorance being either in itself or in its fruits κακία τῆς ψυχῆς^c, “the wickedness of the soul,” and all manner of transgression; the only way for us, the successors of these ignorant Gentiles, to repair those ruins, to renew the image of God in ourselves, which their idolatrous ignorance defaced, must be to take the opposite course to them, and to provide our remedy anti-parallel to their disease, i. e., in respect of their simple ignorance, to labour for knowledge; in respect of the effects of their ignorance, idolatry, profaneness, and all manner of wickedness, to labour for piety and repentance; briefly, if their ignorance of God was an heinous sin, and virtually all kind of sin, then to esteem repentance the greatest knowledge, to approve and second the force and method of St. Paul’s argument, to prescribe ourselves whatever God commands. For so here in this chapter, having discoursed over their ignorance, he makes that a motive of our repentance, and that backed with a special item from God, who now “commands every man every where to repent.”

We have heretofore divided these words, and in them handled already the ignorance of the ancient heathen, which in the justice of God might have provoked Him to have pretermitted the whole world of succeeding Gentiles. We now come to the second part, the mercy of God, not imputing their ignorance to our charge, whosoever every where to the end of the world shall repent. And in this you must consider, first, God’s covenant made with the Gentiles, or the receiving them into the Church, deduced out of these words, “but now commands,” for all to whom God makes known His commands, are by that very cognizance known to be parts of His Church; and with all these He enters covenant, He

^b [ὧ λαοὶ, ἄνδρες γηγενεῖς, οἱ μέθη καὶ ὕπνῳ ἑαυτοῦς ἐκδεδώκετε, καὶ τῇ ἀγνωσίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ, νῆψατε, πάσαυτε κραιπαλῶνι ἐς, θελγόμενοι ὕπνῳ ἀλόγῳ.] — Hermes Trismegistus, Pœmander,

lib. ii. prope finem.

^c Pœmander, lib. iv. [p. 10; appended to the Nova De Universis Philosophia of Patricius. Venice, 1593.]

promiseth salvation upon performance of the condition required by His commands—repentance. Secondly, the condition itself, in the last words, “to repent.” And then lastly the extent of both; the latitude of the persons with whom this covenant is made, and from whom this condition is exacted, “all men every where.” And first of the first, the covenant made with the Gentiles, or the receiving them into the Church, noted in these words, “but now commands,” &c.

It is observable in our common affairs, that we do not use to lay our commands on any but those who have some relation to us; a king will not vouchsafe to employ any in any peculiar service but those whom he hath entertained, and by oath admitted into his court. And it is the livery by which one is known to belong to such a family, if he be employed in either common or special service by the master of it. To express it more generally, they are called natural members of a kingdom, who are tied to obedience to all laws or customs national, who are engaged in the common burdens as well as privileges, the services as well as benefits of a subject. The ecclesiastical canons are meant and exhibited only to those, who are either in truth or profession parts of the Church; the Turk or infidel professed is not honoured so much as to be bound to them. The orders and peculiar laws of a city or country are directed to those who are either *cives* or *civitate donati*; and our oaths and obligations to these, or these local collegiate statutes, argue us, *διακριτικῶς*, to be members of this or that foundation. Now to whomsoever these laws and commands do belong, whosoever is thus entertained and admitted into services, is partaker also of all advantages which belong to a member of a family; and is by covenant to receive all emoluments in as ample a manner as any other of his quality. And this, briefly, is the state of the Gentiles here in the text, who, in that God commands them here to repent—which is the law and condition of the New Testament—are judged upon these grounds to be received into the covenant of the New Testament; and consequently made members of the Church. For as once it was an argument that only Jewry was God’s people, because they only received His commands, and the heathen had not knowledge of His laws; so now was it as evident a proof that the

heathen were received into His Church, i. e. into the number of those whom He had culled out for salvation, because He made known His ordinances to them, entertained them in His service, and commanded them "every one every where to repent." Appian^d observes in his proœm to his History, that the Romans were very coy in taking some nations into their dominions; they could not be persuaded by every one to be their lords; he saw himself many ambassadors from the barbarians, who came solemnly to give themselves up to the Roman greatness, ambitious to be received into the number of their dominions, *καὶ οὐ δεξάμενον βασιλέα*, "and the king would not receive such low unprofitable servants." It was esteemed a preferment, which it seems every nation could not attain to, to be under the Roman government, and commanded by the Roman laws; and there were many reasons, if we may judge by the outside, why the Gentiles should not be likely to obtain this privilege from God, to be vouchsafed His commands. For 1. they had been neazled^e up in so many centuries of ignorance, they had been so starved with thin hard fare, under the tyranny of a continued superstition, which gave them no solid nourishment, nothing but husks and acorns to feed on, that they were now grown horrid and almost ghastly, being past all amiableness or beauty, *ἐς οὐδὲν χρήσιμοι*, "good for nothing" in the world. We see in histories that perpetual wars hinder tillage, and suffer them not to bestow that culture on the ground which the subsistence of the kingdom requires. Thus was it with the Gentiles in the time of their *θεομάχια*, their hostility with God; they generally bestowed no trimming or culture on the soul, either to improve or adorn it; and then, receiving no spiritual food from God, all passages being shut up by their idolatry, they were famished into such a meagreness, they were so ungainly and crest-fallen, that all the fat kine of Egypt according to Pharaoh's dream, all heathen learning could not mend their looks, they were still for all their philosophy, like the lean kine that had devoured the fat, yet thrived not on it; they were still poor and ill-

^d [Appian, Hist. Rom. Præfat. § 7. tom. i. p. 8. ed. Schweigh.]

^e [Neczle. Insinuating oneself into something snug or desirable—from nes-

tle, no doubt. The same in Cheshire W., and in other counties probably.--Moor's Suffolk Words and Phrases, p. 246. So nesting for nesting. Ibid.]

Gen. xli. favoured, "such as were not to be seen in all the land of
19. Jewry for badness."

2. They had engaged themselves in such a course that they could scarce seem ever capable of being received into any favour with God. Polybius^c observes it as a policy of those which were delighted in stirs and wars, to put the people upon some inhuman, cruel practice, some killing of ambassadors, or the like feat, which was unlawful even amongst enemies, that after such an action the enemy should be incensed beyond hope of reconciliation. So did Asdrubal in Appian^f use the captive Romans with all possible cruelty, with all arts of inhumanity, flayed them, cut off their fingers, and then hanged them alive; to the end, saith he, that thereby he might make the dissensions of Carthage and Rome ἀδιάλλακτα, not possibly to be composed, but to be prosecuted with a perpetual hostility. This was the effect of Ahitophel's counsel to Absalom, that he should lie with his father's concubines; and this also was the devil's plot upon the Gentiles, who, as if they were not enough enemies unto God for the space of two thousand years' idolatry, at last resolved to fill up the measure of their rebellions, to make themselves, if it were possible, sinful beyond capability of mercy; and to provoke God to an eternal revenge, they must needs join in crucifying Christ, and partake of the shedding of that blood, which hath ever since so dyed the souls, and cursed the successions of the Jews. For it is plain, 1. by the kind of His death, which was Roman; 2. by His judge, who was *Cæsar's rationalis*, by whom Judæa was then governed; or, as Tacitus saith in the 15th of his Annals^g, Cæsar's procurator; all capital judgments being taken from the Jews' Sanhedrim, as they confess, "it is not lawful for us to put any one to death;" 3. by the prophecy, "They shall deliver Him to the Gentiles;" by these, I say, and many other arguments, it is plain that the Gentiles had their part and guilt in the crucifying of Christ, and so by slaying of the Son, as it is in the parable, provoked and deserved the implacable revenge of the Father. And yet for all this, God enters league, and truce, and peace with them, thinks them worthy to hear and obey His laws; nay, above the estate of

John
xviii. 21.
Matt. xx.
19.

^c [Polyb. i. 70.]

cis, c. cxviii. ed. Schweigh.]

^f [Appian, lib. viii. De Reb. Puni-

^g Tacitus, Annual. xv. [c. 44.]

servants, takes them into the liberty and free estate of the gospel, and by binding them to ordinances as citizens, expresseth them to be *civitate donatos cœlesti*, within the pale of the Church, and covenant of salvation. They which are overcome and taken captives in war, may by law be possessed by the victor for all manner of servitude and slavery, and therefore ought to esteem any the hardest conditions of peace and liberty as favours and mercies, ἐν χάριτι καὶ δωρεᾷ λαμβάνειν, saith Marcus in Polybius^b; they which are conquered must acknowledge themselves beholden to the victor, if he will upon any terms allow them quarter or truce. Thus was it above all other sinners with the Gentiles of that time; after two thousand years' war with the one God, they were now fallen into His hands, ready to receive the sorest strokes, to bear the shrewdest burdens He could lay on them; had it not been then a favour above hope, to be received even as hired servants, which was the highest of the prodigal's ambition? had it not been a very hospitable carriage towards the dogs, as they are called, to suffer them to lick up those "crumbs which fell from the children's table?"^{19.} Yet so much are God's mercies above the pitch of our expectation or deserts, above what we are able or confident enough to ask or hope, that He hath assumed and adopted these captives into sons. And as once by the counsel of God Jacob supplanted Esau, and thrust him out of his birth-right, so now by the mercy of God, Esau hath supplanted Jacob, and taken his room in God's Church and favour; and instead of that one language of the Jews, of which the Church so long consisted, now is come in the confusion of the Gentiles, Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and the Babel of tongues. And as once at the dispersion of the Gentiles by the miracle of a punishment, they which were all of one tongue could not understand one another, so now at the gathering of the Gentiles by a miracle of mercyⁱ, they which were of several tongues understood one another, and every "nation heard the Apostles speak in their own language;"^{26.} noting thereby, saith Austin, that the Catholic Church should be dispersed over all nations, and speak in as many languages as the world

Luke xv.

19.

Matt. xv.

26.

Acts ii. 9.

Gen. xi. 9.

Acts ii. 6.

^b [Polybius, lib. i. c. 31. § 6.]ⁱ S. Leo Magn. [vide librum de Vocatione omnium Gentium, lib. ii. c. xiv.

apud S. Leonis Opera, tom. ii. p. 225. This treatise is more probably to be assigned to S. Prosper.]

hath tongues. Concerning the business of receiving the Gentiles into covenant, St. Austin is plentiful in his 18th book *de Civit. Dei*^k, where he interprets the symbolical writing, and reads the riddles of the prophets to this purpose,

Hos. i. 11. how they are called "the children of Israel," as if Esau had robbed Jacob of his name as well as inheritance; that they

Isa. liv. 1. are declared by the title of "barren and desolate," whose fruitfulness should break forth, surpass the number of the children of the married wife^l. To this purpose doth he enlarge himself to expound many other places of the prophets, and among them the prophecy of Obadiah, from which—Edom by a *pars pro toto* signifying the Gentiles—he expressly concludes their calling and salvation^m; but how that can hold in that place, seeing the whole prophecy is a denunciation of judgments against Edom, and it is expressly read, "For thy violence against thy brother Jacob, shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut out for ever;" how, I say, from that place, amongst others, this truth may be deduced, I leave to the revealers of revelations, and that undertaking sort of people, the preemptory expounders of depths and prophecies. In the meantime we have places enough of plain prediction beyond the uncertainty of a guess, which distinctly foretold this blessed catholic truth, and though Peter had not marked or remembered them so exactly, as to understand that by them the Gentiles were to be preached to, and no longer to be accounted profane and unclean, yet it is more than probable that the devil, a great contemplator, and well seen in prophecies, observed so much; and, therefore, knowing Christ's coming to be the season for fulfilling it, about that time drooped and sensibly decayed; lost much of his courage, and was not so active amongst the Gentiles as he had been; his oracles began to grow speechless, and to slink away beforehand, lest tarrying still they should have been turned out with shame. Which one thing, the ceasing of oracles, though it be by Plutarchⁿ, and some other of the devil's champions, referred plausibly to the change of the soil, and failing of enthusiastical vapours and exhalations; yet was it an evident argument that at

Obad. ver. 10.

Acts x.

^k [S. Aug. De Civit. Dei, lib. xviii. cap. 28. Op., tom. vii. p. 509.]

^m [Ibid., cap. 31.]

ⁿ [Plutarch., de Defectu Oracul., Op., tom. vii. p. 704, sq. Reisk.]

^l [Ibid., cap. 29.]

Christ's coming Satan saw the Gentiles were no longer fit for his turn, they were to be received into a more honourable service under the living God, necessarily to be impatient of the weight and slavery of his superstitions, and therefore it concerned him to prevent violence with a voluntary flight, lest otherwise he should with all his train of oracles have been forced out of their coasts; for Lucifer was to vanish like lightning, when the "light to lighten the Gentiles" did but begin to appear; and his laws were outdated when God would once be pleased to command. Now that, in a word, we may more clearly see what calling, what entering into covenant with the Gentiles, is here meant by God's commanding them, we are to rank the commands of God into two sorts, 1, common catholic commands, and these extend as far as the visible Church; 2, peculiar commands, inward operations of the Spirit, these are both privileges and characters, and properties of the invisible Church, i. e. the elect, and in both these respects doth He vouchsafe His commands to the Gentiles. In the first respect God hath His louder trumpets, *σαλπιγγος φωνήν μεγάλην*, which all acknowledge who are in the noise of it, and that is the sound of the gospel, the hearing of which constitutes a visible Church. And thus at the preaching of the gospel, *εἰς πάντα ἔθνη*, all the heathens had knowledge of His laws, and so were offered the covenant if they would accept the condition. For however that place, Acts i. 25, be by one of our writers of the Church wrested, by changing—that I say not, by falsifying—the punctuation, to witness this truth, I think we need not such shifts to prove that God took some course by the means of the ministry and apostleship, to make known to all nations under heaven, i. e. to some of all nations, both His gospel and commands; "the sound of it went through all the earth," Rom. x. 18, cited out of Psalm xix. 4, though with some change of a word, their "sound" in the Romans, for their "line" in the Psalmist—caused by the Greek translators, who either read and rendered *קול* for *קו*, or else laid hold of the Arabic notion of the word, the loud noise and clamour which hunters make in their pursuit and chase. So Mark xiv. 9, "This Gospel shall be preached throughout the world;" so Mark xvi. 15, "to every creature;" Matt. xxiv. 14, "in all the world," and many the

[Luke ii. 32.]

Matt. xxiv. 31.

Acts i. 25.

Rom. x. 18.

Ps. xix. 4.

Mark xiv. 9; xvi. 15. Matt. xxiv. 14.

[Isa. xxx.
21.]

like, as belongs to our last particular to demonstrate. Besides this, God had in the second respect His *vocem pedissequam*, which the prophet mentions, a voice attending us to tell us of our duty, to shew us the way, and accompany us therein. And this, I say, sounds in the heart, not in the ear, and they only hear and understand the voice, who are partakers as well of the effect as of the news of the covenant. Thus in these two respects doth He command—by His word in the ears of the Gentiles, by giving every man every where knowledge of His laws; and so in some Latin authors ° *mandare* signifies to give notice, to express one's will, to declare or proclaim; and thus, secondly, doth He command by His Spirit in the spirits of the elect Gentiles, by giving them the benefit of adoption; and in both these respects He enters a covenant with the Gentiles—which was the thing to be demonstrated—with the whole name of them at large, with some choice vessels of them more nearly and peculiarly; and this was the thing which by way of doctrine we collected out of these words, “but now commands.” Now that we may not let such a precious truth pass by unrespected, that such an important speculation may not float only in our brains, we must by way of application press it down to the heart, and fill our spirits with the comfort of that doctrine, which hath matter for our practice, as well as our contemplation. For if we do but lay to our thoughts, 1. the miracle of the Gentiles' calling—as hath been heretofore and now insisted on—and 2. mark how nearly the receiving of them into covenant concerns us their successors, we shall find real motives to provoke us to a strain and key above ordinary thanksgiving. For as Peter spake of God's promise, so it is in the like nature of God's command—which is also virtually a promise—it belonged

Acts ii. 39.

not to them only, but it is “to you and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” From the first, the miracle of their calling, our gratitude may take occasion much to enlarge itself. It is storied of Brasidas in the fourth of Thucydides^p, that imputing the victory which was somewhat miraculous to some more than ordinary human cause, he went presently to the temple loaded with offerings, and would not suffer the gods

° Justin, lib. xxiv. cap. 2.

^p [Thucyd. iv. 116.]

to bestow such an unexpected favour on him unrewarded; and can we pass by such a mercy of our God without a spiritual sacrifice, without a daily anthem of magnificats and hallelujahs? Herodotus^q observes it is as a proverb of Greece, that if God would not send them rain, they were to famish; for they had, said he, no natural fountains, or any other help of waters, *ὅτι μὴ ἐκ τοῦ Διὸς μούνον*, but what God from above sent. So saith Thucydides^r in the fourth of his History, there was but one fountain within a great compass, and that none of the biggest. So also was Egypt, another part of the heathen world, to be watered only by Nilus, and that being drawn by the sun, did often succour them and fatten the land, for which all the neighbours fared the worse; for when Nilus flowed the neighbouring rivers were left dry, saith Herodotus^s. You need not the mythology; the philosophers, as well as soil of Greece, had not moisture enough to sustain them from nature; if God had not sent them water from heaven, they and all we Gentiles had for ever suffered a spiritual thirst. Egypt and all the nations had for ever gasped for drought, if the sunshine of the gospel had not by its beams called out of the well which had no bucket, *ζῶν ὕδωρ*, “living or enlivening water.” But by this John iv. 6. attraction of the sun, these living waters did so break out upon the Gentiles, that all the waters of Jewry were left dry, as once the dew was on Gidcon’s fleec, and drought on all Judg. vi. 37. the earth besides. And is it reasonable for us to observe this miracle of mercy, and not return even a miracle of thanksgiving? Can we think upon it without some rapture of our souls? Can we insist on it, and not feel a holy tempest within us, a storm and disquiet, till we have some way disburdened and eased ourselves, with a pouring out of thanksgiving? That spirit is too calm, that I say not stupid, which can bear and be loaded with mercies of this kind, and not take notice of its burden; for besides those peculiar favours bestowed on us in particular, we are, as saith Chrysostom^t, in our audit of thanksgiving, to reckon up all the *τὰ κοινῇ γινόμενα*, “all those common benefactions of which others

^q [Herod. ii. 13.]

^r [Thucyd. iv. 26.]

^s [Herod. ii. 25.]

^t [S. Chrysost. in Acta Apostol. Homil. xxxviii. Op., tom. ix. p. 292, C.]

partake with us ;” for it is, saith he, an ordinary negligence in us to recount God’s mercies as we confess our sins, only in gross, with an *ἀμαρτωλοί ἐσμεν, καὶ εὐηργέτησε Θεὸς*, “ we are great sinners, and God hath abounded in mercies to us ;” never calling ourselves to a strict retail either of our sins or His mercies ; and this neglect, saith he, doth deprive us of a great deal of spiritual strength. For 1. the recounting of the multitude of God’s mercies to us formerly might give us confidence of the continuance of them, according to St. Cyprian, *donando debet*, God’s past blessings are engagements and pawns of future. 2. It is, saith he, of excellent use, *πρὸς τὸ οἰκειοῦν*, “ to bring us acquainted” and familiar with God, and infinitely increaseth our love to Him, and desire of performing some manner of recompense. Which one thing made the heathen of old so love and respect their benefactors, that they worshipped them, and would not suffer any common real benefaction to be done them without an *ἀποθέωσις* to the author of it, as might be proved through all ancient writings ; for on these grounds was it that they would needs sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas. In the second place, if we consider how nearly it concerns us, that if they had been pretermitted, we to the end of the world might probably have lived in the same darkness, that we now hold our right to heaven by the covenant made to them, that those commands belong also to us and our children, then we must in some reason of proportion thank God liberally for that calling of the Gentiles, as we cannot choose but do for our present adoption, and enlarge our thanksgiving not for our own only, but for that first justification, sanctification, and salvation of the Gentiles. And this effusion of our souls in thanks will prove of good use to us, both to confirm our confidence, and keep us in a Christian temper of humility and cheerful obedience. And therefore I thought good to present it to you in the first place as a duty of no ordinary moment.

Acts xiv.
13.

2. If God hath commanded, and consequently expects our obedience ; if these commands concern us, and contain in them all that belongs to our salvation ; if they are, as hath been proved, God’s covenant with the Gentiles ; then, not to be wanting to ourselves, but earnestly to labour and provide that no one circumstance of them may be without its peculiar

profit and advantage to our souls. Polybius from the war betwixt the Numidians and Uticensis observes, that if a victory gotten by the captain, be not by the soldiers prosecuted to the utmost, it likely proves more dangerous than if they had never had it; if the king, saith he, take the city^u, *οἱ δὲ πολλοὶ διὰ προστήρημα ῥαθυμοῦντες*, “and the multitude overjoyed with the news, begin to grow less earnest in the battle,” a hundred to one but the conquered will take notice and heart from this advantage, and, as the Uticensis did, make their flight a stratagem to get the victory. Thus is it in those spiritual combats, where God is our leader, our commander, our conqueror against the devil’s host; if we of His command, the *οἱ πολλοὶ*, the many who expect our part in the profit of the victory, do not prosecute this conquest to the utmost, to the utter discomfiting and disarming of our fugitive enemy; if we should grow secure upon the news, and neither fear nor prevent any further difficulties, we may be in more danger for that former conquest, and as it was ordinary in story, by that time we have set up our trophies, ourselves be overcome. I might prescribe you many courses, which it would concern you to undertake for the right managing of this victory, which this our commander hath not by His fighting, but by His very commanding, purchased us. But because my text requires haste, and I go on but slowly, I must omit them, and only insist on that which is specified in my text, repentance, which drives to the condition of the covenant, the matter of the command which comes next to be discussed.

The word “repent” may in this place be taken in a double sense; 1. generally for a sorrow for our sins, and on that a disburdening of ourselves of that load which did formerly press down the soul; for a sense of our former ill courses, and a desire to fit ourselves for God’s service; for an humbling ourselves before God, and flying to Him as our only succour; and so it well may be called the condition of God’s covenant with us, that which God requires at our hands under the gospel; for it was the first word at the first preaching of the gospel by John Baptist, “Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand,” which, saith the text, was in effect, Matt. iii. 2.

^u Polybius, [lib. i. c. 74. § 10.]

ver. 3.

“Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.” So that, briefly, this “repent” is a straightening and rectifying all crookedness, every distortion of the soul, and thereby a preparing of it for the receiving of Christ and embracing His gospel. 2. In a nearer relation to the first words of the verse, repentance is taken more especially by way of opposition, for a mending and forsaking of that which of old was the fault and guilt of the Gentiles, a reforming of every thing which was either formally or virtually contained in their ignorance; and what that is you shall briefly judge.

Matt. xxvi.
70.

It is observed by interpreters, that doing or suffering, action or passion, are expressed in Scripture by the word knowing; so to know sin is to commit sin, to know a woman, and the like. So Peter to the maid, “I know not what thou sayest,” i. e. I am not guilty of the doing what thou imputest to me. According to which Hebraism, to know God and His laws is to worship Him, and perform them; and, consequently, to be ignorant of both is neither to worship God nor practise any thing which His laws command; and so, knowledge shall contain all piety and godly obedience, or love of God’s commandments, as God is said to know those whom He loves; and ignorance, all profaneness and neglect, yea, and hatred either of God or goodness. According to which exposition are those two sayings, the one of Hermes^x in his tenth book called *νοῦς ἡ τρισκακία τὸ ἀγνοεῖν τὸν Θεὸν*, “the ignorance of God is all manner of sin;” the other of Pastor in Clemens^y, *μετάνοια σύνεσις μεγάλη*, “repentance is a great piece of knowledge or wisdom.” So that, briefly, the recovering of the soul to the pure knowledge of God and goodness, the worshipping, loving, and obeying of God, is the thing here meant by repentance; which yet we may press into a nearer room, into one single duty, the directing all our actions to His glory; for this is in effect to worship, to obey, to love God, to worship for obedience’s sake, because he commands it, to obey Him for love’s sake, because we desire He should be glorified in our obedience. And this is the excellency and perfection of a Christian, infinitely above the reach of the proudest moralists; this is the repentance of a

^x [Hermes Trismeg. (ut supr.) lib. x. ad fin.]

^y [Hermæ Pastor (ii. 4. § 2.) ut ap. Clem. Alex. Strom. ii. 12. p. 458.]

Christian, whereby he makes up those defects which were most eminently notorious in the heathen; this is the impression of that humbling spirit, which proud heathen nature was never stamped with, for it was not so much their ignorance in which they offended God,—though that was also full of guilt, as hath been proved,—as their misusing of their knowledge to ungainly ends, as either ambition, superstition, or for satisfying their curiosity, as partly hath, and for the present needs not further to be demonstrated. Only for us, whom the command doth so nearly concern of repenting for and reforming their abuses, how shall we be cast at the bar, if we still continue in the same guilt! The orderly composition of the world, saith Athenagoras², the greatness, complexion, figure, and harmony of it, are *πρὸς θεοσέβειαν ἐνέχυρα ἡμῶν*, “engagements to us and pawns to oblige us to a pious worship of God.” For what Philoponus observes of the doctrine of the soul, is in like manner true of all kind of learning, *εἰς ὅλον τὸν βίον τείνει δόγματα ταῦτα*, “they extend and have an influence over all our conversation;” and if they be well studied, and to purpose, leave their characters and impressions in our lives as well as our understandings; and from thence arose the Gentiles’ guilt, who did only enrich their intellectual part with the knowledge and contemplation of them, no whit better their lives, or glorify God which made them. But for us, whose knowledge is much elevated above their pitch, who study and ordinarily attain to the understanding of those depths which they never fathomed, the reading of those riddles which they never heard of, the expounding of those mysteries which they never dreamt of; for us, I say, who have seen a marvellous light, thereby only to enlighten our brains and not our hearts, to divert that precious knowledge to some poor, low, unworthy ends; to gather nothing out of all our studies which may advance God’s kingdom in us, this is infinitely beyond the guilt of heathenism; this will call their ignorance up to judgment against our knowledge, and in fine make us curse that light which we have used to guide us only to the chambers of death. Briefly, there was no one thing lay heavier upon the Gentiles than the not directing that measure of knowledge

² [Athenag. Legat. pro Christianis, § 4. [p. 283, A.]

they had to God's glory and a virtuous life ; and nothing more nearly concerns us Christians to amend and repent of. For the most exquisite knowledge of nature, and more specially the most accurate skill in theological mysteries, if it float only in the brain, and sink not down into the heart, if it end not in reformation of erroneous life, as well as doctrine, and glorifying God in our knowledge of Him, it is to be reputed but a glorious, specious curse, not an enriching, but a burdening of the soul, *Aurum Tholosanum*, an unlucky merchandise, that can never thrive with the owner, but commonly betrays and destroys all other good affections and graces in us. Socrates was the first that brought morality into the schools^a, *ideoque ad hominum salutem natus est*, said an old philosopher^b ; and that made the oracle so much admire him for the wisest man in the world. At any piece of speculation the devil durst challenge the proudest philosopher amongst them ; but for a virtuous life he despaired of ever reaching to it ; this set him at a gaze, this posed and made a dunce of him, and forced him to proclaim the moralist the greatest scholar under heaven ; *οἴησις ἰερὰ νόσος*, saith Hesychius^c *περὶ σοφῶν*, the "making use of knowledge to ambition or puffing up, is a dangerous desperate disease," and pray God it be not *ἰερὰ* also in its other sense, a disease that attends our holiest speculations, even our study of divinity. For as Arrian^d saith of those who read many books and digest none, so is it most true of those who do not concoct their *πολυμαθία*, and turn it into spiritual nourishment of the soul, *ἐμοῦσι καὶ ἀποπέπτουσι*, they vomit it up again, and are never the better for it ; they are oppressed with this very learning, as a stomach with crudities, and thereby fall many times *εἰς στρόφους καὶ καταρροίας*, into vertigoes and catarrhs, the first of which disorders the brain, and disables it from all manner of action ; or if the more classical notion of the word take place, it disaffects the bowels, entangles and distorts the entrails, and, as St. Paul complains on this occasion, leaves without natural affection,

^a S. Augustin., De Civitate Dei, lib. viii. cap. 3, &c. [Op., tom. vii. p. 191.]

^b [Verum Socrates, caritate patriæ ardens, et, ut Proclus ait, ad hominum salutem natus, &c. Patricius in his Plato Exotericus, p. 43, appended to

his Nova De Universis Philosophia. Venice, 1593.]

^c [Hesychius, s. v. Heraclitus, ap. Meursium. Op., tom. vii. p. 249.]

^d [Arrian., Epicteti Dissertat., lib. i. c. 26. § 16.]

and then, 2, by the defluxion of the humours on the breast, clogs and stifles the vital parts, and in fine brings the whole man to a *φθίσις*, or corruption of all its spiritual graces. Thus have you at once the doctrine and the use of my second part, the nature of that repentance which is here meant in opposition to the Gentiles' fault, which we have shewed to be the directing of our knowledge to a sober pious end, God's glory and our own edification, together with the danger and sinfulness attending the neglect of these ends, both which are sufficient motives to stir you up, to awake and conjure you to the practice of this doctrine. To which you may add but this one more, that even some of the heathen were raised up by the study of the creatures to an admiration of God's excellency, which was a kind of glorifying His power, and those Philoponus^e calls *τελείους φυσιολόγους*, "perfect exact naturalists;" who from physical causes ascend to divine. Witness Galen^f, *de Usu Partium*, where from the miraculous structure of the foot, he falls off into a meditation and hymn of God's providence, *δημιουργήσαντος ἡμᾶς ὕμνον ἀλήθινον*, "a psalm or holy elogy of Him that hath so wonderfully made us." So Hermes^g, in his first book of piety and philosophy, makes the only use of philosophy to return thanks to the Creator as to a good father and profitable nurse, which duty he professes himself resolved never to be wanting in; and after, in the latter end of his fifth book^h, he makes good his word, breaking out into a kind of holy rhythm, *ποῦ δὲ βλέπων εὐλόγησω σε, ἄνω, κάτω, ἔσω, κ.τ.λ.* The like might be shewed in some measure out of others, more classic heathen writers, which may briefly serve to upbraid our defects, and aggravate our offence, if we with all our natural and spiritual light go on yet in learning, as travellers in peregrination, only either as curious inquisitors of some novelties, which they may brag of at their return, or else having no other end of their travel but the journey itself, without any care to direct our studies to the advancement either of God's glory in other, or grace's kingdom in ourselves. For this is the thing no doubt here aimed at, and the performance of it

^e [Philoponus, Comment. in Aristot. de Anima, Præf. in lib. i., ad finem.]

^f Galen, De Usu Part., lib. iii. c. 6.

^g [Herm. Trismeg., De Pietate et Philosophia, lib. i. ad init., p. 4.]

^h [Id., ibid., lib. v. ad finem.]

as strictly required of us Christians, and that not some only of us, but as many as the commandment is here given to, "every man every where." So I come to my last particular, the extent and latitude of the persons with whom this covenant is made, and from whom this condition is exacted, "All men every where."

Now the universality of the persons reflects either to the preceding words, commands, or to the subsequent, the matter of these commands, repentance. From the first, the point is, that God's commands were made known by the preaching of the gospel to "all men every where." From the second, that the repentance here meant is necessary to every man that will be saved. For the first, it hath been already proved out of Scripture, that the vocal articulation of God's commands, the sound and preaching of the gospel, hath gone out into all the world, and that not *universis*, but *singulis*, directed and promulged at least to every creature, the whole Gentile world has title to it. Now for the spiritual efficacy of this voice, the "demonstration of the Spirit and of power," hath not this also waited on the voice, and in some kind or other evidenced itself in the like extensive latitude? Yes, no doubt; for there being two effects of the preaching of the word, either converting or hardening, either dissolving the wax, or stiffening the clay, you shall in every man be sure to meet with one of them.

For the conversion; what a multitude came in at the first noise of it, *primo mane*, as soon as ever the Sun of righteousness began to dawn. In the ancient sea-fights they had their *λεμβάδια*, little light ships, *πρωτόπλοι*, saith Xenophon¹, *πρόπλοι*, *καὶ σκοποὶ*, say Thucydides^k and Polybius¹, which they sent out as spies in the night, or at day-break, to bring word how the seas were cleared; that so they might dare to make use of the first opportunity to go out with their whole navy. Thus was Job and some few other Gentiles before the Gospel, and Cornelius at the dawning of it, sent before in a manner, *ut lembi ante classem*, to spy and bring word whether the Gentiles might enter and be received; and these returning to them like Noah's dove "with an olive-leaf in her mouth," as a

Gen. viii.
11.

¹ [Xenophon, Hist. Græc., lib. v. cap. 1. § 27.]

^k [Thucydides, lib. vi. c. 44. 46.]
¹ [Polybius, lib. i. c. liii. § 8.]

token of peace and safety to all that would venture, then did the whole navy and troop follow, then did the τὸ πλῆθον καὶ οἱ πολλοὶ, “the many,” the rout, the common people of the world, out of all nations and conditions some, hasten and run and crowd for a part in this salvation, and “the glory of the Lord was revealed, and all flesh saw it together,” as it is Isa. xl. 5. in the phrase of the prophecy, or in the words of the story, “there were daily added to the Church such as should be [Acts ii. 47.] saved.” Look but on the doctor of the Gentiles, as he sits in his chair in Tyrannus’ school, and you shall find that at Acts xix. 9. that one lecture—which indeed was two years long—all the lesser Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Grecks. The three thousand souls which were added to the Acts ii. 4. Church at St. Peter’s sermon, was a sufficient hour’s work, and a thing so admired by the wise men of the Gentiles, that they imputed it *magicis Petri artibus et veneficis carminibus*, saith Austin^m, to some incantations and magical tricks which Peter used. And they got the dying oracle to confirm it with some supposititious verses, to the purpose forged by them; that the Christian religion was raised by Peter’s witchcraft, and by it should last three hundred and sixty-five years, and then be betrayed and vanishⁿ. But had these same Gentiles in this humour of malice and prejudice seen a third part of the Roman world, all the proconsular Asia, converted by one Paul’s disputations, they would certainly have resolved that all the sorcery of hell or Chaldaea could never have yielded such miraculous enchantments. And this the sons of Sceva had experience of, who with all their Acts xix. 14. exorcisms, and the name of Jesus added to them, could not yet imitate the Apostles in any one miracle; but the devil was too hard for them, wounded, overcame, prevailed against them. Briefly, it was more than the magic either of men or devils, which so convinced the artificers of hell, that they “brought out their books and burnt them openly;” which Acts xix. 19. beside the price of their most profitable skill, were rated at 50,000 pieces of silver, which is computed to be about £6,250. “So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed,” and [ver. 20.] the first effect of it, conversion, was miraculously manifest, though not on all, yet on many of all people every where.

^m S. Aug. De Civ. Dei, lib. xviii. c. 53. [Op., t. vii. p. 536, E, F.] ⁿ [Id., ib.]

Now for the other effect of it, the hardening of obdurate
 Acts xix. 9. atheists, look on Acts xix. 9, where it is plain, that for all
 Paul's logic and rhetoric, "disputing and persuading for the
 space of three months," many were hardened and believed
 not. They had within them *νοῦν ἀντίτυπον*, as Theodoret
 calls it, a heart that would reverberate either precept or in-
 struction, and make it rebound against the hand that sent it;
πνεῦμα παχυνόμενον, as Philoponus^o phrases it in his first
 book *de anima*, their spirits fattened and incrassated within
 them, stalled up and fed to such a brawniness, that neither the
 understanding nor the affections were capable of any im-
 pression, and so their condition proved like that of the anvil,
 which by many strokes is somewhat smoothed but no whit
 softened; all they got by one day's preaching was to enable
 them the better to resist the second. Every sermon of a
 Paul or Peter was but an alarum to set them on their guard
 of defence, to warn them to cast up some more trenches and
 bulwarks, to fortify themselves stronger against any possible
 invasion of God's Spirit; according to that of the Egyptian
 Hermes^p, speaking *περὶ δυνάμεως ἱερῶν λόγων*, which is in a
 Christian phrase the "power of the Scripture;" they have,
 saith he, this property in them, that when they meet with
 evil men, *μᾶλλον παροξύνουσιν εἰς κακίαν*, "they do more
 sharpen and egg them on to evil." Thus was the preaching
 of the word to all men every where attended with some effects
 or other, according to the materials it met with, never re-
 turned unprofitably, but either was the power of God to sal-
 vation unto all that believed, or the witness of God to con-
 demnation to those which were hardened. Now if this
 precious receipt administered to all find not in all the like
 effect of recovering, yet from hence is neither the physic to
 be underprized nor the prescriber; the matter is to be im-
 puted sometimes to the weakness and pcevishness of the
 patient, *ὡς ἀδυνατέειν τὰ προστασσομένα ὑπουργέειν*, "that
 he cannot or will not perform the prescriptions," sometimes
τὴν δύναμιν αἰτιασθαι τοῦ πάθεος, "the fault is to be laid on
 the stubbornness and stoutness of the disease," which turns

^o [Philoponus, Comment. in Aristot.
 de Anima, Præf. in lib. i. ad finem.]

^p [Hermes Trismegistus, De Pic-

tate et Philosophia, p. 5. q. i. ad
 finem.]

every medicine into its nourishment, and so is not abated but elevated by that which was intended to assuage it, as Hippocrates¹ defines it medicinally in his book *περὶ τεχνῆς*.

So then by way of use, if we desire that these commands, this covenant offered to all men every where, may evidence itself to our particular souls in its spiritual efficacy, we must with all the industry of our spirits endeavour to remove those hinderances, which may any way perturb, or disorder, or weaken it in its working in us; *προκατασκευάσθω σοι μαλαγμάτων γένεα, κ.τ.λ.*, saith Hippocrates², you must furnish yourself beforehand with a shop of several softening plasters, and take some one of them as a preparative before every sermon you come to, that coming to church with a tender, mollified, waxy heart, you may be sure to receive every holy character, and impression, which that day's exercise hath provided for thee, lest otherwise, if thou shouldst come to church with an heart of ice, that ice be congealed into crystal, and by an *ἀντιπερίστασις*, the warmth of God's word not abate, but increase the coldness of a chill frozen spirit, and finding it hard and stubborn, return it obdurate. O what a horrid thing is it that the greatest mercy under heaven should by our unpreparedness be turned into the most exquisite curse that hell or malice hath in store for us! that the most precious balm of Gilead should by the malignity of some tempers be turned into poison; that the leaves which are appointed for the healing of the nations should meet with some such sores, which prove worse by any remedy; that the most sovereign *μαλακτικόν*, or lenitive, in the world, should only work to our obduration, and the preaching of the word of mercy add to the measure of our condemnation! This is enough to persuade you by an horror into some kind of solicitude to prepare your souls to a capability of this cure, to keep yourselves in a Christian temper, that it may be possible for a sermon to work upon you, that that breath which never returns in vain may be truly gospel, happy in its message, may convert not harden you; to which purpose you must have such tools in store which the physi-

¹ [Cf. Hippocrates, *περὶ τεχνῆς*, tom. i. p. 12. Medici Græci, tom. xxi. ed. Kuhn.]

² [Hippocrates, *περὶ εὐσχημοσύνης*, tom. i. p. 73. Kuhn. ut supr.]

cian^s speaks of, ὄργανα, καὶ μηχανὰς, καὶ σίδηρον, “instruments of spiritual surgery,” to cut and prune off all luxuriant cumbersome excrescences, all rankness and dead flesh, which so oppress the soul, that the virtue of medicine cannot search to it. And for this purpose there is no one more necessary, of more continual use for every man every where, than that which here closeth my text, “repentance.”

And so I come to the second respect, the universality of the persons, as it refers to the matter of the command, repentance, every man every where to repent.

And here I should shew you that repentance, both generally taken for a sorrow for sin, containing in it virtually faith also,—so the baptism of repentance is interpreted, Acts xix. 4, “John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe,” &c.,—and more especially in this place taken for the directing of our knowledge to practice, and both to God’s glory, as hath been shewn, is and always was necessary to every man that will be saved. For according to Aristotle’s^t rule, κατὰ παντὸς, noting both an universality of subject and circumstance, is a degree of necessity; and therefore repentance being here commanded, πᾶσι πανταχοῦ, is to be judged a condition necessary to every man who answers at the command, i. e. who expects his part in the covenant of salvation; this, I say, I might prove at large, and to that purpose vindicate the writings of some of the fathers, especially of Clemens, who, I am almost confident, is groundlessly cited for bestowing salvation on the heathen, without exacting the condition of faith and repentance, which now it were superfluous to insist on. 2. Urge it both to your brains and hearts, and by the necessity of the duty, rouse and enforce, and pursue you to the practice of it. But seeing this catholic duty is more the inspiration of the Holy Ghost than the acquisition of our labours, seeing this fundamental cardinal gift comes from the supreme donor, seeing nature is no more able spiritually to re-enliven a soul than to animate a carcass, our best endeavour will be our humiliation, our most profitable directions will prove our prayers, and what our frailty cannot reach to, our devotions shall obtain.

* Hippocrates, [ibid., p. 72.]

† [Aristot. Post. Anal., lib. i. c. 4.]

And let us labour and pray, and be confident, that God which hath honoured us with His commands will enable us to a performance of them, and having made His covenant with us, will fulfil in us the condition of it; that the thundering of His word being accompanied with the still voice of His Spirit, may suffer neither repulse nor resistance; that our hearts being first softened, then stamped with the Spirit, may be the images of that God that made them; that all of us every where endeavouring to glorify God in our knowledge, in our lives, in our faith, in our repentance, may for ever be glorified by Him, and through Him, and with Him hereafter.

Now to Him that hath elected us, hath created, redeemed, &c.

SERMON XXVI.

ROM. i. 26.

For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections.

Ezek. xvi. 6. IN this most accurate Epistle that ever the pen of man could lay title to, in which all the counsels, and proceedings, and methods of God in the work of our salvation are described, our Apostle in his discourse goes on the same way that God is said to do in His decree; lays the foundation of it as low and deep as possible, begins with them as it were *in massa*, and though they were already Romans and Christians, yet before he openeth heaven gates to them, and either teaches or suffers them to be saints, he stays them awhile in the contemplation of their impurity, and damned neglected estate of the stock they come from; looks upon them as “polluted or trodden down in their own blood,” as the phrase is. He ploughs and harrows, and digs as deep as possible, that the seed which he meant to sow might be firm rooted, that their heaven might be founded in the centre of the earth, and their faith being secured by the depth of its foundation, might increase miraculously both in height and fruitfulness. Thus in the latter part of this first chapter doth he shew them the estate and rebellions, and punishment of their heathen ancestors, that the unregenerate man may in that glass see his picture at the length, the regenerate humble himself in a thankful horror, overjoyed, and wondering to observe himself delivered from such destruction. And that all may be secured from the danger of the like miscarriage, he sets the whole story of them distinctly before their eyes. 1. How the law and light of nature was sufficient to have instructed them into the sight and acknowledgment of God, and therefore that they could not pretend want of means to direct them to

His worship. 2. That they contemned and rejected all the helps and guidances that God and nature had afforded them; and that therefore, 3. God had deserted, and given them up unto the pride, and luxury, and madness of their own hearts, all "vile affections;" for this is the force of the illation, they abused those instructions which God had printed in the creature to direct them, and therefore He will bestow no more pains on them to so little purpose; their own reason convinced them there was but one God, and yet they could not hold from adoring many, and therefore He will not be troubled to rein them in any longer; for all His ordinary restraints they will needs run riot, and "for this cause God gave them up to vile affections." So that in the text you may observe the whole state and history of a heathen, natural, unregenerate life, which is a progress or travel from one stage of sinning to another, beginning in a contempt of the light of nature, and ending in the brink of hell, all vile affections. For the discovery of which we shall survey, 1. The law or light of nature, what it can do; 2. The sin of contemning this law or light, both noted in the first words, "for this cause," that is, because they did reject that which would have stood them in good stead; 3. The effect or punishment of this contempt, sottishness leading them stupidly into all vile affections; and lastly, the inflicter of this punishment and manner of inflicting of it, "God gave them up;" and first of the first, the law and light of nature, what it can do.

To suppose a man born at large, left to the infinite liberty of a creature, without any terms or bounds, or laws to circumscribe him, were to bring a river into a plain, and bid it stand on end, and yet allow it nothing to sustain it; were to set a babe of a day old into the world, and bid him shift for a subsistence; were to bestow a being on him only that he may lose it, and perish before he can ever be said to live. If an infant be not bound in, and squeezed, and swathed, he will never thrive in growth or feature, but as Hippocrates^a saith of the Scythians, for want of girdles, run all out into breadth and ugliness. And therefore it cannot agree either with the mercy or goodness of either God or nature to create

^a [Hippocrates, De aëre, locis et aquis, tom. i. p. 559.]

men without laws, or to bestow a being upon any one without a guardian to guide and manage it. Thus, lest any creature for want of this law any one moment should immediately sin against its creation, and no sooner move than be annihilated; the same wisdom hath ordered that his very soul shall be his law-giver, and so the first minute of its essence should suppose it regular. Whence it is that some atheists in Theophilus *ad Autolyicum*^b, which said that all things were made by chance and of their own accord, yet affirmed that when they were made they had a God within them to guide them, their own conscience, and in sum affirmed, *μόνον εἶναι Θεόν συνείδησιν*, “that there was no other God in the world.” Aristotle^c observes that in the creatures which have no reason phantasy supplies its place, and does the bee as much service to perform the business of its kind as reason doth in the man. Thus further in them whose birth in an uncivilized country hath deprived of any laws to govern them, reason supplies their room, *λόγος φύσει νόμος*, saith Arius Didymus^d, “reason is naturally a law,” and hath as sovereign dictates with it, pronounceth sentence every minute from the tribunal within, as authoritatively as ever the most powerful Solon did in the theatre. There is not a thing in the world purely and absolutely good, but God and nature within commends and prescribes to our practice; and would we but obey their counsels and commands, it were a way to innocence and perfection that even the Pelagians never dreamt of. To speak no further than will be both profitable and beyond exception, the perfectest law in the world is not so perfect a rule for our lives as this *ἔμφυτος καὶ φυσικὸς νόμος*, as Methodius^e calls it, “this law of nature born with us,” is for these things which are subject to its reach. Shall I say Scripture itself is in some respect inferior to it? I think I shall not prejudice that blessed volume, for though it be as far from the least spot or suspicion of imperfection as falsehood, though it be true, perfect, and righteous altogether, yet doth it not so evidence itself to my dull soul; it

^b Theophil. ad Autolyc., lib. ii. § 4. 15. p. 817, D.]
 [Ad calc. S. Just. M., p. 349, D.] ° [Ap. Photium, Biblioth., p. 915.
^c [Arist. Metaph. A. c. 1.] ed. Hoeschel.]
^d [Euseb. Præp. Evang., lib. xv. c.

speaks not so clearly and irrefragably, so beyond all contradiction and demur to my atheistical understanding, as that law which God hath written in my heart. For there is a double certainty, one of adherence, another of evidence, one of faith, the other of sense; the former is that grounded on God's word, more infallible because it rests on divine authority, the latter more clear, because I find it within me by experience. The first is given to strengthen the weakness of the second, and is therefore called *βεβαιότερος λόγος*, "a 2 Pet. i. 19. more firm sure word;" the second given within us to explain the difficulties and obscurities of the first, *αὐτοπταὶ γεννηθέντες*, we "saw it with our eyes:" so that Scriptures being ver. 16. conceived into words and sentences, are subject either not to be understood or amiss; and may either be doubted of by the ignorant, or perverted by the malicious. You have learnt so many words without book, and say them minutely by heart, and yet not either understand or observe what you are about; but this unwritten law, which no pen but that of nature hath engraven, is in our understandings, not in words but sense, and therefore I cannot avoid the intimations; it is impossible either to deny or doubt of it, it being written as legible in the tables of our hearts, as the print of humanity in our foreheads. The commands of either Scripture or emperor may be either unknown or out of our heads, when any casual opportunity shall bid us make use of them; but this law of the mind is at home for ever, and either by intimation or loud voice, either whispers or proclaims its commands to us; be it never so gagged it will mutter, and will be sure to be taken notice of when it speaks softliest. To define in brief what this law of nature is, and what offices it performs in us, you are to know that at that grand forfeiture of all our inheritance,—goods truly real and personal,—all those primitive endowments of soul and body upon Adam's rebellion, God afterwards, though He shined not on us in His full image and beauty, yet cast some rays and beams of that eternal light upon us; and by an immutable law of His own counsel hath imprinted on every soul that comes down to a body, a secret, unwritten, yet indelible law, by which the creature may be warned what is good or bad, what agreeable, what hurtful to the obtaining of the end of its creation. Now

these commands or prescriptions of nature, are either in order to speculation or practice, to increase our knowledge or direct our lives. The former sort I omit, as being fitter for the schools than pulpit to discourse on, I shall meddle only with those that refer to practice, and those are either common, which they call first principles, and such are in every man in the world equally, *et secundum rectitudinem et notitiam*, saith Aquinas^f; every one doth both conceive them in his understanding what they mean, and assent to them in his will, that they are right and just, and necessary to be performed; and of this nature are the worship of God and justice amongst men; for that *lumen super nos signatum*, in Bonaventure's^g phrase, that "light which nature hath sealed and imprinted on our souls," is able to direct us in the knowledge of those moral principles, without any other help required to persuade us; or else they are particular and proper to this or that business, which they call conclusions drawn out of these common principles; as when the common principle commands just dealing, the conclusion from thence commands to restore what I have borrowed, and the like. And these also if they be naturally and directly deduced, would every man in the world both understand and assent to; did not some hinderance come in, and forbid or suspend either his understanding or assent. Hinderances which keep him from the knowledge or conceiving of them, are that confusion and chaos, and black darkness, I had almost said that Tophet and hell of sensual affections, which suffers not the light to shew itself, and indeed so stifles and oppresses it, that it becomes only as hell fire, not to shine but burn, not to enlighten us what we should do, but yet by gripes and twinges of the conscience to torment us for not doing of it. And this hinderance the Apostle calls the vanity of imaginations by which a foolish heart is darkened. Hinderances which keep us from assenting to a conclusion in particular which we do understand, are sometimes good; as, first, a sight of some greater breach certain to follow the performance of this; so though I understand that I must restore every man his own, yet I will never return a knife to one that I see re-

Rom. i.
21.

^f S. Thom. Aq. Summa 1^{ma} 2^a qu. 94. [art. 4.]

^g S. Bonaventura, in lib. ii. Sentent. Dist. 39. Art. 3. quæst. 2. [conclus.]

solved to do some mischief with it; and 2. Divine laws, as the command of robbing the Egyptians, and the like; for [Exod. xi. 2.] although that in our hearts forbid robbing, yet God is greater than our hearts, and must be obeyed when He prescribes it. Hinderances in this kind are also sometimes bad; such are either habitude of nature, custom of country, which made the Lacedæmonians esteem theft a virtue; or again the tyranny of passions; for every one of these hath its several project upon the reasonable soul, its several design of malice either by treachery or force to keep it hoodwinked, or cast it into a lethargy, when any particular virtuous action requires to be assented to by our practice. If I should go so far as some do, to define this law of nature to be the full will of God written by His hand immediately in every man's heart after the fall, by which we feel ourselves bound to do every thing that is good and avoid every thing that is evil, some might through ignorance or prejudice guess it to be an elevation of corrupt nature above its pitch, too near to Adam's integrity; and yet Zanchy^h, who was never guessed near a Pelagian, in his fourth tome, lib. i. c. 10. Thesis 8, would authorize every part of it, and yet not seem to make an idol of nature, but only extol God's mercy, who hath bestowed a soul on every one of us with this character and impression, Holiness to the Lord; which though it be written unequally, in some more than others, yet saith he, in all in some measure so radicated, that it can never be quite changed or utterly abolished. However I think we may safely resolve with Bonaventureⁱ out of Austin against Pelagius, *Non est parum accepisse naturale indicatorium*, it is "no small mercy that we have received a natural glass," in which we may see and judge of objects before we venture on them, a power of distinguishing good from evil^k, which even the malice of sin and passions in the highest degree cannot wholly extinguish in us; as may appear by Cain, the voice of whose conscience spake as loud within him as that of his brother's blood; as also in the very damned, whose worm of sense, not penitence for what they have done in their flesh, shall for ever bite and

^h Zanchii Opera Theologica, tom. iv. p. 190. Genev. 1619.

ⁱ [S. Bonaventura, ut supr., quoting S. August. de Libero Arbitrio, lib. iii.

c. 20. Op., tom. i. p. 633, A.]

^k Which Damascene calls, lucem naturalem intellectus, as the schools have it from him.—Wiggers. [supr., p. 277.]

gripe them hideously. This light indeed may either by, first, blindness, or secondly, delight in sinning, or thirdly, peremp-tory resolvedness not to see, be for the present hindered, *secun-dum actum*, from doing any good upon us. He that hath but a veil before his eyes, so long cannot judge of colours ; he that runs impetuously cannot hear any one that calls to stop him in his career ; and yet all the while the light shines, and the voice shouts ; and therefore when we find in Scripture some men stupified by sin, others void of reason, we must not reckon them absolutely so, but only for the present besotted. And again, though they have lost their reason, as it moves *per modum deliberationis*, yet not as *per modum naturæ*, their reason which moves them by deliberation and choice to that which is good, is perhaps quite put out or suspended ; but their reason which is an instinct of nature, a natural motion of the soul to the end of its creation, remains in them though it move not, like a ship at hull and becalmed is very still and quiet, and though it stir not evidently, yet it hath its secret heaves and plunges within us.

Now that the most ignorant, clouded, unnurtured brain amongst you may reap some profit from this discourse, let him but one minute of his life be at so much leisure as to look into his own heart, and he shall certainly find within him that which we have hitherto talked of, his own soul shall yield him a comment to my sermon ; and if he dare but once to open his eyes, shall shew him the law and light of nature in himself, which before he never dreamt of. Of those of you that ever spared one minute from your worldly affairs to think of your spiritual, there is one thought that suddenly comes upon you, and makes short work of all that spiritual care of yourselves. You conceive that you are of yourselves utterly unable to understand, or think, or do any thing that is good, and therefore you resolve it a great pain to no purpose ever to go about so impossible a project. God must work the whole business in you, you are not able of your-selves so much as either to see, or move, and that is the busi-ness which by chance you fell upon and as soon shook off again, and being resolved you never had any eyes, you are content to be for ever blind, unless, as it was wont to be in the old tragedies, some *θεὸς ἀπὸ μηχανῆς*, some new super-

natural power come down and bore your foreheads, and thrust and force eyes into your heads. It is a blessed desire and gracious humility in any one to invoke God to every thought they venture on, and not to dare to pretend to the least sufficiency in themselves, but to acknowledge and desire to receive all from God; but shall we therefore be so ungratefully religious as for ever to be a craving new helps and succours, and never observe or make use of what we have already obtained, as it is observed of covetous men, who are always busied about their incomes, are little troubled with disbursements, *ἀκαταλλήλοισι λήψεσι, καὶ δόσεσι*ⁱ, “without any proportion betwixt their receipts and expenses.” Shall we be so senseless as to hope that the contempt of one blessing will be a means to procure us as many? I told you that God had written a law in the hearts of every one of you, which once was able, and is not now quite deprived of its power to furnish with knowledge of good and evil; and although by original, and actual, and habitual sin this inheritance be much impaired, this stock of precepts drawn low; yet if you would but observe those directions which it would yet afford you, if you would but practise whatever that divine light in your souls should present and commend to you, you might with some face petition God for richer abilities, and with better confidence approach and beg, and expect the grace that should perfect you to all righteousness. In the meantime, bethink yourselves how unreasonable a thing it is that God should be perpetually casting away of alms on those who are resolved to be perpetually bankrupts; how it would be reckoned prodigality of mercies, to purchase new lands for him that scorns to make use of his inheritance. As ever you expect any boon from God, look, I conjure you, what you have already received, call in your eyes into your brains, and see whether your natural reason there will not furnish you with some kind of profitable, though not sufficient directions, to order your whole lives by; bring yourselves up to that staidness of temper, as never to venture on any thing, till you have asked your own soul’s advice whether it be to be done or no; and if you can but observe its dictates, and keep

ⁱ Arrian. Dissert. Epicteti, [lib. ii. c. 9. § 12.]

your hands to obey your head ; if you can be content to abstain when the soul within you bids you hold, you shall have no cause to complain that God hath sent you impotent into the world ; but rather acknowledge it an invaluable mercy of His, that hath provided such an eye within you to direct you, if you will but have patience to see ; such a curb to restrain and prevent you, if thou wilt only take notice of its checks. It is a thing that would infinitely please the reader to observe, what a price the heathen themselves set upon this light within them, which yet certainly was much more dimmed and obscured in them by their idolatry and superstition, than I hope it can be in any Christian soul by the unruliest passion. Could ever any one speak more plainly and distinctly of it than the Pythagoreans and Stoics have done, who represent conscience not only as a guide and moderator of our actions, but as *ἐπίτροπον δαίμονα*, “a tutelary spirit,” or angel, or genius, which never sleeps or dotes, but is still present and employed in our behalf? And this Arrian^k specifies to be the reasonable soul, which he therefore accounts of as a part of God sent out of His own essence, *μόριον καὶ ἀποσπασμάτιον*, “a piece or shred,” or as others more according to modest truth call it, *ἀπαύγασμα*, “a ray or beam” of that invisible sun, by which our dull, inactive, frozen bodies, after the fall, were warmed and re-culvived. Now if any one shall make a diligent inquisition in himself, shall, as the philosopher in his cynical humour, light a candle to no purpose, or [Jer. v. 1.] as the Prophet Jeremy, seek and make huc and cry after a man through all Jerusalem, and yet not meet with him ; if, I say, any body shall search for this light in himself, and find all darkness within, then will you say I have all this while possessed you with some fancies and ideas, without any real profit to be received from them ; you will make that [John xx. 13.] complaint as the women for our Saviour, we went to seek for Him, and when we went down all was dark and emptiness, “They have taken Him away, and I know not where they have laid Him.” Nay, but the error is in the seeker, not in my directions ; he that would behold the sun must stay till the cloud be over ; he that would receive from the fire, either light or warmth, must take the pains to remove

^k [Arrian. Dissertat. Epicteti. lib. i. c. 11. §§ 6, 12.]

the ashes. There be some encumbrances which may hinder the most active qualities in the world from working, and abate the edge of the keenest metal. In sum, there is a cloud, and gloom, and vail within thee, like that darkness on the face of the deep, when the earth was *תהו ובהו*, "without form and void," Gen. i. 2. or like that at Lot's door among the Sodomites, or that of Egypt, thick and palpable; and this have we created to ourselves, a sky full of tempestuous, untamed affections; this cloud of vapours have we exhaled out of the lower part of our soul, our sensitive faculty; and therewith have we so filled the air within us with sad, black meteors, that the sun in its zenith, the height or pride of its splendour, would scarce be able to pierce through it. So that for to make a search for this light within thee, before thou hast removed this throng and crowd of passions which encompass it, and still to complain thou canst not meet with it, were to bring news that the sun is gone out when a tempest hath only masked it, or to require a candle to give thee light through a mud wall. Thou must provide a course to clear the sky, and then thou shalt not need to entreat the sun to shine on thee; especially if this cloud fall down in a shower, if thou canst melt so thick a viscous meteor as those corrupt affections are, into a soft rain, or dew of penitent tears, thou mayest then be confident of a fair bright sunshine. For I dare promise that never humble, tender, weeping soul, had ever this light quite darkened within it, but could at all times read and see the will of God and the law of its creation, not drawn only, but almost engraven and woven into its heart. For these tears in our eyes will spiritually mend our sight; as whatever you see through water, though it be represented somewhat dimly, yet seems bigger and larger than if there were no water in the way, according to that rule in the optics, whatever is seen through a thicker medium seems bigger than it is. And then by way of use, shall we suffer so incomparable a mercy to be cast away from us? Shall we only see and admire, and not make use of it? Shall we fence, as it were, and fortify our outward man with walls and bulwarks, that the inner man may not shine forth upon it? Or shall we like silly improvident flies make no other use of this candle but only to singe, and burn, and consume ourselves by its flame; receive only

[Gen. xix.
11; Exod.
x. 21.]

so much light from it as will add to our hell and darkness? It is a thing that the flintiest heart should melt at, to see such precious mercies undervalued, such incomparable blessings either contemned or only improved into curses. Arrian calls those in whom this light of the soul is, as I shewed you, clouded and obscured, *νεκρὰ* and *σαρκίδια*¹, “dead trunks and carcasses of flesh,” and to keep such men in order were human laws provided, which he therefore calls *ταλαιπώρους τοὺς τῶν νεκρῶν νόμους*^m, “miserable hard laws to keep dead men in compass,” and again, *γῆν καὶ βάραθρον*, “earth and hell,” the places to which dead bodies are committed. And certainly, if so, then by way of contrary, all the life that we possess is but by obedience to this law within us, and it is no longer to be called life, but either sleep, or death, or lethargy, every minute that we move out of the circle of its directions. There is not a step, or moment in our lives, but we have a special use and need of this law to manage us; every enterprise of our thoughts or actions will yield some difficulty which we must hold up, and read, and judge of by this candle; nay, sometimes we have need of a glass or instrument to contract the beams and light of it, or else it would scarce be able to get through to our actions; passion, and folly, and the atheism of our lives hath so thickened the medium. Wherefore in brief, remember that counsel, “take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth;” the wife of his youth, i. e. saith Jerome’s glossⁿ, *legem naturalem scriptam in corde*, the law of nature written in his heart, which was given him in the womb as a wife and help to succour him. Let us set a value on this polar star within us, which hath, or shall have an influence, at least directions on all our actions; let us increase, and nourish, and make much of the sparks still warm within us. And if scholars and antiquaries prize nothing so high as a fair manuscript or ancient inscription, let us not contemn that which God’s own finger hath written within us, lest the sin of the contempt make us more miserable, and the mercy profit us only to make us inexcusable. And so I come to

[Epicteti Dissert., lib. i. c. 9. § 19; and lib. i. c. 3. § 5, &c.]

^m [lib. i. c. 13. § 5.]

ⁿ [S. Hieron. Comment. in Malach. iii. 15. Op., tom. vi. p. 967, D.]

my second part, the sin of contemning or rejecting this law. For this cause He gave them up, i. e. because the contempt of His law thus provoked Him.

The guilt arising from this contempt shall sufficiently be cleared to you by observing and tracing of it, not through every particular, but in general through all sorts of men since the fall, briefly reducible to these three heads, first, the heathens, secondly, the Jews, thirdly, present Christians; and then let every man that desires a more distinct light descend and commune with his own heart, and so he shall make up the observation.

The heathens' sin will be much aggravated, if we consider how they reckoned of this law, as the square, and rule, and canon of their actions, and therefore they will be inexcusable who scarce be ever at leisure to call to it to direct them, when they had use of it. The stoic^o calls it *ἐπαγγελίαν ἀνθρώπου*, the "promise that every man makes," the obligation that he is bound in to nature at his shaping in the womb, and upon which condition his reasonable soul is at his conception demised to him; so that whosoever puts off this obedience doth, as he goes on, renounce and even proclaim his forfeiture of the very soul he lives by, and by every unnatural, that is, sinful action, *ἀπολλύει τὸν ἄνθρωπον*, "destroys the natural man" within him, and by a prodigious regeneration is in a manner transubstantiate into a beast of the field. Which conceit many of them were so possessed with, that they thought in earnest that it was ordinary for souls to walk from men into cocks and asses, and the like, and return again at nature's appointment, as if this one contempt of the law of nature were enough to unman them and make them without a figure, comparable, nay, co-essential to the beasts that perish. It were too long to shew you what a sense the wisest of them had of the helps that light could afford them; so that one of them cries out confidently, *ἔαν πάντες οἱ νόμοι*^p, κ.τ.λ. "If all other laws were taken out of the world, we philosophers would still live as we do;" those directions

^o [Arrian. Epicteti Dissert., lib. ii. c. 9. § 1.]

^p [οὗτος ἐρωτηθεὶς τί πλέον ἔχουσιν οἱ φιλόσοφοι, ἔφη, ἔν πάντες οἱ νόμοι

ἀναιρεθῶσιν, ὁμοίως βιώσομεν.—Hesychius, De Viris Claris. s. v. Aristippus. ap. Meursium. Op., tom. vii. p. 212.]

within us would keep us in as much awe as the most imperious or severest lawgiver. And again, how they took notice of the perverseness of men in refusing to make use of it; for who, saith one, ever came into the knowledge of men without this *ἔμφυτος ἔννοια*, this knowledge and discretion of good and evil, as old in him as his soul? And yet who makes any use of it in his actions? nothing so ordinary as to betray, and declare that we have it, by finding fault, and accusing vices in other men; by calling this justice, this tyranny, this virtue, this vice in another, whilst yet we never are patient to observe or discern aught of it in ourselves. *Τίς ἡμῶν φείδεται*^q, κ.τ.λ., “Whoever spares to call injustice which he sees in another by its own name?” for his own reason tells him it is so, and he must needs give it its title. But when the case concerns his own person, when his passions counsel him against the law within him, then is he content not to see, though it shine never so bright about him; and this was one degree of their guilt, that they observed the power of it in their speculations, and made use of it also to censure and find fault with others; but seldom or never strived to better themselves, or straighten their own actions by it. Again, to follow our apostle’s argument, and look more distinctly upon them in their particular chief sins which this contempt produced in them, you shall find them in the front to be idolatry and superstition, in the verses next before my text; “When they knew God they glorified Him not as God,” “but changed His glory into an image,” &c. And then we may cry out with Theodoret^r in his *θεραπευτ. θεοχάρακτα πάλαι γράμματα διέφθειρεν ὁ δυσσεβείας πλάνος*, “the errors and vanities of their worship hath rased out all the characters that God anciently had written in them.” And can any man shew a greater contempt to a book, or writing, than to tear, and scrape, and scratch out every letter in it? The first voice of nature in the creature which it uttered even in the cradle, when it was an infant in the world, and therefore perhaps, as children are wont, not so plainly and syllabically, and distinctly, as could have been wished, is the acknowledgment and worship of one eternal God,

^q [Arrian. Epicteti Dissert., lib. ii. c. 11. § 3.]

^r [Theodoret. Therapeut., p. 54. ed. Gaisford.]

Creator of that soul we breathe by, and world we live in; as one simple, incorporeal, everlasting essence; and thus far, no doubt, could nature proclaim in the heart of every Gentile, though it was by many of them either silenced or not hearkened to, which if it were doubted of, might be deduced out of the 19th verse of this chapter, "God hath shewed unto them," &c. Now this light shining not equally in all eyes, some being more overspread with a film of ignorance, stupid conditions and passions, and the like, yet certainly had enough to express their contempt of it, "so that they are without excuse." All that would ever think of it, and were not blind with an habit of sottishness, acknowledged a God, yet none would think aright of Him. Some would acknowledge Him a simple essence, and impossible to be described or worshipped aright by any image, as Varro an heathen observes, that the city and religion of old Rome continued one hundred and seventy years without any images of the gods in it^a. Yet even they which acknowledged Him simple from all corporeity and composition, would not allow Him single from plurality. Jupiter and Saturn, and the rest of their shoal of gods, had already got in and possessed both their temples and their hearts. In sum, their understandings were so gross within them, being fattened and incrassate with magical phantasms, that let the truth within them say what it would, they could not conceive the deity without some quantity, either corporeity or number; and either multiply this god into many, or make that one god corporeous. And then all this while how plainly and peremptorily, and fastidiously, they rejected the guidance of nature, which in every reasonable heart counselled, nay, proclaimed the contrary; how justly they provoked God's displeasure and desertion, by their forsaking and provoking Him first by their foolish imaginations, I need not take pains to insist on. Aristotle^t observes in his Rhetoric that a man that hath but one eye loves that very dearly, ἀγάπητον καὶ μόνον, and sets a far higher price on it, is much more tender over it than he that hath two; so he that hath but one son cannot choose but be very fond of him,

^a [S. Origen. c. Celsus, lib. i. § 4, (ad init.)
sq. Op., tom. i. p. 323. Clemens Alex-
andr. Strom., lib. i. c. 15. § 71. p. 359.]

^t [Aristot. Rhet., lib. i. c. 7. ad fin.]

and the greatest lamentation that can be expressed, is but a shadow of that which is for one's only son, as may appear, when it is observed that *μονογενῆς* and *ἀγάπητος*, the "only-begotten" and the "beloved" are taken in Scripture promiscuously as signifying all one. And then, what a price should the heathen have set upon this eye of nature, being *μονόφθαλμοι*, having no other eye to see by? having neither Scripture, nor the Spirit, those two other glorious eyes of the world, to enlighten them; and therefore being sure, by the contemning and depriving themselves of this light, to turn all into horrible darkness. It would strike a man into agony of pity and amazement to see a world of Gentiles for many years thus imprisoned, and buried in a dungeon and grave of invincible idolatrous ignorance; and from thence engaged in inevitable hell, as it is in the book of Wisdom, and all this directly by contemning this first and only-begotten light in them, which God set in the firmaments of their hearts, to have led and directed them in a more comfortable way. And this, or as bad, is every unregenerate man's case exactly, if they be not forewarned by their elder brethren the heathens' example; as we shall anon have more leisure to insist on.

Amos viii.
10; Zech.
xii. 10.

[Wisd.
xvii. 14.]

Secondly, among the Jews, under which name I contain all the people of God, from Adam to Christ, it is a lamentable contemplation to observe, and trace the law and the contempt of it; like a Jacob at the heels supplanting it in every soul which it came to inhabit. Those characters of *verum* and *bonum* which in Adam were written in a statelier copy, and fairer manuscript than our slow undervaluing conceits can guess at; nay, afterwards explained with a particular explication to his particular danger; "Of the tree of knowledge," &c., "thou shalt not eat." Yet how were they by one slender temptation of the serpent presently sullied and blurred! so that all the aqua fortis and instruments in the world will never be able to wash out or erase that blot; or ever restore that handwriting in our hearts to the integrity and beauty of that copy in its primitive estate. And since, when by that sin darkness was in a manner gone over their hearts, and there remained in them only some tracks and reliques of the former structure, the glory whereof was like that of the second temple, nothing comparable to the beauty

Gen. ii. 17.

of the first; instead of weeping with a loud voice, as many of the priests and Levites did, or building, or repairing of it with all alacrity, as all Israel did through that whole book; their whole endeavour and project was even to destroy the ruins, and utterly finish the work of destruction which Adam had begun, as being impatient of that shelter which it would yet, if they would but give it leave, afford them. Thus that *συντήρησις* and *συνείδησις*, two sparks of that primitive sacred flame, which came from heaven still alive and warm, though weak in them, intended by God to direct them in His will, and for ever set either as their funeral pile or their ordeal fire, their punishment or acquittal, either as their devil or their God, to accuse, or else excuse them, were both in their practice neglected and slighted; nay, in a manner oppressed and stifled. For any natural power of doing good, God knows, it was utterly departed; and therefore this thin measure of knowledge or judgment betwixt good and evil that was left them (which my awe to God's sincere love of His creature makes me hope and trust He bestowed on them for some other end than only to increase their condemnation, to stand them in some stead in their lives, to restrain and keep them in from being extremely sinful;) this, I say, they horribly rejected, and stopt their ears against that charmer in their own bosoms, and would not hear that soft voice which God had still placed within them, to upbraid their ways and reprove their thoughts. What a provocation this was of God's justice, what an incentive of His wrath, may appear by that terrible promulgation of the ten commandments at mount Sinai. They despised the law in their hearts, where God and nature whispered it in calmly, insensibly, and softly; and therefore now it shall be thundered in their ears in words, and those boisterous ones, at which the "whole mount quaked greatly," *Exod. xix. 18.* And in the 16th verse, it must be ushered with variety of dismal meteors upon the mount, and the voice of a "trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people that was in the camp trembled." Thus upon their contempt and peevishness was this manuscript put in print, this privy seal turned into a proclamation, and that a dreadful one, bound and subscribed, with a "Cursed is he that continues not in every tittle of it to

Ezra iii.
12.

Exod. xix.
18.

ver. 16.

perform it." Meanwhile the matter is not altered, but only the dispensation of it. That which till then had taught men in their hearts, and had been explained from tradition, from father to son, Adam instructing Seth, and Seth Enoch, in all righteousness, is now put into tables, that they may have eyes to see, that would not have hearts to understand, that the perverse may be convinced, and that he that would not before see himself bound, may find and read himself accursed. And after all this, yet is not the old law within them either cast away or cancelled by the promulgation of the other; for all the book is printed, the old copy is kept *in archivis*, though, perhaps, as it always was, neglected, soiled, and moth-eaten, and he shall be censured either for ambition or curiosity, that shall ever be seen to enquire, or look after it. Still I say, throughout all their ways, and arts, and methods of rebellions, it twinged, and pricked within, as God's judgments attended them without, and as often as sword, or plague wounded them, made them acknowledge the justice of God, that thus rewarded their perverseness. Nay, you shall see it sometimes break out against them, when perhaps the written law spake too softly for them to be understood. Thus did David's heart smite him when he had numbered the people; though there was no direct commandment against mustering or enrolment, yet his own conscience told him that he had done it either for distrust, or for ostentation, and that he had sinned against God in trusting and glorying in that arm of flesh, or paid not the tribute appointed by God on that occasion. To conclude this discourse of the Jews, every rebellion and idolatry of theirs was a double breach of a double law, the one in tables, the other in their heart; and could they have been freed from the killing letter of the one, the wounding sense of the other would still have kept them bound, as may appear in that business of crucifying Christ, where no human law-giver or magistrate went about to deter them from shedding His blood, or denying His miracles, yet many of their own hearts apprehended, and violently buffeted, and scourged, and tormented them. At one time when they are most resolved against Him, the whole senate is suddenly pricked, and convinced within, and express it with a "surely this man doth many miracles."

[1 Sam.
xxiv. 10.]

Exod. xxx.
12.

John xi. 48.

At another time at the top and complement of the business, [Mat. xxvii. 24.] Pilate is deterred from condemning, and though the fear of the people made him valiant, yet, as if he contemned this voice of his conscience against his will, with some reluctance, he washes his hands when he would have been gladder to quench the fire in his heart, which still burnt and vexed him. Lastly, when Judas had betrayed and sold Him, and no man [ver. 3, 4, 5.] made hue and cry after him, his conscience was his pursuer, judge, and executioner, persecuted him out of the world, haunted him, would not suffer him to live, whom otherwise the law of the country would have reprieved, till a natural death had called for him.

Lastly, even we Christians are not likely to clear ourselves of this bill; it is much to be feared, that if our own hearts are called to witness, our judge will need no farther indictments. It was an heathen speech^x concerning this rule of our lives and actions, that to study it hard, to reform and repair all obliquities and defects in it, and then *βεβαιοῦν*, to set it up strong and firm as a pillar in our hearts, was the part and office of a philosopher; and then afterwards to make use of it in our whole conversation, this was the part of a virtuous man complete and absolute. And how then will our contempt be aggravated, if Christianity, which Clemens calls spiritual philosophy, and is to be reckoned above all moral perfections, hath yet wrought neither of these effects in us! if we have continued so far from straightening, or setting up, or making use of this rule, that we have not so much as ever enquired or marked whether there be any such thing left within us or no! Theodoret^y in his second *θεραπ.* is very passionate in the expression of this contempt of the *τὸ νοερὸν φῶς τῆς ἀληθείας*, “the light of truth shining in our understandings.” There be a sort of birds, saith he, that fly or move only in the night, called from thence night-birds, and night-ravens, which are afraid of light, as either an enemy to spy, to assault, or betray them; but salute, and court, and make love to darkness as their only queen and mistress of

^x [Καὶ τὸ φιλοσοφεῖν τοῦτό ἐστιν, ἐπισκέπτεσθαι καὶ βεβαιοῦν τοὺς κανόνας. τὸ δ' ἤδη χρῆσθαι τοῖς ἐγνωσμένοις, τοῦτο τοῦ καλοῦ καὶ ἀγαθοῦ ἔργον ἐστίν.

—Arrian. Epicteti Dissertat., lib. ii. c. 11. § 24.]

^y [Theodoret. Therapeut. ii. p. 58. ed. Gaisf.]

their actions, *ὡς σωτήριον*, as a creature sent on purpose to preserve them; and these, saith he, deserve not to be chid but pitied, for nature at first appointed them this condition of life, *ἀπεκλήρωσεν*, it is their birthright and inheritance, and therefore nobody will be angry with them for living on it; *οἱ δὲ αὐθαιρέτως, κ.τ.λ.*; but for them who were made creatures of light, and, had it not been for their wilfulness, had still continued light in the Lord, who are altogether encompassed and environed with light, light of nature, light of reason, light of religion, nay, the most glorious asterism, or conjunction of lights in the world, the light of the gospel to walk in; for these men merely out of perverseness of wilful hearts, to hate and abjure, and defy this light, to run out of the world almost for fear of it, to be for ever a soliciting and worshipping of darkness, as Socrates was said to adore the clouds^z, this is such a sottishness, that the stupidest element under heaven would naturally scorn to be guilty of; for never was the earth so peevish, as to forbid the sun when it should shine on it, or to slink away, or subduce itself from its rays. And yet this is our case, beloved, who do more amorously, and flatteringly court, and woo, and solicit darkness, than ever the heathens adored the sun. Not to wander out of the sphere my text hath placed me in, to shew how the light of the gospel and Christianity is neglected by us, our guilt will lie heavy enough on us, if we keep us to the light only of natural reason within us. How many sins do we daily commit, which both nature and reason abhor and loathe! How many times do we not only unman, but even uncreate ourselves! Aristotle^a observes, that that by which any thing is known first, that which doth distinguish one thing from another *a priore*, *ἀρχὴ λέγεται*, is to be called the beginning or cause of that thing; and that the light of reason distinguishing one action from another, being the first thing that teaches me that this is good, that otherwise may from thence be termed the beginning of every reasonable action in us, and then wherever this cause or beginning is left out and wanting, there the thing produced is not so called a positive act, or proper effect, but a defect, an abortion, or still-born frustrate issue; and of this condition in-

^z [Aristoph. Nubes. v. 253.]

^a [Aristot. Metaph., Δ. c. 1. ad init.]

deed is every sin in us. Every action where this law within us is neglected, is not truly an action, but a passion, a suffering or a torment of the creature. Thus do we not so much live and walk, which note some action, as lie entranced, asleep, nay, dead in sin; by this perverseness it is perpetual night with us, nay, we even die daily; our whole life is but a multiplied swoon or lethargy, in which we remain stupid, breathless, senseless, till the day of death or judgment with a hideous voice affrights and rouses us, and we find ourselves awake in hell; and so our dark souls having a long while groped wilfully in the sun, are at last led to an everlasting, inevitable darkness, whither the mercy or rays of the sun can never pierce; where it will be no small accession to our torment, to remember and tremble at that light which before we scorned. Thus, I say, do we in a manner uncreate ourselves, and by the contempt of this law of our creation, even frustrate and bring to nothing our creation itself, and this is chiefly by sins of sloth, and stupid, sluggish, unactive vices, which, as I said, make our whole life a continued passion, never daring, or venturing, or attempting to act or do any thing in Church or commonwealth, either toward God or our neighbour; and of such a conditioned man nobody will be so charitable as to guess he hath any soul, or light of reason in him, because he is so far from making use of it, unless it be such a soul as Tully^b saith a swine hath, which serves it only instead of salt, to keep it from stinking. For it is Aristotle's^c observation, that every one of the elements, besides the earth, was by some philosopher or other defined to be the soul. Some said the soul was fire, some that it was air, some water, but never any man was so mad, as to maintain the earth to be it, because it was so heavy and unwieldy. So then this heavy, motionless, unactive Christian, this clod of earth, hath, as I said, uncreated himself, and by contemning this active reason within him, even deprived himself of his soul. Again, how ordinary a thing is it to unman ourselves by this contempt of the directions of reason, by doing things that no man in his right mind would ever have patience to think of!

^b [Cicero, De Nat. Deorum, lib. ii. c. 64.]

^c [Aristot. De Anima, lib. i. c. 2.]

Beloved, to pass by those which we call unnatural sins, i. e. so in the highest degree, as too horrid for our nature, set down in the latter end of this chapter, for all Christian ears to glow and tingle at, and I had hoped for all English spirits to abhor and loathe; to pass these, I say, our whole life almost affords minutely sins which would not argue us men, but some other creatures. There be few things we do in our age, which are proper peculiar acts of men; one man gives himself to eating and drinking, and bestows his whole care on that one faculty, which they call the vegetative, growing faculty; and then what difference is there betwixt him and a tree, whose whole nature it is to feed and grow? Certainly unless he hath some better employment, he is at best but ζώοφυτον, a plant-animal, whose shape would perhaps persuade you that it hath some sense or soul in it, but its actions betray it to be a mere plant, little better than an artichoke or cabbage; another goes a little higher, yet not far; doth all that his sense presents to him, suffers all that his sensitive faculties lust and rage to exercise at freedom^d; is as fierce as the tiger, as lustful as the goat, as ravenous as the wolf, and the like; and all the beasts of the field, and fowls of the air, be but several emblems and hieroglyphics concurring to make up his character; carries a wilderness about him, as many sins as the nature of a sensitive creature is capable of; and then who will stick to compare this man to the beasts that perish? For it is Theophilus'^e note, that the cattle and beasts of the field were created the same day

Gen. i. 25. with man, to note *θηρία τῶν ἀσεβούντων*, the brutish condition of some men, and that therefore the blessing was not bestowed on them, but reserved for the man which should

ver. 26. 28. "have the dominion over them." In sum, every action which reason, or Scripture, or God's Spirit guides not in us, is to be called the work of some other creature of one of these three sorts; either earthly, the work of a plant, or sensual, the work of a brute^f, or thirdly, above the condition of both these, devilish.

^d [πῶς δὲ οὐκ ἄλογον πολλοὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐπ' αἰσθήσει μόνον ζῶντας ὀρῶντας, νοῦν δὲ καὶ λόγον οὐκ ἔχοντας, κ.τ.λ.—Porphyr., De Abstemitiā, lib. iii. § 19.]

^e Theophilus ad Autolye., lib. ii. [§ 17. p. 361, D.]

^f Jamblichus, Protrept., p. 145. [Symb. xvi.]

Thus do you see the sin of the contempt of the light of nature, which although it be dimmed in us by our corruption, yet shined so bright in the heathen, that they were left without excuse; in the Jews, that even their own hearts accused them for their rebellions; and in us Christians, that unless we move according to its directions, we are fallen below the condition of men, almost of creatures. It were now superfluous further to demonstrate it, our time will be better spent if we close with some use of it; and that will prove manifold, 1. by way of caution, not to deify, or exalt too high, or trust in this light of nature. It was once a perfect glorious rule, but is now distorted and defaced; it once was light in the Lord, almost an angel of light; it shone as the sun in the firmament, in majesty and full brightness, but is now only as the moon, pale and dim, scarce able to do us any service, unless it borrows some rays from the Sun of Righteousness. The fall hath done somewhat with it, I know not what to call it, either much impaired it and diminished its light in its essence, or else much encumbered or oppressed it in its operations, as a candle under a veil, or lantern, which, though it burn and shine as truly as on a candlestick, yet doth not so much service in enlightening the room; the soul within us is much changed, either is not in its essence so perfect, and active, and bright, as once it was; or else being infused in a sufficient perfection, is yet terribly overcast with a gloom and cloud of corruptions, that it can scarce find any passage to get through, and shew itself in our actions; for the "corruptible body presseth down the soul," &c. ^{Wisd. x. 15.} And from this caution grow many lower branches, whence we may gather some fruit; as in the second place, infinitely to humble ourselves before God for the first sin of Adam, which brought this darkness on our souls, and account it not the meanest or slightest of our miseries, that our whole nature is defiled, and bruised, and weakened; to aggravate every circumstance and effect of that sin against thyself, which has so liberally afforded fuel to the flames of lust, of rage, and wild desire, and thereby, without God's gracious mercy, to the flames of hell. This is a most profitable point, yet little thought on; and therefore would deserve a whole sermon to discuss to you. Thirdly, to observe and acknowledge the necessity of some brighter

light than this of nature can afford us, and with all the care and vigilancy of our hearts, all the means that Scripture will lend us, and at last with all the importunities and groans, and violence of our souls, to petition and solicit, and urge God's illuminating Spirit to break out and shine on us. To undertake to interpret any ancient author, requires, say the grammarians, a man of deep and various knowledge, because there may be some passage or other in that book, which will refer to every sort of learning in the world, whence it is observed that the old scholiasts and ἐξηγηταί, were most exquisite scholars. Thus, certainly, will not any ordinary skill serve turn to interpret and explain many dark sayings, which were at first written in the book of our hearts, but are now almost past reading; only that omniscient Spirit, that hath no shadow of ignorance, the finger that first writ, must be beseeched to read and point out the riddle. We must make use of that rotten staff of nature, as far as its strength will bear, and that very gingerly too, never daring to lean or lay our whole weight upon it, lest it either wound with its splinter, or else break under us; our help and stay, and subsistence, and trust must be in the Lord, our eyes must wait on His enlightening Spirit, and never lose a ray that falls from it. Fourthly, to clear up as much as we can, and re-enliven this light within us; and that, first,

By stirring up and blowing, and so nourishing every spark we find within us. The least particle of fire left in a coal, may by pains be improved into a flame; it is held possible to restore, or at least preserve for a time any thing that is not quite departed. If thou findest but a spark of religion in thee, which saith, a God is to be worshipped; care, and sedulity, and the breath of prayers may in time by this inflame the whole man into a bright fire of zeal towards God. In brief, whatever thou doest, let not any the least atom of that fire, which thou once feelest within thee, ever go out; quench not the weakest motion, or inclination even of reason towards God or goodness; how unpolished soever this diamond be, yet if it do but glisten, it is too precious to be cast away. And then, secondly,

By removing all hinderances or encumbrances that may any way weaken or oppress it, and these you have learnt to be corrupt

affections. That democracy, and crowd, and press, and common people of the soul, raises a tumult in every street within us, that no voice of law or reason can be heard. If you will but disgorge and purge the stomach, which hath been thus long oppressed, if you will but remove this cloud of crudities, then will the brain be able to send some rays down to the heart, which till then are sure to be caught up by the way, anticipated, and devoured. For the naked simplicity of the soul, the absence of all disordered passions, is that *οικεία εὐεξία τῆς ψυχῆς*, saith Aphrodiscus^g, that kindly, familiar, good temper of the soul, by which it is able to find out and judge of truth. In brief, if thou canst crop thy luxuriant passions, if thou canst either expel or tame all the wild beasts within thee, which are born to devour any thing which is weak or innocent, then will that mild voice within thee, in the cave, take heart and shew itself. In the mean time this hurry of thy senses drowns that reason, and thou canst not hope to see, as long as like old Tobit, the dung and white film doth remain upon thine eyes. If thou canst use any means to dissolve this dung of affections, which an habit of sin hath baked within thee, the scales will fall off from thine eyes, and the blind Tobit shall be restored to his sight. In brief, do but fortify thy reasonable soul against all the undermining, and faction, and violence of these sensual passions, do but either depose, or put to the sword that atheistical tyrant and usurper, as Jamblichus calls the affections, do but set reason in the chair, and hear and observe his dictates, and thou hast disburthened thyself of a great company of weights and pressures; thou wilt be able to look more like a man, to hold thy head more courageously, and bend thy thoughts more resolutely toward heaven; and I shall expect, and hope, and pray, and almost be confident that if thou dost perform sincerely what thy own soul prompts thee to, God's Spirit is nigh at hand to perfect, and crown, and seal thee up to the day of redemption.

In the next place, thou mayst see thine own guilts the clearer, call thyself to an account even of those things which thou thinkest thou art freest from; that which the Apostle in this chapter and part of my discourse hath charged the

^g [Cf. Alex. Aphrodis. in Aristot. Top., lib. i. f. 17. Ald.]

heathens with ; and if thou lookest narrowly I am afraid thou wilt spy thine own picture in that glass, and find thyself in many things as arrant a Gentile as any of them. For any sincere care of God, or religion, how few of us are there that ever entertained so unpleasant a guest in their hearts ; we go to church, and so did they to their temples ; we pray, and they sacrificed ; they washed and bathed themselves before they durst approach their deities, and we come in our best clothes and cleanest linen ; but for any further real service we mean towards God there, for any inward purity of the heart, for any sincere worship of our soul, we are as guiltless, as free from it, we do as much contemn and scorn it, as ever did any heathen. Again, what man of us is not in some kind guilty even of their highest crime, idolatry ? Some of them took the brain to be sacred, *ἐγκέφαλος ἱερός*, saith Athenæus^h ; and therefore hearing some cry God help when one sneezed, the ignorant sort worshipped that noise as an expression of a deity in the brain ; and so, as senselessly, many of us deify our own brains, and adore every thing that ever comes out of them. Every conceit of ours must be like the birth of Jupiter's brain, a Minerva at least ; be we never so ignorant or mechanical, every device, every fancy of our own—especially in matters of religion—is straight of divine authority ; and having resolved ourselves the children of God, every crotchet we fall upon must be necessarily *theopneust*, and inspired, and others accused for irreligious, or singular, that will not as soon give homage to it. In sum, every imagination becomes an image, and the artificer deifies his own handiwork, forgetting that he made it, as it is described in the thirteenth of Wisdom toward the end ; and this is one kind of idolatry. Again, who is there that hath not some pleasure in his heart which takes place of God there ? They had their sun and moon, most glorious creatures, their heroes, whose virtues had even deified their memory, and silly men they admired and could not choose but worship. The devil, and a humour of superstition customary in them, feed and bribed the law in their hearts to hold its peace, and not recall them. But how basely have we outgone their vilest worships ! How have we outstript them ! Let but one appearance of gain, like that

Wisd. xiii.
17, sq.

^h [Athenæus, lib. ii. § 72. p. 66. ed. Casaub.]

golden calf of the Israelites; a beautiful woman, like that Venus of the heathens; nay, in brief, whatever image or representation of delight thy own lusts can propose thee, let it but glance, or glide by thee, and *Quis non incurvavit?* Shew me a man that hath not at some time or other fallen down and worshipped. In sum, all the lower part of the soul or carnal affections are but a picture of the city of Athens, "wholly given to idolatry." The basest, unworthiest pleasure or content in the world, that which is good for nothing else, the very refuse of the refuse, is become an idol, and hath its shrines in some heart or other; and we crouch and bow, and sacrifice to it, and all this against the voice of our soul, and nature within us, if we would suffer it to speak aloud, or but hearken to its whisperings; *φύσεως γὰρ τροφή, ἐπιθυμίας ἡδονή*, saith Philoponus^l, Nature only bids us feed ourselves with sufficient, lust brought in superfluity and pleasure. But this only by the way, lest you might think that part of my sermon concerning the heathens' contempt of this law, did belong little to you, and so might have been spared.

Acts xvii.

16.

Wisd. xiii.

13.

Lastly, not to lade every part of my former discourse with its several use, or application, take but this one more. If this light shines but dimly within us, then let us so much the more not dare contemn it. That master that speaks but seldom, then surely deserves to be obeyed; he that is slow in his reproofs, certainly hath good reason when he falls foul with any body. If Cræsus' dumb son in Herodotus^k, seeing one come to kill his father, shall by violence break the string of his tongue that formerly hindered his speech, and he that never spake before roar out an *ἄνθρωπε, μὴ κτείνε Κροῖσον*, "Sir, kill not Cræsus," I wonder not that the Persian held his hand; a very barbarian would be amazed and stopped by such a prodigy; it must needs be an odious thing when the child which can scarce speak expresses indignation. Wherefore if ever our bestial soul, that of our sense, shall seduce us to any thing that our manly soul, that of our reason, which is now somewhat decrepit, and dim-sighted, shall yet espy and find fault with; if in any enterprise this natural law within us shall give the check, let us suddenly remove our project, and not dare to reject such fatherly, sage admonish-

^l [Philoponus, in Aristot. de Anima, f. 4.]^k [Herod., lib. i. c. 85.]

ments ; if all the means in the world can help to avoid it, let us never fall into the snare. And if at thy audit with thy own soul, and examination of thyself, amongst the root of thy customary ignorant sins,—and, O Lord deliver me from my secret faults—if in that heap and chaos, thy own heart can pick out many of this nature, and present them to thee, which it before forewarned thee of; then let the saltiest, most briny tear in thy heart be called out to wash off this guilt; let the saddest, mortified thought thou canst strain for, be accounted but a poor unproportionable expiation. Think of this seriously, and if all this will nothing move you, I cannot hope that any farther rhetoric, if I had it to spare, would do any good upon you. Only I will try one suatory more, which being somewhat rough may chance to frighten you, and that is, the punishment that here expects this contempt, and that a dismal hideous one, all the wild savage devourers in the wilderness, vile affections, which punishment together with the inflicter and manner of inflicting it, are the last parts of my discourse, of which together in a word; “God gave them up to vile affections.”

A punishment indeed; and all the fiends of hell could not invent or wish a man a greater; there is not a more certain presage of a *πανωλεθρία*, or total subversion of body and soul, not a more desperate prognostic in the world. It is observed in Photius¹, as a sure token that Jerusalem should be destroyed, because punishment came upon it in a chain, every link drew on another, no intermission or discontinuance of judgments, τῷ γὰρ λιμῷ ὁ λοιμὸς, κ.τ.λ. A single judgment that brings no train after it is cheaply entertained, and is therefore called not a calamity, but a visitation; but when one plague shall invade, shall supplant another; when the pestilence shall fright out the famine, and the sword pursue the pestilence, that neither may slay all, but each join in the glory of the spoil; then must the beholder acknowledge *θεομηνίας ἔργον*, that God is resolved to make them the scene of His rage, not only of His wrath. Thus also in the spiritual *κρίσις* of the estate of the soul, some sins may [Judg. i.] be suffered to invade us, and stick as did the Amorites, to goad our sides, not destroy but humble us. But when sins

¹ [Photius in Biblioth., p. 36. ed. Hæschel.]

shall come like gaol birds linked and chained together, when our corruptions and insolent tyrannical passions shall make us contemn the light and law of reason and nature; when that contempt shall bring forth idolatry, and the like, either worship of idol gods, or vain conceits, or imaginary delights, every lust of our baser soul; then can it not be expected that God will have so little to do, as to take any more care of us, that He will have so much mercy as even to punish us any longer. The next voice that we can expect is that horrible mercy of His, "Why should you be smitten any more?" Isaiah i. 5. Any restraint either of chastisement or instruction would be scarce seen upon us, and therefore it is but lost labour to beat the air, or to lay stripes upon the sea with Xerxes^m. The height of God's wrath in this world is but our just reward, and that is desertion, or dereliction, and giving us over, and giving us up, which will suddenly bring us to that which our corrupt nature posts after, all vile affections.

The issue of all is this; that those that contemn God's ordinary restraints, God ordinarily leaves to themselves, and suffers them to run into most horrible sins. It is justice that they which delight in error, should be let alone in their course, that they may see and acknowledge the error of their delight, that they which have contemned God's voice, and nature's within them, should be forsaken and left without either, ungodly, unnatural; that they which lulled their reasonable soul into a lethargy, for fear it should awake them, or disturb their delights, should not have life enough without it, ever to awake or rouse themselves or it; that they which have maliciously, and contemptuously put out the sun, should for ever suffer a continued night. It is Hippocrates'ⁿ observation that the Africans are very libidinous; they are neither hardy nor valiant, nor laborious, *ἀλλὰ κρατέειν τὴν ἡδονὴν*, lust hath so effeminated them, that they are fit for nothing but for softness; and therefore, saith he, *πολύμορφα γίνεται τὰ ἐν τοῖς θηρίοις*, there be among them beasts of all sorts of strange shapes, the heat and violence of the same lust makes the very beasts unnatural, the confusion of species is ordinary among them;

^m [Herod., lib. vii. c. 45.]

cis, tom. i. p. 349. Med. Græc., tom.

ⁿ [Hippocrates De aqua, aere et lo-

xxi. ed. Kühn.]

and so almost every birth a monster; nature is almost lost among them, and many beasts may be found in Africa, which never had any of their kind in the ark; *Africa semper aliquod apportat novi*, whosoever hath a mind to a strange sight, there he shall have store of them. Thus is it in the soul, if the upper, the manly part of it be overswelled with lust, it straight becomes effeminate, and enervate, hath neither strength, nor sinews, nor courage for any undertaking; and then the beasts of the field, the lower, baser, sensual faculties of the soul are not only lusty, but outrageous; having no keeper to govern them, they become wild; scorn any limits, or bounds of nature, do every day conceive horrid, unnatural, vile imaginations, and every season grow big, and bring forth monsters,—monstrous oaths, monstrous delights, monstrous vanities. Some new art or trick of sinning that was never heard of before, is invented against every solemn season of our jollity, and this we carry about, and shew, and brag of as a new creature, or strange sight, and get a great deal of applause, and admiration, and perhaps some money by the employment. It were too long to point out the several sorts of these vile affections, which contempt of this light hath produced in every one of us; only let us strive and strain, and stretch the eyes that are left us to examine, and observe every degree and symptom, and prognostic of them in ourselves, and never leave poring till we have pierced through that carnal security that blinded us, and fully humble ourselves in a sense of that desperate estate, and almost the hell that we are fallen blindfold into. And if we are still blinded, still unable to see, or move, or relieve ourselves, let us then lay hold of the next post or pillar we meet with, and there fix, and dwell, and weep, and pray to that omnipotent Physician of our souls, that restorer of reasonable creatures, that He will by some spiritual eye-water recover us to that sense. It is impossible, saith Jobius^o,

^o [. . . οὐδὲν ἕτερον διαλαμβάνει, ἢ ὅτι τῶν πρεπωδιστάτων ἦν, τὴν ἀπαράλλακτον καὶ φυσικὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶς τοὺς κατ' εἰκόνα μὲν γεγονότας, τὴν δὲ χαρακτῆρα κιβδηλεύσαντας, ταύτην ἡμῶς ἀποκαθάραι τε τῶν κηλιδωμάτων, καὶ εἰς τὸ ἀρχαῖον κάλλος ἀναμορ-

φώσασθαι· καὶ ὡς εἶδει τὸν ἀληθῆ καὶ ἐνυπόστατον τοῦ θεοῦ σοφίαν τοὺς εἰς ἀλογίαν παρατραπέντας καὶ πρὸς τὸν κτηνώδη βίον ἀπονεύσαντας, ἀπέλλαξαι τε τῆς ἀλογίας, καὶ πρὸς τὸ νοερὸν ἐπαναγαγεῖν ἀξίωμα.—Photius Biblioth., p. 601. ed. Hoeschel.]

for any one to restore us to the image of the Father, which was once on us, but Him only who was the eternal image of the Father, He only could ἀπάλλαξαι τῆς ἀλογίας, καὶ πρὸς τὸ νοερόν ἐπαναγαγεῖν ἀξίωμα, turn out that unreasonable blind soul within us, made up of our sins which move us, and reduce us to the dignity of reasonable creatures. He hath already by His incarnation, delivered us from one long night, the dark gloom of our heathen ancestors; O that He would be born again spiritually in our souls, to deliver us from other more Cimmerian darkness, the night and hell of habituate sin, wherein we grope! He once breathed on us the breath of life to make us men; O that He would again but breathe on us the τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, His holy breath, His hallowing breath, His breath of holiness to make us saints! It is He that must prevent us with His Spirit, or else we run headlong into all vile affections.

O that He would but sanctify us! and then the most plausible flattering sin in the world, nay, the most boisterous, impetuous lust, should not be able to tyrannize over us. In the meantime, let us remain men till it shall please that free voice to call us into saints. Grace is never placed but in a reasonable creature; and is therefore said to be sent to make reason see, what by nature only it cannot, never to blemish it in what it can comprehend, as the learned bishop hath observed against the Jesuit. Let us make much of all the light that nature and reason will afford us, let us not suffer one precious ray to be cast away upon us, but improve it to the extent of its virtue, for the direction of our lives. And whensoever this light shall fail, that it cannot guide us, or our eyes dazzle that we cannot follow, let us pray to the Father of lights, and God of spirits, that He will shine spiritually in our hearts, and fulfil us with His light of grace here, which may enable us to behold Him, and enjoy Him, and rejoice with Him, and be satisfied with that eternal light of His glory hereafter.

Now to Him which hath elected us, hath created, redeemed, &c.

SERMON XXVII.

GAL. vi. 15.

But a new creature.

AMONGST all other encumbrances, and delays in our way to heaven, there is no one that doth so clog and trash, so disadvantage and backward us, and in fine, so cast us behind in our race, as a contentedness in a formal worship of God, an acquiescence and resting satisfied in outward performances, when men upon a confidence that they perform all that can be required of a Christian, they look no further than the outward work, observe not what heart is under this outside, but resolve their estate is safe, they have as much interest in heaven as any one. Such men as these the Apostle begins to character and censure in the twelfth verse of the chapter, “As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh,” &c. They that stand only on a fair specious outside, and think all the sap and life of religion lies in the bark, they do this and this; these will have you circumcised, and constrain you to a many burthensome ceremonies; measuring out religion to you by the weight, thus much is required of you to do (as popish confessors set their deluded votaries their task of Ave Maries and Pater nosters by tale) and thus you may be sure to be saved. In brief, the Apostle here shews the unprofitableness of all these, and sets up the inward sanctity and renewedness of heart against them all, as the only thing that will stand us in stead, and appear to be of any weight in the balance of the sanctuary. If you observe all the commands, and submit yourselves to all the burden of both law and gospel, and bear it upon your shoulders never so valiantly; if you be content to be cir-

cumcised as Christ was, or because He hath now abrogated that, make use of Christian liberty, and remain uncircumcised, notwithstanding all inducements to the contrary; in brief, be you outwardly never so severe a Jew or Christian, all that is nothing worth, there is but one thing most peremptorily required of you, and that you have omitted; "For neither circumcision availeth any thing, neither uncircumcision, but a new creature."

The particle 'but' in the front of my text is exclusive and restrictive, it excludes every thing in the world from pretending to avail any thing, from being believed to do us any good. For by circumcision the Church of the Jews, and by uncircumcision the whole profession of Christian religion being understood, when he saith neither of these availeth any thing, he forcibly implies that all other means, all professions, all observances that men think or hope to get heaven by, are to no purpose, and that by consequence it exactly restrains to the new creature; there it is to be had, and nowhere else; thus doth he slight and undervalue, and even reprobate all other ways to heaven, that he may set the richer price, and raise a greater estimation in us of this. The substance of all the Apostle's discourse, and the groundwork of mine shall be this one aphorism, nothing is efficaciously available to salvation, but a renewed, regenerated heart. For the opening of which we will examine by way of doctrine, wherein this new creature consists, and then by way of use, the necessity of that, and unprofitableness of all other plausible pretending means; and first of the first, wherein this new creature consists.

It is observable, that our state of nature and sin is in Scripture expressed ordinarily by old age, the natural sinful man, that is, all our natural affections that are born and grow up with us, are called the old man, as if since Adam's fall we were decrepit, and feeble, and aged as soon as born, as a child begotten by a man in a consumption never comes to the strength of a man, is always weak, and crazy, and puling, hath all the imperfections and corporal infirmities of age before he is out of his infancy. And according to this ground the whole analogy of Scripture runs; all that is opposite to the old decrepit state, to the dotage of nature, is

Rom. vi. 6;
Col. iii. 9;
Eph. iv.
22.

Mark i. 27; phrased new; "the new covenant;" the language of believers; "new tongues;" "a new commandment;" "a new man."
 xvi. 17;
 John xiii. In sum, the state of grace is expressed by πάντα καινὰ, "all is become new." So that old and new, as it divides the Bible,
 34; Eph. ii. 15; become new." So that old and new, as it divides the Bible,
 2 Cor. v. 17. the whole state of things, the world; so it doth that to which
 all these serve, man; every natural man which hath nothing
 but nature in him, is an old man, be he never so young, is
 full of years, even before he is able to tell them. Adam was
 a perfect man when he was but a minute old, and all his
 children are old even in the cradle, nay, even dead with old
 age. And then consequently, every spiritual man which hath
 somewhat else in him than he received from Adam, he that
 is "born from above," γεννηθῆ ἄνωθεν, (for it may be so
 rendered from the original, as well as born again, as our
 English read it,) he that is by God's Spirit quickened from
 the old death, he is contrary to the former, a new man,
 a new creature; the old eagle hath cast his beak and is
 grown young; the man, when old, has "entered the second
 time into his mother's womb, and is born again," all the
 gray hairs and wrinkles fall off from him, as the scales
 from blind Tobit's eyes, and he comes forth a refined, glorious,
 beauteous new creature, you would wonder to see the
 change. So that you find in general, that the Scripture
 presumes it, that there is a renovation, a casting away of the
 old coat, a youth and spring again in many men from the
 old age and weak bed-rid estate of nature. Now that you
 may conceive wherein it consists, how this new man is
 brought forth in us, by whom it is conceived, and in what
 womb it is carried, I will require no more of you, than to
 observe and understand with me what is meant by the ordinary
 phrase in our divines, a new principle, or inward principle
 of life, and that you shall do briefly thus. A man's body is
 naturally a sluggish, unactive, motionless, heavy thing,
 not able to stir or move the least animal motion, without
 a soul to enliven it; without that it is but a carcass, as you
 see at death; when the soul is separated from it, it returns
 to be but a stock or lump of flesh; the soul bestows all life
 and motion on it, and enables it to perform any work of
 nature. Again, the body and soul together considered in
 relation to somewhat above their

[Tobit xi.
13.]

power and activity, are as impotent and motionless, as before the body without the soul. Set a man to remove a mountain, and he will heave perhaps to obey your command, but in event will do no more towards the displacing of it, than a stone in the street could do; but now let an omnipotent power be annexed to this man, let a supernatural spirit be joined to this soul, and then will it be able to overcome the proudest, stoutest difficulty in nature. You have heard in the primitive Church of a grain of faith removing mountains, and believe me, all miracles are not yet out-dated. The work of regeneration, the bestowing of a spiritual life on one "dead in trespasses and sins," the making of a carcass walk, the natural old man to spring again, and move spiritually, is as great a miracle as that. Now the soul, in that it produces life and motion, the exercise of life in the body, is called a principle, that is, a spring or fountain of life, because all comes from it; in like manner, that which moves this soul, and enables it to do that which naturally it could not; that which gives it a new life, which before it lived not, furnisheth it with spiritual powers to quell and subdue all carnal affections which were before too hard for it; this, I say, is called properly an inward principle; and an inward, because it is inwardly and secretly infused, doth not only outwardly assist us as an auxiliary at a dead lift, but is sown and planted in our hearts, as a soul to the soul, to elevate and enable it above itself, hath its seat and palace in the regenerate heart, and there exercises dominion, executes judgment, and that is commonly either by prison or banishment, it either fetters, or else expels all insolent rebellious lusts. Now the new principle, by which not the man, but the new man, the Christian, lives, is, in a word, the Spirit of God, which unites itself to the regenerate heart, so that now he is said to be a godly man, a spiritual man from the God, from the Spirit, as before a living reasonable man from the soul, from the reason that informed and ruled in him; which is noted by that distinction in Scripture betwixt the regenerate and unregenerate, expressed by a natural or animal, and a spiritual man. Those creatures that have no soul in them are called naturals, having nothing but nature within to move them; others which have a soul, animals, or living

creatures, by both which the unregenerate is signified indifferently, because the soul which he hath stands him in little stead, his flesh rules all, and then he is also called a carnal man, for all his soul he is but a lump of flesh, and therefore, whether you say he hath a soul, and so call him an animal, or hath not a soul, and so call him a mere natural, there is no great difference in it. But now the regenerate man which hath more than a soul, God's Spirit to enliven him, he is of another rank, *πνευματικός*, a spiritual man, nay, only he properly a Christian, because he lives by Christ, he lives, yet not he, but Christ liveth in him. This being premised, that now you know what this new creature is, he that lives and moves by a new principle, all that is behind will be clearest presented to you by resolving these four questions; 1. whence it comes; 2. where it lodges; 3. when it enters; 4. what works it performs there.

To the first, whence it comes, the answer is clear and punctual, *ἄνωθεν*, from above, from whence comes every good, and especially "every perfect gift," but this most peculiarly by a several and more excellent way than any thing else. Since Christ's ascension the Holy Ghost of all the Persons in the Trinity is most frequently employed in the work of descending from heaven, and that by way of mission from the Father and the Son, according to the promise of Christ, "The Comforter, whom I will send from the Father." Now this Spirit being present every where in its essence, is said to come to us by communication of His gifts, and so to be peculiarly resident in us, as God is in the Church, from which analogy our bodies are called the "temples of the Holy Ghost which is in us." God sends then His Spirit into our hearts; and this, I said, by a peculiar manner, not by way of emission, as an arrow sent out of a bow, which loses its union which it had with the bow, and is now fastened in the butt or white; nor properly by way of infusion, as the soul is in the body, infused from God, yet so also, that it is in a manner put into our hands, and is so in the man's possession that hath it, that it is neither in any man's else, nor yet by any extraordinary tie annexed to God from whom it came; but by way of irradiation, as a beam sent from the sun, that is in the air indeed, and that substantially, yet so as it is not separated

from the sun, nay, consists only in this, that it is united to the sun; so that if it were possible for it to be cut off from the sun, it would desist to be, it would illuminate no longer. So that you must conceive these beams of God's Spirit at the same time in the Christian's heart and in the Spirit, and so uniting that Spirit to the heart, as you may conceive by this proportion. I have a javelin or spear in my hand; if I would mischief any thing, or drive it from me, I dart it out of my hand at it, from which God's judgments are compared to shooting and lightning, "He hath bent His bow, He hath sent forth His arrows, He cast forth lightnings." But if I like any thing that I meet with, if I would have it to me, I reach out my spear and fasten in it, but still hold the spear in my hand, and having pierced it draw it to me. Thus doth God reach forth His graces to us, and as I may so say, by keeping one end in His hand, and fastening the other in us, plucks and unites us to Himself, from which regeneration is ordinarily called an union with Christ, and this union by a strong able band, *διὰ μείζονος καὶ κυριωτέρου δέσμου*, in Eusebius' phrase, which no man can cut asunder. It is impossible to divide or cut a spirit, and this bond is *δέσμος πνευματικός*, a spiritual one, and that made St. Paul so confident, that no creature should ever separate him. And this God does by way of emanation, as a loadstone sending out its effluvia or magnetic atoms draws the iron to itself, which never stays till it be united. Thus do you see from whence this principle comes to me, and in what manner, from God's Spirit by this means uniting me to Himself.

Ps. xviii.
14.

Rom. viii.
39.

To the second question, where it lodges, my answer is, in the heart of man, in the whole soul; not in the understanding, not in the will—a distinction of faculties invented by philosophers to puzzle and perplex divines, and put them to needless shifts—but, I say, in the whole soul, ruling and guiding it in all its actions, enabling it to understand and will spiritually; conceived, I say, and born in the soul, but nursed, and fed, and increased into a perfect stature by the outward organs and actions of the body, for by them it begins to express and shew itself in the world, by them the habit is exerted and made perfect, the seed shot up into an ear, the spring improved to autumn, when the tongue dis-

courses, the hands act, the feet run the way of God's commandments. So, I say, the soul is the mother, and the operations of soul and body, the nurse of this spirit in us, and then who can hold in his spirit without stifling, from breaking out into that joyful acclamation, "Blessed is the womb that bears this incarnate Spirit, and the paps that give Him suck!" Now this inward principle, this grace of regeneration, though it be seated in the whole soul, as it is an habit, yet as it is an operative habit producing, or rather enabling the man to produce several gracious works, so it is peculiarly in every part, and accordingly receives divers names according to several exercises of its power in those several parts. As the soul of man sees in the eye, hears in the ear, understands in the brain, chooses and desires in the heart, and being but one soul, yet works in every room, every shop of the body in a several trade, as it were, and is accordingly called a seeing, a hearing, a willing or understanding soul; thus doth the habit of grace seated in the whole, express and evidence itself peculiarly in every act of it, and is called by as several names as the reasonable soul hath distinct acts or objects. In the understanding, it is, first, spiritual wisdom and discretion in

Luke xi. 27.

Rom. i. 28. holy things, opposite to which is *νοῦς ἀδόκιμος*, an unapproving, as well as unapproved or reprobate mind, and frequently in Scripture, spiritual blindness. Then as a branch of this, it is belief or assent to the truth of the promises, and the like; in the practical judgment it is spiritual prudence in ordering all our holy knowledge to holy practice; in the will it is a regular choice of whatsoever may prove available to salvation, a holy love of the end, and embracing of the means with courage and zeal. Lastly, in the outward man it is an ordering of all our actions to a blessed conformity with a sanctified soul. In brief, it is one principle within us doth every thing that is holy, believes, repents, hopes, loves, obeys, and what not? And consequently, is effectually in every part of body and soul, sanctifying it to work spiritually, as an holy instrument of a divine invisible cause, that is, the Holy Ghost that is in us and throughout us.

For the third question, when this new principle enters; first, you are to know that it comes into the heart in a three-fold condition; 1. as an harbinger; 2. as a private secret

guest; 3. as an inhabitant or housekeeper. As it is an harbinger, so it comes to fit and prepare us for itself; trims up, and sweeps, and sweetens the soul, that it may be readier to entertain Him when He comes to reside; and that He doth—as the ancient gladiators had their *arma prælusoria*—by skirmishing with our corruptions before He comes to give them a pitch battle; He brandishes a flaming sword about our ears, and as by a flash of lightning, gives us a sense of a dismal hideous state; and so somewhat restrains us from excess and fury; first, by a momentary remorse, then by a more lasting, yet not purifying flame, the spirit of bondage. In sum, every check of conscience, every sigh for sin, every fear of judgment, every desire of grace, every motion or inclination toward spiritual good, be it never so short-winded, is *prælude Spiritus*, a kind of John Baptist to Christ, something that God sent before to prepare the ways of the Lord. And thus the Spirit comes very often, in every affliction, every disease—which is part of God's discipline to keep us in some order—in brief, at every sermon that works upon us at the hearing; then I say, the lightning flashes in our eyes, we have a glimpse of His Spirit, but cannot come to a full sight of it; and thus He appears to many, whom He will never dwell with. Unhappy men, that they cannot lay hold on Him when He comes so near them! and yet somewhat more happy than they that never came within ken of Him; stopped their ears when He spake to them even at this distance. Every man in the Christian Church hath frequently in his life a power to partake of God's ordinary preparing graces; and it is some degree of obedience, though no work of regeneration, to make good use of them; and if he without the inhabitation of the Spirit cannot make such use as he should, yet to make the best he can; and thus, I say, the Spirit appears to the unregenerate almost every day of our lives. 2. When this Spirit comes a guest to lodge with us, then is He said to enter; but till by actions and frequent obliging works He makes Himself known to His neighbours, as long as He keeps His chamber, till He declare Himself to be there, so long He remains a private secret guest; and that is called the introduction of the form, that makes a man to be truly regenerate, when the seed is sown in his heart, when the habit is

infused; and that is done sometimes discernibly, sometimes not discernibly, but seldom, as when Saul was called in the midst of his madness, he was certainly able to tell a man the very minute of his change, of his being made a new creature. Thus they which have long lived in an enormous antichristian course, do many times find themselves stricken on a sudden, and are able to date their regeneration, and tell you punctually how old they are in the Spirit. Yet because there be many preparations to this Spirit, which are not this Spirit; many presumptions in our hearts false-grounded, many tremblings and jealousies in those that have it, great affinity between faith natural and spiritual; seeing it is a spirit that [Acts ii. 3.] thus enters, and not as it did light on the disciples in a bodily shape, it is not an easy matter for any one to define the time of his conversion. Some may guess somewhat nearer than others, as remembering a sensible change in themselves; but in a word, the surest discerning of it, is in its working, not at its entering. I may know that now I have the Spirit better than at what time I came to it. Undiscernibly God's supernatural agency interposes sometimes in the mother's womb, as in John Baptist springing in Elizabeth at Mary's Luke i. 41. salutation, and perhaps in Jeremiah, "Before thou camest Jer. i. 5. out of the womb I sanctified thee," and in Isaiah, "The Isa. xlix. 5. Lord that formed me from the womb to be His servant." But this divinc address attends most ordinarily till the time of our baptism, when the Spirit accompanying the outward sign infuses itself into their hearts, and there seats and plants itself, and grows up with the reasonable soul, keeping even their most luxuriant years within bounds; and as they come to an use of their reason, to a more and more multiplying this habit of grace into holy spiritual acts of faith and obedience; from which it is ordinarily said, that infants baptized have habitual faith, as they may be also said to have habitual repentance, and the habits of all other graces, because they have the root and seed of those beauteous healthful flowers which will actually flourish then, when they come to years. And this, I say, is so frequent to be performed at baptism, that ordinarily it is not wrought without that means, and in those means we may expect it, as our Church doth in our Liturgies, where she presumes at every baptism that "it hath

pleased God to regenerate the infant by His Holy Spirit." And this may prove a solemn piece of comfort to some who suspect their state more than they need; and think it is impossible that they should be in a regenerate condition, because they have not as yet found any such notable change in themselves, as they see and observe in others. These men may as well be jealous they are not men, because they cannot remember when their soul came to them; if they can find the effects of spiritual life in themselves, let them call it what they will, a religious education, or a custom of well-doing, or an unacquaintedness with sin; let them comfort themselves in their estate, and be thankful to God who visited them thus betimes; let it never trouble them that they were not once as bad as other men, but rather acknowledge God's mercy, who hath prevented such a change, and by uniting them to Him in the cradle, hath educated, and nursed them up in familiarity with the Spirit.

Lastly, the Spirit sometimes enters into our hearts upon occasional emergencies, the sense of God's judgments on ourselves or others, the reflection on His mercies, the reading good books, falling into virtuous acquaintance, but most eminently at, and with the preaching of the Word; and this by degrees as it seems to us; but indeed at some one especial season or other, which yet perhaps we are not able to discern, and here indeed are we ordinarily to expect this guest if we have not yet found Him; here doth it love to be cherished, and refreshed, and warmed within us, if we have it, "for even it is the power of God unto salvation." Rom. i. 16. The third condition in which this Spirit comes into our hearts, is as an inhabitant or housekeeper. "The Spirit," saith Austin ^a, "first is in us, then dwells in us; before it dwells, it helps us to believe; when it dwells, it helps, and perfects, and improves our faith, and accomplishes it with all other concomitant graces." So, I say here, the Spirit is then said to inhabit, and keep house in us, not as soon as it is entertained and received, but when it breaks forth into acts, and declares itself before all men, "when men see our good works, and glorify our Father." Mat. v. 16. Before we were said to "live in the Spirit," now to walk, as Gal. v. 25. you shall see the phrases used distinctly. To walk, that is,

^a S. Aug. Epist. cv. ad Xystum. [epist. exciv. § 18. tom. ii. p. 720. ed. Ben.]

to go about conspicuously in the sight of all men, breaking forth into works—as the sun after the dispersions of a mist or cloud—whereby all men see and acknowledge his faith and obedience, and find their own evil ways reprehended and made manifest by his good, as is noted in the 13th verse,

Eph. v. 13. “All things that are reprov'd, are made manifest by the light.” Semblable to which is that of the atheists' repining

at the godly man, “He is made to reprove our thoughts.” Thus is the third query resolved also, when this inward principle enters. 1. It comes as an harbinger, in every outward restraint by which God keeps us from sinning. 2. It enters as a guest in some season or other, once for all. In the womb, at baptism, at some sermon, sometimes at a notable tempest, shaking and stirring us violently, ordinarily and for the most part not to be discern'd by us; and lastly, it comes and dwells with us, and shews itself in its works, yet that not at any set time after His entrance, not constantly without ever covering His face, but when and as often as He pleases, and the flesh resisteth not.

To the last query, what works it performs, the answer shall be brief; every thing that may be called spiritual, faith, repentance, charity, hope, self-denial, and the rest; but these not promiscuously, or in a heap altogether, but by a wise dispensation, in time and by degrees. The soul being enabled by this inward principle, is equally disposed to the producing of all these, and as occasions do occur, doth actually perform and produce them; so that in my conceit that question concerning the priority of repentance, or faith, is not either of such moment, or difficulty, as is by some disputers pretended. The seeds of them both are at one time planted in the soul; and then there is no faith in any subject, but there is repentance also; nor repentance

Heb. xi. 6. without faith. So that where it is said, “without faith it is impossible to please God” in any thing else, it is true; but argues no necessary precedence of it before other graces, for the habits of them all are of the same age in us, and then also will it be as true, that without repentance, or without love, faith itself cannot please God; for if it be truly acceptable faith, there is both repentance and love in the same womb to keep it company. Thus are we wont to say that only faith justifieth, but not faith alone; and the reason

these promises in Scripture are made sometimes to one grace precisely, sometimes to another, is because they are all at once rooted in the man, and in their habits chained together inseparably. Faith saves every man that hath it, and yet the believingest man under heaven shall not be saved without charity. "Charity hides a multitude of sins," and yet the charitabest man in the world shall never have his score crossed without repentance. A catalogue of these fruits of the Spirit you may at your leisure make up to yourselves for your trial out of the fifth to the Galatians from the twenty-second verse, and 1 Pet. i. 5. All these graces together, though some belonging to one, some to another faculty of the soul, are yet all at once conceived in it, at once begin their life in the heart, though one be perhaps sooner ready to walk abroad and shew itself in the world than another. As in the second of Kings iv. 34, "Elisha went up on the bed and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth, and eyes upon his eyes, and hands upon his hands, and stretched himself upon the child, and the flesh of the child waxed warm," and verse 35, "the child sneezed seven times, and opened his eyes;" thus, I say, doth the Spirit apply itself unto the soul, and measure itself out to every part of it; and then the spiritual life comes at once into the soul,—as motion beginning in the centre diffuses itself equally through the whole sphere, and affecteth every part of the circumference—"and the flesh of the child waxed warm;" where the flesh indefinitely signifieth every part of it together, and in the spiritual sense the whole soul; and this is when the inward principle, when the habit enters. Then for acts of life, one perhaps shews itself before another, as the child first "sneezed seven times," a violent disburdening itself of some troublesome humours that tickle in the head; to which may be answerable our spiritual clearing and purging ourselves by self-denial, "the laying aside every weight," then "opened his eyes," which in our spiritual creature, is spiritual illumination, or the eye of faith; these, I say, may first shew themselves as acts, and yet sometimes others before them, yet all alike in the habit, all of one standing, one conception, one plantation in the heart; though indeed ordinarily—like Esau and Jacob—the rougher come out first. We begin our spiri-

1 Pet. iv. 8.

Gal. v. 22.

1 Pet. i. 5.

2 Kings iv.
34.

ver. 35.

Heb. xii. 1.

tual life in repentance and contrition, and with many harsh twinges of the Spirit; and then comes faith, like Jacob at the heels, smooth and soft, applying all the cordial promises to our penitent souls. In brief, if any judgment be to be made, which of these graces is first in the regenerate man, and which rules in chief; I conceive self-denial and faith to be there first, and most eminent, according to that notable place where Christ seems to set down the order of graces in true disciples; "Let him deny himself, and take up his cross," that is, forego all his carnal delights, and embrace all manner of punishments and miseries, prepare himself even to go and be crucified, and "then follow Me;" that is, by a live faith believe in Christ, and prize Him before all the world besides; and indeed in effect these two are but one, though they appear to us in several shapes; for faith is nothing without self-denial, it cannot work till our carnal affections be subjected to it. Believe a man may, and have flesh and fleshly lust in him, but unless faith have the pre-eminence, faith is no faith. The man may be divided betwixt "the law of his members, and the law of his mind;" so many degrees of flesh, so many of spirit; but if there be constantly but an even balance, or more of flesh than Spirit, if three degrees of Spirit and five of flesh, then can there not be said to be any true self-denial, and consequently any faith, no more than that can be said to be hot, which hath more degrees of cold than heat in it. In brief, it is a good measure of self-denial that sets his faith in his throne, and when by it faith hath conquered, though not without continual resistance, when it hath once got the upper hand, then is the man said to be regenerate, whereupon it is that the regenerate state is called the life of faith. Faith is become a principle of the greatest power and activity in the soul. And so much for these four queries; from which I conceive every thing that is material, and directly pertinent to instruct you, and open the estate of a new creature, may be resolved. And for other niceties how far we may prepare ourselves, how co-operate and join issue with the Spirit, whether it work irresistibly by way of physical influence, or moral persuasion, whether being once had, it may totally or finally be lost again, and the like; these, I say, if they are fit for any, I am resolved are not

Mat. xvi.
24.

[Rom. vii.
23.]

Gal. ii. 20.

necessary for a country auditory to be instructed in. It will be more for your profit to have your hearts raised, than your brains puffed up; to have your spirits and souls inwardly affected to an earnest desire and longing after it, which will perhaps be somewhat performed, if we proceed to shew you the necessity of it, and unavailableness of all things else, and that by way of use and application.

And for the necessity of renewedness of heart, to demonstrate that, I will only crave of you to grant me, that the performance of any one duty towards God is necessary, and then it will prove itself; for it is certain no duty to God can be performed without it. For it is not a fair outside, a slight performance, a bare work done that is accepted by God; if it were, Cain would deserve as much thanks for his sacrifice as his brother Abel; for in the outside of them there was no difference, unless perhaps on Cain's side, that he was forwardest in the duty, and offered first. But it is the inside of the action, the marrow and bowels of it that God judges by. Gen. iv. 3. If a sum in gross, or a bag sealed up would pass for payment in God's audit, every man would come and make his accounts duly enough with Him; and what he wanted in gold for his payment should be made up in counters. But God goes more exactly to work when He comes to call thee to an account of thy stewardship; He is a God of thoughts, and [Ps. vii. 9.] a searcher of the heart and reins, and it will then be a harder business to be found just when He examines, or clear when He will judge. The least spot and blemish [Ps. li. 4.] in the face of it, the least maim or imperfection in the offering, the least negligence or coldness in the performance, nay, the least corruption in the heart of him that doth it, hath utterly spoiled the sacrifice. Be the bulk and skin of the work never so large and beautiful to the eye, if it come not from a sanctified, renewed, gracious heart, it will find no acceptance but that in the prophet, "Who hath required it [Isa. i. 2.] at your hands?" This is not it that God is taken with, or such as He commanded; it may pass for a compliment or a work of course, but never be valued as a duty or real service. Resolve thyself to dwell nowhere but in the Church, and there—like Simeon *στηλίτης*, in Eusebius^b—plant thyself

^b [Evangrii Hist. Eccl., lib. i. c. 18. E. H. iii. p. 265.]

continually in a pillar, with thy eyes, and words, fixed and shot up perpetually towards heaven. If there be not a spirit within thee to give light to the eyes, to add sighs and groans to the voice, all this that thou hast done is nothing but as a blind man's pretensions to sight, and a dumb man's claim to speech; and so in like manner in all our duties which the world and carnal men set a price on. And the reason is, because every spiritual seeming work done by a natural man is not truly so; it is nothing less than that which it is said to be; his prayers are not prayers, lip-labour perhaps, but not devotion; his serving of God is formality, not obedience; his hope of heaven, not a hope but a fancy. If God, or Satan, a judge, or a tempter, should come to reason with him about it, he would soon be worsted, never be able to maintain his title to it.

In brief, the fairest part of a natural man, that which is least counterfeit, his desire and good affections to spiritual things—which we call favourably natural desires of spiritual obedience—these I say, are but false desires, false affections. 1. They have no solidity or permanency in the will, only fluid and transitory, some slight sudden wishes, tempests and storms of a troubled mind, soon blown over: the least temptation will be sure to do it. They are like those wavering prayers without any stay of faith, *Jam. i. 6*, “like a wave of the sea driven by the wind and tossed.” 2. That being which they have is counterfeit, they are not that which they are taken for. We are wont to say that acts are distinguished by their objects; he sees truly which judges the thing to be that that it is; it is true indeed that another man sees, he that takes blue for green, but he does not see truly; so also he only willeth a good thing that wills that in it which is truly good. Now the natural man, when he is said to choose spiritual things, as heaven, happiness, and the like, he desires not a spiritual, but a carnal thing; in desiring heaven, he desires somewhat that would free him from misery in happiness, a natural or moral good, that would be acceptable to any creature under heaven: and so a Turk will desire paradise, and that very impatiently, in hope that he shall have his fill of lust there. Generally you may mark that in such desires of spiritual things, it is some carnality that moves unregenerate men: somewhat it is that may

please the flesh, and then it is not the spiritual but the carnal part of it that is their object, which they woo and make love to; which you may judge of by this, that they are frequent and importunate in their wishes for glory, seldom or never for grace—though that also may be wished for carnally, to make us more renowned and better esteemed in the world. For the most part, I say, they desire glory, for that will make them happy, and out of danger of worldly misfortunes; remission of sins, for these lie heavy on their consciences, and give them many a twinge that they would fain be eased of; but seldom petition for grace, as if holiness without other conveniences or gains, were not worth the having. And this arises from hence, that our love of Christ grows by sending out and fastening our affections on Him as an object fittest for our turns, that will advantage us most; but not by receiving in His image and shape into our souls; this indeed would make us not only love, but imitate Him, and having once tasted, long after Him; this would sanctify our souls, whereas the other doth but only satisfy our greedy affections.

By what hath been said it is plain enough—though it might be much more amplified—that grace is of absolute necessity to performance of any holy work acceptable to God: that without it, whatsoever is done in spiritual matters is carnal, not indeed spiritual, but equivocally and absurdly so called. The natural man's desires of heaven are not desires of heaven: his faith, no faith: his believing of the Scripture, infidelity; because he doth not apply them particularly to himself to obey them. In sum, when he prays, hopes, or gives alms, he does somewhat indeed, and it is well done of him; but he doth not truly either pray, or hope, or give alms; there is some carnality in them that hath poisoned them, and quite altered the complexion, the constitution, and inward qualities of the work. And then indeed how impatient should every Christian be of this *coloquintida* within him? There is *mors in olla*, as the prophet once spake, that is, death in the pot, that so infects and kills every thing that comes out of it. How should we abhor, and loathe, and detest this old leaven that so besours all our actions; this heathenism of unregenerate carnal nature, which makes our best works so unchristian? To insist longer

2 Kings iv.
40.

upon this, were but to increase your thirst, not to satisfy it: to make you sensible of that *marasmus* and desperate drought that hath gone over your souls, but not to help you to any waters for the cure: that shall come next, as the last work of this exercise to be performed, in a word.

Having learnt what this new creature is, and how absolutely necessary to a Christian, O let us not defer one minute longer to examine our estates, whether we are yet renewed or no, and by the acts which we daily perform, observe whether the sanctifying habit be as yet infused into our souls. If the grounds of our best duties, that which moves us in our holiest actions, be found upon search to be but carnal; if a careful religious education, custom of the place which we live in, fear of human laws, nay, perhaps a good, soft, tender disposition, and the like, be the things that make thee love God, and perform holy duties, and not any inward principle of sanctity within thee: I counsel thee to think better of thine estate, and consider whether the like motives, had it so happened that thou hadst been born and brought up in Turkey, might not have made thee worship Mahomet. I would be sorry to be rigid; I fear thou wilt find they might: well then, a new course must be taken, all thy former heathen, carnal, or at best, good moral life, all thy formal performances, the best of thy natural desires must be content to be ranked here with circumcision, and uncircumcision availing nothing; there is no trust, or confidence to be placed on these Egyptian staves "of reed." And then, if thou wilt not live heartless for ever, if ever thou meanest to move or walk, or do any thing, you must to that Creator of spirits and lover of souls, and never leave soliciting till He hath breathed another breath into your nostrils, another soul into your soul: you must lay yourself at His feet, and with all the violence and rhetoric, and humility, that these wants will prompt thee to, and woo, and importune the Holy Spirit to overshadow thee, to conceive all holy graces spiritually in thee: and if thou canst not suddenly receive a gracious answer, that the Holy Ghost will come in unto thee, and lodge with thee this night, yet learn so much patience from thy beggarly estate, as not to challenge Him at thy own times, but comfortably to wait His leisure. There is employment

[Gal. vi.
15.]
Is. xxxvi.
6.

enough for thee in the while to prepare the room against His coming, to make use of all His common graces, to cleanse and reform thy foul corruptions, that when the Spirit comes it may find thee swept and garnished. All the outward means which God hath afforded thee, He commands thee to make use of, and will require it at thy hands in the best measure, even before thou art regenerate; though thou sin in all thy unregenerate performances, for want of inward sanctity, yet it is better to have obeyed imperfectly than not at all: the first is weakness, the other desperate presumption; the first, material, partial obedience, the second, total disobedience. Yet whilst thou art preparing, give not over praying; they are acts very compatible; thou mayest do them both together. Whilst thou art a fortifying these little kingdoms within thee, send these ambassadors abroad for help, that thou mayest be capable of it when it comes. But above all things be circumspect, watch and observe the Spirit, and be perpetually ready to receive Its blasts; let It never have breathed on thee in vain; let thine ear be for ever open to Its whisperings: if It should pass by thee either not heard, or not understood, it were a loss that all the treasures upon earth could not repair, and for the most part you know It comes not in the thunder. Christ seldom speaks so loud now-a-days as he did to Saul. It is in a soft, still voice, and I will not promise you that men that dwell in a mill, that are perpetually engaged in worldly, loud employments, or that men asleep shall ever come to hear of it. The sum of all my exhortation is, after examination, to cleanse, and pray, and watch; carefully to cleanse thyself, incessantly to pray, and diligently to watch for the Sun of righteousness, when He shall begin to dawn, and rise, and shine in thy heart by grace. And do thou, O Holy Lord, work this whole work in us, prepare us by Thy outward, perfect us by Thy inward graces: awaken us out of the darkness of death, and plant a new seed of holy light and life in us: infuse into our heathen hearts a Christian habit of sanctity, that we may perform all spiritual duties of holiness; that we may glorify Thee here by Thy Spirit, and be glorified with Thee by Thy Christ hereafter.

Acts xix.
[1 Kings
xix. 12.]

Now to Him that hath elected us, hath, &c.

SERMON XXVIII.

2 PET. iii. 3.

Scoffers walking after their own lusts.

THAT we may take our rise luckily, and set out with the best advantage, that we may make our preface to clear our passage to our future discourse, and so spend no part of our precious time unprofitably, we will by way of introduction examine what is here meant, 1, by scoffers, 2, by walking after their own lusts. And first, scoffers here do not signify those whom confidence joined to a good natural wit, hath taught to give and play upon every man they meet with, which in a moderate use is called *εὐτραπέλεια*, “facetiousness,” in an immoderate, scurrility^a. But scoffers here are of a more special stamp, those who deal out their scoffs only on God and religion. The word in the original (*ἐμπαίζειν*) signifies to mock, to abuse, and that either in words, and then it is rendered “scoffing;” or in our actions, when we promise any man to perform a business, and then deceive his expectation, and then it is rendered “deluding.” So when Herod saw he was

Mat. ii. 16. mocked, *ὅτι ἐνεπαίχθη*, that he was “deluded” by the magicians. So that in the first primitive sense, scoffers must signify those who either laugh at God, or else delude Him in not performing what He expects, and they by their profession promised. In the secondary notion, to scoff is by way of argument to oppose any truth contumeliously or bitterly, as Solomon begins his discourse of the atheists’

Wisd. ii. 1. scoffs, “The ungodly said, reasoning with themselves;” and these are said to set their mouth against heaven, managing disputes, which have both sting and poison in them; the first to wound and overthrow the truth spoken of, the other to infect the auditors with a contrary opinion. And these

^a [Aristot. Eth. Nic. iv. 8.]

rational scoffs, for which Socrates anciently was very famous, are ordinarily in form of question, as in the Psalmist often, "Where is now their God?" i. e. certainly, if they had a God, He would be seen at time of need, He would now shew Himself in their distress. In which they do not only laugh at the Israelites for being such fools as to worship Him that will not relieve them, but implicitly argue, that indeed there is no such God as they pretend to worship. And just in this manner were the scoffers in my text, who did not only laugh, but argue, saying, "Where is the promise of His coming?" persuading themselves, and labouring to prove to others, that what is spoken of Christ's second coming to judgment was but a mere dream, a *μορμολύκειον*, a bugbear, or fable to keep men in awe, and therefore laugh at it, as the Athenians did at the resurrection, Acts xvii. 3; "and when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked," &c., i. e. disputed sarcastically and contumeliously against it, that certainly there was no such matter. And thus also is the same word used of those which joined their reason and malice to disprove Christ's omnipotence, where they reviled and mocked Him, saying, "He saved others, Himself He cannot save." In which speech the bitterest part of the scoff was the reason there used, plausible enough amongst ignorant Jews, that surely if He had any power, He would make use of it for Himself.

Thirdly, to scoff is sometimes without words or actions to shew a contempt or neglect of any body. So Herod's mocking of Christ is set as an expression that He did not think Him worthy talking with. "He set Him at nought, and mocked Him, and sent Him back to Pilate;" He would not vouchsafe to take notice of Him, nor to be troubled with the examination of so poor, contemptible a fellow. And so in Aristotle^b, not to know a man's name, not to have taken so much notice of him, as to remember what to call him, is reckoned the greatest neglect, the unkindest scoff in the world, and is ordinarily taken very tenderly by any one who hath deserved any thing at our hands. So that in brief—to gather up what we have hitherto scattered—the scoffers here meant, are those, who promising themselves to God's service, do delude Him when He looks to find them amongst His

^b [Aristot. Rhet., lib. ii. c. 2. § 26.]

servants, i. e. remain errand^c atheists under a Christian profession, who by letting loose either their wits to profane jests, or their reason to heathenish conceits and disputings, or their actions to all manner of disobedience, demonstrate that indeed they care not for God, they scarce remember His name, neither is He in all their thoughts.

Ps. x. 4.

In the next place, walking after their own lusts, is giving themselves liberty to follow all the directions of corrupt polluted nature, in entertaining all conceits and practices which the pride of their understandings and rankness of their affections shall propose to them in opposition to God. And this without any reluctancy or twinge of conscience, walking on as securely and confidently as if it were indeed the right highway.

So that now you have seen the outside of the text, and looked it over in the gross, it is time to survey it more particularly in its parts, and those are two: 1. The sin of atheism, and the subjects in which it shews itself, "There shall come in the last days scoffers." 2. The motive and impellent to this sin, a liberty which men give themselves, to walk after their own lusts.

And first of atheism, and the subjects in whom it shews itself, "In the," &c. Where you may note that the words being in a form of a prophecy, do note a sort of people which were to come, in respect of St. Peter who writes it; and though in its first aspect it refer to the period of the Jewish nation, and destruction of Jerusalem, takes in the parallel state of things under the last age, and dotage, and declination of the world.

Mat. xxiv.

Accordingly we see at the 24th of St. Matthew, the prophecy of both, as it were interwoven and twisted into each other; so that what St. Peter saith shall be, we may justly suspect is fulfilled amongst us, his future being now turned into a present, his prophecy into a story. In the Apostles' times, when Christianity was in the cradle, and wanted years and strength to move and shew itself in the world, there were but very few that would acknowledge it; many sects of philosophers, who peremptorily resolved themselves against this profession, joined issue with the Apostles in assiduous disputation, as we may find in the 17th of the Acts. Amongst those the

^c [Errand or errant, an early way of spelling arrant.]

Epicureans did plainly deny that there was any God that governed the world, and laugh at any proof that Moses and the prophets could afford for their conviction. And here a man might think that his prophecy was fulfilled in his own days, and that he needed not to look beyond that present age for store of scoffers. Yet so it is, that the infidelity which he foresaw should in those last ages reign confidently in the world, was represented to him in a larger size and uglier shape than that of the present philosophers. The Epicurean unbelief seemed nothing to him, being compared to this Christian atheism, where men under the vizard of religion and profession of piety, are in heart arrant heathens, and in their fairest carriages do indeed but scoff, and delude, and abuse the very God they worship. Whence the note is, that the profession of Christianity is mixed with an infinite deal of atheism, and that, in some degree, above the heathenism of the perversest philosophers. There were in St. Peter's time Epicureans, and all sects of scoffers at Christianity, and yet the scoffers indeed, the highest degree of atheism, was but yet heaving; it would not rise and shew itself till the last days.

It is worth observing what variety of stratagems the devil hath always had to keep us in defiance with God, and to nourish in us that hostility and enmity against heaven, which is so deep and predominant in himself. He first set them a work to rebel and fortify themselves against God, and make themselves, by building of a tower, so impregnable that God Himself could not be able to disperse them. Afterwards, ^{Gen. xi.} when by the punishment and defeating of that design, ^{14.} the world was sufficiently instructed that no arm of flesh, no bodily strength could make resistance against heaven; when the body could hold out in rebellion no longer, he then instructs the inward man, the soul, to make its approaches, and challenge heaven. Now the soul of man consisting of two faculties, the understanding and the will, he first deals with the understanding, and sets that up against God in many monstrous fashions; first, in deluding it to all manner of idolatrous worship, in making it adore the sun, the moon, and the whole host of heaven, which was a more generous kind of idolatry. Afterwards, in making them worship dogs and cats, onions and garlic, for so did the Egyptians; and this

was a more sottish stupid affection ; a man would wonder how the devil could make them such fools. Afterward he wrought still upon their understanding, in making them—under pretence of two laudable qualities, admiration and gratitude, admiration of any kind of virtue, and gratitude for any good turn—to deify and worship as gods any men which had ever done, either their nation, or private persons, any important good or favour. So that every *heros*, or noble, famous man, as soon as he was dead, was worshipped. It were long to shew you the variety of shifts in this kind, which the devil used to bring in the *πολυθεότης* of the Gentiles, i. e. their worshipping of many gods. In brief, this plot lasted thus till Christianity came into the world, and turned it out of doors, and at Christ's resurrection all the gods of the heathen expired. However, the devil still stuck close to that faculty of the soul which he had been so long acquainted with, I mean the understanding, and seeing through the whole world almost the doctrine of Christ had so possessed men, that he could not hope to bring in his heathen gods again, he therefore hath one design more on the understanding ; seeing it is resolved to believe Christ in spite of heathenism, he then puzzles it with many doubts about this very Christ it is so possessed with. He raises up, in the first ages of the Church, variety of heresies concerning the union of His natures, equality of His person with the Father, and the like : and rung as many changes in men's opinions as the matter of faith was capable of. There was no truth almost in Christianity, but had its heretic to contradict and damn it. Now since at last, reason and truth, and the power of Scripture having outlived in a good degree fundamental error in opinion, hath almost expelled the devil out of the head—or upper part of the soul, the understanding—his last plot is on the heel, i. e. the will and affections ; and that he hath bruised

Gen. iii. 15. terribly, according to that prophecy, Gen. iii. 15. He deals mainly on our manners, and strives to make them, if it be possible, sinful beyond capability of mercy. And this design hath thrived with him wonderfully ; he hath wrought more opposition against God, more heresy against Christ in our lives than ever he was able to do in our doctrine. In a kingdom, where the custom of the country and education

hath planted purity of faith in the understanding, he there labours to supplant and eradicate charity and devotion in the will, and crucifies Christ more confidently in our corrupt heathenish practices than ever the Jews did in their incredulity. And on this plot he hath stuck close, and insisted a long while, it being the last and most dangerous stratagem that the policy of hell can furnish him with, to corrupt, and curse, and make abominable a sincere belief by an atheistical conversation. And this doth prove in general, that it is the devil's aim, and from thence probably the Christian's curse, to have more hostility against God in our wills, and so to be more horrible atheists, than ever the heathen had in their understandings. Now that we may the more distinctly discover the Christian atheist, who is very orthodox in his opinion, very heretical in his practice; we will observe how every part of his life, every piece of his conversation doth directly contradict his doctrine, and pluck down and deface the very fabric of godliness, expunge those very notions of piety, which reason and Scripture hath erected in the soul. And first,

He is in his knowledge sufficiently catechised in the knowledge of Scripture, and is confident that all its dictates are to be believed, and commands practised. But if you look to find this assent confirmed by his practice, and expressed in his carriage, you are much mistaken in the business. Is he such a fool as to order his life according to the rigour of them? No, no doubt, it is not one man's work to believe the Scripture and obey it. Suppose I should tell you that there are but a few of you that read Scripture to that purpose, that observe any edict of piety or virtue only because the Scripture hath commanded it. There be many restraints that keep unregenerate men from sinning; a good disposition, religious education, common custom of the place or times where we live, human laws, and the like; and each or all of these may curb our forwardness, and keep us in some order. But who is there amongst us, that being tempted with a fair, lovely, amiable vice, which he may commit without any regret of his good nature, scandal to his former carriages, fear or danger of punishment, either future or present, or any other inconvenience: who is there, I say, that from the

mere awe and respect that he bears to Scripture, retires and calls himself off from that sin which he had otherwise fallen into? If I should see all manner of conveniences to sin in one scale, and the bare authority of the Scriptures in the other quite outweighing all them with its heaviness, I should then hope that our hearts were catechised, as well as our brains, in the acknowledgment of this truth, that Scripture is to be believed and obeyed. But I much fear me, if I should make an enquiry in every one of our hearts here single, the greatest part of the jury would bring in an evidence of guilt, that in any our most entire obediences some other respect casts the scales; and this is one piece of direct atheism, that though our understandings affirm, yet our will and affections deny that Scripture is for its own sake to be obeyed.

Secondly, our brains are well enough advised in the truth of the doctrine of God's essence and attributes, our understandings have a distinct conceit of awe and reverence, to answer every notion we have of God; and yet here also our conversation hath its postures of defiance, its scoffs and arts of reviling, as it were, to deface and scrape out every of these notions out of our wills, and to persuade both ourselves and

¹ ἐπιπολήσ. others, that that knowledge doth only float¹ in our brains, but hath no manner of weight to sink it deep into our hearts. To glance at one or two of these; we believe, or at least pretend we do so, the immensity, i. e. the ubiquity and omnipresence of God, that He indeed is every where, to fill, to see, to survey, to punish; and yet our lives do plainly proclaim, that in earnest we mean no such matter; we shut up our hearts against God, and either as the Gadarenes did Christ, being weary of His presence, fairly entreat, or else directly banish Him out of our coasts, because He hath been or is like to be the destruction of some swine, i. e. bestial affections in us. And in sum, those bodies of ours, which He hath marked out for His temples, we will scarce allow Him for His inn to lodge with us one night. Again, can we expect to be credited when we say we believe the ubiquity and omnipresence of God, and yet live and sin as confidently as if we were out of His sight or reach? Do we behave ourselves in our outrages, in our luxury, nay, even

¹ ἐπιπολήσ.

Mark v.
17.

in our gravest devotions, as if God were within ken? Without all doubt, in every minute almost of our lives we demonstrate that we doubt either of His omnipresence to see, or else His justice to punish us: for those very things which we dare not to venture on in the sight of an earthly magistrate that may punish us, nay, of a spy that may complain of us, nay, of an enemy that will upbraid us, nay, of a friend that will check and admonish us; we never doubt, or demur, or delay to practise in private, or the dark, where still God is present to oversee and punish. And if this be not a scoffing, a deluding, a mere contemning of God, to do that without any fear or regret in His sight, which we never offer to attempt before a man, nay, a friend, I know not what may be counted atheism. In like manner, we acknowledge God to be *αὐτάρκης*, “all-sufficient;” and if we should be examined in earnest, we would confess that there is no ability in any creature to bestow or provide any good thing for us; and yet our will here also hath its ways and arguments of contradiction. Our whole life is one continued confutation of this piece of our faith; our tremblings, our jealousies, our distrusts, our carefulness, our worldly providence and importunate carking, our methods and stratagems of thrift and covetousness, and the whole business of our lives in wooing, and soliciting, and importuning every power of nature, every trade and art of the world, to succour, to assist, and provide for us, are most egregious evidences that we put no trust or confidence in God’s all-sufficiency, but wholly depend and rely upon the arm of flesh, both to raise and sustain us. This very one fashion of ours, in all our distresses, to fly to and call upon all manner of second causes, without any raising or elevating our eyes or thoughts toward God, from whom cometh our help, plainly shews that God still dwells abroad in tents: we have seen or heard of Him, but have not yet brought Him home into our hearts, there to possess, and rectify, and instruct our wills, as well as our understandings.

[2 Sam.
vii. 6.]

Thirdly, the whole mystery of Christ articulately set down in our Creed we as punctually believe, and to make good our names, that we are Christians in earnest, we will challenge and defy the fire and fagot to persuade us out of it; and

these are good resolutions, if our practices did not give our faith the lie, and utterly renounce at the church door whatsoever we professed in our pews. This very one thing, that He which is our Saviour, shall be our Judge, that He which was "crucified, dead, and buried, sits now at the right hand of God, and from thence shall come to judge the world;" this main part, yea, sum of our belief, we deny and bandy against all our lives long. If the story of Christ coming to judgment, set down in the 25th of Matthew after the 30th verse, had ever entered through the doors of our ears to the inward closets of our hearts, it is impossible but we should observe and practise that one single duty there required of us. Christ there as a Judge exacts and calls us to account for nothing in the world, but only works of mercy, and according to the satisfaction which we are able to give Him in that one point, He either entertains or repels us; and therefore our care and negligence in this one business, will prove us either Christians or infidels. But alas! it is too plain, that in our actions we never dream either of the judgment or the arraignment; our stupid neglect of this one duty argues us not only unchristian but unnatural. Besides our alms-deeds, which concern only the outside of our neighbour, and are but a kind of worldly mercy, there are many more important, but cheaper works of mercy, as good counsel, spiritual instructions, holy education of them that are come out of our loins, or are committed to our care, seasonable

Lev. xix. 7. reproof, according to that excellent place, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart, but in any wise reprove him:" a care of carrying ourselves that we may not scandal, or injure, or offer violence to the soul and tender conscience of him that is flexible to follow us into any riot. These and many other works of mercy in the highest degree, as concerning the welfare of other men's souls, and the chief thing required of us at the day of judgment, are yet so outdated in our thoughts, so utterly defaced, and blotted out in the whole course of our lives, that it seems we never expect that Christ in His majesty as a Judge, whom we apprehend, and embrace, and hug in His humility as a Saviour. Beloved, till by some severe hand held over our lives, and particularly by the daily study and exercise of some work of mercy

or other, we demonstrate the sincerity of our belief; the saints on earth and angels in heaven will shrewdly suspect, that we do only say over that part of our Creed, that we believe only that which is for our turn, the sufferings and satisfactions of Christ, which cost us nothing, but do not proceed to His office of a Judge, do not either fear His judgments, or desire to make ourselves capable of His mercies. Briefly, whosoever neglects or takes no notice of this duty of exercising works of mercy, whatsoever he brags of in his theory or speculation, in his heart either denies or contemns Christ as Judge, and so destroys the sum of his faith; and this is another kind of secret atheism.

Fourthly, our Creed leads us on to a belief and acknowledgment of the Holy Ghost; and it is well we have all conned His name there, for otherwise I should much fear that it would be said of many nominal Christians, what is reported of the Ephesian disciples, "They have not so much as heard ^{Acts xix.} whether there be an Holy Ghost or no." But not to suspect ^{2.} so much ignorance in any Christian, we will suppose indeed men to know whatsoever they profess, and enquire only whether our lives second our professions, or whether indeed they are mere infidels and atheistical, in this business concerning the Holy Ghost. How many of the ignorant sort which have learnt this name in their Catechism or Creed, have not yet any further use to put it to, but only to make up the number of the Trinity, have no special office to appoint for Him, no special mercy, or gift, or ability to beg of Him in the business of their salvation, but mention Him only for fashion's sake, not that they ever think of preparing their bodies or souls to be temples worthy to entertain Him, not that they ever look after "the earnest of the Spirit" in their ^{2 Cor. i.} hearts! Further yet, how many better learned amongst us ^{22.} do not yet in our lives acknowledge Him in that epithet annexed to His title, the Holy Ghost, i. e. not only eminently in Himself holy, but causally, producing the same quality in us, from thence called the sanctifying and renewing Spirit! how do we for the most part fly from, and abandon, and resist, and so violently deny Him, when He once appears to us in this attribute! When He comes to sanctify us, we are not patient of so much sourness, so much humility, so much

non-conformity with the world, as He begins to exact of us; we shake off many blessed motions of the Spirit, and keep ourselves within garrison, as far as we can out of His reach, lest at any turn He should meet with, and we should be converted. Lastly, the most ordinary morally qualified, tame Christians amongst us, who are not so violent as to profess open arms against this Spirit, how do they yet reject Him out of all their thoughts! How seldom do many peaceable orderly men amongst us, ever observe their wants, or importune the assistance of this Spirit! In sum, it was a shrewd speech of the fathers^d, which will cast many fair outsides at the bar for atheists, “that the life of an unregenerate man is but the life of an heathen,” and that it is our regeneration only that raises us up ἐξ ἐθνῶν, from being still mere Gentiles. He that believes in his Creed the Person, nay, understands in the schools the attributes and gifts of the Holy Ghost, and yet sees them only in the fountain, neither finds nor seeks for any effects of them in his own soul; he that is still unregenerate, and continues still gaping and yawning, stupid and senseless in this his condition is still, for all his Creed and learning, in effect an atheist. And the Lord of heaven give him to see, and endeavours to work, and a heart to pray, and His Spirit to draw and force him out of this condition.

Fifthly, not to cramp in every article of our Creed into this discourse, we will only insist on two more. We say therefore that we believe “the Forgiveness of Sins,” and it is a blessed confidence, that all the treasures in the world cannot equal. But do ourselves keep equipage, and hand in hand accompany this profession? Let me catechise you a while. You believe the forgiveness of sins, but I hope not absolutely, that the sufferings of Christ shall effectually clear every man’s score at the day of judgment: well then, it must be meant only of those that by repentance and faith are grafted into Christ, and shall appear at that great marriage in a wedding-garment, which shall be acknowledged the livery and colours of the Lamb. But do our lives ever stand to this explication and restriction of the article? Do they ever expect this beloved remission by performing the condi-

^d Clemens Al.x. Strom., p. 281. [ut supr.]

tion of repentance? Do we ever go about to make ourselves capable of receiving this mercy conditionally offered us? Nay, do we not by our wilful stupidity, and pertinacious continuing in sin, nullify in respect of us all that satisfaction of Christ, and utterly abandon those means which must bring home this remission to us? The truth is, our faith runs only on general terms, we are willing to lay all our sins on Christ's shoulders, and persuade ourselves somewhat slightly and coldly, that He will bear them in the root and in the fruit, in the bullion and in the coin, in the gross and in the retail, i. e. both our original and our actual transgressions: but we never take any course to rest satisfied that we in particular shall participate of this happiness. This requires the humiliation of the whole man, the spirit of bondage for a while, afterwards a second purity and virginity of the soul recovered by repentance, and then a soberly grounded faith and confidence, and an expressing of it by our own forgiving of others. And till this piece of our Creed be thus explained and interpreted in our conversation, we remain but confident atheists, not able to persuade any body that hears us that indeed we believe what we profess.

Sixthly and lastly, "the Resurrection of the Body," and its consequent, "Everlasting Life," is the close of our faith, and end, and prop, and encouragement, and consummation of our hope; and yet we take most pains of all to prove ourselves infidels in this; our whole carriage, both in the choice and observance of our religion, shew that we do not depend on it, that we put no confidence in the resurrection. If we went on this assurance, we should condemn any worldly encouragement, and make the same thing both the object and end of our service. We should scorn to take notice of so poor a thing as profit or convenience is, in a matter of so high importance, knowing and expecting that our reward shall be great in heaven. This one thought of a resurrection, and an infinite reward of any faithful undertaking of ours, would make us disdain, and almost be afraid of any temporal recompense for our worship of God, for fear it should, by paying us beforehand, deprive us of that everlasting one. We should catch and be ambitious of that expression of devotion, which were most painful and least pro-

fitable as to worldly advantage: and yet we in the stupidity of atheistical hearts are so improvidently covetous, so hasty and impatient in our religion, that unless some present gain allure and draw us, we have no manner of life, or spirit, or alacrity to this, as we count it, unprofitable service of God. The least encumbrance in the world will fright us from the greatest forwardness, and nimbleness, and activity in religion: and the least appearance of promotion, or other like encouragement, will produce and raise in us these affections and expressions of zeal, which the expectation of the resurrection could never work in us. Our religion is somewhat like that of the Samaritans, before Christ's time, either Jews or heathens, according as their king Antiochus would have them^e; after Christ's time were perpetually either Jews or Christians, according as the Romans, their new lords and masters, either threatened or granted privilege to the Jews. If there were any thing to be gotten by the profession, they would be as solemn Christians as any. So when the Goths and Vandals overrun Italy, and—whether upon good affection or compulsion from God, I know not—spared them that fled to the basilica in Rome^f, the place where the Christians exercised; then, I say, they which formerly persecuted the Christians, now bore them company very friendly to their churches, and to save their lives fled to the temple for a refuge, which before they abominated; and made use of Christianity for their safeguard, which they would not own for their religion, and hurried to that sanctuary for their lives, which they would not visit for their souls. The condition of our religion is like that which is upbraided to Ephraim,

Hos. x. 11. "Ephraim is like an heifer that loveth to tread out the corn."

[Deut. xxv. 4.]

It was prohibited by the law to muzzle the ox or heifer that treadeth out the corn; it was allowed them to feed as long as they did the work, and that made Ephraim love the toil so well, because that at the very time he performed the labour, he enjoyed the fruit of it; had, as we say, his wages in his hand; had some present emolument that would ingratiate his work to him; was not left to such a tedious expectation,

^e Josephus, *Antiq. Jud.*, lib. xii. c. 5. [vol. i. p. 533. ed. Huds.] et lib. xi. c. 8. [§ 6. p. 504.] ^f [Cf. S. August. *De Civit. Dei*, lib. i. c. 1. Op., tom. vii. init.]

to so long a date as to wait for his reward till the resurrection: those were too hard terms for him, he could not endure to be tied so long up to the empty rack, or feed upon the bit. And thus hasty are we in the exacting of our reward for our service of God: we will never set our hands to it, unless we may make our conditions: we are resolved not to be such fools, as to serve God for nought, to spend the quickest of our spirits in a sour crabbed profession, and expect our thanks at doomsday. This plainly demonstrates, that however our theory be possessed, our practice places no trust, no confidence, no assurance in that part of our Creed, the resurrection. Again, it was an excellent argument to persuade doubtful Christians in the youth and nonage of the Church, of the certainty of the resurrection, that religious men, and those whom undoubtedly God loved, were full of sufferings in this world, and lived and died many of them without any expression of God's favour to them, which made them certainly to conclude, that no doubt God hath some other course to exhibit Himself in the riches of His mercy to them; and seeing there was no hope but in another world, "Verily there should be a reward for the righteous, doubtless there is a God that judgeth the earth;" and by this argument we may try ourselves for the sincerity of our faith in this business. If we can be patient to endure afflictions here, and not complain or grumble for a respite and deliverance, but keep all our hopes to be accomplished, defer all our happiness to be performed to us at the resurrection, and though God kill us, yet trust in Him, and be able to see through death, in a trust "that our Redeemer lives, and that with these eyes we shall behold Him," then may we cheer up, and persuade ourselves on good grounds that our hearts and lives do assent to the resurrection, which our tongues brag of: "Take no heaviness to heart, but drive it away and remember the end." But if this consideration cannot digest the least oppression of this life, cannot give us patience for the lightest encumbrance, but for all our Creed we still fly out into all outrages of passion and ecstasies of impatience, we plainly betray ourselves men of this present world, whose happiness or misery is only that which is temporary, and before our eyes, are not able by the perspective of faith to

[Ps. lviii.
11.]

[Job xiii.
15.]

Job xix.
25.

Ecclus.
xxxviii.
20.

behold that which easily we might, all our wants relieved, all our injuries revenged, all our wounds bound up in the day of the resurrection: but all our life long we repine and grumble, and are discontented as men without hope; and whilst we do thus, what do we but act the part of these atheists here in my text, scoffing and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming," in the next verse to my text. This very impatience and want of skill in bearing the brunts of this our warfare, is but a piece of cowardly atheism, either a denying or mocking at the resurrection. Every sigh is a scoff, every groan a gibe, every fear a sly art of laughing at the stupidity of those who depend upon the fulfilling of the promise of His coming. Lastly, say we what we will, we live as if there were no resurrection, as Sadducees, if not as atheists; all our designs look no further than this life, all our contrivances are defeated and frustrate in the grave; we manage ourselves with so little understanding, that any spectator would judge by our actions that it is no injury to compare us to the beasts that perish and never return again. Certainly if we had any design upon heaven or another life, we would here make some provision for it, "make ourselves friends of our unrighteous mammon, that when we fail, they may receive us into everlasting habitations," i. e. use those good things that God hath given us with some kind of providence, that they may stand us in stead when we have need of them, i. e. not only as instruments to sin—for that is to get us more enemies—but as harbingers to be sent before us to heaven. It was a bitter sarcasm of the fool to the abbot on his death-bed, that the abbot deserved his staff, as being the verier fool of the two, that being straight to die, to remove his tent to another world, he had sent none of his household-stuff before him. The truth is, we live generally as men that would be very angry, much displeas'd if any should persuade us there were a resurrection, the very mentioning of it to us might seem to upbraid our ordinary practices, which have nothing but the darkness of death and silence of the grave to countenance them. I may justly say that many ignorant heathens, which were confident there was nothing beyond this life, expected certainly with death to be annihilated, and turn again into a perpetual

[1 Thess.
iv. 13.]

[Ps. xlix.
20.]

[Luke xvi.
9.]

nothing; yet either for the awe they bore to virtue, or fear of disgrace after death, kept themselves more regularly, lived more carefully than many of us Christians. And this is an horrid accusation, that will lie very heavy upon us, that against so many illuminated understandings the ignorance of the Gentiles should rise up in judgment, and the learned Christian be found the most desperate atheist. I have been too large upon so rigid a doctrine as this, and I love and pray God I may always have occasion to come up to this place upon a more merciful subject: but I told you even now out of Lev. xix. 17, that it was no small work of mercy, it was the most friendly office that could be performed any man, to reprehend, and as the text saith, “not to suffer sin upon thy neighbour,” especially so sly a covert lurking sin as this of atheism, which few can discern in themselves. I shall now come to application, which because the whole doctrine spoke morally to your affections, and so in a manner prevented uses, shall be only a recapitulation and brief knitting up of what hitherto hath been scattered at large.

Seeing that the devil’s policy of deluding, and bewitching, and distorting our understandings, either with variety of false gods, or heresies raised upon the true, is now almost clearly out-dated, and his skill is all bent to the deforming of the will, and defacing the character of God, and the expression of the sincerity of our faith in our lives; we must deal with this enemy at his own weapon, learn to order our munition according to the assault, and fortify that part most impregnable, toward which the tempest binds and threatens. There is not now so much danger to be feared from the inroad of heretics in opinion as in practice, not so much atheism to be dreaded from the infidelity of our brains, as the heathenism and gentilism of our lusts, which even in the midst of a Christian profession deny God even to His face. And therefore our chiefest frontiers and fortifications must be set up before that part of the soul, our most careful watch and sentinel placed upon our affections, lest the devil enter there and depopulate the whole Christian, and plant the atheist in his room. To this purpose we must examine what seeds are already sown, what treachery is a working

within; and no doubt most of us at the first cast of the eye shall find great store, unless we be partial to ourselves, and bring in a verdict of mercy, and construe that weakness, which indeed signifies atheism.

When upon examination we find our lives undermining our belief, our practices denying the authority of Scripture, and no whit forwarder to any Christian duty upon its commands; when we find God's essence and attributes reviled and scoffed at in our conversation, His omnipresence contemned by our confidence in sinning, and argued against
 [Ps. x. 4.] by our banishing God out of all our thoughts, His all-sufficiency doubted of by our distrusts, and our scorn to depend upon it; when we perceive that our carriages do fall off at this part of our belief in Christ, that He shall come again to be our Judge, and by our neglect of those works, especially of mercy, which He shall then require of us, shew that indeed we expect Him not, or think of Him as a Judge, but only as a Saviour; when we observe our wills resisting the gifts, and falsifying the attribute, whilst our Creed confesses the person of the Holy Ghost, and see how little, how nothing of the sanctifying Spirit, of the earnest of our regeneration is in our hearts, and we still stupidly senseless of the want; when we believe forgiveness of sins, and that only upon condition of repentance, and yet abhor so much as to hear or think of the performing of it, or to make good that mercy to others which ourselves challenge of God; lastly, when we prove to ourselves, and all the world beside, by our requiring of a present reward for all our goodness, and ruling our religion to our earthly profit, by our impatience of any affliction, by our heathenish neglect, and stupidity, and riot, that we do not in earnest look for the resurrection to life; when, I say, by a just, but exact survey and inquest, we find these so many degrees of secret atheism in us, then must we shrift, and purge, and cleanse, and rinse our souls from these dregs of heathenism; then must we humble ourselves below the dust, and not dare to look the veriest Gentile in the face, till we have removed this plague from us. And do Thou, O Lord, assist our endeavours, and by the violence of Thy Spirit force and ravish us in our lives, as well as belief, to a sincere acknowledgment and expres-

sion of every minute part of that religion which is purely Christian, that we may adore Thee in our hearts as well as our brains, and being sanctified throughout, from any tincture, or colour, or suspicion of irreligion in either power of our soul, we may glorify Thee here, and be glorified by Thee hereafter.

Now to Him which hath elected us, hath, &c.

SERMON XXIX.

2 PET. iii. 3.

Scoffers walking after their own lusts.

IT is an excellent observation of Aristotle's, that rich men are naturally most contumelious, most given to abuse and deride others, which he expresses thus, in the seventh of his Politics^a; ἡ δὲ τῆς εὐτυχίας ἀπόλαυσις καὶ τὸ σχολάζειν μετ' εἰρήνης, ὑβριστὰς ποιεῖ μᾶλλον. The contentment which they enjoy in the continuance of their worldly happiness, the perpetual rest, and quiet, and tranquillity, which their plenty bestows on them, makes them contemn and despise the estate of any other man in the world; upon this conceit, saith the same Aristotle^b, (ὅτι ὑπερέχειν φαίνονται,) that their happiness is elevated infinitely above the ordinary pitch; that whatever contentments any other sort of people can glory or delight in, is but some imaginary, slight, poor happiness that men are fain to solace themselves withal, to keep them from melancholy, all far enough below the size of their felicity, which all agreeable circumstances have conspired to make exactly complete. Hence is it that you shall ordinarily observe the rich man, in this confidence of his opinion, that no man is happy but himself, either contemn or pity the poverty, and improvidence, and perhaps the sottishness of such spirits, that can rejoice or boast in the possession of wisdom, knowledge, nay, even of God's graces; no object is more ridiculous in his eye, than either a scholar or a Christian, that knows not the value of riches: for saith Aristotle, ὁ πλούτου οἶον τιμὴ τις ἐστὶ τῆς ἀξίας τῶν ἄλλων, διὸ φαίνεται πάντα ὄνια εἶναι αὐτοῦ, "Money is reckoned the price of all things

^a [Aristot. Polit., lib. vii. c. 15.]

^b [Aristot. Rhetor., lib. ii. c. 16.]

else," that which can easily purchase whatever else we can stand in need of; and therefore the rich man, if he could think learning and religion worth any thing, having his money by him (which is in effect every thing) thinks he can call for them when he pleases. In the mean, he hath more wit than to forsake his pleasures, and go to school to the Stoic, to divest himself of his robes, and put on the sourness, the rigid, sad behaviour which the profession of wisdom or Christianity requires. He is better pleased in his present pomp, than to go and woo that misery and ruggedness, which the severity of discipline looks for. Let silly beggars boast of the contents of wisdom or hopes of heaven, *at mihi plaudo domi*^c, his coffers at home are better companions than all the melancholy of books, or sullen solaces of the spirit. He hath learnt by experience, that he ought to pity and condemn these fictions of delight which the poets fetch from the Fortunate Islands to delude, and cozen, and comfort beggars: his glory, and pride, and riches, are happiness indeed, and whatever else the poverty of the world can boast of, are objects not of his envy but his scorn.

What we have hitherto noted to you concerning the rich man is applicable on the same grounds to any sort of people which have fixed upon any worldly content, and resolved upon some one object, beside which they will never value or prize any thing. Thus the epicure or voluptuous man, who hath set up his idol lust, to whom he owes all his sacrifice, and from whom he expects all his good fortune, that hath fixed his pillars, and cast his anchor, and is peremptorily constant in his course, that he is resolved for ever to walk in; this man, I say, being possessed with an opinion of the happiness which he is placed in, like the sun in his pride, rejoices to run his course, and scorns any contrary motion that he meets or hears of; and only observes the ways of virtue and religion, to hate and laugh at them; and the further he walks, the deeper he is engaged in this humour of self-content, and contempt of others, of security, and scoffing. For this is the force and implicit argument covertly contained in the close of these words, "There shall come in the last days scoffers," &c.; i. e. this resolution to

^c [Horat. Sat. i. l. 65.]

walk on in their own lusts hath brought them to this pitch of atheism, to scoff and deride both God and goodness. "There shall," &c.

We have heretofore divided these words, and in them observed and handled already the sin of atheism, together with the subjects in which it works, Christians of the last times, noted from this prophetic speech, "There shall come in the last days scoffers." We now come to the second particular, the motive or impellent to this sin, a liberty which men give themselves, and a content which they take to walk after their own lusts.

The second chapter of the Wisdom of Solomon is an excellent description of the atheist: and though it be of apocryphal authority, yet it is of most divine canonical truth. I could find in my heart, nay, I can scarce hold from reading and paraphrasing the whole chapter to you; it is so solid, so strong, so perfect a discourse upon this theme, it contains so many strains of atheistical reason in opposition to godliness, and the root, and growth, and maturity of this tree of knowledge and death, that the clear understanding of that one place might suffice without any enlargement of proofs or expressions. But for brevity sake, and on promise that you will at your leisure survey it, I will omit to insist on it: only in the end of the twenty-first verse, after all the expressions of their atheistical counsels, you have the reason, or motive, or first worker of all, "for their own wickedness hath blinded them;" their stupid perseverance in those dark ways, in that black Tophet on earth, habituate custom of sinning, had so thickened their sight, had drawn such a film over their eyes, that in the judgment of divine affairs they were stark blind: they could see nothing in all the mystery of godliness which was worth embracing, and therefore had no employment but to walk on after their own lusts, and to scoff at those that were so foolishly friendly to them as to call them out of their way: they were well enough acquainted with their own paths, they could walk them blindfold, and therefore had more wit than forsake the road for a nearer by-way. The issue of all is this, that a voluptuous course of life is a great promoter and advancer of atheism: there had never been so many scoffers in the Chris-

[Wisd. ii.
21.]

tian world, had there not been also those that were resolute to walk after their own lusts.

In the first verse of the Psalms, there be steps and rounds, [Ps. i. 1.] and gradations of a sinner specified; 1. Walking in the counsel of the ungodly; 2. Standing in the way of sinners; 3. Sitting in the seat of the scorner: the two first being degrees in his motion, several stages of his journey to this ἀκμῆ, or top pitch of sinning in the last. Walking in the counsel of the ungodly is the first entrance to his course; and he that hath such a rise as this, hath a great advantage of all other sinners; he will perform his race with speed, and come suddenly to his goal. This deliberate walking in the ways, and with the companions and contrivers of ungodliness, this partaking and prosecuting of the counsels, the enjoying this familiarity with sin, proves a strong engagement to continue and persevere, and delight in its acquaintance. Yet because walking is a laborious motion, and will tire the sinner in time, he is fain to betake himself to an easier posture, and that is standing in the way of sinners, continuing in a still, sober, quiet, stupid tranquillity of sinning, standing like a Mercury's post in the midst of a road, never removed or stirred an inch, though never so justled by the passengers. Let all the contrary virtues never so thwart and cross him, he hath fixed his station, and neither force nor allurements shall make him move. Yet because standing also is a painful posture, with which the valiantest legs will at last be numbed, if not tired, he hath in the last place his chair of ease and state, and here he sets up his rest, here he sins with as much majesty as delight: 1. *in cathedra*, as a seat of greatness, lording it, and sinning imperiously, commanding every spectator to follow his example of scoffing at God and goodness: 2. *in cathedra*, as a seat of authority, sinning doctorally, and magisterially, by his practice defining the lawfulness of these scoffs, even setting up a school of atheism: and 3. *in cathedra*, as a seat of rest, and ease, and pleasure, which he is resolved never to rise out of, which he hath reposed himself in, that he may laugh at ease, and without any pains or trouble or charges blaspheme God for ever. And for the most part indeed he proves as bad as his resolution, having once given himself this licence of laughing at and deriding

religion, he seldom ever recovers himself to a sober countenance; like men whose custom of scoffing hath made wry-mouthed, he lives and continues, and for the most part dies scoffing. He comes as it were laughing into hell, and seldom forsakes this habit of profaneness, till horror hath put smiling out of date. There is not a sin in the world that sits closer to him which hath once entertained it, and he that is once a merry atheist, seldom, if ever, proves a sad sober Christian. He is seated in his chair of scorning, and contemns the mercy of that Spirit that should take him out of it. Thus you see, that walking in the steps, and standing in the way, i. e. following the commands of their own lusts, they are soon arrived to the pitch of atheists, to the chair of scorers, and then there is but little preferment more that they are capable of, unless they will strive with Lucifer for pre-eminence in hell, or else challenge Rabshakeh to rail, or Julian to blaspheme. But this is the highest degree of scoffers, and I hope the devil hath but few such valiant, bold, forward champions in the world, since Julian or Lucian's time. And therefore I hope I have pricked no man's conscience here whilst I have spoke of them; but I have formerly proved that there be some lower, tamer, secret degrees of atheism, which every man may chance to spy in some angle or corner of his soul, some implicit artificial ways of scoffing, or abasing God, which most of us are guilty of; and it will be worthy our pains to shew how these seeds are warmed, and cherished, and animated by a licentious life. Hippocrates^d observes of the Scythians that they do not swathe themselves, nor bind in their loins with any kind of girdle, but go with their bodies very loose, that they may ride the easier, which is the only exercise they use: and from hence, saith he, they grow so corpulent and fleshy, so broad and bulky, that they are both ugly and unwieldy, an eye-sore to others and cumbersome to themselves: these accessions, which in other people extend themselves proportionably in length and breadth, in height as well as bulk, in them grow all into thickness; so that you shall see a pigmy in stature as big as a giant in the girt. Thus is it with those whose affections are not ruled, and restrained in order, and within limits, are not swathed and kept in, have not some set terms of tem-

^d Hippocrates, de Aqua, Aere et Loco. [ut supr.]

perance, and other virtues, beyond which they suffer not themselves to fly out. If, I say, these affections within us be by the owners left ungirt to their own freedom, they will never grow upward toward heaven; they will still be dwarfish, of small growth in religion; but yet like those Scythians, they will run into a strange bulk and corpulence, into some unwieldy misshapen forms of atheism, or the like. Certainly they will grow into a greater breadth than the reasonable soul will be able to manage; unless the spirit vouchsafe to come down, and contract and call it into bounds, it will increase beyond all proportion, beyond all acknowledgment of God or religion. We are used to say in nature, that all moist things are apt to be contained in other terms, but hardly in their own; the water is easily cooped up in a glass or bucket, where there are boundaries to keep it in, but being let loose on a table or a floor, it flies about and never stays again till it meet with some ocean or hollow place which may inclose, and bestow the consistency on it which it has not of itself. Thus you may see a river, whilst it is kept within the channel, go on in its stream and course very soberly and orderly, but when it hath overswelled the banks which before kept it in, then doth it run about the pastures, scorns to be kept within any compass. Thus is it with the soul of man; if it be ordered within terms and bounds, if it have a strict hand held over it, if it be curbed and brought to its postures, if it have reason and grace, and a careful tutor to order it, you shall find it as tame a creature as you need deal with; it will never straggle or stray beyond the confines which the spirit hath set it; the reason is, because though it be in itself fluid and moist, and ready to run about like water, yet *Deus firmavit aquas*, "God Gen. i. 7. hath made a firmament betwixt the waters," as He did Gen. i. 7, i. e. He hath established it, and given it a consistency, that it should not flow or pour itself out beyond its place. But if this soul of man be left to its own nature, to its own fluid, wild, incontinent condition, it presently runs out into an ocean, never stays, or considers, or consults, but rushes headlong into all inordinacy; having neither the reins of reason nor God to keep it in, it never thinks of either of them, and unless by chance, or by God's mercy, it fall into their hands, it is likely to run riot for ever. Being once let loose,

it ranges, as if there were neither power on earth to quell nor in heaven to punish it. Thus do you see how fluid, how inconstant the soul is of its own accord, how prone it is, how naturally inclined to run over like a stream over the banks, and if it be not swathed, and kept in, if it be left to the licentious condition of itself, how ready is it to contemn both reason and God, and run headlong into atheism. Nay, we need not speak so mercifully of it, this very licentiousness is the actual renouncing of religion, this very "walking after their own lusts," is not only a motive to this sin of scoffing, but the very sin itself.

A false conception in the womb is only a rude, confused, ugly chaos, a mere lump of flesh, of no kind of figure or resemblance, gives only disappointment, danger, and torment to the mother. It is the soul at its entrance which defines, and trims, and polishes into a body, that gives it eyes, and ears, and legs, and hands, which before it had not distinctly and severally, but only rudely altogether with that mass or lump. Thus is it with the man, till religion hath entered into him as a soul to inform and fashion him; as long as he lives thus at large, having no terms, or bounds, or limits to his actions, having no form, or figure, or certain motion defined him, he is a *mola*, a mere lump of man, an arrant atheist; you cannot discern any features or lineaments of a Christian in him; he hath neither eyes to see, nor ears to hear, nor hands to practise any duty that belongs to his peace. Only it is religion must take him up, must smooth and dress him over, and according to its etymon must *re-ligare*, swathe and bind up this loose piece of flesh, must animate and inform him, must reduce him to some set form of Christianity, or else he is likely after a long and fruitless travel to appear a deformed monstrous atheist. But not to deal any longer upon similes, lest we seem to confound and perplex a truth by explaining it, I told you the licentious, voluptuous life was itself perfect heathenism. For can you imagine a man to be any but a Gentile, who hath abandoned all love, all awe, all fear, all care of God—any one of which would much contract and draw him into compass—who hath utterly put off every garb of a Christian, who hath enjoyed the reins so long, that now he is not sensible, or at least

contemns the curb or snaffle if he be but checked with it, gets it in his teeth and runs away with it more fiercely. The heathen are noted not so much that they worshipped no god at all, but that they worshipped so many, and none of them the true. Every great friend they had, every delight and pleasure, every thing that was worth praying for, straight proved their god, and had its special temple erected for its worship. So that do but imagine one of them every day worshipping every god whom he acknowledged, in its several oratory, spending his whole life, and that too little too, in running from one temple to another, and you have described our licentious man posting on perpetually to his sensual devotions, worshipping, adoring, and sacrificing every minute of his life, to some idol-vanity, and bestowing as much pains and charges in his profane, heathenish pleasures, as ever the Gentiles did on their false gods, or the most supererogating papist on their true.

We are wont to say in divinity^e, and that without an hyperbole, that every commission of sin is a kind of idolatry, an incurvation, and bending down of the soul to some creature, which should always be erect, looking up to heaven, from whence it was infused, like water naturally inclined to climb and ascend as high as the fountain, or head from whence it sprang. And then certainly a licentious life is a perpetual idolatry, a supineness, and proneness, and incurvation of the soul to somewhat that deserves to be called an idol, i. e. either in St. Paul's acceptance of it, nothing—"an idol is ¹ nothing," or else, in the most honourable signification, only ⁴ an image, or some rude likeness or representation of God. We are the image of God ourselves, and whatsoever is below us, is but an imperfect draught of Him, containing some lineaments, some confused resemblances of His power which created them, have no being of their own, but only as shadows which the light doth cast. And therefore every love, every bow, every cringe which we make to any creature, is the wooing and worshipping of an image at best, in plain terms of an idol, nothing. What degree then of idolatry have they attained to, who every minute of their lives bow down and worship, make it their trade and calling for ever

^e Wiggers in 1^{am} secundæ, quæst. 1. art. 5. p. 27, 28.

to be a soliciting some pleasure or other! some exquisite piece of sensuality to bless and make them happy, which have no other shrines to set up, but only to their own lust, to which they do so crouch, and creep, and crawl, that they are never able to stand upright again: like those trees which the papists talk of, which by bowing to our Lady's house, when in walks by the wood toward Loretto, have ever since stood stooping. Thus do you see how the latter part of my text hath overtook the former: the walking after his own lusts becomes a scoffer, the licentious man proceeded atheist, and that with ease, his very voluptuous life is a kind of atheism; and the reasons of this are obvious, you need not seek or search far for them.

For first, this walking in their own lusts, notes an habit gathered out of many acts; he hath walked there a long while, and therefore now hath the skill of it, walks on confidently, and carelessly, without any rub or thought of stopping. And contrary to this, the worship of God, of which atheism is a privation, is an holy, religious habit of piety and obedience. Now we know two contrary habits cannot consist or be together in the same subject. An habit and its opposite privation are incompatible, light and darkness at the same time, though they may seem to meet sometimes as in twilight; but for two opposite positive habits, never any man's conceit was so bold or fantastical as to join them; you cannot imagine one, but you must remove the other. You may suppose a man distempered or weak, which is a privation of health, and yet suppose him pretty healthy, as long as his natural strength is able to overcome it; but can you suppose a man in a violent fever actually upon him, and yet still imagine him in perfect health? Thus is it with a sinner, who hath given himself over to the tyranny and impotency of his lusts, he hath utterly put off all degrees, all sparks of any habit of religion, according to that of our Saviour, "you cannot serve God and mammon," where mammon signifying in a vast extent the god of this world, imports all lusts, all earthly vanities, which any habituate sinner deifies.

[Mat. vi.
24.]

Secondly, every habit notes a delight, an acquiescence, and joy, in enjoying of that which through many actions, perhaps some brunts and rubs, he hath at last arrived to. Now this

delight and contentation, that it may be complete, is impatient of any other encumbrance, which at any time may come in to interrupt or disorder it. If any thing so happen, it is never quiet, till it have removed it. The scholar that hath all his life laboured, and at last attained to some habit of knowledge, and then resolves to enjoy the happiness and fruits of learning, in the quiet and rest of a perpetual contemplation, is impatient if any piece of ignorance cross or thwart him in his walk, he will to his books again, and never rest till he hath overcome and turned it out. Thus doth the sensual man, being come to the ἀκμῆ, and pitch, and entered into the paradise of his worldly joys, if he do but meet with any jar, if he feel any pluck or twinge from his conscience, any grudge or compunction of the spirit within him, any spark or heat, or warmth of religious fear in his breast, he will never rest till he hath abandoned it, he is impatient of such a qualm of godliness, he must needs put it over, he is sick at heart till he hath disgorged himself of this choler, and then returns securely godless to his walk, having banished God out of all his thoughts. Thus shall you see the atheist [Ps. x. 14.] on his humour, for want of some compunction at home, grumble at every godly man or action which they saw in the street. In the 2nd of Wisdom at the 14th; “He is grievous unto us to behold, he was made to reprove our thoughts;” and they do not return to their content, they are not pleased again, till they have gotten him into their inquisition, to examine him with despitefulness and torture. Thus do they abhor, and stifle, and strangle every godly action in others, or motion in themselves, because the holiness of the one is an exprobatation to their profaneness, and the other was a pang of conscience, made, as it were on purpose, by God to reprove their thoughts. Wisd. ii. 14.

Thirdly, this walking in the text, though it be with some motion, yet it is a slow one, a kind of walking in one’s sleep, or that of a melancholy man, that can walk till he be wet through, and not mark that it rained. I say, it notes here an heavy, drowsy, unactive habit, expressed by the Psalmist by sitting in a chair, as we shewed you; it notes a kind of churlish resoluteness, to walk on, whatever come in his way; he is grown even a passive to his lusts, he doth not so much act as suffer

them, he walks on snorting in his road; do what you can, you shall neither turn nor wake him. Now this slow, drowsy, unactive habit begets a kind of numbness in him, a sluggish, sullen stupidity over all his faculties, that even a spur or goad cannot rouse him; all the pores, as it were, and passages, and entries to the soul are so stopped and bunged up, all his affections are grown so gross and brawny, so hardened and incrassate, that no air or breath from heaven can pierce it. He that tells him of religion, or God, or virtue, is as he that waketh one from a sound sleep; he that telleth such a fool a tale of wisdom, speaketh to one in "a slumber, and when he hath told his tale, he will say, What is the matter?" Thus do you see; 1. the repugnance and inconsistency of a voluptuous life and religion; 2. the delight; 3. the stupidity of this habit; each of which have made a place for the libertine, and set him in the chair of the scorner. And all this while methinks I have but talked to your ears; now that your hearts and affections may partake of the sound, that the softer waxy part of you may receive some impression from this discourse, let us close all with an application.

Eccius.
xxii. 8.

And, first, from the guilt and dangerous condition of a licentious life, to labour by all means possible to keep out of it. He that is once engaged in it, goes on with a great deal of content, and in the midst of his pleasures on the one side, and carnal security on the other, his understanding, and will, and senses are lulled into a lethargy, nay, the very fancy in him is asleep, which in other sleeps is most active; he never imagines, never dreams of any fear or danger, either God or devil. Oh what a lamentable woeful estate is it to be thus sick beyond a sense of our disease, to be so near a spiritual death, and not so much as feel our weakness! Oh what an horrid thing it were to pass away in such a sleep, and never observe ourselves near death, till Satan hath arrested beyond bail, to sleep on and snort, as men without dread or danger, till the torments of hell should awake us! You cannot imagine how easy a thing it is for an habituate sinner to fall into the devil's paws before he thinks of it, as a melancholy man walking in the dark may be drowned in a pit, and no man hear him complain that he is fallen.

Again, we are wont to say that custom is another nature,

and those things which we have brought ourselves up to, we can as ill put off, as our constitution or disposition. Now those things which spring from the nature of any thing, are inseparable from the subject; banish them as oft as you will, *usque recurrent*^f, they will return again as to their home, they cannot subsist any where else, they dwell there. So wallowing in the mire being a condition natural to the swine, can never be extorted from them: wash them, rince them, purge them with hyssop, as soon as ever they meet with mire again, they will into it. Their swinish nature hath such an influence on them, that all care or art cannot forbid or hinder this effect of it. So that a customary sinner, who hath as it were made lust a part of his nature, hath incorporated profaneness, and grafted it into his affections, can as hardly be rid of it, as a subject of his property; it is possible for fear, or want of opportunity sometime to keep him in, and make him abstain: the loadstone may lie quiet, whilst no iron is within ken, or it may be held by force in its presence; but give it materials and leave to work, and it draws incontinently. So for all his temporary forbearance, upon some either policy or necessity, the habituate sinner hath not yet given over his habit. Leave him to himself, give him room and opportunity, and he will hold no longer. If he be once advanced to this pitch of sin to be walking after his own lusts, he may possibly be driven back with a storm or thunder; but he will hardly give over his walk, he will forward again as soon as ever the tempest is over. Nay farther, even when he wants objects and opportunities, he will yet shew his condition, he will betray the desire and good affection he bears to his old lusts; his discourse or fashions argue him incontinently bent, even when he is at the stanchest. As Aristotle^g observes of the fearful man, that even when no formidable object is near, he falls into many frights: so the voluptuous man's fancy is perpetually possessed with the meditation of his own ways, when some disease or necessity will not let him walk. In brief, unless this second nature be quite taken out of him, and another holy spiritual nature created in its room, unless a stronger come [Luke xi. 21.] and bind this devil and dispossess him of it, he hath small

^f [Hor. Epist. i. 10. 24.]

^g [Arist. de Animâ, lib. i. c. 1.]

hopes of getting himself out of his dominion and tyranny ; there is a great deal more stir in the converting of one customary sinner, than of a thousand others ; it is not to be accomplished without a kind of death and resurrection, without a new creation of another nature. So that (if we should judge of God's actions by our own) the Spirit should seem to be put to more pains and trouble with this one habituate, than in the ordinary business of converting many a tamer sinner. This is enough by the desperateness of the cure to move you to study some art, some physic of prevention, lest when it is grown upon you, it be too late to enquire for remedies. How should we dare to entertain and naturalize such an evil spirit within us, which if ever he be ravished out of us again, cannot without tearing, and torturing, and rending even our whole nature in pieces ! If we must needs be sinful, yet let us keep within a moderation, let us not so follow the devil's works, as to transubstantiate ourselves into his nature ; let us not put off our manhood with our integrity, and though we cannot be saints, let us keep ourselves men. It is a degree of innocence not to be extremely wicked, and a piece of godliness not to be atheists. Our lust is an infinite thing, said a philosopher, (*ἀπέραντος ἐπιθυμία*, Jamblichus ^h.) and he that walks after it hath an endless journey : there is no hope that he that hath so far to go, will ever have leisure to sit still. And therefore I say, if we must needs sin, yet let us not engage ourselves to sin for ever : if our being men lays a necessity of sinning on us, let our care to stay whilst it is possible for us, prove that we do not sin like devils, whose sin is their glory, and their resolution peremptory, never to give over sinning ; and so may ours seem, and in all likelihood prove to be, if we give ourselves liberty to walk after our own lusts.

Secondly, if our lusts be such dangerous paths to walk in, and this in that very respect as they are our own in opposition to God's commands ; if they are the straight direct way to atheism, nay atheism itself : then what care and circumspection is required at every setting down of our feet, at every entrance on any action, lest there be a serpent in the way, some piece of profaneness in every enterprise we enter

^h [Jamblichus Protrept., c. xvii.]

on of ourselves! How ought we to fear, to suspect, and balk any way that is our own! For where it is atheism to walk, there surely it is a sin to tread: and where we have once ventured to tread, we shall be shrewdly tempted to walk; every step we have safely taken being an encouragement to a second. *Verebar omnia opera mea*, saith Job, "I feared all my works:" whatever action I could entitle myself to, methought there was some danger in it, I was afraid it was not right as it should be, I should never be able to justify it. This is an excellent trial of all our serious deliberate actions, to mark whether they are our own or no, whether we went about them on our own heads, without our warrant or directions from God: if we did, it is much to be doubted there is some poison, some guilt in them, something that deserves to be feared, and fled from. This very suspecting of our own ways, will alien us from our own lusts, will bend us nearer to God, and never suffer us to dare to venture where He hath not secured us; will join us as it were in an engine to God Himself, where the lower wheels never begin to move without the example and government of the higher. If you can but persuade yourself to fear your own ways, it will be a good stop of your progress to atheism. I am confident the devil will never get you to walk in your own lusts.

[Job ix.
28. Vulg.]

Thirdly, if walking in our own lusts be direct atheism, what shall we think of them who make it a piece of religion and holy policy to do so? Beloved, there be some learned catechised atheists, who upon confidence of an absolute eternal predestination of every man in the world that shall ever possibly be saved, set up their rest there, and expect what God will do with them. It is to no purpose to hope God will alter the decree; they are resolved to leave all to God, and if they perish, they perish. Mark with me, is not this a religious atheism to attribute so much to God as to become careless of Him, so to depend as never to think on Him, and by granting His decree in our understanding, to deny His Godhead in our conversation? He that lives negligently on confidence that his care may be spared, that if there be any salvation for him, God will work it out without his fear or trembling: he that believes God's election so absolute,

1 John
iii. 3.

that himself hath nothing to do in the business; whilst he expects mercy, makes himself incapable of it; and though he acknowledge a resurrection, lives as though he looked to be annihilated. Certainly he that expects God should send him a fruitful harvest, will himself manure the ground; he that hopes will labour; according to that, 1 John iii. 3, "He that hath this hope in him purifies himself," &c. So that whosoever relies on God for salvation, and in the midst of his hopes stands idle, and walks after his own lusts, by his very actions confutes his thoughts, and will not in a manner suffer God to have elected him, by going on in such reprobate courses.

[Gen. iv.
13.]

Lastly, if it be this confident walking after our own lusts, which is here the expression of atheism, then here is a comfort for some fearful sinners, who finding themselves not yet taken up quite from a licentious life, suspect, and would be in danger to despair of themselves as atheists. It is a blessed tenderness to feel every sin in ourselves at the greatest advantage; to aggravate and represent it to our conscience in the horridest shape; but there is a care also to be had, that we give not ourselves over as desperate; Cain lied when he said his sin was greater than could be either borne or forgiven. When the physicians have given one over, *αἱ φύσεις ἰατροὶ νούσωσι*¹, nature hath its spring and plunge, and sometimes quits and overcomes the disease. If thou art in this dangerous walk, and strivest and heavest, and canst not get out of it, yet sorrow not as one without hope: this very regret and reluctancy, this striving and plunging is a good symptom. If thou wilt continue with a good courage, and set thyself to it to the purpose, be confident thou shalt overcome the difficulty. If this sin be a walking, then every stop is a cessation, every check a degree to integrity, every godly thought or desire a pawn from God that He will give thee strength to victory: and if thou do but nourish and cherish every such reluctancy, every such gracious motion in thyself, thou mayest with courage expect a gracious calm deliverance out of these storms and tempests. And let us all labour, and endeavour, and pray that we may be loosed from these toils and gins, and engagements of our

¹ Joan. Philoponus, i. de Anima.

own lusts, and being entered into a more religious severe course here, than the atheism of our ways would counsel us to, we may obtain the end, and rest, and consummation, and reward of our course hereafter.

Now to Him which hath elected us, &c.

SERMON XXX.

1 TIM. i. 15.

Of whom I am the chief.

1 Tim. iv.
11.
Gal. vi.
14.

THE chief business of our Apostle St. Paul in all his Epistles is, what the main of every preacher ought to be, exhortation. There is not one doctrinal point but contains a precept to our understanding to believe it, nor moral discourse, but effectually implies an admonishment to our wills to practise it. Now these exhortations are proposed either vulgarly in the downright garb of precept, as, "These things command and teach," &c., or in a more artificial, obscure, enforcing way of rhetoric, as, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ, whereby the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world;" which though in words it seems a protestation of St. Paul's own resolution, yet in effect is a most powerful exhortatory to every succeeding Christian to glory only in the cross of Christ, and on it to crucify both the world and himself. This method of reducing St. Paul to exhortation I observe to you for the clearing of my text. For this whole verse at the first view seems only a mere thesis or point of belief, that Christ came into the world to save sinners, illustrated and applied by the speaker as one, and the chief of the number of those sinners to be saved. But it contains a most rhetorical powerful exhortation to both understanding and will; to believe this faithful saying, "that Christ came," &c. and to accept, lay hold of, and with all our might to embrace and apply to each of ourselves this great mercy, toward this great salvation bestowed on sinners who can with humility confess their sins, and with faith lay hold on the promise. And this is the business of the verse,

and the plain matter of this obscure double exhortation to every man's understanding, that he believe "that Christ," &c.; to every man's affections, that he humble himself, and teach his heart, and that his tongue, to confess, Of all sinners, &c. This text shall not be divided into parts—which were to disorder and distract the significancy of a proposition—but into several considerations; for so it is to be conceived either absolutely as a profession of St. Paul of himself; and there we will enquire whether and how Paul was the chief of all sinners: secondly, respectively to us, for whom this form of confessing the state, and applying the salvation of sinners to ourselves is set down.

And first, whether and how Paul was the chief of all sinners; where we are to read him in a double estate, converted and unconverted, expressed to us by his double name Paul and Saul, Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ, Saul a persecutor, mad against the Christians; and that both these estates may be contained in the text, although penned by Paul regenerated, may appear, in that the pronoun ἐγὼ, I, signifying the whole complete person of Paul, restrains not the speech to his present being only, but considers also what he had been; more especially set down at the thirteenth verse, "who was [ver. 13.] before a blasphemer," &c. So then Paul in his Saul-ship being a blasphemer, a persecutor and injurious, and in sum, a most violent, perverse, malicious unbeliever, was a chief sinner, ranked in the front of the devil's army; and this needs no further proof or illustration. Yet seeing that that age of the world had brought forth many other of the same strain of violent unbelief, nothing inferior to Saul, as may appear by those many that were guilty of Christ's death (as Saul in person was not), and those that so madly stoned St. Stephen whilst Saul only "kept the witnesses' clothes," and as the text speaks, "was consenting unto his death;" seeing, I say, that others of that age equalled, if not exceeded Saul's guilt, how can he be said above all other sinners to be the chief? I think we shall not wrest or enlarge the text beside or beyond the meaning of the Holy Ghost or Apostle, if in answer unto this we say that there is intended not so much the greatness of his sins above all sinners in the world, but the greatness of the miracle in

Acts vii.
58.
viii. 1.

converting so great a sinner into so great a saint and Apostle. So that the words shall run, Of all sinners that Christ came into the world to save, and then prefer to such an eminence, I am the chief, or as the word primarily signifies, *πρῶτος εἰμι*, I am the first, i. e. Paul was the chief of all converts, and Paul was the first that from so great a persecutor of Christ was changed into so great, so glorious an Apostle. For so it follows in the verses next after my text, "For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Christ Jesus might shew forth all long-suffering," &c. The issue of all is this, that Saul unconverted was a very great sinner, yet not the greatest of sinners absolutely, but for aught we read in the New Testament, the greatest and first that was called from such a degree of infidelity, a blasphemous, a persecutor, to so high a pitch of salvation, a saint, an Apostle, yea, and greater than an Apostle; whence the observation is, that though Saul were, yet every blasphemous sinner cannot expect to be called from the depth of sin to regeneracy and salvation. Although Saul being *πρῶτος ἁμαρτωλῶν*, "the chief of sinners," was called and saved; yet Saul was also in another sense, for aught we read, *πρῶτος*, and perhaps the last that from so great a riot of sin obtained so great salvation. Wherefore, O sinner, be not presumptuous from Paul's example, but from Paul's single example begin to suspect thy state, and fear that such a miracle of salvation shall not be afforded thee. There hath been an opinion of late revived, perhaps original among the Romans, that the greatest sinner is the more likely object of God's mercy, or subject of His grace, than the mere moral man, whom either natural fear, or the like, not spiritual respects, hath restrained from those outrages of sin. The being of this opinion in the primitive Romans, and the falseness of it, is sufficiently proved by that exhortation of St. Paul, Rom. vi. 1. "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid," in answer to some, who, hearing that Christ came into the world to save sinners, thought that the excess of sin was the best qualification and only motive to provoke and deserve a more abundant grace and certain salvation. As if that Spirit which once, to manifest its power, called Saul, in the midst of his madness breathing out threatenings

and slaughters against the Church, would not call any but those who had prepared themselves by the same degree of madness; but required that men should make themselves almost devils that they might be called into Christians; as if that God which could out of stones, could not also out of men raise up children unto Abraham; as if that Christ which raised up Lazarus, being dead four days, and as they thought stinking in his grave, could not as easily have healed him whilst he was yet alive: whereas we read that Christ dealt more on the cures of the impotent than resurrections of the dead; that is, in a spiritual application, healed more from the bed of languishment of their weaknesses and diseases, than He raised out of the graves of trespasses and sins; though some also hath He out of death quickened, to exalt the power and miracle of His mercy. Yet hath not this doctrine too been most confidently maintained among some of our times? That there is more hope of the debauched man, that he shall be called or saved, than of the mere moral, honest man, who yet is in the state of unregeneracy. Have not some men, defining this moral man by the formal hypocrite, set him in the greatest opposition to heaven? As if that degree of innocence, or rather not being extremely sinful, which a moral care of our ways may bestow on us, were a greater hindrance than promotion toward the state of grace, and the natural man were so much the further from God, the nearer he were to goodness, and no man could hope to come to heaven but he that had knocked at hell gates. I confess indeed that the Holy Ghost, where He means to inhabit, hath no need of pains to prepare Him a room, but can at His first knock open and cleanse, adorn and beautify the most uncouth, ugly, and unsavoury heart in the world. That omnipotent convincing Spirit can at the same instant strike the most obdurate heart, and soften it, and where it once enters cannot be repulsed by the most sturdy habituate sin or devil. I confess likewise, that some have been thus rather snatched than called, like the fire-brands out of the fire, and by an ecstasy of the Spirit inwardly in a minute changed from incarnate devils into incarnate saints. So was Mary dispossessed of seven devils, who was after so highly promoted in Christ's favour, that

[Mat. iii.
9.]
John xi.
39.]

[Luke viii.
2.]

Mark
xvi. 9.
[Luke viii.
27 sqq.]

she had the honour to be the first witness of the resurrection. So that Gadarene who had entrenched and fortified himself among the tombs, and was garrisoned with an army of devils, so that he brake fetters and chains, and could not be tamed or kept in any compass, yet in a minute at Christ's word sent forth a legion of fiends sufficient to people and destroy a colony of swine. And so was Paul in my text, in a minute at Christ's call delivered of a multitude of blasphemous malicious spirits, and straight became the joy of angels, the Apostle of the Gentiles. Yet meantime, these miraculous but rarer examples must not prescribe and set up, must not become a rule and encourage any one to Saul's madness on confidence of Paul's conversion, to a more impetuous course of sinning, that he may become a more glorious saint. It is a wrong way to heaven to dig into the deep, and a brutish arrogance to hope that God will the more eagerly woo us, the further our sins have divorced us from Him. If some, as hath been said, have been caught or stricken in the height of their rebellions, or in the fulness of the evil spirit called to a wane,—as diseases in the ἀκμή, or top-pitch, are wont to decay and weaken into health again,—if there have been some of these, as my Apostle, raised from the depth of sin, as Lazarus from the stench of the grave, yet these in respect of others more softly and ordinarily called, are found few in number; and such as were appointed for the miracles as well as the objects of God's mercy. Hence it is that a strange disorder hath most times accompanied this extraordinary conversion of more violent outrageous sinners. Our Apostle—to go no further—was to be cast into a trance, and his regeneration not to be accomplished without a kind of death and resurrection, whereas others who are better morally qualified, or rather are less hardened in the sins of ungeneracy, do answer at the softest knock or whisperingest call of the Spirit, and at His beckon will come after Him. More might be said of this point, how St. Paul was most notably converted; that he had the alleviation of ignorance, for which cause, as he says himself, he found mercy, and that others are not probably to expect the like miracle, who have not those insuperable prepossessions from custom and religion; but that this

[1 Tim. i.
13.]

is not the business of the text, but a *præcognoscendum* or passage to the clearing of it. Briefly therefore to conclude this note, Paul is the chief example mentioned in Scripture, and there be not many, though some more, that were called from the height of impiety, from the gall of bitterness, to this mystical third heaven, or so high degree of saint and apostle. The more ordinary course of God's proceeding—if we may possibly judge of the decree by events and examples—is to call such to the state of grace, and so consequently of glory, who have passed their unregeneracy most innocently, and kept themselves least polluted from the stains of habituate wickedness, that is, have lived as much as natural men can do, in the plainest, honestest course of morality, it being presupposed that among all other moral virtues they have purchased humility, the best—if there be any preparative—for the receiving of grace. Meanwhile we are not to be mistaken, as if we thought God's purposes tied to man's good behaviour, or man's moral goodness to woo and allure God's Spirit, as that the Almighty is not equally able to sanctify the foulest soul by His converting grace, and the less polluted; or that He requires man's preparation: but our position is, that in ordinary charitable reason we ought to judge more comfortably, and hope more confidently of a mere moral man naturally more careful of his ways, that he shall be both called and saved, that God will with His Spirit perfect and crown his morally good, though imperfect endeavours, than of another more debauched sinner utterly negligent of the commands of either God or nature. Which position I have in brief proved, though nothing so largely as I might, in confutation of them who do utterly condemn unregenerate morality, and deject it below the lowest degree of profaneness, as if they would teach a man his way to heaven by boasting arrogantly, what Paul converted confesses humbly, I am the nearer to Christ's salvation, because of all sinners I am the chief. The use in brief of this thesis shall be for those who not as yet find the power of the regenerating Spirit in them,—for I am to fear many of my auditors may be in this case, and I pray God they feel, and work, and pray themselves out of it,—the use, I say, is for those who are not yet full possessors of the Spirit,

to labour to keep their unregeneracy spotless from the greater offence, that if they are not yet called to the preferment of converts and saints, the second part of heaven, that earthly city of God, that yet they will live orderly in that lower regiment, wherein they yet remain, and be subject to the law of nature, till it shall please God to take them into a new commonwealth under the law of grace, to improve their natural abilities to the height, and bind their hands and hearts from the practice and study of outrageous sins by those ordinary restraints which nature will afford us; such as are a good disposition, education, and the like; not to leave and refer all to the miraculous working of God, and to increase our sins for the magnifying of the virtue in recalling us. God requires not this glory at our hands that we should peremptorily over-damn ourselves, that He may be the more honoured in saving us. His mercy is more known to the world than to need this woeful foil to illustrate it. God is not wont to rake hell for converts, to gather devils to make saints of; the kingdom of heaven would suffer great violence, if only such should take it. If Saul were infinitely sinful before he proved an Apostle,—though by the way we hear him profess he had lived in all good conscience,—yet expect not thou the same miracle, nor think that the excess of sins is the cue that God ordinarily takes to convert us. The fathers in an obedience to the discipline and pedagogy of the old law, possessed their souls in patience, expecting the prophesied approach of the new—did not by a contempt of Moses precipitate and hasten the coming of the Messias. Cornelius lived a long while devoutly, and gave much alms, till at last God called him, and put him in a course to become a Christian: and do thou, if thou art not yet called, wait the Lord's leisure in a sober moral conversation, and fright not Him from thee with unnatural abominations. God is not likely to be wooed by those courses which nature loathes, or to accept them whom the world is ashamed of. In brief, remember Saul and Cornelius; Saul, that he, not many, were called from a professed blasphemer; Cornelius, that before he was called he prayed to God alway; and do thou endeavour to deserve the like mercy, and then in thy prayer confess thine undeserv-

Acts
xxiii. 1.

Acts x. 2.

ing, and petition grace, as grace, that is not as our merit, but as His free-will favour, not as the desert of our morality, but a stream from the bounty of His mercy, who—we may hope—will crown His common graces with the fulness of His Spirit. And now, O powerful God, on those of us which are yet unregenerate, bestow Thy restraining grace, which may curb and stop our natural inordinacy, and by a sober, careful, continent life, prepare us to a better capability of Thy sanctifying Spirit, wherewith in good time Thou shalt establish and seal us up to the day of redemption. And thus much concerning Saul unconverted, how of all sinners he was the chief, not absolutely, that he surpassed the whole world in rankness of sin, but respectively to his later state, that few or none are read to have been translated from such a pitch of sin to saintship. Now follows the second consideration of him being proceeded Paul, i. e. converted, and then the question is, whether and how Paul converted may be said the chief of all sinners. [Eph. iv. 30.]

It were too speculative a depth for a popular sermon to discuss the inherence and condition of sin in the regenerate; the business will be brought home more profitably to our practice if we drive it to this issue, that Paul in this place, intending by his own example to direct others how to believe the truth, and embrace and fasten on the efficacy of Christ's incarnation, hath no better motive to incite himself and others toward it, than a recognition of his sins, that is, a survey of the power of sin in him before, and a sense of the relics of sin in him since his conversion. Whence the note is, that the greatness of one's sins makes the regenerate man apply himself more fiercely to Christ. This faithful saying was therefore to Paul worthy of all acceptance, because of all sinners he was the chief. St. Paul, as every regenerate man, is to be observed in a treble posture, either casting his eyes backward, or calling them in upon himself, or else looking forward and aloof; and accordingly is to be conceived in a treble meditation, either of his life past, or present state, or future hopes. In the first posture and meditation you may see, first, Paul alone, who was before a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious; secondly, all the regenerate together. "For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin did work [Rom. vii. 5.]

in our members," &c., and many the like. In the second posture and meditation you may observe him retracting an error, deprecating a temptation with earnest and repeated intercessions, fighting with and harassing himself, "beating down his body, and keeping it in subjection, lest while he preached to others he himself might be a cast-away." In the third posture we find him, where after a long disguise he cries out, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." And again most evidently, "Forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching out to those things which are before, I press toward the mark," &c., like a racer in the heat of his course whose eyes desire to anticipate his feet, and enjoy the goal before he reach it. These three carriagees of the regenerate man fully prove our observation: for if either of the two former sights could afford any content; if either his former or present state did not sufficiently terrify him, he would not be so eager on the third, it being the folly of human pride and self-love to contemn any foreign aid as long as it finds either appearance or hope of domestic. If in the view of his former life he should find any thing either good, or not extremely bad and sinful, he would under-prize the mercy of that Saviour that redeemed him from so poor a guilt; if he could observe in his present state any natural firmness or stability, any inherent purity, any essential justice, he might possibly sacrifice to his own nets, and reckoning himself in perfect peace with God, neither invoke and seek, nor acknowledge a Mediator. But when in his former life he shall find nothing but the matter and cause of horror and amazement, nothing but hideous, ghastly affrightments, yea, and a body of damnation: when in hope to mend himself, and ease his fears, he shall fly to the comfort of his present converted state, and yet there also espy many thorns of temptations, how can he but be frightened out of himself? How can he but fly from the scene of those his torments, and seek out and importune the mercy of a Saviour, which may deliver him out of all his fears? After the example of our Apostle in my text, where he does more peremptorily apprehend Christ, and more bodily believe, "that He came into the world to save sinners, because of all sinners he was chief," making his own sinfulness—being the object and ex-

Acts xxiii.
[5.]

2 Cor. xii.
7.

1 Cor. ix.
27.

Rom. vii.
25.

Phil. iii.
13.

[Hab. i.
16.]

2 Cor.
xii. 7.

ternal motive of God's mercy—an argument and internal motive of his own faith and confidence. The plain meaning of this thesis is that among men things are not always valued according to the merit of their nature, for then each commodity should be equally prized by all men, and the man in health should bestow as much charges on physic as the diseased: but each thing bears its several estimation by its usefulness, and the riches of every merchandize is increased accordingly as men to whom it is proffered do either use or want it. Moreover, this usefulness is not to be reckoned of according to truth, but opinion, not according to men's real wants, but according to the sense which they have of their wants; so a man distracted, because he hath not so much reason about him as to observe his disease, will contemn hel-lebore, or any other the most precious recipe for this cure: and generally no man will hasten to the physician, or justly value his art and drugs, but he whom misery hath taught the use of them. So then unless a man have been in some spiritual danger, and by the converting Spirit be instructed into a sense and apprehension of it, he will not sufficiently observe the benefit and use of a deliverer: unless he feels in himself some stings of the relics of his sin, some pricks of the remaining Amorite, he will not take notice of the want and necessity which he hath of Christ's mediation. But when he shall with a tenderness of memory survey the guilt of his former state, from the imputation, not importunity whereof he is now justified, when he shall still feel within him "the buffetings of Satan," and sensibly observe [2 Cor. xii. 7.] himself not fully sanctified, then, and not before, will he with a zealous earnestness apprehend the profit, yea, necessity of a Saviour, whose assistance so nearly concerns him. The second ground of this position is that an extraordinary undeserved deliverance is by an afflicted man received with some suspicion: the consideration of the greatness of the benefit makes him doubt of the truth of it, and he will scarce believe so important an happiness befallen him, because his misery could neither expect nor hope it. Hence upon the first notice of it he desires to ascertain it unto his sense, by a sudden possession of it, and not at all to defer the enjoying of that mercy which his former misery made infinitely "worthy

of all acceptation." Thus may you see a shipwrecked man recovered to some refuge, cling about, and almost incorporate himself unto it, because the fortune of his life depends on that succour. The new regenerate man finding in the Scripture the promise of a Redeemer, which shall free him from those engagements which his former bankrupt estate had plunged him in, cannot delay so great an happiness, but with a kind of tender fear and filial trembling, runs and strives, (as

Mat. xx. 4. the disciples to the sepulchre), to assure his necessitous soul of this acceptable salvation: even sets upon his Saviour with a kind of violence, and will seem to distrust His promise, till His seal shall authorize and confirm it. Thus did the greatness of the work of the unexpected resurrection beget in

John xx. 25. Thomas a suspicion and incredulity, "I will not believe," &c., where our charity may conjecture, that he above all the rest was not absolutely resolved not to believe the resurrection, but that he being absent at the first apparition, would not take so important a miracle upon trust, but desired to have that demonstrated to his sense, which did so nearly concern his faith; that so by putting his finger into the print of the nails, and thrusting his hand into His side, he might almost consubstantiate and unite himself unto his Saviour, and at once be assured of the truth, and partake of the profit of the resurrection. Hear but the voice of the spouse, and any further proofs shall be superfluous, where in violence and jealousy of love she importunes the eternal presence of the

Cant. viii. 6. Beloved, "Set me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thine arm, for love is strong as death, jealousy as cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire which hath a vehement flame." She had before often lost her beloved, which made her so fiercely fasten on him, for having roused him, *ruit in amplexus*, she rushed into his embraces, she held him and would not let him go. Thus you see the jealousy and eagerness of love produced by either a former loss, or present more than ordinary want of the object, both which how pertinent they are to the regenerate man, either observing his past sins, or instant temptations, this discourse hath already made manifest.

Cant. iii. 4. The use of this thesis (to wit, that the greatness of one's sins makes the regenerate man apply himself more fiercely to Christ) is first, by way of caution, that we mistake not

a motive for an efficient, an impulsive for a principal cause. For where we say, 'it makes him apply himself,' &c., we mean not that the increase of sin produces faith formally, but only inciteth to believe by way of instruction, by shewing us what distress we are in, and consequently in what a necessity of a deliverer. The meditation of our sinful courses may disclose our misery, not redress it; may explore, not mend a sinner, like a touchstone to try, not any way to alter him. It is the controlling Spirit which must effectually renew our spirits, and lead us to the Christ which our sins told us we had need of. The sense of sin may rouse the soul, but it is the Spirit of God that lays the toils; the feeling of our guilt may beat the waters, but it is the great fisher of our souls which spreads the nets, which entraps us as we are on our way to hell, and leads us captive to salvation. The mere gripings of our conscience being not produced by any pharreacon of the Spirit, but by some distemper arising from sin, what anxiety doth it cause within us! what pangs and twinges to the soul! O Lord, do Thou regenerate us, and then Thy Holy Spirit shall sanctify even our sins unto our good; and if Thy grace may lead us, our sins shall pursue and drive us unto Christ! Secondly, by way of character, how to distinguish a true convert from a false. A man which from an inveterate desperate malady shall meet with a miraculous unexpected cure, will naturally have some art of expression above an ordinary joy; you shall see him in an ecstasy of thanksgiving and exultancy, whilst another, which was never in that distress, quietly enjoys the same health, and gives thanks softly by himself to his preserver. So is it in the distresses of the soul, which if they have been excessive, and almost beyond hope of recovery, as the miracle must, so will the expression of this deliverance be somewhat extraordinary. The soul which from a good moral or less sinful natural estate, is *magis immutata quam genita*, rather changed than regenerate into a spiritual, goes through this business without any great noise, the Spirit entering into it in a still small voice, or at a breathing: but when a robust-^{John xx.}ous obdurate sinner shall be rather apprehended than called,^{22.} when the sea shall be commanded to give up his shipwrecked, and the sepulchre to restore her dead, the soul

surely which thus escapeth shall not be content with a mean expression, but will practise all the halleluiahs and magnificats which the triumphant liturgies of the saints can afford it. Wherefore, I say, if any one, out of a full violent course of sinning conceive himself converted and regenerated, let him examine what a degree of spiritual exultancy he hath attained to, and if he find it but mean, and slight, and perfunctory, let him somewhat suspect, that he may the more confirm the evidence of his calling. Now this spiritual exultancy of the regenerate consists both in a solemn humiliation of himself, and a spiritual rejoicing in God his Saviour; both expressed in Mary's Magnificat, where she specifies in the midst of her joy "the lowliness of His handmaid," and in St. Paul's victory-song over death. So that if the conversion of an inordinate sinner be not accompanied with unwonted joy and sorrow, with a godly sense of his past distress, and a godly triumph for his delivery; if it be not followed with a violent eagerness to fasten on Christ; finally, if there be not somewhat above ordinary in the expression, then I counsel not to distrust, but fear, that is, with a solicitous, not suspicious trembling, to labour to "make thy calling and election sure:" to pray to that Holy Spirit to strike our hearts with a measure of holy joy and holy sorrow, some way proportionable to the size of those sins, which in our unregeneracy reigned in us; and for those of us whom our sins have separated far from Him, but His grace hath called home to Him, that He will not suffer us to be content with a distance, but draw us close unto Himself, make us "press toward the mark," and fasten ourselves on that Saviour, which hath redeemed us from the body and guilt of this so great death. The third use is, of comfort and confirmation to some tender souls who are incorporate into Christ, yet finding not in themselves that excessive measure of humiliation which they observe in others, suspect their own state, and infinitely grieve that they can grieve no more. Whereas this doctrine being observed will be an allay to their sorrow, and wipe some unnecessary tears from their eyes. For if the greatness of sin past, or the plentiful relics of sin remaining, do require so great a measure of sorrow, to expiate the one, and subdue the other; if it be a deliverance from an habituate servitude

[Luke i.
48.]
[1 Cor. xv.
55—57.]

[2 Pet. i.
10.]

[Philipp.
iii. 14.]

[Rom. vii.
24.]

to all manner of sin, which provokes this extraordinary pains of expression; then certainly they who have been brought up with the Spirit, which were from their baptism never wholly deprived of it, need not to be bound over to this trade of sorrow, need not to be set apart to that perpetual humiliation which a more stubborn sin or devil is wont to be cast out by. I doubt not but a soul educated in familiarity with the Spirit, may at once enjoy herself and it; and so that if it have an humble conceit of itself, and a filial of God, may in earth possess God with some clearness of look, some serenity of affections, some alacrity of heart, and tranquillity of spirit. God delights not in the torment of His children, (though some are so to be humbled,) yea, He delights not in such burnt offerings as they bestow upon Him, who destroy, and consume, and sacrifice themselves; but "the Lord's de- [Psalm cxlvii. 11.] light is in them that fear Him" filially, "and put their trust," i. e. assurance, confidence, "in His mercy;" in them that rejoice, that make their service a pleasure, not an affliction, and thereby possess heaven before they come to it. It is observed in husbandry that soil, laid on hard, barren, starved ground doth improve it, and at once deface and enrich it, which yet in ground naturally fruitful, and kept in heart, and good case, is esteemed unnecessary and burthensome. You need not the application. Again, the husbandman can mend a dry, stubborn, wayward, fruitless earth, by overflowing of it, and on such indeed is his ordinary requisite discipline, to punish it for its amendment. But there is a ground otherwise well tempered, which they call a weeping ground, whence continually water soaks out, and this proves seldom fruitful (if our learned husbandmen observe aright), whereof there is sometime need of draining, as well as watering. The application is that your soul, which either hath been naturally dry and barren, or else overwrought in the business of the world, needs a flood of tears to soften and purge it. But the well-tempered soul, which hath never been out of heart, but hath always had some inward life, some fatness of, and nourishment from the Spirit, is rather oppressed than improved by such an overflow. The Christian is thereby much hindered in his progress of good works, and cannot serve the Lord with alacrity, that so perpetually hangs

down his head like a bulrush. Wherefore, the country rule is, that that ground is best which is mellow, which being crushed will break but not crumble, dissolve, but not excessively. Hence, I say, the habituate believer need not suspect his estate, if he find not in himself such an extremity of violent grief and humiliation as he observes in others; knowing that in him such a measure of tears would both soil the face of his devotion, and clog the exercise of it. His best mediocrity will be to be habitually humbled, but actually lively and alacrious in the ways of godliness; not to be too rigid and severe a tyrant over his soul, but to keep it in a temper of Christian softness, tender under the hand of God, and yet man-like and able both in the performance of God's worship and his own calling. And whensoever we shall find ourselves in either extreme, either too much hardened or too much melted, too much elevated or too much dejected, then to pray to that Holy Spirit so to fashion the temper of our souls, that we neither fail in humbling ourselves in some measure for our sins, nor yet too cowardly deject and cast down ourselves, below the courage, and comfort, and spiritual rejoicing which He hath prescribed us. "O Holy Lord, we are the greatest of sinners, and therefore we humble ourselves before Thee, but Thou hast sent Thy Christ into the world to save sinners, and therefore we raise up our spirits again, and praise and magnify Thy Name." And thus much of this point, and in brief, of the first consideration of these words, to wit, as they are absolutely a profession of Paul himself, to which end we beheld him in his double estate, converted and unconverted. In his unconverted state we found, though a very great sinner, yet not absolutely greater than those times brought forth, and therefore we were to think of him relatively to his future estate, and so we found him the greatest sinner that ever was called in the New Testament into so glorious a saint. Whence we observe the rarity of such conversions, that though Saul were, yet every blasphemous sinner could not expect to be called from the depth of sin to regeneracy and salvation: and this we proved both against the ancient Romans and modern censors of morality, and applied it to the care which we ought to have of keeping our unregeneracy spotless from any reigning sin. Afterward we came

to Paul converted, where we balked the discourse of the condition of sin in the regenerate, and rather observed the effect of it; and in it, that the greatness of his sin made (as Paul, so) every regenerate man more eagerly to fasten on Christ. Which being proved by a double ground, we applied first, by way of caution, how that proposition was to be understood; 2. by way of character, how a great sinner may judge of his sincere certain conversion; 3. by way of comfort to others, who find not the effects of humiliation and the like in themselves, in such measure as they see in others; and so we have passed through the first consideration of these words, being conceived absolutely as St. Paul's profession of himself, we should come to the other consideration, as they are set down to us as a pattern or form of confessing the estate, and applying the salvation of sinners to ourselves, which business requiring the pains, and being worthy the expense of an entire hour, we must defer to a second exercise.

Now the God which hath created us, hath elected, redeemed, called, justified us, will sanctify us in His time, will prosper this His ordinance, will direct us by His grace to His glory. To Him be ascribed due the honour, the praise, the glory, the dominion, which through all ages of the world have been given to Him that sitteth on the throne, to the Holy Spirit, and Lamb for evermore.

PARS SECUNDA.

SERMON XXXI.

I TIM. i. 15.

Of whom I am the chief.

IN all human writings and learning, there is a kind of poverty and emptiness, which makes them when they are beheld by a judicious reader look starved and crest-fallen: their speeches are rather puffed up than filled, they have a kind of boasting and ostentation in them, and promise more substance and matter to the ear, than they are able to perform really to the understanding: whence it falls out, that we are more affected with them at the first hearing, and, if the orator be clear in his expression, we understand as much at the first recital, as we are able to do at the hundredth repetition. But there is a kind of excellency in the Scripture, a kind of *ὑψος*, or sublimity above all other writings in the world. The reading of every section of it leaves a sting in the mind, and a perpetual conceit of a still imperfect understanding of it. An intelligent man at every view finds in it a fresh mystery, and still perceives that there is somewhat beyond, not yet attained to: like men digging in mines, the deeper he dives he finds the greatest treasure, and meets with that under ground, which looking on the outward turf, or surface, he never imagined to have been there. This I observe unto you, to shew you the riches both of all, and especially of this Scripture, whereinto the deeper I dig, the more ore I find: and having already bestowed one hour in the discussing of it, without any violence, or wresting, or wire-drawing, find plenty of new materials.

We have already handled the words at large in one consideration, as they are a profession of Paul himself; I will not repeat you the particular occurrents. We now without any more delay of preface come to the second consideration of

them, as they are spoken by Paul respectively to us, i. e. as they are prescribed us for a form of confessing the estate, and applying the salvation of sinners unto ourselves, teaching each of us for a close of our faith and devotion to confess, "Of all," &c.

Where first, the cadence or manner how Paul falls into these words, is worthy to be both observed and imitated: the chief and whole business of this verse being the truth, the acceptable truth, of Christ's Incarnation, with the end of it, the saving of sinners. He can no sooner name this word sinners, but his exceeding melting tenderness abruptly falls off, and subsumes, "Of all sinners," &c. 'If there be any thing that concerns sinners, I am sure I have my part in that, for of that number I am the chief.' The note by the way briefly is, that "a tender conscience never hears of the name of sinner, but straight applies it to itself." It is noted by Aristotle^a, the master of human learning, that that rhetoric was very thin and unprofitable, very poor and like to do little good upon men's affections, which insisted on general matters, and descended not to particulars, as if one should discourse of sin in general and sinners, without reference to this or that particular sin or sinner; and the reason of his note was, because men are not moved or stirred with this eloquence. The intemperate person could hear a declamation against vice, and never be affected with it, unless it stooped to take notice of his particular enormities; and so is it with other criminals. This reason of his was grounded upon the obduracy of men's hearts, which would think that nothing concerned them, but what was framed against the individual offender, all such being as dull and unapt to understand any thing that being applied might move or prick them, as men are to take notice of a common national judgment, which we never duly weigh, till we smart under it in particular. This senselessness may also seem to have been amongst St. Paul's Corinthians, which made him use Aristotle's counsel in driving his speech home to their private persons. Where [1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.] telling them that neither fornicators nor idolaters, and the like, shall inherit the kingdom of God; for fear they should not be so tender consciented as of their own accords to apply

^a [Rhetoric., lib. ii. c. 22.]

these sins to themselves, and read themselves guilty in that glass; he is fain to supply that office, and plainly tell them what otherwise perhaps they would not have conceived, “and such were some of you.” This senseless hard-heartedness or backwardness in applying the either commands or threatenings of the law to one’s self, is by the Apostle called, *νοῦς ἀδόκιμος*, which we ordinarily translate a reprobate mind, but may be brought to signify, a mind without judgment, that hath no faculty of discerning, that cannot in a general threatening observe something that may concern the danger of his particular state: or, as it may be rendered, a mind without sense, not apprehensive of those things which are manifestly proposed to them, like those walking idols described by the Psalmist, “Eyes have they and see not, ears and hear not, noses and smell not,” only beautiful carcasses of Christians, which have nothing but their shape and motion to persuade you that they live: unless we add this most unhappy symptom, which indicates a state more wretched far than death itself, that there is strength and vigour to oppose recovery, that amidst death there yet survives a hatred and antipathy to life. In such a soul as this there is a perpetual reaction, and impatience of the presence of any thing which may trash, encumber, or oppress it: a judgment or denunciation is but cast away upon it, it shall be sure to return unprofitably, and neither move nor mend it. This hath been, and much more might be observed to you, of the carriage of the hard, stupid heart toward either Scripture or preacher, to the plain opening of this point; for you shall more clearly understand the tender heart by observing the obdurate, and learn to be affected aright with God’s law or punishments, by knowing and hating the opposite stubborn senselessness. Now in brief, this tender heart in the discovery of a sin, or denunciation of a judgment needs not a particular, “Thou art the man,” to bring it home to his person. The more wide and general the proposal is, the more directly and effectually is this stricken with it. In a common satire, or declamation against sin in general, it hath a sudden art of logic to anatomize and branch this sin in general into all its parts; and then to lay each of them to its own charge; it hath a skill of making every passage in the Scripture a

ver. 11.

[Rom. i.
28.]

[Ps. cxv.
5, 6.]

glass to espy some of her deformities in, and cannot so much as mention that ordinary name of sin or sinner, without an extraordinary affection, and unrequired accusation of itself, "Of all sinners," &c. The plain reason of this effect in the tender heart is, first, because it is tender. The soft and accurate parts of a man's body do suffer without reaction, i. e. do yield at the appearance of an enemy, and not any way put forward to repel him. These being fixed on by a bee, or the like, are easily penetrated by the sting, and are so far from resisting of it, that they do in a manner draw it to them, and by their free reception allure it to enter so far, that the owner can seldom ever recover it back again. Whereas on a dead carcass, a thick or callous member of the body, a bee may fix and not forfeit her sting. So doth a tender heart never resist or defend itself against a stroke, but attenuates itself, lays wide open its pores, to facilitate its entrance, seems to woo a threatening, to prick, and sting, and wound it sharply, as if it rejoiced in, and did even court those torments which the sense of sin or judgment thus produced.

Again, a tender heart ordinarily meets with more blows, more oppressions than any other: its very passiveness provokes every one's malice; the fly and dust, as if it were by a kind of natural instinct, drive directly at the eye, and no member about you shall be oftener rubbed or disordered than that which is raw or distempered; the reason being, because that which is not worthy notice to another part is an affliction to this, and a mote which the hand observes not, will torment the eye. So is it with the conscience, whose tenderness doth tempt every piece of Scripture to afflict it, and is more encumbered with the least atom of sin or threat, than the more hardened sinner is with a beam or mountain.

Thirdly, one that hath any solemn business to do will not pass by any opportunity of means which may advantage him in it. One that hath a search to make will not slip any evidence which may concur to the helping of his discovery; one that hath any treatise to write will be ready to apply any thing that ever he reads to his theme or purpose. Now the search, the discourse, the whole employment of a tender heart is the enquiry after the multitude of its sins, and in sum, the aggravation of each particular guilt, in and against

itself, that so having sufficiently loaded itself, and being tired with the weight and burden of its sins, it may in some measure perform the condition which Christ requires of them which come to Him, and be prepared to receive that ease
 Mat. xi. 26. which Christ hath promised to the "weary and heavy laden."

So then if the tender conscience doth never repel, or revereberate any mention of sin, but doth draw out the sting of it to its length, if it be much affected with the least atom of sin, and therefore meets with frequent disorders, if, lastly, it make its employment to gather out of all the Scripture, those places which may advantage her in the sight and sense of her sins; then certainly doth she never hear of the name of sinner, but straight she applies it to herself, which was the point we undertook to shew.

The direct use of this proposition is for a κρίσις, or judgment of our estate. It is observed in the body that the rest of the senses may be distempered and lost without impairing of it, but only the touch cannot, which therefore they call the sense of life, because that part or body which is deprived of feeling, is also at death's door, and hath no more life in it, than it hath relics of this sense. So is it also in spiritual matters: of all other symptoms this of senselessness is most dangerous, and as the Greek physicians are wont to say of a desperate disease, *ὀλέθριον κάρτα λίαν*, "very very mortal." This feeling tenderness is necessary to the life of grace, and is an inseparable both effect and argument of it. Wherefore, I say, for the judgment of yourselves, observe how every piece of Scripture works upon you. If you can pass over a catalogue of sins and judgments without any regret, or reluctancy, if you can read Sodom and Gomorrah, Babylon and the harlot Jerusalem, and not be affected with their stories, if thou canst be the auditor of other men's faults without any sense or griping of thine own, if the name of sin or sinner be unto thee but as a jest or fable, not worthy thy serious notice, then fear thy affections' want of that temper, which the softening Spirit is wont to bestow where it rests, and accordingly as thou findest this tenderness increasing or waning in thee, either give thanks or pray: either give thanks for the plenty of that Spirit which thou enjoyest, or in the sense of thy wants importune it, that God will give us

softened relenting hearts, that the recital of other men's sins may move us, other men's judgments may strike us, other men's repentance melt us with a sense, with a confession, with a contrition of our own. But above all, O Holy Spirit, from hardness of heart, from an undiscerning, reprobate spirit, from a contempt, nay neglect, a not observing of Thy Word, as from the danger of hell, Good Lord deliver us.

And thus much of this point, of this effect of a tender heart, noted to you out of the cadence of the words. I now come to observe somewhat more real out of the main of the words themselves, "Of whom," &c. We find not our Apostle here complimenting with himself, either excusing or attenuating his guilt, but as it were glorying in the measure of his sins, striving for pre-eminence above all other sinners, challenging it as his right, and as eager upon the preferment, as his fellow-labourer Peter's successor for a primacy (as he professes) of all bishops, yea the whole Church; so our Apostle here, "Of all sinners I am the chief." The note briefly is this, that every one is to aggravate the measure and number of his sins against himself, and as near as he can observe how his guilt exceedeth other men's. This was St. Paul's practice and our pattern, not to be gazed on, but followed, not to be discussed, but imitated. In the discourse whereof I shall not labour to prove you the necessity of this practice, which yet I might do out of David's example in his penitential psalms, [Ps. li.; especially the fifty-first, out of Nehemiah's confession, and the like, but taking this as supposed, I shall rather mix doctrine, and reason, and use altogether, in prescribing some forms of aggravating ourselves to ourselves, yet not descending to a particular dissection of sin into all its parts, but dealing only on general heads, equally applicable to all men, briefly reducible to these two, 1. original sin, or the sin of our nature, of which we are all equally guilty; 2. personal sin, grounded in and terminated to each man's person. Nehem. ix.]

For original sin, it is the fathers' complaint, and ought more justly to be ours of these times, that there is no reckoning made of it, it is seldom thought worthy to supply a serious place in our humiliation, it is mentioned only for fashion's sake, and as it were to stop God's mouth, and to give Him satisfaction, or palliate the guilt

of our wilful rebellions, not on any real apprehension that its cure and remedy in baptism is a considerable benefit, or the remnant weakness (after the killing venom is abated) were more than a trivial disadvantage. So that we have a kind of need of original clearness of understanding, to judge of the foulness of original sin, and we cannot sufficiently conceive our loss, without some recovery of those very faculties we forfeited in it. But that we may not be wilfully blind in a matter that so imports us, that we may understand somewhat of the nature and dangerous condition of this sin, you must conceive Adam, who committed this first sin, in a double respect, either as one particular man, or as containing in his loins the whole nature of man, all mankind, which should ever come from him. Adam's particular sin, i. e. his personal disobedience is wonderfully aggravated from the fathers^b, 1. from his original justice, which God had bestowed on him; 2. from the near familiarity with God, which he enjoyed and then lost; 3. from the perpetual blessed estate, which, had it not been for this disobedience, he might for ever have lived in; 4. from the purity and integrity of his will, which was then void of all sinful desire, which otherwise might have tempted to this disobedience; 5. from the easiness of both remembering and observing the commandment, it being a short prohibition, and only to abstain from one tree, where there was such plenty besides; 6. from the nature and circumstances of the offence, by which the fathers^d do refer it to all manner of heinous sins, making it to contain a breach of almost each moral law, all which were then written in the tables of his heart, and therefore concluding it to be an aggregate or mixture of all those sins which we have since so reiterated, and so many times sinned over. So then this personal sin of Adam was of no mean size, not to be reckoned of as an every day's offence, as an ordinary breach, or the mere eating of an apple. In the next place, as Adam was no private person, but the whole human nature, so this sin is to be considered either in the root, or in the fruit, in itself, or in its effects. In itself; so all mankind, and every particular man is, and in that name must humble himself as concerned in the eating

^b S. August. De Civit. Dei, xxi. 12.

^c Ibid., lib. xiv. c. 12.

^d S. Leo Magn., p. 143. [See above, p. 289.]

of that fruit, which only Adam's teeth did fasten on; is to deem himself bound to be humbled for that pride, that curiosity, that disobedience, or whatsoever sin else can be contained in that first great transgression; and count you this nothing, to have a share in such a sin which contains such a multitude of rebellions? It is not a slight, perfunctory humiliation that can expiate, not a small labour that can destroy this monster which is so rich in heads, each to be cut off by the work of a several repentance. Now in the last place, as this sin of all mankind in Adam is considered in its effects, so it becomes to us a "body of sin and death," a natural disorder of the whole man, an hostility and enmity of the flesh against the spirit, and the parent of all sin in us, as may appear, Rom. vii. and Jam. i. 14. Which that you may have a more complete understanding of, consider it as it is ordinarily set down, consisting of three parts, 1. a natural defect, 2. a moral affection, 3. a legal guilt; i. e. a guiltiness of the breach of the law, for these three (whatsoever you may think of them) are all parts of that sin of our nature, which is in, and is to be imputed to us, called ordinarily original sin in us, to distinguish it from that first act committed by Adam, of which this is an effect. And first, that natural defect is a total loss and privation of that primitive justice, holiness and obedience, which God had furnished the creature withal; a disorder of all the powers of the soul, a darkness of the understanding, a perverseness of the will, a debility, weakness, and decay of all the senses, and in sum, a poverty and destruction, and almost a nothingness of all the powers of soul and body. And how ought we to lament this loss with all the veins of our heart! to labour for some new strain of expressing our sorrow, and in fine to petition that rich grace, which may build up all these ruins; to pray to God that His Christ may purchase and bestow on us new abilities, that the second Adam may furnish us with more durable powers and lasting graces than we had, but forfeited in the first! The following part of this sin of our nature, viz., a moral evil affection, is word for word mentioned Rom. vii. 5; for there the Greek words *παθήματα ἁμαρτιῶν*, ordinarily translated "motions of sins," and in the margin 'the passions of sins,' are more significantly to be rendered "affections of sins," i. e. by

[Rom. vii.
5.]

James i.
14.

an usual figure, sinful affections. That you may the better observe the encumbrances of this branch of this sin, which doth so overshadow the whole man, and so fence him from the beams and light of the spiritual invisible Sun, I am to tell you that the very heathen that lived without the knowledge of God, had no conversation with, and so no instruction from the Bible in this matter; that these very heathens, I say, had a sense of this part of original sin, to wit, of these evil moral lusts and affections, which they felt in themselves, though they knew not whence they sprang. Hence it is that a Greek philosopher^c out of the ancients makes a large discourse of the insatiable desire and lust which is in every man, and renders his life grievous unto him, where he useth the very same word, though with a significant epithet added to it, that St. James doth, ch. i. ver. 14. ἀπέραντος ἐπιθυμία, “infinite lust,” with which, as St. James saith, “a man is drawn away and enticed,” ἐξελλκόμενος καὶ δελεαζόμενος, so, saith he, that part of the mind in which these lusts dwell, is persuaded and drawn, or rather falls backward and forward, ἄνω καὶ κάτω μεταπίπτει καὶ ἀναπείθεται, which lust or evil concupiscence he at last defines to be^f, ἀκολασία τῷ τετριμμένῳ πίθῳ διὰ τὴν ἀπληστίαν ἀπεικασμένη, “an insatiable intemperance of the appetite, never filled with a desire,” never ceasing in the prosecution of evil; and again he calls it, περιπεφυκυίαν ἡμῖν ἕξωθεν γένεσιν^g, “our birth and nativity derived to us by our parents,” i. e. an evil affection hereditary to us, and delivered to us as a legacy at our birth and nativity: all which seems a clear expression of that original lust, whose motions they felt, and guessed at its nature. Hence is it, that it was a custom among all of them, I mean the common heathen, to use many ways of purgations, especially on their children, who at the imposition of their names were to be lustrated and purified, with a great deal of superstition and ceremony, such like as they used to drive away a plague, or a cure for an house or city. As if nature by instinct had taught them so much religion, as to acknowledge and desire to cure in every one this hereditary disease of the soul, this “plague of man’s heart,” as it is called 1 Kings viii. 38. And

^c Jamblichus, Protrept., c. xvii. p. 101.

^f Ibid., p. 102.

^g [Id. Explan. Symb., iii.] p. 136.

in sum, the whole learning of the wisest of them, (such were the moralists,) was directed to the governing and keeping in order of these evil affections, which they called the unruly citizens^h and common people of the soul, whose intemperance and disorders they plainly observed within themselves, and laboured hard to purge out, or subdue to the government of reason and virtue, which two we more fully enjoy, and more christianly call the power of grace, redeeming our souls from this body of sin. Thus have I briefly shewed you the sense that the very heathen had of this second branch of original sin, which needs therefore no farther aggravation to you but this, that they who had neither Spirit nor Scripture to instruct them, did naturally so feelingly observe and curse it, that by reason of it they esteemed their whole life but a living deathⁱ, *τίς οἶδεν εἰ τὸ ζῆν μὲν ἐστὶ καταθεῖν, τὸ καταθεῖν δὲ ζῆν*; and their body but the sepulchre of the soul, *τὸ σῶμα ἐστὶν ἡμῶν σῆμα, καὶ γὰρ ἡμεῖς τῷ ὄντι τέθναμεν*, both which together are but a periphrasis of that which St. Paul calls in brief the “body of death.” And shall we who have obtained plenty of light and instruction, besides that which nature bestowed on us with them, shall we, I say, let our eyes be confounded with abundance of day? shall we see it more clearly to take less notice of it? shall we feel the stings of sin within us, (which though they do but prick the regenerate, prove mortal to the rest of us,) and shall we not observe them? Shall we not rather weep those fountains dry, and crop this luxury of our affections with a severe sharp sorrow and humiliation? Shall we not starve this rank, fruitful mother of vipers, by denying it all nourishment from without, all advantages of temptations and the like, which it is wont to make use of to beget in us all manner of sin: let us aggravate every circumstance and inconvenience of it to ourselves, and then endeavour to banish it out of us, and when we find we are not able, importune that strong assistant the Holy Spirit to curb and subdue it, that in the necessity of residing, it yet may not reign in our mortal bodies; to tame and abate the power of this necessary Amorite, and free us from the activity, and mischief and temptations of it here, and from the punishment and imputation of it hereafter.

^h Maximus Tyrius, [supr. p. 278.] ⁱ Euripides, Polydus, frag. 7. ed. Dind.

And so I come to the third part or branch of this original sin, to wit, its legal guilt, and this we do contract by such an early prepossession, that it outruns all other computations of our life. We carry a body of sin about us, before we have one of flesh, have a decrepit, weak old man, with all his crazy train of affections and lusts, before even infancy begins. “Behold,” saith the Psalmist, “I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me:” as if guilt were the plastic power that formed us, and wickedness the minera and element of our being, as if it were that little moving point which the curious enquirers into nature find to be the rudiment of animation, and pants not then for life, but lust, and endless death. So that the saying of St. James, chap. i. 15, seems a description of our natural birth, “when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” Nor does this hasty inmate leave us when grown up: no, it improves its rancour against God and goodness, mixes with custom, passion, and example, and whatever thing is apt to lead us unto mischief, fomenting all the wild desires of our inferior brutal part, till it become at last an equal and professed enemy, making open hostility, setting up its sconces, fortifying itself with munition and defence, as meaning to try the quarrel with God, and pretending right to man, whom God doth but usurp. Thus shall you see it encamped, and setting up its “banners for tokens,” under that proud name of another law. “I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind,” and as if it had got the better of the day, “bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in the members,” i. e. unto itself. And shall we feel such an enemy within us, laying siege at God and grace in us, and fiercely resolving, whether by deceit or battery to captivate us unto himself, and shall we not take notice of him? Shall we not think it worthy our pains and expense to defeat him, or secure ourselves? Beloved, that will be the best stratagem for the taking of this enemy, which is now-a-days most ordinary in sieges, to block up all passages, and hinder all access of fresh provision, and so by denying this greedy devourer all nourishment from without, to starve and pine him into such a tameness, that he may be taken without resistance; which how really you may perform by these means

Ps. li. 5.

James i.
15.

[Ps. lxxiv.
4.]
[Rom. vii.
23.]

of mortification and repentance prescribed you in Scripture, you shall better learn by your own practice than my discourse.

The fourth aggravation of this guilt is, that its minera and fuel lurks even in a regenerate man, wretched, &c., and enforceth Paul into a conflict, a war against himself. And ^{1 Cor. ix. 27.} is it possible for one otherwise happy, (as the regenerate man inwardly surely is,) to sleep securely, and never to try a field with the author of its so much misery, or finding it to be within itself part of itself, not to think it a sin worthy repentance, and sorrow, by which God's Holy Spirit is so resisted, so affronted, and almost quelled and cast out?

Fifthly, and lastly, the guilt of it appears by the effects of it, 1. inclination, 2. consent to evil: for even every inclination to sin without consent is an irregularity and kind of sin, i. e. an aversion of some of our faculties from God; all which should directly drive amain to Him and goodness. That servant which is commanded with all speed and earnestness to go about any thing, offends against his master's precept if he any way incline to disobedience, if he perform his commands with any regret or reluctancy. Now secondly, consent is so natural a consequent of this evil inclination, that in a man you can scarce discern, much less sever them. No man hath any inordinate lust, but doth give some kind of consent to it, the whole will being so infected with this lust, that that can no sooner bring forth evil motions, but this will be ready at hand with evil desires: and then how evident a guilt, how plain a breach of the law it is you need not mine eyes to teach you. Thus have I insisted somewhat largely on the branches of original sin, which I have spread and stretched the wider, that I might furnish you with more variety of aggravations on each member of it, which I think may be of important use, for this or any other popular auditory, because this sin ordinarily is so little thought of, even in our solemnest humiliations. When you profess that you are about the business of repentance, you cannot be persuaded that this common sin which Adam, as you reckon, only sinned, hath any effect on you. I am yet afraid that you still hardly believe that you are truly, and in earnest to be sorry for it, unless the Lord strike our hearts with an exact sense, and professed feeling of this sin of our nature, and corruption of our kind.

And suffer us not, O Lord, to nourish in ourselves such a torpor, sluggishness and security, lest it drive us headlong to all manner of hard-heartedness to commit actual sins, and that even with greediness.

[Eph. iv.
19.]

And so I come briefly to a view of each man's personal sins, "I am the chief:" where I might rank all manner of sins into some forms or seats, and then urge the deformity of each of them single and naked to your view, but I will for the present presume your understandings sufficiently instructed in the heinousness of each sin forbidden by the commandments. For others who will make more or less sins than the Scripture doth, I come not to satisfy them, or decide their cases of conscience. In brief I will propose to your practice only two forms of confessing your sins, and humbling yourselves for them, which I desire you to aggravate to yourselves, because I have not now the leisure to beat them low, or deep to your consciences. Besides original sin already spoken of, you are to lay hard to your own charges, 1. your particular chief sins, 2. all your ordinary sins in gross. For the first, observe but that one admirable place in Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the Temple. "If there be in the land famine," &c. "Whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness, what prayer or supplication soever be made by any man, or by all Thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hand to this house, then hear Thou in heaven," &c. Where the condition of obtaining their requests from God is excellently set down, "if they shall know," i. e. be sensible of, be sorry for, and confess to God every man the "plague of his own heart," that is, in the bulk and heap of their sins, shall pick the fairest loveliest sin in the pack, the plague, i. e. the pestilential, reigning, sweeping offence, on which all the lower train of petty faults do wait and depend, do minister and suppeditate matter to work. If, I say, they shall take this captain sin, and anatomize, and cut up, and discover every branch of him without any fraud or concealment before the Lord, and then sacrifice that dear darling, and with it their whole fleshly lust as an holocaust, or whole burnt-offering before the Lord: then will He "hear from heaven His dwelling-place, and when He heareth, forgive,"

1 Kings
viii. 37, &c.

even their other concealed sins, because they have disclosed so entirely, and parted so freely from that. For there is in every of us one master sin that rules the rabble, one fatling which is fed with the choicest of our provision, one captain of the devil's troop, one "the plague" in every man's heart. This being sincerely confessed and displayed, and washed in a full stream of tears, for the lower more ordinary sort, for the heap or bulk, we must use David's penitential compendious art, who overcome with the multitude of his sins to be repeated, folds them all in this prayer, "Who can tell how oft he offendeth?" &c. "And do Thou, O Lord, work in us the sincere acknowledgment of, and contrition for both them, and the whole bundle of our unknown every day's transgressions, and having purged out of us those more forward, known, notorious enormities, cleanse us also from our secret faults." And thus much be spoken of this proposition, that, and how every man is to aggravate the measure and number of his sins against himself. The whole doctrine is, and in our whole discourse hath been handled for a store of uses; for in setting down how you are to aggravate your sins, especially your original sin against yourselves, I have spoken all the while to your affections, and will therefore presume that you have already laid them up in your hearts to that purpose. Only take one pertinent use for a close, which hath not been touched in the former discourse. If every one be to aggravate his own sins, and to reckon himself "of all sinners the chief;" then must no man usurp the privilege to see or censure other men's sins through a multiplying glass, i. e. double to what indeed they are, as most men do now-a-days. What so frequent among those who are most negligent of their own ways, as to be most severe inquisitors of other men's? and to spy, and censure, and damn a mote or atom in another man's eye, when their own is in danger to be put out by a beam? Hence is it that among laymen the sins of clergy are weighed according to the measure of the sanctuary, which was provided for the paying of their tithes^k, i. e. double the ordinary balance; and their own, if not under, at most according to the common weight of the congregation. In a minister every error shall become an heresy,

Ps. xix.
12.

Lev. xxvii.
25.

^k Hooker, p. 428. [Book v. ch. 79. § 10. ed. Keble.]

every slip a crime, and every crime a sacrilege, whereas, beloved, he that means to take out St. Paul's lesson, must extenuate every man's sins but his own, or else his heart will give his tongue the lie, when it hears him say, "Of all," &c.

And so much of this doctrine of aggravating our sins to ourselves, which we are to perform in our daily audit betwixt us and our own consciences. There is another reasonable observation behind in a word to be handled; this particle *ὧν*, "of whom," hath a double relation, either to sinners simply, and so it hath been handled already, or to sinners as they are here set down, to wit, those sinners which Christ came into the world to save: and so St. Paul here is changed from the chief of sinners to the chief of saints, and then the doctrine is become a doctrine of comfort fit for a conclusion, that he who can follow Paul's example and precept, can sufficiently humble himself for his sins, accept that faithful saying, and rightly lay hold on Christ, may assure himself that he is become a chief saint, for so could Paul say, "Of all sinners I am the chief," and therefore of all those sinners that Christ came into the world to save, *πρώτος εἰμι*, "I am the chief too." I shall not discuss this point at large, as being too wide to be comprehended in so poor a pittance of time, but shew the condition of it briefly. He that by God's inward effectual working is come to a clear sight and accurate feeling of his sins; that hath not spared any one minute [of] circumstance for the discovery of them, not one point of aggravation for the humbling of himself, he that being thus prepared for his journey to Christ with his burden on his back, shall then take his flight and keep upon the wing, till he fix firmly on Him, may be as sure that he shall die the death, and reign the life of a saint, as he is resolved that God is faithful in His promises: then may he live with this syllogism of confidence, not presumption, in his mouth, "it is a faithful saying that Christ came into the world" to justify, sanctify, and "save believing humble sinners;" but I find myself an humble and believing, and consequently, a justified, sanctified sinner, therefore it is as certain a truth, that I shall be saved. And thus you see Paul's, "I am the chief," interpreted by that assured persuasion, "that neither death nor life, nor any creature shall be able to separate him,"

[Rom. viii.
38.]

&c. I will not discuss the nature of this assurance, whether it be an act of faith or hope, only thus much, it seems to be derived or bestowed upon hope by faith, an expectation of the performances of the promises grounded upon a firm faith in them, and so to be either an eminent degree of faith, or a confirmed hope. The use of this point is, not to be content with this bare assurance, but to labour to confirm it to us by those effects which do ordinarily and naturally spring from it. Such are, first, joy, or glorying, mentioned Heb. iii. 6; Heb. iii. 6. the confidence and “rejoicing of your hope firm unto the end:” secondly, a delight in God, mentioned 1 Pet. i. 3, 6; “a lively hope,” &c., wherein ἀγαλλιᾶσθε, “you exult,” you greatly rejoice and are delighted: thirdly, a patient adhering to God in a firm expectation of this state, even in the midst of all manner of worldly evils, mentioned Isaiah viii. 17; “I will wait upon the Lord which hideth His face, and I will look for Him,” i. e., I will wait His leisure patiently, for I am sure He will uncover His face. And Job more plainly and vehemently, “Though He kill me, yet will I trust in Him.” So *verbalim*, Rom. viii. 25, then “do we in patience wait for it,” and 2 Thess. iii. 5, “the patient waiting for Christ.” Fourthly, as an effect of this patience, a silence and acquiescence “in the will of God,” without any desire of hastening or altering any effect of it. So Psalm xxxvii. 7; “Rest in the Lord,” where the Hebrew hath it, be silent to the Lord, “and wait patiently for Him,” i. e. as the consequence interprets it, quarrel not with God for any thing that happens according to His will, but against thine, as the prosperity of the wicked, and the like. Fifthly, a confirmation of the mind, as making our hope “the anchor of our soul, sure and stedfast,” that we may thereby in “patience possess our souls.” And lastly, a desire of sanctifying ourselves, according to that 1 John iii. 3; “Every man that hath this hope in him purifies himself, even as Christ is pure.” These six effects briefly set down, may be certain marks to you, by which you may judge how just grounds your assurance stands on, and whereby it is to be distinguished from presumption. O Lord, let the fulness of Thy Holy Spirit overshadow us, and increase our weaker faith into a richer measure of assurance, and our more fearful hopes into a degree of full persuasion and certain expect-

1 Pet. i. 3, 6.

Isa. viii. 17.

[Job xiii. 15.]
Rom. viii. 25.

2 Thess. iii. 5.

Ps. xxxvii. 7. דום

Heb. vi. 17.
Luke xxi. 19.

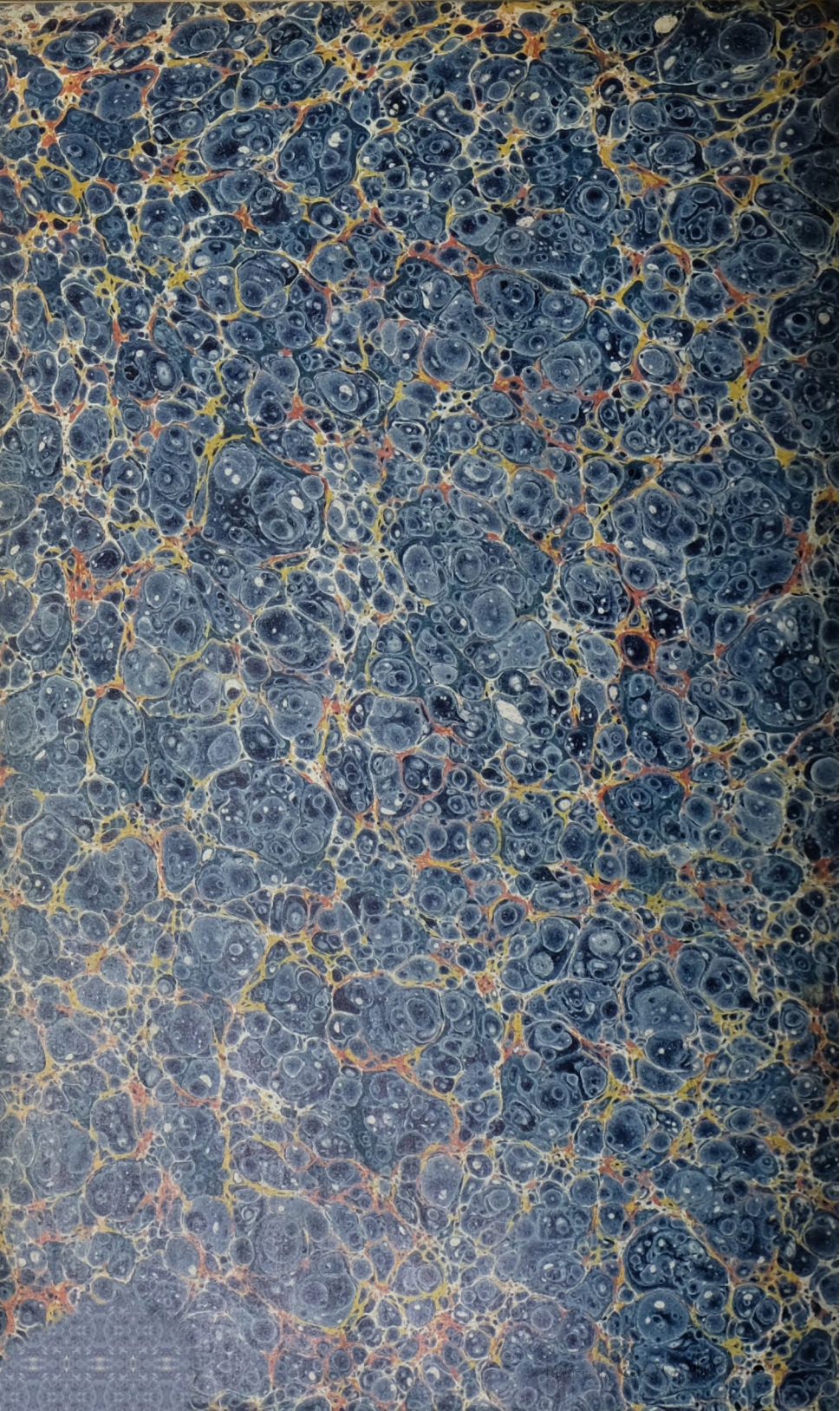
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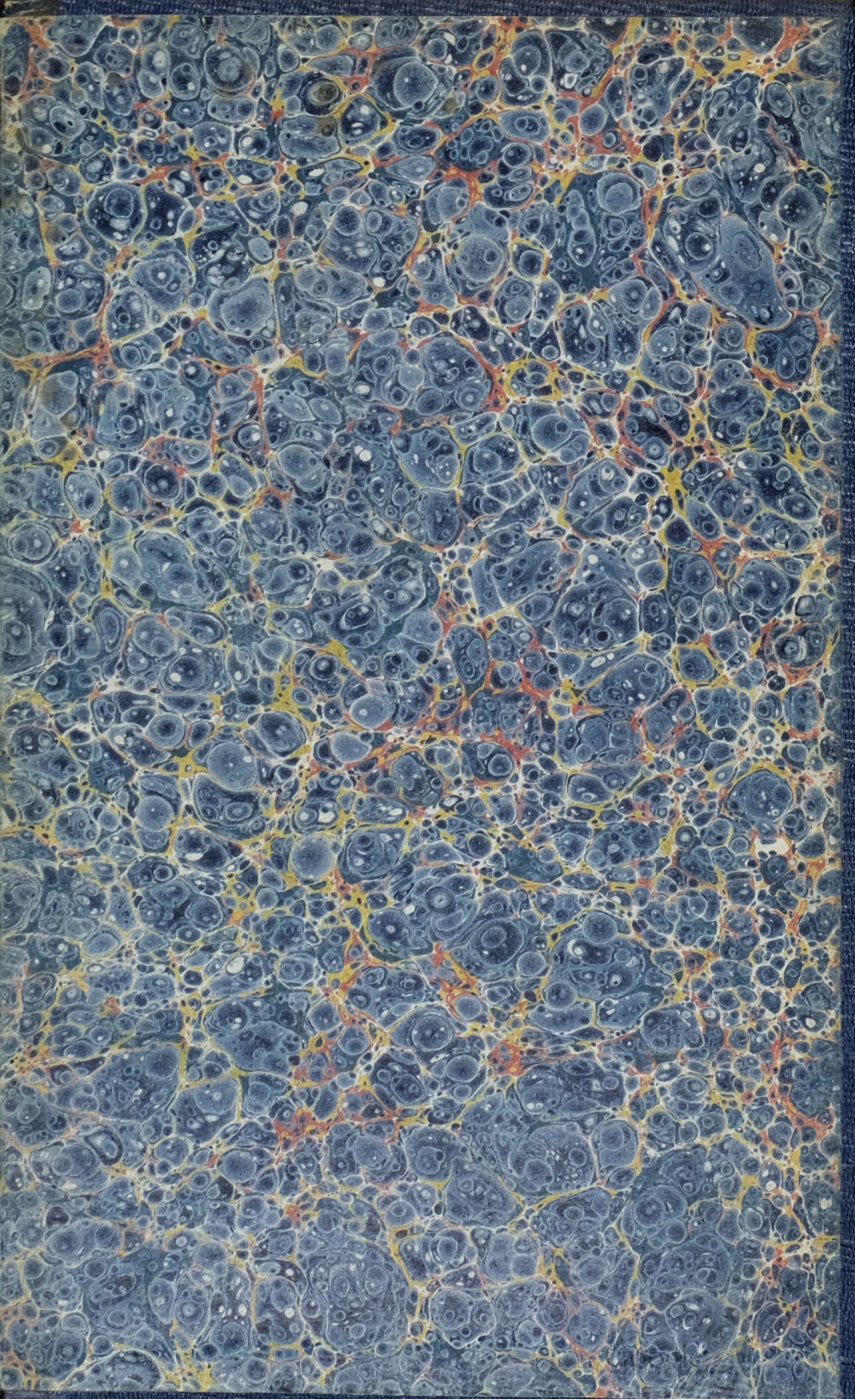
tation of those visions that Thou shalt reveal, and that blest estate that Thou shalt bestow upon us; and lest our confidence may either be or seem but a presumption, work in us those effects of patience, of silence, of joy, of delight, of confirmation of mind, and above all a desire and ability of sanctifying our lives unto Thee.

Thus have I with all possible haste made an end of these words, and at this time out of the cadence of them observed to you the tenderness of St. Paul and every regenerate man, at the least mention of a sin or sinner, illustrated by the opposite hardness of heart, proved of soft tender parts of our body, and made use of for a crisis or judgment of our estate and livelihood in grace. Secondly, out of the words themselves we observed the necessity and method of aggravating our sins, especially original sin, against ourselves, which we made use of against those that are more quick-sighted in other men's estates and guilts than their own. Thirdly, we closed all with that comfortable doctrine of assurance, discussed to you in brief with six effects of it proposed for an example to your care and imitation.

Now the God which hath created us, redeemed, called, justified us, will sanctify in His time, will prosper this His ordinance to that end, will direct us by His grace to His glory. To Him be ascribed due the honour, the praise, the glory, the dominion, which through all ages of the world have been given to Him that sitteth on the throne, to the Holy Spirit, and to the Lamb for evermore.

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